



1 Corinthians

*Paul's First Letter
to the
Church in Corinth*

***The Road
From
Carnality to Spirituality***

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS.

Lesson #1

INTRODUCTION

I Corinthians 1:1-30

HISTORY: The City of Corinth was a Roman Colony in the Country of Greece. It was an extremely wealthy city, but it was known as a city of "great wickedness and extreme immorality." The very word "Corinthians" became a synonym for "a person of loose living."

The Corinthian Church was established by the Apostle Paul in Acts 18:1-18. Paul was there for at least 18 months (Acts 18:11). He returned there during his 3rd missionary journey (Acts 20:2-3). The Corinthian Letter was written by Paul in response to a letter which the church had written to him asking questions (I Corinthians 7:1). There seems to be at least 10 question which were asked. Paul answered the questions they asked, **but** he did not answer them immediately. Rather, he first addressed some extreme failures which members of the church were having that HAD TO BE ADDRESSED FIRST.

A. The authority for writing this book is Paul, who was an Apostle.

1. The Apostles were a "special group" which Jesus selected (Mark 3:13-19).

2. The Apostles were given "supreme authority" over the churches.

DIVISIONS: The Book of I Corinthians is basically divided into two major sections.

First, Chapters 1:1 through Chapter 6:20 deals with a "believer living a life of carnality, sin in the foundation of the church and the consequence of sin and worldliness." Paul also applies the remedy of those failures in the believer's life, which is Christ. In this section, Paul not only addresses "their failures" but he also gives them instruction to resolve those failures. His teaching was that until they repent and change and correct their failures, they cannot possibly "travel the road from carnality to spirituality." They must have the "Biblical Foundation" on which to travel the road.

Second, Chapters 7:1 - 16:24 deals with a "believer living a spiritual life." In these same chapters, Paul explains how a "carnal believer" can rebuild and have a "spiritual life." Paul gives the remedy for EVERY failure that the Corinthian believers had.

PLEASE keep in mind as we study the book of I Corinthians, IT IS POSSIBLE for a believer to live a CARNAL life. The Bible tells is that "some may be saved, but so as by fire!" Paul challenged these Corinthian believers who, according to I Corinthians 1:1-9, were saved - but were living a carnal life (I Corinthians 3:15). The church had failed in many ways.

BE SURE YOUR SINS WILL FIND YOU OUT!

I. The Failures of the Believers in the Church at Corinth:

A. There were divisions in the church (I Corinthians 1:10).

B. There were contentions in the church (I Corinthians 1:11).

C. The church was following "man's wisdom" rather than the message. (I Cor. 1:21).

D. There was envying and strife in the church (I Corinthians 3:3).

- E. There were some who were puffed up against others (I Corinthians 4:6, 18, 19).
- F. There were serious moral failures in the church (I Corinthians 5:1).
- G. There were members taking other members to court (I Corinthians 6:1-11).

II. A Summary of the Church at Corinth:

- A. They were a church of "extremely carnal believers" (I Corinthians 3:1-4).

III. This is a Picture of Things that are Going on in Churches Today!

- A. Today the church is failing for not "following Paul's pattern" (Acts 20:20, 26 & 27).

GOD CALLED BELIEVERS TO BE HOLY!

I Corinthians 1:1-9

I. Believers are "Set Apart by God" (Verses 2-3).

- A. A "church" means "a called-out people."
 - 1. EVERY member of the church is:
 - a. Sanctified (*Hagiazō*): Meaning: made Holy and consecrated.
 - b. A Saint (*Hagios*): Meaning: blameless and pure.
 - c. Believers are "saints" NOW - not after they die and voted on.
 - 2. EVERY member of the church is "set apart by and for God" (Colossians 1:16).
 - a. Set aside for "His Enjoyment" (Revelation 4:11).
 - b. Set aside for "Be Like Christ." (Romans 8:29).

II. Believers are "Enriched by God's Grace" (Verses 4-6).

- A. "Enriched (*Plortizo*): Meaning: to be made wealthy!
 - 1. God has given us "gifts" to serve and glorify Him (I Corinthians 12:11).
 - 2. God has given us "All things to enjoy" (I Timothy 6:17).

III. Believers are "To Live Their Life Expecting Jesus to Come" (Verse 7).

- A. Expecting Jesus should constrain us to keep our life pure (I John 2:28, 3:2-3).

IV. Believers are to "Trust in God's Faithfulness" to Live such a Life.

- A. God will ALWAYS keep His side of the contract (I Corinthians 15:58)!

GOD CALLED BELIEVERS TO BE IN UNITY!

I Corinthians 1:10-25)

I. Paul Commanded That There Should be "No Division" in the Church (Verse 10).

- A. The Apostle commands the church:
 - 1. "...that ye all speak the SAME thing..."
 - 2. "... be perfectly joined together in the SAME mind..."
 - 3. "...and in the SAME judgment."

II. Paul Asked Three Questions About Who Their Confidence was In (Verse 13).

- A. **Question #1** - "Is Christ Divided?"
 - 1. Paul makes them realize that there is only ONE Christ (Galatians 1:6-9).

2. Different members identified with "the **messenger** rather than - the **message**."
- B. **Question #2** - "Was Paul crucified for you?"
1. Paul stated that "his only part in their life was... (Verse 17):
 - a. To preach Christ, His crucifixion and resurrection!
 2. It is clear that preachers are not to use "human wisdom of words" (Verse 17).
 - 3.. Preachers are not to use "ANYTHING" to draw people's attention to themselves.
- C. **Question #3** - "Were you baptized in the name of Paul?"
1. They were saying, "I was baptized by Paul - I by Apollos - I by Cephas (Peter).
 2. Paul made it clear that he was not called to baptize people (Verses 14-16).
 3. Jesus and Paul allowed "other co-laborers" to baptize converts. (John 4:1-2)

GOD CALLED BELIEVERS TO GLORIFY HIM!
I Corinthians 1:26-31 (31)

- I. **What Type of People God Chose to Use** (I Corinthians 1:26-28).
- A. Foolish things - Billy Sunday
 - B. Weak things - George Williams & Paul Anderson
 - C. Base things - Gideon - Judges 6:14
 - D. Despised things - David & Goliath - I Samuel 17:42-47
 - E. Things that "are not." ("Nobodies.")
 1. Moody - Meyer - Chapman - Sunday - Hamn - Graham
- II. **Why did God Choose People of This Type** (I Corinthians 1:29 and 31)?
- A. God chose those "five types of people" for a purpose.
- III. **All That We Have is Given to us by God** (I Corinthians 1:30).
- A. Righteousness - They "**had been saved**" from the penalty of sin.
 1. He is our Righteousness (II Corinthians 5:21).
 - B. Sanctification - They "**are being saved**" from the power of sin.
 1. He is our Sanctification (John 17:19).
 - C. Redemption - They "**will be saved**" from the presence of sin
 1. He is our redemption (Romans 3:24).

NO FLESH SHOULD GLORY IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

- A. "Accord as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."
 1. This is a quote based on Jeremiah 9:24
- B. When saved believers "glorify God in all they do" --
 1. Their failures will go away!

The Corinthian Church Was: - a Defiled Church - a Divided Church - a Disgraced Church

Paul will give the church a "master plan" that will glorify God.

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #2
PREPARING THE ROAD FOR TRAVEL
HE THAT GLORIETH - LET HIM GLORY IN THE LORD
I Corinthians 1:31 - 2:1-16

INTRODUCTION: The church at Corinth was enamored with certain men who were "performers instead of ambassadors" of Christ. They were like a "gifted salesman" whose purpose was to draw people to "admire and follow them," instead of following the great truths they had been taught by the Apostle Paul. They had drawn people away from the truth by using "enhancing words and wisdom of the world" woven into their teaching and preaching, all of which was corrupting the entire church. In I Corinthians Chapter 1 Verse 31, Paul had just said to the church, "...*He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*" Paul follows that statement by giving them a pattern of three truths which should cause all of us to "glory in the Lord."

1. GOD THE FATHER ORDAINED THE GOSPEL.
(I Corinthians 2:5-7)

I. The "Wisdom of God is a Mystery" - The Mystery is "God's Plan of Salvation."

- A. The "Mystery" was hidden in the Old Testament (I Peter 1:10-12).
 - 1. The "way of salvation for man" was not an "after-thought" as the result of man's fall!
 - 2. It was "*Ordained before the world unto our glory*" (Verse 7).
 - 3. The "Mystery" was hidden until the day God sent for his Son to make it known!
 - a. God **foretold** that Messiah was coming (Gen. 3:15; Deut. 18:15 - 19).

2. GOD THE SON IS THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL
(I Corinthians 2:1-4)

I. Paul's Determination in Preaching

- A. Paul began by saying, "*And I....*" **He reminded them of how he preached when he was in Corinth.**
 - 1. Paul did not go to Corinth to "glorify himself."
 - 2. Paul did not go to Corinth to "draw attention to himself."
 - 3. Paul did not go to "enhance them with words of wisdom" (I Cor. 1:17).
- B. When Paul was "**determined**" not to know anything save **Jesus Christ!** (**Determined:** "*Krino*" meaning, "I condemn doing anything other than - preaching Christ")
Don't add anything to your witnessing, preaching or teaching
 - 1. Many preachers today, go to the pulpit and act more like "performers."
 - a. They appear to have the purpose of "drawing attention to themselves."
 - b. **In doing so, they "Hide Christ" and "Quench the Holy Spirit."**

II. Paul's Demonstration in Preaching is Presented in Two Parts (Verse 3-4).

- A. First, he came to the church, "**demonstrating** a preacher as a **humble servant**" (I Corinthians 2:1-4).
 - 1. He appeared weak - He appeared fearful - He appeared trembling II Cor. 10:10
 - 2. Paul learned that when "he was weak" God made him strong (II Cor. 12:10).
 - 3. His speech was not with "enticing words" (like that of a salesman).
 - 4. His speech was not mixed with "worldly words or cute words."
- B. Second, he came to the church "**demonstrating the Spirit and of Power.**" (I Cor. 2:4).
 - 1. Paul wanted them to "trust in the message - not the messenger."
- C. Paul said, "*I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, ...*".
 - 1. Paul believed "...for **it is the power of God unto salvation**" (Romans 1:16).
 - a. "*My Word WILL NOT return void!*" (Isaiah 55:11)
 - 2. **For us to use that power we must...**
 - a. Prepare our "head" to witness, teach or preach by study.
 - b. Prepare our "hearts" to witness, teach or preach by prayer

3. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALS THE GOSPEL. (I Corinthians 2:10 & 13)

I. Our Salvation was Provided by the Trinity (Ephesians 1:3-14 & I Peter 1:2).

- A. We are saved by God the Father's Grace.
- B. We are saved by God the Son's Sacrifice.
- C. We are saved by God the Holy Spirit's Conviction.

II. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit is a "four-fold" ministry.

- A. The Holy Spirit reveals "God's plan for us, which was made in eternity past (Verses 10-11).
- B. The Holy Spirit indwells us, "That we might know God's plan for us today" (Verse 12).
- C. The Holy Spirit teaches us, "That we might be guided in the truth" (Verse 13) (John 14:26).
- D. The Holy Spirit matures us, "That we might have the mind of Christ" (Verse 16) (Romans 8:29).
 - 1. We are enabled to "think like Christ thinks."
 - 2. We are enabled to "want what Christ wants."
 - 3. We are enabled to "ask of God what Christ would have us ask for."
 - 4. We are enabled to "do for God what Christ would have us to do."

THE INCONCEIVABLE MYSTERY OF GOD IS REVEALED TO US TODAY. (I Corinthians 2:9-16)

- I. **The "Mystery of God" was a Foretold Mystery** (Isaiah 64:4).

