

Paul's First Letter to  
the Corinthians

# FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMUNITY

*To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those  
sanctified in Christ Jesus...*

## Class Time

- Class Officer Reports
- Prayer Requests
- Review of Introduction
- Scripture Reading and Summary – 1 Corinthians 1:1-3
- Class Discussion:
  - ✓ *What is the meaning of the word “apostle” as used in the New Testament?*
  - ✓ *What is the meaning of the word “church” as used in the New Testament?*
  - ✓ *What relationship between God and Christ is implied by the greeting in verse 3?*
- Outline and Lesson

## Study of 1 Corinthians

C. A.D. 33/34

Conversion of Paul

C. A.D. 48/49–51

Paul plants church  
at Corinth

C. A.D. 53–55

Paul writes  
1 Corinthians

- ✓ *Instructive to see Paul deal with the Corinthians major problems*
- ✓ *Edifying and encouraging to read the soul-stirring theology*
- ✓ *Sobering to discover that Corinth is a mirror to the culture and church of today*

*“The cosmopolitan character of the city and church, the strident individualism that emerges in so many of their behavioral aberrations, the arrogance that attends their understanding of being people of the Spirit, the accommodation of the gospel to the surrounding culture in all too many ways—these and some other features of the Corinthian church are but mirrors held up before the church of today.”*

*-- Gordon Fee*

# 1 CORINTHIANS – INTRODUCTION

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The Unique Setting  
Of Corinth -  
*Geographically*



# 1 CORINTHIANS – INTRODUCTION

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The Unique Setting  
Of Corinth -  
*Economically*

- Home to the Isthmian Games
- Travelers, Sailors, Traders, Tourists
- Businesspeople, Entrepreneurs
- Tolls and Fees

*“a deeply competitive, self-sufficient, and entrepreneurial culture marked by ambitions to succeed”*

-- Anthony Thistleton

“Consumerism”

# 1 CORINTHIANS – INTRODUCTION

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## The Unique Setting Of Corinth - *Culturally*

- Corinth II
  - ✓ Sacked and destroyed in 146 B.C.
  - ✓ Rebuilt in 44 B.C. by Julius Caesar
- Although Greek, it was a Roman city
- Energetic business culture – quick success or quick failure a part of the mindset

*“Competition, patronage, consumerism, and multiform layers and levels of success were part of the air breathed by citizens of Corinth.”*

*“a humiliated, crucified Christ was an affront to people ... who loved winners”*

-- Thistleton

# Corinth

Important, intellectually alert, materially prosperous, but morally corrupt.

-Morris



# 1 CORINTHIANS – INTRODUCTION



*Insight into today's church and our culture*



1<sup>st</sup> century Corinthian aberrations –

Are a mirror before the 21<sup>st</sup> century church –

The solution for both is Christ the wisdom and power of God

## 1 Corinthians 1:1–3 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,

<sup>2</sup> To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Summary Statement**

- Paul, the writer, identifies himself as an apostle of Christ commissioned by God, along with his companion, Sosthenes. He is writing to the assembly of believers in Corinth who have also been commissioned and set apart by God for holiness and service to Christ, as are all believers everywhere who likewise call on the Lord. He wishes upon them God's continued gracious dealings and spiritual prosperity that come from both God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Discussion

*What is the meaning of the word “apostle” as used in the New Testament?*

- *Called*
- *Set apart for the gospel of God*
- *Received*
- *Grace to bring about obedience of faith*
- *By the will of God*
- *Have seen Jesus*
- *God appointed apostles, prophets, etc*
- *Jesus appeared to all apostles, including Paul*
- *Signs of true apostle: signs, wonders, mighty works*
- *Not from men but through Jesus and God*
- *God worked through*
- *Foundation of apostles and prophets*
- *Insight into mystery of Christ revealed to*
- *God gave apostles and prophets*
- *By command of God*

## Discussion

*What is the meaning of the word “church” as used in the New Testament?*

- ✓ *Of God*
- ✓ *Those sanctified in Christ Jesus*
- ✓ *Called to be saints*
- ✓ *Together with all in every place...*
- ✓ *Who call upon the name of Jesus*
- ✓ *One common Lord – the Lord Jesus Christ*

## Discussion

*What relationship between God and Christ is implied by the greeting in verse 3?*

*The [combination] of Father and Son in such texts as these must not be overlooked. Texts such as this one make it clear that in Paul's mind the Son is truly God and works in cooperation with the Father in the redemption of God's people.*

- Gordon Fee

## Sovereign Acts of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in First Corinthians

- I. The Apostle of Christ Called by God v1
  - a. Called by the will of God
  - b. In Service to Christ Jesus
- II. The Church of God Sanctified in Christ v2
  - a. Belonging to God
  - b. Set apart for holiness and service to Christ
  - c. Identified with all Believers in every place
- III. The Greeting of Paul from God and Christ v3
  - a. Free grace
  - b. Resulting peace
  - c. True Deity



# Sovereign Acts of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in First Corinthians

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and our brother Sosthenes,



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  - a. Called by the will of God
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## Sovereign Acts of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in First Corinthians

<sup>2</sup> To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:



### II. The Church of God Sanctified in Christ v2

- a. Belonging to God
- b. Set apart for holiness and service to Christ
- c. Identified with all Believers in every place

## Sovereign Acts of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in First Corinthians

<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus  
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### III. The Greeting of Paul from God and Christ v3

- a. Free grace
- b. Resulting peace
- c. True Deity