- II. **The "Mystery of God" is an Inconceivable Mystery** (I Corinthians 2:9).
 - A. The human mind cannot conceive "that God's Son would so humble Himself ...".
 - 1. Take on the form of a sinful man!
 - 2. Suffer mocking, criticism, beatings, - more.
 - 3. Be obedient, even to the death on the cross!

 - B. Until the book of Acts - it never entered into the heart of man what God planned (I Cor. 2:10-11)!
 - 1. The Jews did not see this mystery - even as they "watched it play out!"

 - C. The "Mystery" is still hidden today from the "unsaved world." (II Cor. 4:3-5)
 - 1. The Old Testament Tabernacle is a picture of what the world sees today.
 - a. The Tabernacle was covered with four layers of fine linens.
 - b. The outer cover was "dried animal skin" **with no beauty at all!**
 - 2. The people of the world look at the church and "see nothing to be desired" (Isaiah 53:3)!

 - D. **The People of the World Only See "the Glory of God in You and in Me!"**
 - 1. We should be a picture of Christ and (Matthew 5:14-16)

"Glorify Your Lord and Savior"

THE BOOK OF CORINTHIANS
Lesson #3
PREPARING THE ROAD FOR TRAVEL
HOW TO BE A WISE MASTER BUILDER
I Corinthians 3:1-23

INTRO: Paul, in the closing verse of Chapter 2, made it clear that he is writing to people who were believers. He is NOT dealing with people who are not believers.

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF BELIEVERS IN EVERY CHURCH.
(Spiritual and carnal)
I Corinthians 3:1-3

- I. In The Corinthian Church, Most of the Believers Were Carnal (I Corinthians 3:3).**
 - A. Paul accuses them of being carnal and offers "proof" of his statement. (Verses 3-4)
 - 1. "...for whereas... (Paul offers proof) - ... there is envy among you" (Verse 3).
 - a. Envy comes when some member thinks other members have "more say" than they have!
 - 2. Envy produces "strife."
 - 3. Strife means there was "contentions and continual dispute"
 - 4. Envy and Strife produce "divisions" in any church (Verse 3).
- II. The Carnal Believers in the Corinthian Church Were Divided into Different Divisions (Verses 4-8).**
 - A. Different "divisions" in a church will always attack each other (Verse 4).
 - 1. Both Paul and Apollos had Ministered in the church at Corinth.
 - 2. Paul had founded the church (Acts 18) - One saith, "I am of Paul!"
 - 3. Apollos had ministered in Corinth. (Acts 19:1) Another saith, "I am of Apollos!"
 - B. Paul directs them to the truth by "asking questions."
 - 1. Who then is Paul? - Who is Apollos?
 - a. **Nothing** more than "**ministers**" (*diakonos*). **Meaning: "servants."**
 - b. "*By whom ye believed ...*" **Instruments** which God has used (Verse 4).
 - C. Paul compares the church at Corinth to "an agricultural field" (I Corinthians 3:6-7).
 - 1. "I have planted!" (Paul had planted the Gospel and the church in Corinth.)
 - 2. "Apollos watered."
 - 3. "**...God that giveth the increase.**" (Verse 7).
 - 4. Paul made mention of Peter in I Corinthians 1:12. There must be a connection.

ILLUSTRATION: God called a man to take the Gospel to the Aboriginal people in Australia. He was there for four years to find a way to go into the territory of the Aboriginal people, but the dangers were too great. He returned to the United States and visited some of his supporting churches. In one of those services, after he had presented the need to reach the Aboriginal people, a young girl about 10 years old, came up to him, held out her hand, and said, "I want to help you reach the Aboriginal people." She had a "penny" in her hand. The missionary took the penny and thanked the little girl for

giving it to him. Later, he put the penny in his billfold as a "good memory." He returned to Australia and continued to try and find a way to get into Aboriginal territory. One day, he was going through his billfold and saw the penny. He said, the Lord spoke to his heart and said, "That little girl give you that penny to help you reach the Aboriginal people, not for you to use as a "keep-sake." The missionary went to a Christian bookstore and purchased a "one-penny gospel tract." He wrote his name and address on the back of the tract and gave it away. He felt relieved! He had invested the little girl's penny.

Two years later, he had still not been able to enter the territory of the Aboriginal people. He was sitting on his front porch, reading his Bible, and praying that God would "open the door" to those people. A knock came at his door. He looked up and there was a very mean looking black man standing at the screen door. A bit fearful, he went, opened the door, and asked the man if he could help him. The man had his fist doubled tightly and was holding it up before the missionary's face. After a minute, he opened his fist, and took out a crushed, dirty piece of paper. He unfolded it, turned it to the back and said, "Is this you?" It was the "one-penny" tract with the missionary's name on it. With great surprise, he said, "Yes, that is me. I am (and he called his name)." The man, still with a harsh look on his face said, "I not read. Something tell me (pointing to his heart) I need to know what this paper say!" The missionary invited him in, read and explained the gospel tract. After a time, the black man changed his facial expression, prayed, and received Christ as his Savior. After talking a while, the black man explained that he was an "Aboriginal" and asked the missionary, "You go and tell story to Aboriginal." The missionary explained that he had been trying to go into Aboriginal territory for six years but had been told by the Aboriginals that they would kill him if he came to their land. He explained that he would love to go and tell his people, but it was too dangerous. The man looked at him and said, "You go with me. You be safe." The missionary asked, "Are you sure? How do you know that some of those people there won't kill me?" The black man looked back at him and said, "They no hurt you! I the chief!" *"...God that giveth the increase."*

- D. Paul said, "Apollos and I are like farmers."
 - 1. We only did two things: "I sowed the seed - Apollos watered the seed."
 - a. "Why in the world are you glorying two farmers who "planted and watered?"
- E. **Conclusion:** We are all "one" in the work of Christ (Verses 8-9).
 - 1. We all have one and the same goal.
 - 2. We are ALL co-laborers together with God (Verse 9). (Glory goes to God!)
- F. Paul reminds them, that ALL THEY HAVE - they received freely (I Cor. 4:7).
 - 1. Why are you "giving men the credit?"
 - 2. Why are you "taking credit for yourself?"
- G. *"He that glorieth, let him glory in the LORD!"* (I Corinthians 1:31)

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF BUILDING MATERIALS AVAILABLE TO THE CHURCH.

I Corinthians 3:12-15

I. A Church Must Build on the Right Foundation. (Vs 11)

- A. *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"*

MATERIALS USED BY A WISE MASTER BUILDER.

II. The Church can Build with "Gold, Silver, Precious Stones." These picture Bible Approved Materials.

- A. THE WORD OF GOD - (I Corinthians 2:2).
1. Be instant in season and out of season (II Timothy 4:2).
2. God PROMISED His Word will not return void (Isaiah 55:11).
- B. THE WITNESSING OF JESUS CHRIST - (Acts 1:8).
1. *"...And if I be lifted up...will draw all men unto me."* (John 12:32).
- C. THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - (Zachariah 4:6).
- D. **The only part man has** in being a "Wise Master Builder" is **being obedient**.
1. Obedience refers to the three things mentioned above.

III. The Church can Build with, "Wood, Hay, Stubble." These picture Worldly Approved Materials.

- A. The first New Testament church had...no worldly materials of any type.
1. No buildings.
2. No property.
3. No advertising.
4. No entertainment.
5. Nothing was used to draw a crowd.
- B. They had people who were "witnessing and preaching" - **THAT'S ALL!**
1. Acts 2:41 *"...the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."*
2. Acts 4:4 *"...many of them which heard the word believed...about five thousand."*
3. **They had no worldly programs or entertainment to draw a crowd.**
- C. The church had "The preaching of The Word of God, Prayer, and the Power of the Holy Spirit."
1. That is **ALL THEY HAD** in the first New Testament Church.
a. That is ALL THEY NEEDED!
b. That is **ALL WE NEED TODAY!**
- D. The Fire will try everyman's work as to "**what sort it is!**"
1. Gold, Silver, Precious Stone **WILL NOT BURN!**
a. Fire produces - *"...praise and honour and glory ..."* (I Peter 1:7).
2. Wood, Hay, Stubble **WILL BURN EASILY!**

- a. The wood, hay and stubble burn - meaning your work is a "total loss."
E. Will a person be satisfied if they are "saved so as by fire" but lose all they had (I Corinthians 3:13)?

"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (Vs 15).

ILLUSTRATION: There was a man who had worked hard, made a lot of money, had bought stocks and bonds. He was a multi-millionaire! However, he did not believe in or trust banks. Therefore, he kept all his money, stocks, and bonds in his beautiful, massive house. He had a wife and two children. One night he and his family all went to bed, he and his wife in a bedroom downstairs and their two children upstairs. That night as he slept soundly, he was suddenly awakened! His entire house was on fire and filled with smoke and the walls and ceiling were starting to fall! He saw the fire had burned a large hole in the wall beside his bed. In a panic, he rolled out of bed, took about two long steps, and dove through the hole in the wall. Outside firetrucks had arrived, neighbors had gathered, and were screaming for him to "get up and run." He responded, jumped up, and ran toward a group of people. When he stopped, one of the men in the group, who was his "next-door-neighbor" and was a good friend, put his arm around his shoulder and asked him if he was alright? He stood there, looked at his house going up in flames, with his wife and children inside! He looked at his neighbor and said, "There it goes; my wife, my children, my house, my money, my stocks, my bonds, all that I have - it's gone! Then he said to his neighbor, "It's all gone! Everything I had in this world is gone, but - I'm saved and that's all that really matters!"

Is that what you think and will say if, at the Judgement Seat of Christ you see "all that you had in your life on earth - go up in smoke"! I doubt it!

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

Lesson #4
PREPARING THE ROAD FOR TRAVEL
REMEMBER WHAT YOU ARE CALLED TO BE
I Corinthians 4:1-21
(Read I Cor. 4:1-7)

INTRO: Paul is wanting the believers in the Corinthian church to understand "how God judges His servants." In the church, one believer was judging another. Paul is pointing out that none of them should be "puffed up" and be judging one another! Paul gives them "three different views" in order to give them a picture they can understand. Paul began by reminding "what God HAS called them to be."

I. Remember that you are Called of God to be a Minister (I Corinthians 4:1).

- A. Ministers: (*Huperetes*) - It means a "boat rower, oarsmen."
 - 1. The Romans had slaves who were "boat rowers" for their ships.
 - 2. Paul, Apollos, and Peter "were not captains" of Christ's ship!
 - 3. They were "under orders" from the Captain of the ship.
 - a. The church at Corinth could see that they "were all rowers and all equal."
 - 4. Each of us is a "boat rower" together for God (I Cor. 3:9)!

II. Remember that you are Called of God to be a Steward (I Corinthians 4:1).

- A. A steward is one who has been made "overseer of his master's household" (I Corinthians 4:2).
 - 1. (As Joseph in - Genesis 39:4).
 - 2. A steward's requirements:
 - 3. A steward was required to "be a faithful overseer" for his master. (I Cor. 4:2)
 - 4. A good steward will always be criticized by someone, however...

If you please the Lord, it does not matter who you displease.
If you do not please the Lord, it will not matter who you do please!

III. Remember that you are Called of God to be Humble (I Corinthians 4:7-13).

- A. *"For who maketh thee to differ from another?"*
 - 1. The answer is understood, "We are not different - -
 - a. We are all, "ministers of God and stewards of God!"
- B. What does any believer have that "we did not receive" (Verse 7)?
 - 1. The answer is understood, "We have nothing that we did not receive!"
- C. *now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*
 - 1. The answer is understood: We have no reason to glory!
 - 2. We should rejoice together, glorify God together and "row" together.
- D. **Question for us:** What do you and I have to be proud of (John 3:27 and 30)???
 - 1. *"Humble yourselves ... that he may exalt you in due time."* (I Peter 5:6)

IV. Remember that you are Called of God to be an Example to Others
(I Corinthians 4:14-16)!

- A. **Examples** are Very Important and Very Special. (Verses 14-16).
 - 1. Paul never called himself a "father" but a "spiritual father" (Matthew 23:8-9).
 - 2. Paul was a "spiritual father" to those at the church in Corinth.
 - 3. A "Spiritual Father" is not an "authority" but is a "older/mature" example.
- B. **Examples** are to Set an Example for Others to Follow (Verses 16-17).
 - 1. Everyone needs an "Example" for them to follow (Verse 16).
 - 2. They need to be raised to be "imitators" of their Spiritual father (I Cor. 11:1).
 - a. "Spiritual Fathers" cannot say, "Don't do as I do, but do as I say do."
 - b. They MUST be able to say, "Anything you see me do, - you can do!"
- C. **Examples** are to be Teachers of Sound Doctrine (Verse 17).
 - 1. They should teach their children to "stand fast on the never changing doctrines and principles in the Bible!"
 - a. After teaching them the doctrines and Principles ...
 - i. They should teach them by letting them "see them live it out."
 - b. There is a difference between "words" and "walk" (I Corinthians 4:20).

REMEMBER THAT GOD GAVE US AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW.

I. God Gave us the Apostle Paul as an Example To Follow (Verse 9).

- A. Paul was a "minister" (Romans 1:1) "A servant - A boat rower - A bondman"
- B. Paul was a "steward" of the manifold Grace of God (I Peter 4:10).
 - 1. "... *I am pure from the blood of all men.*" (Acts 20:26).
 - 2. I came to you, "...*not with the wisdom of words...*" (I Corinthians 1:17).
 - 3. "*For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ...*" (I Corinthians 2:2).
- C. Paul was "humble" as a minister and steward (I Corinthians 4:9-13).
 - 1. He describes how the world sees him and the other Apostles.
 - 2. "*We are fools for Christ's sake...,*" - "*...we are weak...*" - "*...we are despised.*" (Verse 10).
- D. Every believer has a choice between "the self life" or the "way of the cross" life (Titus 1:7).
 - 1. Paul chose "the way of the cross life." (Galatians 2:20)
 - 2. Later in the book, Paul wrote, "*I die daily*" (I Corinthians 15:31).
- E. Most believers today live the "middle of the road life."

1. There IS NO middle of the road life (Matthew 12:30)!

F. God admonished US to "follow the pattern of Paul's life" (I Cor. 4:16 and I Cor. 11:1).

REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE NOT CALLED TO JUDGE.

- I. Remember that you Are Not Called to Judge Yourself.** (I Corinthians 4:3!)
 - A. Paul did not even judge his own self (Verse 3).
 - B. *"For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified..."*(Verse 4).
 - 1. "By myself" comes from the Greek word *"emautou."*
 - 2. Meaning: I know nothing against myself. (I know nothing I have done wrong.)
 - 3. Paul was saying, "My conscience is clear."
 - 4. Conscience "guides us if we are doing" right or wrong (Romans 2:14-15).
 - 5. Paul personally knew nothing bad in his ministry.
 - 6. Paul knew that "the Lord's judgement would come in the future" (Verse 4).
- II. Remember that you Are Not Call to Judge Each Other** (I Corinthians 4:4-5!)
 - A. Paul here refers to you and/or me judging ourselves or judging our co-laborers!
 - B. We are ALL slaves and servants of God. We ALL have the "same Master."
 - C. We are not to compare ourselves with other believers" (Verses 6-7)!
 - 1. The believers in the church at Corinth were "comparing themselves to other men in the church!"
 - D. Paul later said, *"...comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."* (II Corinthians 10:12).
 - E. ANY believer who does these things is "**acting like they are God!**" (Verse 4).
 - 1. GOD FORBID!
- III. Remember that you Are Not Called to Judge ANYTHING before the Lord comes** (Verse 5).
 - A. *"There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: **who art thou that judgest another?**"* (James 4:12)
 - B. God will judge all things according to I Samuel 16:7.

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #5
PREPARING THE ROAD FOR TRAVEL
THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM IN THE CHURCH AT CORINTH
I Corinthians 5:1-13

Introduction: Paul, in the opening four chapters, avoided the "root of the problem" in the church at Corinth. In those chapters he was "laying the foundation" to approach and deal with the "root, or with the main problem" in the church. Corinth was "defiled and was divided". All 3 divisions Paul - Apollos - Peter were to blame!

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH WAS
A CHURCH OF DISGRACE.

(This is not an easy matter to deal with in any church but was important enough that Paul addressed it in the church at Corinth. That means it is serious enough that it must be dealt with in churches today. Like situations have disgraced a number of churches in America during this generation.) - (Acts 20:26-27)

I. The Church at Corinth was a "Disgrace" Because they tolerated Sexual Perversion (I Corinthians 5:1)!

- A. The sin in the church was "reported commonly" (Verse 1).
 - 1. Commonly in the Greek is "*holos*." It means:
 - a. Widely known, known everywhere, and everyone was talking about it!
 - b. The word "*Corinthians*" was commonly used to mean "sin city."
- B. The "sexual perversion" was so bad that it "was not even named among the Gentiles!"
 - 1. Lost Gentile people, in that day, had no religion of any type.
 - a. Yet THIS sin was not even "talked about" by the heathen (Verse 1).

II. The Church at Corinth was a "Disgrace" Because they were Puffed up! (I Cor. 5:2)!

- A. The Greek word of "puffed" (*phusioo*) means: Proud - Haught.
 - 1. They were occupied with being "A Super Church" and they ignored sin. (Vs 6)
 - a. It was not possible that they did not know about the sin.
 - b. It was "commonly reported" (Word got to Paul - Verse 5:1).
 - c. The entire city was aware what was going on in that church.
- B. There are churches in the United States who are "open minded and user friendly."
 - 1. They say, "We have room for everybody."
 - a. That is TOO MUCH ROOM!"
 - 2. It is bad enough to be defiled and divided, but to be disgraced is unacceptable!

III. The Church at Corinth was a "Disgrace" Because they "Mourned not" (Verse 2).

- A. Instead of weeping over sin in their church, they ignored it.
 - 1. They did not want to "embarrass themselves" openly.

DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE CHURCH IS COMMANDED BY GOD!
(I Corinthians 5:3-5)

I. God, through Paul, Commanded them to "Gather Together and Expel" the Offender
(Verse 4).

- A. There is no doubt that the church "knew about the sin" but would not expel him!
1. The members of a church are not to "judge **one another**" but...
 2. The church **IS TO JUDGE sin** within their church (Matthew 18:15-20).
 - a. Public sin will destroy the testimony and work of the entire church.
 3. The entire purpose of the church is "stopped" when "public sin is tolerated!"

- B. The commandment of God is "clear and with strong emphasis!"
NOTE: This was done by the "Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ"
(I Corinthians 5:4).

1. They are told that the man guilty of the sin must be "...*taken away from among you*" (Verse 2).
2. They are told " *To deliver such an one unto Satan ...*" (Verse 5).
3. They are told to "*purge out therefore...*" (Verse 7).
4. They are told to "...*put away from among yourselves...*" (Verse 13).

- C. "To deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh ..." (Verse 5)!

1. It does not mean that he:
 - a. Had lost his salvation.
 - b. It does not mean that Satan will kill him (Verse 5).
2. God would never command a man to be **killed because he has sinned**
 - a. The text does not say "for the destruction of the body"; it says,
 - b. "...*for the destruction of the flesh.*"
 - c. It was "the flesh" that caused this man to fall! (Galatians 5:16)
 - d. He was to be put out of the church in order that he will not have any false security.
 - i. **This is to be done according to** Galatians 6:1.

3. He is not to be "put out or excommunicated **forever!**"
 - a. The purpose of Church Discipline is to "restore."
 - b. The Church discipline was effective. In Paul's second letter to Corinth, II Corinthians 2:4-9 he wrote:

"Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him."

Paul was referring to the man in I Corinthians 5. Later he wrote, in II Corinthians 7:11:

For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear,

yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter."

The man was forgiven and restored. Such a person is "limited as to what they can do" (Proverbs. 6:32). This is the outcome of obeying God's Word, even when it is difficult to do so.

GOD FORBIDS KEEPING BAD COMPANY.

I. Bible Standards for "Keeping Company with Fornicators" (Verses 9-11).

- A. Paul had written them "not to keep company with fornicators of the world" (Verses 9-10).
- B. Now, Paul commands them "not to keep company with a man called a brother" (Verse 11).
 - 1. That person is not only to be "*put away from among...*" from the church,
 - 2. But the church is commanded "*...not to keep company with them.*"
 - a. We are to "love and pray for them - but wait upon the Lord to work."
 - b. We are to "**help them** come to repentance" but we are not to "**hang out with them.**"
- C. Church discipline is not easy or popular, but vitally important, both to the church **and the person!**

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #6
PREPARING THE ROAD FOR TRAVEL
REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE - AND - TO WHOM YOU BELONG
I Corinthians 6:1-20

INTRO: Paul had told the Corinthian Church that they were "carnal" and that he could not speak to them as *"unto spiritual."* (I Corinthians 3:1-3). In the first five chapters of Corinthians, Paul repeatedly reminded them of that truth and challenged them to "change directions." In Chapter Six, Paul continues to deal with their carnality, and refers to the fact that there were some in the church who were filing "lawsuits" against other members of the church. Toward the end of this chapter Paul is preparing them for the "THE ROAD FROM CARNALITY TO SPIRITUALITY, which he will begin in Chapter seven. In preparation for that, he divided Chapter Six into two sections.

REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE!

I Corinthians 6:1-10

- I. Paul "Makes a point" referring to them as "Saints"** (I Corinthians 6:1-3!)
 - A. They seemed to have a difficult time accepting that "they are Saints." (Like us!)
 - 1. A believer becomes a "saint" the second they trust and receive Christ as Savior (Chapter 6:11).
 - B. Bible verse that testifies that every believer is a "saint":
 - 1. Paul referred to himself as *"...less than the least of the saints..."* (Ephesians 3:8).
 - 2. If the "less than the least" is a saint, **every believer is included** - You are a Saint!
- II. Paul Gets Their Attention by telling them that THEY, "*the saints shall judge the world*"** (Verse 2)!
 - A. If you can judge the world, why can't you "talk out the smallest matters" (Verse 2)?
- III. Paul Gets Their Attention by telling them that THEY, the saints, "*...shall judge angels*"** (Verse 3)!
 - A. Paul no doubt is referring to "fallen angels." (II Peter 2:4)
- IV. Paul says: "Remember what they are!" - **You Are one of God's Saint!** (I Cor.1:2)**
- A. You and I are "saints - now - in this life!"
 - 1. You do not become a saint by a false religion voting to make you a saint!
- B. How do believers become "saints" (I Corinthians 6:11)?
 - 1. *"And such were some of you..."* Refers back to Verses 9-10.
 - a. Saints are washed... Cleansed from all sin.
 - b. Saints are sanctified...Set apart for God.
 - c. Saints are justified... Made right for fellowship with God.
 - 2. *"...in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God"* (Verse 11)!
- C. What the Future Holds for the Saints.
 - 1. Saints are "Made worthy to judge the world" (I Corinthians 6:2-3).

2. Saints are "Made worthy to judge the angels" (I Corinthians 6:2-3).
3. Saints are "Made worthy to be Ambassadors for Christ" (II Corinthians 5:20)!
4. Saints are "Made worthy to be Joint heirs with Jesus, God's Son" (Rom. 8:14-17)
5. Saints are "Made worthy to be part of the Bride of Christ" (Revelation 19:7-8)!
6. Saints are "Made worthy to Reign with Christ" (Daniel 7:18)!
7. Saints are "Made worthy to be Kings and Priest" (Revelation 1:6)!
8. Saints are "Made worthy to reign with Christ on the earth" (Revelation 5:10)!
9. Saints are "Made worthy to "... *reign for ever and ever.*" (Rev. 22:1-5)!

V. The Characteristics of Saints

- A. A Saint should "act like Jesus Christ" (Romans 8:29).
- B. A Saint should "...*seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness*" (Matthew 6:33).
- C. A Saint should "love the Lord" with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30).
- D. A Saint should "love other Saints" and show he is a disciple of Christ (John 13:35).
- E. A Saint should "obey the commandments" of our Father (I John 2:3-5).
- F. A Saint should "do ALL that they do to Glorify God" (I Corinthians 10:31).

VI. A Saint Should Wake Up Every Morning and Remember that They are a Saint!

REMEMBER TO WHOM YOU BELONG!

I Corinthians 6:11-20

INTRO: Paul began to give the church at Corinth a "Road from Carnality to Spirituality" by telling them to "remember that they are saints." **Now, he continues Telling them,** "to whom they belong."

I. Paul Tells them that "their Body was Created for the Lord" (I Cor. 6:13)!

- A. Remember that "God had a special purpose when He created You" (I Cor. 11:7)!
 1. Colossians 1:16
 2. Revelation 4:11
 3. Philippians 2:13

II. Paul Tells them that "their Bodies will be Raised up with Jesus Christ"

(I Corinthians 6:14).

- A. Remember the GREAT honor of "going to a place prepared for you by God" (I Corinthians 2:9)!

III. Paul Tells them that "their Bodies are Members of Christ" (I Corinthians 6:15).

- A. It is a GREAT honor for "a man born a sinner," to be "a part of Christ's body."

IV. Paul Tells them that "their Bodies are the Temple of the Holy Ghost" (I Cor. 6:19).

- A. Remember the GREAT honor that it is to be "The Temple of the Holy Spirit."
- B. Remember every day as you "go about your daily life" that your body is "a Temple!"

1. Remember that "the Holy Spirit is in you and - with you" everywhere you go, at all time
2. Remember, "YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN!"

V. Paul Tells them that "they have been Bought with a Price" (I Corinthians 6:20).

- A. Remember the GREAT love that moved God to purchase you "at the price of His Son's blood!"
 1. You are "bought with a price" (I Peter 1:18-19).

If you will remember "what you are" and remember the GREAT honor you have by being "The Temple of the Holy Spirit," you will never fall into the sins that the Corinthian believers fell into. "Remembering What You Are" and "Remembering to Whom You Belong" will keep you from walking in the lust of the Flesh.

Remember Who You Are And To Whom You Belong!

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

Lesson #7

RULES FOR THE ROAD

Part #1

QUESTIONS ABOUT MARRIAGE

I Corinthians 7:1-40

INTRO: Beginning in Chapter One, Paul addressed several serious sins in the church at Corinth; sins that were "commonly reported" which meant that "the sins in the church were known by the entire city, and beyond." The church had become "a laughingstock" and the name "Corinthians" implied "loose living people." Paul continued to deal with those sins through Chapter Six. It is apparent from I Corinthians 7:1 that the leaders of the church at Corinth had written Paul a letter asking him at least 8-12 questions about misunderstandings in the church, apart from those addressed in Chapters 1-6. They DID NOT have a Bible to refer to. The first question they asked was about "marriage" (I Corinthians 7:1-40). Paul begins, *"Now concerning the things where of you wrote..."*

EXPLANATION: As we study these lessons, keep in mind that Paul is answering "specific questions" about these subjects. He is not giving a "complete doctrinal position" on marriage. Also, do not "assume" that Paul is denying that what he is writing is "not the inspired Word of God." As he wrote, he was not referring to other "New Testament books" because at that time there were no other New Testament books. There were some Scrolls with some Old Testament books, but the church in Corinth did not have a copy of ANY of those. Paul is referring to the things (1) that Jesus taught while He was on earth. (2) Also, Paul answers some questions that Jesus had never mentioned while He was on earth. Paul was not "denying inspiration" but rather, he was saying that "the things he was teaching" had not been taught by Jesus while He was here. However, Paul was absolutely sure that God was leading him in those answers. We will explain that further as we come to them in the lesson.

I. Now Concerning this Matter of Marriage (I Corinthians 7:1-11):

- A. Paul taught that God established marriage (I Cor. 7:10:11, Matt. 22:2, John 2:1 &2).
- B. The question appears to be, "Is it better to remain unmarried than to marry" (Ve 1)?
 - 1. It is "**good**" if man does not touch (marry) a woman.
 - a. Paul is not denying marriage, as God condones marriage.
 - 2. It is "**better**" if a man marries and has "...*his own wife*" (Verse 2).
 - a. Staying "unmarried" is acceptable, but it is "an exception" (Verses 7-9).
- C. An important purpose of marriage is to "...*avoid fornication...*" (Verse 2).
 - 1. The husband and wife should respect this special purpose (Verses 3-4).
 - 2. God "sets aside" a time for "fasting and prayer" (Verse 5).
 - 3. This makes marriage of great importance (Verses 8-9).
 - a. Paul said, "It is better to marry" (Verses 8-9).
 - b. Again, Jesus verified that in Matthew 19:10-12.
- D. Apparently the "question of divorce" was asked by the church (Verses 10-12).
 - 1. Divorce is not acceptable unto God.

- a. If a husband or wife "separate" they are to "reconcile or remain unmarried!"

II. Now Concerning the Matter of a Christian who is Married to a Non-Christian (I Corinthians 7:12-16):

NOTE ONE: The New Testament is clear that a "Christian" is not to marry a "non-Christian." That is clearly stated in II Corinthians 6:14. The problem that Paul is offering counsel for in this passage, does not go contrary to the commandment. There were "believers" in the church at Corinth who were Gentiles and were married before they even "heard the Gospel" and before they believed and became a Christian. The Gentiles viewed marriage TOTALLY different from how you and I view it today. Those are the people who were seeking Paul's counsel concerning "if they should divorce the 'non-believing' wife or husband (I Corinthians 7:12-16).

NOTE TWO: Do not be confused and think that Paul was denying "inspiration" when in Verse 12 he said, *"But to the rest speak I, not the Lord."* Paul was not saying "this is not from the Lord." In Verse 6 he said, *"But I speak this by permission and not of commandment."* When he stated, *"...by permission..."* he was saying that God had inspired him to teach this. By saying *"not of commandment,"* he was saying, "It was not by the words that Jesus spoke while on earth." In Verse 12, he was stating that there was nothing recorded by Jesus, that dealt with this subject, while he was on earth. Therefore, Paul was writing under the inspiration of God.

- A. Paul's counsel was that the believing party was not to put the unbelieving party away (Verse 12-13).
- B. There is a "two-fold" reason behind God inspiring Paul to give this counsel:
 - 1. Being already married, they are "one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).
 - 2. The "believing party" could very possibly lead the "unbelieving party" to salvation (Verse 16).
 - a. This truth is confirmed in I Peter 3:1-5.

III. Now Concerning the Matter of an Unmarried Christian (I Corinthians 7:25-40).

NOTE: This was a church of "Gentiles" who had no understanding of the principles of Christianity. Matter of fact, they never heard the term "Christianity." All they knew was "the way of having their sins forgiven and going to Heaven." Everything about their "change of life" was new to them. Apparently, the leaders of the church, in the letter they wrote to Paul, had asked if "unmarried people should marry?" Paul's answers were:

- A. If you are married - stay married (I Corinthians 7:27).
- B. If you are "loosed" from a wife - Consider staying "loosed" (I Corinthians 7: 27).

- C. If you've never married, or if your wife has died and you are thinking of re-marrying, you may want to re-consider - because you will face problems (I Corinthians 7:28).

1. They would possibly face "outward" problems - **not problems between husband and wife.**

- a. Christians were hated and rejected in that day.
- b. Many had been fired from their job.
- c. They would face difficulties in life - Persecutions - Trials - Anxiety.
- d. Families had been torn apart - homes taken – lot jobs and burned!

IV. Now Concerning the Future and Marriage, Remember, "*time is short*"
(I Corinthians 7:29-34).

A. **They should center their life on priorities.**

1. You should live their life, preparing to die and face the Judgment Seat of Christ.

B. If you marry or re-marry ...

1. Do not mistreat nor neglect your wife, **BUT - -**

a. Be as faithful to Christ as if you were un-married (I Corinthians 7:33).

2. Husband and wife should "work together" as one, **giving Christ first place.**

3. Today, many Christians live "more for their spouses than for their Savior".

C. Marriage is for Life (I Corinthians 7:39)!

1. If a wife's husband dies, she is free to "re-marry, **but ONLY IN THE LORD**".

2. Only marry a man who "**knows his obligation to Christ**" (Colossians 1:18)!

a. You do not have a scriptural marriage if Christ does not have the preeminence!

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

Lesson #8

RULES FOR THE ROAD

Part #2

NEVERTHELESS, NOT WHAT I WILL - BUT WHAT THOU WILT

I Corinthians 8:1-13

INTRO: 1 Corinthians 8 is one of the most controversial chapters in the book, and possibly one of the most controversial in the New Testament. It is not only "one of the most controversial," but it also deals with one of the most serious dangers in any church. It deals with offending and hurting "another brother in Christ" and possibly destroying their Christian life.

There were a few Jews in the church at Corinth, but there were a larger number of young Christians in the church at Corinth who were Gentiles. They had been saved out of a "false religion" which offered meats to idols. Their religion taught them that they "**could not eat meat offered to idols.**" This is a serious matter and Paul devotes part of the next five chapters to explain the dangers of "doing things that you have a right to do but are wrong!"

Chapter #9: Paul gives his life "as a pattern" for "giving up his rights." He gives three personal and Bible reasons that made him willing to "give up his rights."

Chapter #10: Paul continues and will give us "three more Biblical principles" for "giving up our rights" to do things that "may be right," but these three Bible principles "over-ride our rights" to do them.

Paul sums up Chapter #10 by saying, "*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*" (I Corinthians 10:31).

Chapter #11: Paul continues with the same principles.

Chapter #12: Paul deals with, "*That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another*" (I Corinthians 12:25).

Chapter #13: Paul emphasizes that **everything we do should be done in love for the brethren**, and if not, we are no more than "*sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal*" (I Corinthians 13:1).

IS EATING MEATS OFFERED TO IDOLS RIGHT?

I Corinthians 8:1-13

Setting the Stage: In those days, fresh meats were very desirable but very expensive, as there was no refrigeration. However, some meats were sold to the public after it had been offered as a sacrifice to an idol in a pagan temple, for about one-half the price of fresh meat not offered to idols. In those days when the churches came together, it was an "all day meeting." Therefore, the church would prepare a meal for the people on that day. The older and stronger leaders in the church thought nothing of purchasing "meat offered to idols" as it saved the church a considerable amount of money. That caused serious problems for the younger Gentile believers in the church. Therefore, the church leaders had "asked Paul's counsel" on the matter.

This IS NOT an issue in the church today. There are no meats offered to idols today. However, there is a VERY IMPORTANT principle which has been violated in churches today in 2022 and has done serious damage.

- I. **Knowing it is Right, Does Not Mean it is God's Will to Do It!** (Verses 1-8).
Is it right to go to the mission field? It's right but it may not be God's will for you!
 - A. We know that "meats offered to idols" are not cursed or contaminated" (Verse 8).
 - 1. "...we know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is none other God but one" (Verse 4).
 - B. The older Christians KNEW "**it was not wrong to eat meat offered to idols!**"
- II. **It is NOT God's Will to cause a Brother to Stumble** (Verse 6-9).
 - A. Stumbling block in Greek: *Proskomma*: to stumble, be offended, or be snubbed.
- III. **It is NOT God's Will for Anyone to Wound a Younger Brother** (Verse 12).
 - A. Wound in Greek: *Tupto* - "like striking him in the face with the palm of your hand."
 - B. To wound a brother is to "sin against a brother."
 - C. To wound a brother is to "sin against Christ."
- IV. **It is NOT God's Will to do Anything that Offends a Brother** (Verse 13).
 - A. Offend in Greek: *Skandalizo*: To be tripped up, offended, hurt.
- V. **Paul Follows the Example of Christ: "Not what I will, but What thou Wilt."**
(Verse 13) - (Mark 14:36).
 - A. *"If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth..."*
(I Cor. 8:13).
 - B. We must "**forget OUR rights**" and *"...do all to the Glory of God."* (I Cor. 10:31).
 - C. It is NEVER God's Will to cause a brother to stumble, or to be offended!
- VI. **As Paul Followed Christ, Older, Mature Christians Should do the Same.**
 - A. **They should Always "Set an Example"**

FAST FORWARD TO TODAY!

INTRO: As I said, there are no "meats offered to idols today." However, we live in a day when many Christians, even older more mature Christians, even leaders, will say, "I don't see anything wrong with it." Again, if we cause a brother to stumble, be wounded, or be offended WE SIN AGAINST CHRIST (I Corinthians 8:12). We live in a day when these same principles should apply - because there are **MANY THINGS** that may be right according to knowledge, but they are not God's will, and they will offend other believers.

- I. **Questionable Things which we Face in 2022 that may be "Right," but may Offend Others.**
 - A. Movies, Television, and the list goes on.
 - 1. We KNOW most movies and TV are bad, but there may be good movies(Vs 4).

- B. We know the good from the bad. QUESTION???
 - 1. Is it "our right" to make decisions and do things solely on "what we know is okay?"
 - a. The Answer is no!

II. Everything we do Should be "According to the Will of God" and NOT on "Our Rights."

- A. Bible principles that should determine every decision we make.
 - 1. The principle of love (I Corinthians 8:3).
 - 2. The principle of conscience (I Corinthians 8:12).
 - 3. The principle that, "*No man liveth to himself ...*" (Romans 14:7).
- B. If we "offend a brother", he is hurt - the Lord is hurt - the Holy Spirit is grieved!
- C. **EVERYTHING**, we do should be governed by 3 Bible principles (Rom. 8:29).
 - 1. It is EXTREMELY serious, when we KNOWINGLY - **sin against Christ!**

III. Starting with Leadership and Working down, we are NOT to be "Self-Willed."

- A. We are not to say, "**I know my rights**" (Titus 1:7)!
- B. A brother offended is difficult to recover. (Proverbs 18:19)

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

Lesson #9

RULES FOR THE ROAD.

(1. Marriage - 2. Offending a brother.)

Part #3

GIVING UP YOUR RIGHTS IN EXCHANGE FOR REWARDS

I Corinthians 9:1-27

INTRO: Paul appears to be changing the subject, but he is not. He is giving us an illustration of what he has just taught by giving us his own personal testimony. He illustrates a Christian's personal responsibility to "balance their personal rights with their obligation to God to 'forget their rights' for the sake of other Christians and for the church." Paul uses his personal convictions about several things. Paul shows that he served God with a higher and holier cause - rather than for worldly rewards.

PAUL DEFENDS HIS APOSTLESHIP.

Paul claimed he was free to do all the things found in
Verses 1-6, BUT...

- I. Paul Defended His Claim That "He Had Seen the Lord"**(I Corinthians 9:1-3).
 - A. They thought because he had not seen Jesus on earth, he was not an Apostle (Acts 1:22).
 1. *"Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?"* (Verse 1)
 - a. Paul had seen him on the road to Damascus (Resurrected) - (Acts 9:2).
 2. The Bible does not put "any limitations on where Paul had to see Christ."
 - B. Paul points out, "Have you not seen God's blessing on me?" (Verses 1 and 2)
 1. Most every believer in the church was there due to Paul's ministry.
 2. If Paul was being deceitful- God would not have blessed his ministry.
- II. Paul Defended his Right to Refuse to Eat and Drink** (Verse 4).
 - A. They thought because he would not "eat meat offered to idols" that he was not an Apostle.
 1. *"Have we not power to eat and drink?"*
 - a. Paul had already addressed that in I Corinthians 8:13.
 - b. He chose not to risk offending a brother.
- III. Paul Defended His Right to Remain Single** (Verse 5).
 - A. They thought because he was not married - he was not an Apostle.
 1. *"Do we not have the power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles...?"*
 - a. (Sister implies a "believing wife".)
- IV. Paul Defended His Right not to Receive Support** (Verse 6).
 - A. They thought because he did not require the church to pay him, that he was not an Apostle.
 1. *"...have not we power to forbear working?"*

- B. Paul had "worked as a tentmaker" in Acts 18:3.
1. He had "worked" to supply the needs of others (Acts 20:34).
- C. They thought because he worked but received no pay, he was not an apostle.
- D. Paul said, "It is my Right to Receive Financial Support" from those I minister to (I Corinthians 9:7-14).
- E. Paul declares that the things he is sharing are not "his opinion"(Verse 8).
1. He points them to the Scriptures.
- F. The Old Testament law gave him that right (Verses 8-9) - (Deuteronomy 25:4).
- G. The New Testament gives him that right (Verse 14).
1. *"The labourer is worthy of his hire"* (Luke 10:7-8).

PAUL'S PERSONAL PATTERN.
(Verses 15-27)

I. Paul said, "It is my Right to Give up my Rights" and not Accept Financial Support (I Cor. 9:15-27).

- A. For the sake of the Gospel being preached (Verses 15-18).
- B. For the sake of the salvation of the lost (Verses 19-23).
- C. Paul declares his reason for not doing these things.
1. He did not want to risk offending others (Verse 12).
2. He did not want to exalt himself (Verse 16).
3. He did not want worldly gain - at the expense of eternal rewards (Vs 15-17).
(Give up: eating meats - marriage - receive pay for preaching.)

II. Paul Said, "It is my Right to Give up Worldly Rewards to Gain Eternal Rewards" (I Cor. 9:24-27).

- A. He gladly "worked with his hands at tentmaking and provided his own needs."
(Acts 18:3; 20:34 - I Corinthians 4:12)
- B. Treasures "laid up in Heaven have eternal value while worldly rewards are temporary."

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Matthew 6:19-21

Several years after Jim Elliot had given his life on the banks of the Curaray River in Ecuador at the hands of the Auca Indians, they found his diary. In that diary, which he wrote before he left the United States to go to Ecuador as a missionary, he wrote these words:

***"A man is no fool to give up that which he cannot keep
- to gain that which he cannot lose."***

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #10
RULES FOR THE ROAD
Part #4
HAVE NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH
I Corinthians 10:1-33

INTRO: This is the "third chapter" which is used to cover the subjects of "not offending a brother in Christ." Anytime a matter is tied together in "threes" it is vitally important (Ecclesiastes 4:12). That makes these three chapters of great importance and gives us dire warning concerning doing ANYTHING that will offend a "brother in Christ."

THE DANGER OF BEING OVER-CONFIDENT.

I. If You Want to Finish Well, Put No Confidence in the Flesh! (I Corinthians 10:1-5)

- A. Israel is "an example" of the danger of being "over-confident."
 - 1. Israel was a chosen nation - with great privilege, but **THEY FAILED!**
 - a. They all had been delivered out of Egypt by the Power of God (Ver 1-4).
 - b. They all came out of Egypt under the Cloud (Exodus 13:21-22).
 - c. They all drank from that Spiritual Rock - which was Christ (Verse 4).
 - d. They all ate from the manna.
 - e. But with many of them - God was not pleased (Verse 5).
 - 2. In spite of ALL the Blessings of God – **They failed!**
 - 3. **WHY? They thought they were stronger than God!** (I Corinthians 10:22)

II. It You Want to Enter the Promised Land, Put No Confidence in the Flesh!
(I Corinthians 10:6-13)

- A. The EXAMPLE: They thought they were strong enough to STAND!
(Verses 11-12).
 - 1. They were warned not to lust - *"As they also lusted"* (Verse 6).
 - 2. Neither be ye idolaters - *"As were some of them"* (Verse 7).
 - 3. Neither let us commit fornication - *"As some of them committed"* (Vs 8).
 - 3. Neither let us tempt God - *"As some of them tempted"* (Verse 9).
 - 4. Neither murmur ye, as some do - *"As some of them ..."* (Vs 10).
- B. The Jews had God's present blessings – And had the sure promise of God for the future!
 - 1. All the men 20 years old and up were delivered out of Egypt (Numbers 26:4).
 - 2. **Two of them**, "Joshua & Caleb" entered the Promised Land (Nums. 14:26-33).
 - 3. The others were "saved from the world" but never claimed the full promise of God.

**THREE “RULES FOR THE ROAD” THAT WILL PROTECT YOU FROM FAILING.
(I Corinthians 10:13-22)**

- I. Be Careful to Stay in Communion with Christ** (I Corinthians 10:16).
- A. Communion speaks of the “the Blood of Christ”.
 - B. This is "ESPECIALLY" true when we "partake of the Lord's Supper" (I Corinthians 11:28-29)!
 - C. The Lord's Supper is an emblem of Christians "being SET APART" for Jesus.
 - 1. The Blood reminds us of “the love God had for us and sent his own Son.
 - 2. The Bread reminds us of “the fact that we are actually ‘a member’ of his Body”
 - 3. We are reminded to “walk with God” with Christ daily (Galatians 5:16 and Colossians 2:6).
 - a. EVERY Christian should FEAR losing God's blessings and power.
 - 4. If you do not stay in Christ and Walk in Communion with Him...
 - a. **You think yourself stronger and smarter than God** (Verse 22)!
- II. Be Willing to Sacrifice your rights for the Salvation of Sinners** (I Corinthians 10:24).
- A. This involves a "believer" who has been asked to dinner with a "non-believer" (Vs.27).
 - 1. "...and ye be disposed to go..." The choice is yours (Verse 27).
 - i. This is not daily "hanging out with lost people."
 - B. Paul gives "rules for the road."
 - 1. Whatsoever they set before you - eat - ask no questions (Verse 27).
 - 2. If ANY OTHER PERSON tells you, "This is meat offered to idols" ...
 - a. **EAT IT NOT!**
 - b. Eating - might violate "HIS" conscience" - **Not yours.**
 - 3. This PRINCIPLE applies to things today.
 - a. We do not have a problem with "meat offered to idols”.
 - b. We do have a problem with other things.
 - i. Movies
 - ii. Television
 - iii. Appearance/Dress **ANYTHING!**
 - 4. A Believer should **NEVER**, lower his standard of Christian living!
 - 5. Remember the reason for you accepting the invitation.
 - a. It is not for "social" enjoyment.
 - b. It is for “the possible salvation” of the other person.
- III. Be Determined to do "all things for the glory of God"** (I Corinthians 10:31).
- A. If you CANNOT do it for the "glory of God, " **DON'T DO IT!**
 - B. Ask yourself these questions:
 - 1. Can I do this and not be a stumbling block to another Christian?
 - 2. Can I ask for God's blessing on what I am about to do? (Like Mixed Swimming.)
 - 3. Can I dress the way I am dressing for the Glory of God.
 - 4. Can I do what I am thinking of doing for the Glory of God?
 - 5. When a Christian "hits a pothole in the road and slides off the road" - -
 - a. Three things happen:

- i. You bring "**disgrace** to your testimony."
- ii. You bring "**disaster** on yourself."
- iii. You bring "**dishonor** on the Lord."

- 4. Have "*no confidence in the flesh*" (Philippians 3:3).
- 5. Sin in the church is **FAR WORSE** than sin in the world!
 - 1. Remember the Rules of the Road.
 - 2. Drive with care! - Keep your eyes on the road!
- 6. "*Set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth*" (Col. 3:2).

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #11
RULES FOR THE ROAD
Part #5
THE RULES FOR MEN
I Corinthians 11:1-3

INTRO: This is one of the most misunderstood and misapplied passages in the New Testament. There were problems in the church at Corinth. The problem about which they wrote to Paul, seems to be about "the women's role in the church." Paul realized that was not "the root of the problem." Paul KNEW that the beauty, glory, and success of the church - depended on "**the home being right.**"

I. Paul Begins by Establishing the Authority for His Teaching (Verse 1).

A. *"... followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."*

1. EVERYTHING I am telling you - came from the Lord!

II. Paul "Strongly" Expresses God's Plan for HOW "the World and the Home Should work.

A. *. "I would have you know..." (A very strong statement in Greek):*

1. The "head" of every man is Christ.
 - a. Man is clearly to be in 100% submission to Christ.
2. The "head" of every woman is the man.
 - a. Woman is clearly to be in 100% submission to the man.
3. The "head" of Christ is God.
 - a. Christ is in 100% submission to God (John 8:29).

III. Understanding "God's Plan for the Home – the church - and the World."

A. **The First Relationship Listed:** The Head of Every Man is Christ!

1. God created man **with the plan that would build a strong home.**
2. God's plan:
 - a. Man's relationship to Christ would be the same as Christ's relationship to God.
 - b. The "husband" is to be in the same relationship, **as Christ is with God.**

B. **The Third Relationship Listed:** "The head of Christ is God."

1. *"For I do always those things that please Him (John 8:29).*
 - a. There is no further study or comment needed!

C. **The Second Relationship Listed:** The Head of Every Woman is the Man.

1. The relationship depends totally on the "first and third relationship".
2. Man is to "Love his wife as Christ Loved the Church. and **gave himself** for it" (Eph. 5:23-25)!
 - a. The Home cannot be right unless **"God's plan is obeyed"**
3. There is much talk and discussion today about:
 - a. The wife being "in submission to her husband."

4. In MOST home-failures, the man is not in the right relationship “with his head, who is Christ”.

THE RULES FOR WOMEN.

Important: In the eastern culture there were false religions which required women to wear veils which covered the head and the lower half of their face. In those religions the veil was a "symbol" that "women were in submission" to their husbands (Muslims). Men never covered their head. For a woman to go in public without wearing "a veil" was unacceptable. She was considered to “be in rebellion toward her husband, toward their religion, and toward their God.” (Muslims today.) The Corinthian church, being mostly Gentiles, was greatly influenced by the false religions.

I. Rules for "Praying or Prophesying" by Men and/or Woman (I Corinthians 11:4-16).

- A. Praying and Prophesying in Greek was: **"praying or talking."**
1. Today, it is like “talking to people about Spiritual things or witnessing.”
- B. When a woman was praying or prophesying, she was **"to be covered"** (Verse 5).
1. Paul was not saying “God required her to wear a veil” as the false religion did.
 2. Paul was referring to her “HAIR.” It was given her as a covering (Verse 15).
 3. Having her head covered, testified to “two things:
 - a. She was in submission to her husband, ACCORDING to God’s plan.
 - b. She was honoring and obeying “God’s plan” (Verses 10 and 12).
 4. Also, her hair was given to her “by God”...
 - a. “...it is a glory to her, for her hair is given her for a covering” (Vs 15).
- C. Women were forbidden to usurp authority over a man (I Timothy 2:11-14).
1. God's reasoning was because God made men and women different.
 - a. Men were made by God to "make decisions" based on cold hard facts.
 - b. Women were made by God to act and respond by emotions.
 - i. For that reason they are easily deceived, **as Eve was** (Genesis 3).
- D. **Paul refers back to "creation,"** - how God created them "Male and Female" (I Cor. 11:14-15).
1. Man was "created in the image and glory of God" (Verse 7) (Genesis 5:1).
 - a. Verse 15 states: “By nature” it is a shame for a man to have long hair.
 - b. The word “**nature**” refers to creation.
 - c. God created the man with short hair and the woman with "long hair."
 - 2.. Her long hair testifies that "she is the glory of man."
 - a. Her long hair testifies that she "willingly" submit to her husband
 - b. Her long hair shows she “**agrees with God**” for why He created her.
 - i. When a woman honors her husband – she is honoring Christ.
 - ii. When a woman honors her husband, - she honors God’s plan!
 3. Her "voluntary submission" should show in EVERY aspect of her appearance!
 - a. This includes the matter in which she dresses (I Peter 3:1-7).
 - i. Greek word "adorned" is: *kosmeo* –

Meaning **"to adorn themselves in the proper order."**

4. Bible Principles of Dress.

a. Deuteronomy 22:5:

- i. There were NO PANTS when that was written.
- ii. There were no pants in the early church.

b. Men wore robes – to the knee and had a Girdle (belt) around the waist.

c. Women wore robes – to their ankles – with NOTHING around their waist.

d. Deuteronomy 22:5 gives a Bible Principle:

God Created them “Male and Female.”

They were to “have different appearance of the hair.”

They were to dress differently!

Men were to look like men.

Women were to look like women.

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #12
RULES FOR THE ROAD
Part #6
RULES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE LORD'S SUPPER
I Corinthians 11:17-34

INTRO: The Lord's Supper apparently had been practiced by the churches since the first church in Jerusalem.

The church at Corinth had been practicing The Lord's Supper since it was founded. However, there were some in the church who were "calling it the Lord's Supper," but were totally abusing it.

Many of the believers at the church at Corinth were Gentiles (heathen). They had practiced having a "love feast" in honor of their idols. In a "love feast" everyone would bring food. Those who were "better off" would bring food and share it with the people attending the feast who were poor.

They had now received Christ as their Savior but seemingly were now comparing their "love feast" to the Lord's Supper. There is/was no comparison between the "love feast" and "The Lord's Supper."

PAUL'S REBUKE FOR TURNING THE LORD'S SUPPER INTO A "SOCIAL GATHERING."
I Corinthians 11:17-22

- I. There were "Cliques and Divisions" in the Church (Verse 18).**
- A. First, these people were "*coming together IN THE CHURCH.*"
 - 1. The word "divisions" is "Schisms."
 - 2. They were the "beginning" of separating the church into "two groups."
 - B. Second, they were comparing "The Lord's Supper" to the "Love Feast" they had for idols.
 - C. Paul **STRONGLY** rebuked them (Verse 17).
 - 1. He is not rebuking them for "false doctrine."
 - a. He had taught them the practice of "The Lord's Supper" before (Vs 23).
(They knew!)
 - b. He rebukes them for changing "The Lord's Supper" to a "social event!"
 - i. "*when ye come together...it is not to eat*" (Verse 20).
 - 2. He rebukes them for shunning those who have nothing (Vs 21-22).
 - a. The wealthy people were "eating together" and ignoring poorer people.
 - b. Some brought plenty of food "for themselves" but were not sharing it with others.
 - i. "*One was hungry...*"
 - ii. Some were "drunken."
 - D. The "Lord's Supper" cannot be taken under these conditions (Verse 20).

1. It IS NOT a social event.

RULES FOR PARTAKING IN THE LORD'S SUPPER.

INTRO: Paul said, “*For I have received of the Lord that which also delivered unto you, that....*” Now, Paul again delivers that which Christ had taught. The Lord's Supper was instituted by the the Lord Jesus Christ in **Matthew 26:26-29**. This was just prior to Him going to the Garden of Gethsemane where he was betrayed by Judas, tried, and crucified. It was a time “to be VERY SERIOUS!”

JESUS SAID, "DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME!" I Corinthians 11:23-34

I. In Preparation for the Lord's Supper, we must "Remember the Cross"

(I Corinthians 11:23-25).

- A. **Why** do we look back to the Cross?
 1. Remember that it was His "Body" which was broken **for us** (Verse 24).
 2. Remember that it was His "Blood" which was shed **for us** (Verse 25).
- B. Today, people who have lost a loved one want to "look back on their life!"
 1. They say, "we are celebrating the life of our loved one".
- C. Jesus wants every believer to look back and "remember His death." - Not this life!
 1. He wants us TO REMEMBER He shed his blood and died – **for us!**
- D. Because, EVERYTHING we have from salvation to eternity, was given us "through His death."

II. In Preparation for the Lord's Supper, we must "Remember our Blessed Hope"

(I Corinthians 11:26).

- A. We are "to remember" that Jesus is coming back "for us" (John 14:1-3).
 1. When he comes – You will see Him face to face.
 2. It is OUR responsibility to “to make ourselves ready” (Revelation 19:7).
 3. Some will be “ashamed” at His coming (**I John 2:28**).
- B. Jesus not only "died for us" but he is "coming again for us." - **MAYBE TODAY!**
 1. EVERY Christian SHOULD BE WORKING toward that day (Romans 8:29).

III. In Preparation for the Lord's Supper, "Remember to Examine Your Own Life"

(I Cor. 11:27-28).

- A. Anyone partaking of the Lord's Supper "unworthily" will be guilty of his body and blood (Verse 27).
 1. Meaning, “to be united in spirit with those who put him to death!”

- B. Everyone should "examine themselves" BEFORE partaking of the Lord's Supper.
 - 1. The Scripture is clear, that as we examine ourselves...
 - a. We should ask God to "search your heart" (Psalms 139:23-24).
 - i. See if we have "true repentance for any sin in our life."
 - ii. See if we have a "true desire to be like the Son of God" (Romans 8:29).
 - b. The examination should extend to our:
 - i. Thoughts – Words – Feelings – Conduct.
 - ii. **Ask this question:**
"Have we lived a Christian life in front of the world?"
 - c. We should confess and repent of our sins and ask for cleansing - BEFORE we partake.
 - d. Then and then only!
"...SO LET HIM EAT of that bread and drink of that cup!"

**THERE ARE NO OPTIONS OR EXCUSES TO
NOT PARTAKE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

- I. **I have heard people say, "I did not partake because I have sin in my life."**
 - A. The PURPOSE of the Lord's Supper is to keep us to perfect fellowship.
 - B. The consequence of not confessing sin, but partaking of The Lord's Supper are"
 - 1. God will not hear your prayers (Psalms 66:18)
 - 2. When you lose access to the Throne of God – you lose God's blessings
 - 3. You are "on your own in sinful, ungodly world."
 - C. **THERE IS NO EXCUSE for not partaking of the Lord's Supper!**
 - 1. Confess your sin – and eat!

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #13
RULES FOR THE ROAD
Part #7
RULES FOR UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL GIFTS
I Corinthians 12:1-11

INTRO: In Chapter 12, Paul explained how God "gives gifts" to every member of the church. In Chapter 14, Paul is going to explain how God would have us to "exercise" the gift He has given us. In between those two chapters, in Chapter 13, Paul explains the "one main characteristic" that does two things: (1) It teaches us how to use the gift He has given us "for the glory of God," and (2) It teaches us how to use the gift He has given us "for the benefit of others."

- I. They are "Spiritual" Gifts** (I Corinthians 12:1).
 - A. Not natural gifts - not good looks - not good health - not natural abilities.
 - B. Not material gifts such as money - possessions etc.
 - C. These are "Gifts that equip the saints to carry on the work of God in the local church."
Spiritual work – requires Spiritual gifts.
- II They are "Salvation" Gifts** (I Corinthians 12:12-13).
 - A. You receive a "spiritual gift" the second you receive Christ and are placed in His Body.
 - B. We are all baptized into one body (I Corinthians 12:13).
 - C. Placed into the body at the time of salvation (I Corinthians 12:18).
- III. They are "Super-Natural" Gifts** (I Corinthians 12:4).
 - A. The word "gift" - "Charismata" meaning "Grace" gift. (Each member is "fitted".)
 - B. Given by God – This should excite you.
 - C. They may be combined with "natural" gifts but are not natural.
Example: Singing - two types: (1) Professional (2) Heart-stirring.
 - D. "Spiritual gifts" cannot be obtained by: Study - practice - work, or in any other way.
Example: "I wish I could sing like that" – I can't - You can't!
- IV. They are Sovereign Gifts** (I Corinthians 12:11).
 - A. God decides on which gift to give to each believer.
 - 1. God has a plan – (Verses 14 - 18) "*...as it pleased Him*".
 - 2. There is a problem when one member wants another member's place! (Pride)
 - B. Every member has at least one gift – possibly more: See Matthew 25:15.
 - 1. If you are faithful with the one God gave you, God will give you more.
 - C. SHAME on the member of a Fundamental Baptist Church **who knows he/she has a gift... But won't use it! This person is hurting us all.**
- V. They are Service Gifts** (I Corinthians 12:7).
 - A. Gifts are given to help others - "Profit withal" meaning the "entire body!"
(Participate together.)
 - (Tongues – Only enables one to "feel" good.)
 - (Gifts are NOT to make you "feel" good or to make you "look" good.)

- (They are given to you to "glorify God and Edify the entire church.
- B. **Example:** Girl saw a car accident happen. She was glad she had taken First Aid!
 - 1. She sat down – put her head between her knees and said, "They taught me if I would do this, I would not faint!
 - C. Gifts are for "Employment - Not Enjoyment".

THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH THE CHURCH SHOULD BUILD.

I. The Importance of Understanding the Principles of using “Spiritual Gifts.”

- A. Understand that the church “and EVERY member” are the “Spiritual Body of Christ.”
- B. Understand that the church “should function **as one body.**”
- C. Understand that the church “should **co-operate equally** with **every other part** of the body.”
 - 1. The church is NOT A BUILDING – A church is a “group of believers!”

II. The Importance of the Church Following the “Unity of the Trinity” (Verses 4-6).

- A. There are diversities of gifts - **but the same Spirit** (Verse 4).
- B. There are differences of administrations - **but the same Lord** (Verse 5).
- C. There are diversities of operations - **but the same God** (Verse 6).
 - 1. The "Trinity" ALWAYS works together in unity.
 - 2. The “Trinity” ALWAYS complements each other.

THE PATTERN WHICH THE CHURCH SHOULD FOLLOW.

I. In Acts 1:8-9 "The Body of Christ" changed from a “physical body” to a “Spiritual body.”

- A. God used the "physical body” of Christ to help us understand “the Spiritual Body.”
 - 1. The Body of Christ today, it is the Local church (I Corinthians 12:27)!
 - a. *"For as the body is one ... so also is Christ".*
- B. **When that happened - God's work on this earth DID NOT END!**
 - 1. What He began in His physical body -
 - a. **His "spiritual body,” the church, is to continue doing His work every day (Vs 27)!**
- C. The "Spiritual Body of Christ" should function like the physical "Body of Christ" did when on earth!
- D. EVERY member of the SPIRITUAL body of Christ, HAS A SPIRITUAL GIFT!
 - 1. EVERY Member of Christ’s Spiritual body should USE their spiritual gift (I Cor. 12:14).
 - a. No member of your body can say to another member "I do not need you!"
 - 2. EVERY member of “your physical body” is vitally important

(I Corinthians 12:16-24).

3. EVERY member of “Christ’s Body” is as important as every other member.
 - a. No member should feel unnecessary.
 - b. No member should feel unimportant.
 - c. No member should feel that ANY OTHER MEMBER is unnecessary or unimportant!
3. You can function without "one member" **but when just one member does not function...**
 - a. **THE ENTIRE BODY IS GREATLY HINDERED!**

II. The Spiritual Body of Christ should “Follow the Pattern of the Trinity.

- A. The Local Church should follow the pattern and be in 100% Unity (I Corinthians 12:12).
- B. The Local Church should “follow the pattern” and EVERY member should use their spiritual gift.

III. Every Christian Should be "Obedient to What God Expects of Us".

- A. God “gave” every member a spiritual gift at salvation.
- B. God “expects” every member to “use” the gift He gave them.

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

Lesson #14

RULES FOR THE ROAD

Part #8

LOVE NEVER FAILETH

I Corinthians 12: 31 - 13:1-13

INTRO: In Chapter 12, Paul explained how God "gives spiritual gifts" to every member of the church. These gifts are to be used to "serve Christ in the local church." In Chapter 13, Paul explains that "love, is the main characteristic in using gifts." That does two things: (1) It teaches us how to use the gift He has given us "**for the glory of God,**" and (2) It teaches us how to use the gift He has given us "**for the benefit of others.**"

The believers in the church at Corinth had an abundance of "spiritual gifts" (I Corinthians 1:7), but they were "using the gifts wrongly." They seem to have been using their gifts to "exalt themselves."

SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE TO BE USED WITH LOVE.

Definition of Love.

The word "Charity" in these verses is translated from the Greek word "Agape." The word means: the same kind of love that God has for us. "This is the greatest chapter in the entire Bible on the subject of love!"

God is Love - I John 4:16

THE AGAPE LOVE OF GOD – VS – THE HUMAN ABILITIES OF MAN.

I Corinthians 13:1-3

I. Love Must Rule in Our Hearts - or Spiritual Gifts Have No Value. (We glorify self)

- A. Paul said, *"Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity..."* (Verse 1).
 - 1. A Christian can be "a great orator with great preaching and teaching abilities..."
 - 2. But if he does not have "God's love in his heart..."
 - a. Everything he preaches is "doctrinally sound," and true, **but ...**
 - i ...he is like "*...sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.*" (Verse 1).
 - ii. That man's gift is "**of no value.**"
 - 3. ANYTHING that "exalts the person" **is of no value.**
 - a. Things DONE WITH LOVE, always touch the hearts of others.
 - 4. If "your gift" does not "touch the heart of others" **it is of no value!**
- B. Paul used the word "*though I*" five times, which covered much ground (Vs 1-3)
 - 1. *Though I speak...*
 - 2. *Though I have the gift of prophecy...*
 - 3. *Though I have all faith...*
 - 4. *Though I bestow all my goods...*
 - 5. *Though I give my body to be burned...*
 - 1. *"but have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."*

FIFTEEN CHARACTERISTICS OF AGAPE LOVE

I Corinthians 13:4-8)

To Glorify God & Benefit Others

INTRO: These four verses are a perfect picture of our Lord Jesus Christ. Before beginning, let's remind ourselves that God "**predestined**" EVERY believer to "**be conformed to the image of his Son**" (Romans 8:29).

- I. Love "...suffereth long, ..." (Verse 4).**
 - A. Meaning if you have been done wrong, you wait patiently and remain silent.
 - B. You refuse to give way to anger - though it would be justified.
 - C. Love suffers being wounded and DOES NOT STRIKE BACK.
 - D. When Jesus was reviled - He "*reviled not again*" (I Peter 2:23).
- II. Love "... is kind; ..." (Verse 4).**
 - A. Means you are good-natured, gentle, and affectionate.
 - B. You always treat others with courtesy.
 - C. Love not only suffers injury - but it shows kindness to a person who has injured you!
 - D. Jesus showed kindness to Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him (Matthew 26:47-50).
- III. Love "...envieth not; ..." (Verse 4).**
 - A. Love does not begrudge the blessings of God on others.
 - B. Jesus always "went about doing good" never expecting reciprocation (Matthew 20:28).
- IV. Love "...vaunteth not itself, ..." (Verse 4).**
 - A. Love never "puts self on dress parade."
 - B. Love never calls attention to one's self.
 - C. The Lord Jesus Christ - NEVER attempted to "show off" (Galatians. 6:14).
- V. Love "...is not puffed up." (Verse 4).**
 - A. Love is never "arrogant" but is "always humble".
 - B. Jesus never showed contemptuous feelings toward others (Philippians 2:5-8).
- VI. Love "...doth not behave itself unseemly, ..." (Verse 5).**
 - A. Love is not rude or ill mannered to anyone.
 - B. Love is always courteous to all people.
- VII. Love "...seeketh not her own, ..." (Verse 5).**
 - A. Love never "demands it's rights." (We studied that!!!)
 - B. Love does not "seek its own advancement" - sometimes at the cost of others.
 - C. Many Christians are totally unconcerned about the good of others (Philippians 2:1-4).
- VIII. Love "... is not easily provoked, ..." (Verse 5).**
 - A. Love has no "bad-temperament" lying beneath the surface.

- B. This is the sin that destroys a home - and ruins children.
 - C. Jesus Christ was NEVER provoked, and He NEVER retaliated.
- IX. Love "...thinketh no evil; ..." (Verse 5).**
- A. Love always remembers acts of kindness - but never records wrong doings.
 - B. Love caused Jesus Christ to:
 1. Blot out our sins - remembers them no more (Isaiah 43:25).
 2. Cast them as far as the east is from the west (Psalms 103:12).
- X. Love "...Rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; ..." (Verse 6).**
- A. Love does not rejoice in the failures of others.
 - B. Love always condemns sin - but is brokenhearted over the sinner.
 - C. Jesus "protected and restored the person" who had fallen (John 8:4-11).
- XI. Love "...beareth all things, ..." (Verse 7).**
- A. Love "bears the weight of suffering, hardship, and reproach" caused by others.
 - B. The Lord Jesus patiently bore all the wrong and injustice - -
 1. Then prayed while on the cross, "*Father forgive them...*" (Luke 23:34).
- XII. Love "...believeth all things, ..." (Verse 7).**
- A. Love is never suspicious of other's words or actions.
 - B. We should take "the kindest opinion possible - for as long as possible."
 - C. Love never "judges" before hand.
- XIII. Love "...hopeth all things, ..." (Verse 7).**
- A. Love never thinks a thief is honest, or a criminal is innocent, but...
 1. It never gives up on the salvation and change of life in either.
 - B. Love always remembers that "God is not willing that any should perish."
 1. Jesus has never given up hope on anyone (II Peter 3:9)!
- XIV. Love "...endureth all things." (Verse 7).**
- A. Nothing can EVER overcome "the Love of God."
 - B. Love, bears, believes, hopes, and endures ALL THINGS!
 - C. The Lord Jesus Christ endured more than ANY human being has ever endured (Hebrews 12:1-2).
- XV. "Love never faileth" (Verse 8).**

Summary: *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."* (I John 3:16). **(The love began in John 3:16 and endures in I John 3:16).**

- A. "Never" is a long time! -
 1. Why is it impossible for love to never fail?
 - a. God is Love - God NEVER changes (**Malachi 3:6**)!

B. *"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever"* (Hebrews 13:8).

How much do you love God?

How much do you love others?

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #15
RULES FOR THE ROAD
Part #10

UNDERSTANDING “OTHER” TONGUES AND “UNKNOWN” TONGUES.
I Corinthians 14:1-4 (Continues through the chapter)

INTRO: Paul dealt with Spiritual Gifts in Chapters 12 and 13. Now, he proceeds to explain how two of the gifts are to be used in a public worship service. It seems that many of the believers in the church at Corinth had, or at least thought they had, the gift of speaking in tongues. Therefore, it seems that they were causing confusion in the services as they would "burst out speaking in an *“unknown tongue.”*"

IMPORTANT: Paul wrote this epistle to the church at Corinth about 59 AD. Remember, this is dealing with speaking in tongues **IN THAT DAY, NOT TODAY.** In that day they were speaking in an “unknown tongue” to imitate the Apostles in Acts Chapter Two, in order to impress people to think they were equal with the Apostles!

I. Understand what the Bible teaches about Speaking in “Other Tongues?”

- A. There is NO MENTION of “**unknown**” tongues in Acts 2:4-11.
 - 1. Acts 2:4 says they were speaking in “*other* tongues.”
- B. The teaching of speaking in “*other tongues*” is based on Acts 2:6-8.
 - 1. In that chapter, the apostles spoke in “**other languages**” (Acts 2:4, 6, 8).
 - 2. The “other languages” in Acts 2:4, 7, 8 - **referred to 16 known languages.**
 - 3. There were people present from 16 nations, who spoke in another language (Verses 9-11).
- C. Those 16 nations were amazed and said, “*we do hear them speak in our tongues*” (Verse 11).
- D. The PURPOSE of “the gift of tongues” was to **preach the Gospel to people of other languages.**

II. Understand what the Bible teaches about Speaking in an “Unknown Tongue”
(I Corinthians 14).

- A. The word “*unknown*” tongue is ONLY mentioned in 1 Corinthians Chapter 14!
 - 1. In that chapter it is mentioned 6 times (I Corinthians 14: 2, 4, 13, 14, 19, and 27).
 - 2. In all 6 verses, the word translated “tongues” is from the Greek word: “Glossa.”
 - a. The Greek word: Glossa means “**languages.**”
- B. The word “unknown” in those six verses IS NOT in the original Greek text!
 - 1. The word “unknown” was added by the translators.
 - 2. Their purpose seems to have been that the language spoken was...
 - a. “**...Unknown to some present in the Corinthian church.**”
 - 3. It causes confusion in today's understanding of the word “unknown”.

- C. There is NO record of anyone speaking in an “unknown” language “that no one but God understood.”
 - 1. Paul was stating it was a language that NO OTHER PERSON PRESENT could understand.

III. Understand, “*when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*” (I Corinthians 13:10)

- A. That which is perfect refers to the “Word of God.”
 - 1. The Bible was “completed” about 100 AD.
 - 2. The Bible was “assembled” about 200 AD.
- B. At that time in history, the church did not have a copy of the Word of God.
- C. The Gift of Tongues was a “temporary” gift **for those days** (I Corinthians 13:8-10).
 - 1. The **gift of tongues** CEASED when the Word of God was completed and assembled.

RULES FOR "SPEAKING IN TONGUES."

(The Church at Corinth appears to have been speaking in tongues to "show off and draw attention.)

I. Which Gift was more Important: Prophecy or Tongues? (Verse 1)?

- A. The gift of prophecy was far more important.
 - 1. It is not like the prophets in the Bible.
 - a. Those prophets **"foretold the future."**
 - 2. Prophecy in that day was sharing “things they personally got from God.”
 - a. It was "sharing blessings that would "edify, encourage, and comfort others."
 - b. It is compared to “testimonies” we share today that bless and encourage others.
- B. Why was "the gift of prophesy" more important than the "gift of tongues" (I Corinthians 14:2-3)?
 - 1. Because "*...he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to **edification, and exhortation, and comfort.***"
- C. In that day, those in the Corinthian church were “speaking in tongues” to **exalt** themselves.”
 - 1. They wanted to appear to others that they were “super spiritual.” (Like the Apostles!)

II. What Do the words Edification, Exhortation, and Comfort Mean?

- A. The word **edification** means, "to continually build up and strengthen."
 - 1. EVERY church in America needs: “to continually be built up.”

- B. The word **exhortation** means, “to exhort people to practice the duties of a holy life.”
 - 1. EVERY church in America needs: “applies the practical duties of a Christian.”
- C. The word **comfort** means, “to present the promises and the hope of the gospel.”
 - 1. EVERY church in America needs: promises, hope, and encouragement.” (Rom. 8:28)
- D. Speaking in an "unknown tongue" - was edifying and exalting themselves!

III. The Main Objective for all Spiritual Gifts (I Corinthians 14:12).

- A. *"Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." (I Corinthians 14:12).*

IV. For **THAT** day, Paul Gave Important Instructions About Speaking in Tongues (foreign languages).

- A. No one is to speak in a foreign language in the church without an "interpreter" (Chapter 14:27-28).
- B. Speaking in a foreign language was/is **not for believers,** but un-believers (I Corinthians 14:22).
 - 1. God gave this unusual gift for one reason, and one reason ONLY!
 - a. For people to hear and understand the Gospel **IN THEIR LANGUAGE** (Acts 2:4)!
 - b. There were “no language schools” which could/can meet the urgent need.

V. For **THIS** day, 2022, there is not a “gift of tongues.”

- A. “The gift of tongues” ceased by at least 200 AD (I Corinthians 13:8-10).

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

Lesson #16

RULES FOR THE ROAD

Part #12

THE RESURRECTION IS TRUE!

I Corinthians 15:1-11

INTRO: Paul is approaching the closing of his letter to the church at Corinth. The church apparently had some false teachers, most likely Sadducees, who had come into the church unaware and were teaching that "there was no resurrection of the dead." It seems that the church had asked Paul his counsel on this subject also.

EVIDENCE THAT CHRIST DIED AND WAS BURIED.

I. The Prophecies of Christ's Death and Burial (I Corinthians 15:1-4).

- A. The Old Testament prophesied Christ would suffer and die (Isaiah 53:5-6 & 12).
 - 1. *"...He was wounded for OUR transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities..."*
 - 2. *"...the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."*
 - 3. *"...Christ died for our sins, **according to the Scriptures...**"* (I Corinthians 15:3).

PROPHECIES THAT JESUS CHRIST WOULD BE RESURRECTED.

I. The Prophecies of Christ's Resurrection.

- A. The Old Testament prophesied that Christ would be restored to life (Isaiah 53:10-12).
- B. The New Testament recorded that Jesus would be "resurrected from the dead."
 - 1. Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; & 20:17-19.
- C. Paul declared, *"...and he rose again the third day, **according to the Scriptures...**"* (I Corinthians 15:4).

INDISPUTABLE EVIDENCE THAT CHRIST WAS RESURRECTED.

I Corinthians 15:5-8

I. Evidence # 1: The Disciples were "Willing to be Martyred for Him."

- A. The disciples would not have been "willing to be martyred" for something they knew was not true.
- B. The disciples would not have "turned the world upside down" for something untrue (Acts 17:6).

II. Evidence #2: Jesus was Seen by Hundreds of People after He Resurrected

(I Corinthians 15:5-8).

- A. He was seen by Cephas, the twelve, above 500, James, all the Apostles, and Paul.
 - 1. (I can imagine that was a day Paul never forgot!)
- B. Jesus was seen by those listed below, people whom Paul did not mention.
 - 1. Mary Magdalene (John 20:14-16).

2. Mary, Mother of Jesus – Salome and Joanna (Matthew 28:1 & 9).
3. Two disciples on the road (Luke 24:13-31).
4. All Disciples – Minus Thomas (John 20:19, 20, 24).
5. All Disciples – Including Thomas (John 20:26-28).
6. Two Disciples (John 21:1-**14**).
7. On the Mount in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-17) .
8. Before His ascension (Luke 24:36-53). **(Indisputable proof!)**

THE LIFE CHANGING RESULTS OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

I. The Resurrection Caused Paul to: Think about, Realize and Acknowledge how unworthy he was (Vs. 9).

- A. Paul admitted that *"he was not meet to be called an apostle"* (not worthy to be called...).
 1. Paul's life "before the resurrection" Philippians 3:4-6.
 2. Paul's life "after the resurrection" Philippians 3:7-8.
- B. When Paul "knew Jesus was alive" he said, *"Lord what will you have me do?"* (Acts 9:6)
 1. **Have you said**, *"Lord, what would you have me do?"*
- C. Since you have accepted Jesus Christ, and know beyond doubt that He was resurrected ...
 1. Have you *"counted all things but loss for the knowledge Christ?"*

II. The Resurrection Caused Paul's life to "Change in Character and Conduct" (Verse 10).

- A. God's grace changed his character!
 1. Paul testified: *"...by the grace of God. I am what I am..."* (Verse 10).
- B. God's grace changed his conduct. *"laboured more abundantly than they all: ...yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me!"* (I Corinthians 15:10).
 1. Paul testified: *"...his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."* (Verse 10).
- C. God's grace caused Paul to testify that his character and conduct had changed (Philippians 3:13-14).

"I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
- D. Paul does not say he is perfect, but says he had a goal for his life!
 1. *"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."*

The **"Mark"** is a picture of "the finish line." Of a race.
when we stand before Christ to receive the prize for "how we ran the race!"

The “***Press***” (dioko) was used when the horse, in a horse race, made the last turn and started down the “home-stretch.” He “Pressed.” “**He turned it loose and gave it ALL he had.**”

HAS THE RESURRECTION CHANGED YOUR LIFE?

I. You and I are Headed Down the “Home Stretch” toward the Rapture!

- A. We should do all we do in light of the day we will stand before Jesus and give an account!
- B. We should be “pressing toward that mark.”
 - 1. We should be giving it all we have as we “press” down the homestretch!

If we will do that ... if we will give it all we have ... The results will be that...

Our Church

“...will turn the world upside down for Christ.”

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

Lesson #17

THE VICTORY HAS BEEN WON!

I Corinthians 15:51-58

INTRO: Paul has spent the first 50 verses of chapter 15 answering the churches questions about "the resurrection of the dead." Now, it seems that the church had also asked him a question to this effect; "When the resurrection takes place and the dead are resurrected, what will happen to those who are still alive when the Lord Jesus raises the dead?" Paul answers their question in verses 51 and explains it to them in verses 52-54

I. Behold, A Mystery Hidden for 4000 Years is Revealed to us!" (I Cor. 15: 51-54)

- A. A "mystery" in this context is not like mystery today. It is not "something that cannot be discovered."
- B. A "mystery" in the Bible is something that has been "hidden" **from the generations before us.**
 - 1. "We shall not all sleep..." (Verse 51)
 - 2. "Sleep" is beautiful and comforting word for those who have gone before us.
 - a. Those who "sleep" are comfortably resting! (John 11:12- Lazarus also!
 - i. many of you have loved ones "resting & waiting."
 - b. Their ever-living, never dying soul is with the Lord (II Cor. 5:8)
 - c. They are waiting on the day of bodily resurrection! (I Thess. 4:13)
 - 3. Notice: "*We shall not all sleep, (those still living) but we shall ALL be changed.*"
 - a. There is a generation of people who will not die.
 - b. Some believers will be alive when "the resurrections takes place."
 - i. We shall ALL "be changed!"
 - ii. We shall ALL have an "incorruptible body!"
 - iii. Our corruptible body will "BE CHANGED!"
 - iv. There will be NO SIN NATURE in heaven.
 - b. What an "amazing day that will be!"
 - 4. There are no dates given for the event of "The Rapture."
 - a. It will happen "on the exact date which God has planed in eternity past!"
 - b. That could HAPPEN TODAY! That will happen...
 - c. "... in a moment, in the twinkling of any eye ..." (Verse 52)
 - d. "The trumpet sounds, The dead are raised ...and we shall be changed!"
 - i. "This corruptible shall have **put on** incorruption..." (Verse 35)
 - ii. "This mortal shall have **put on** immortality.
- C. The Mystery was Hidden, but is now understood and explained (Vs

II. We Learn that the Sting of Death has been Swallowed up in Victory! (Verse 54b-57)

- A. This victory was prophesied in the Old Testament.
 - 1 "He will swallow up death in victory..." (Isaiah 25:8)
- B. The victory is fulfilled in the New Testament
 - 1. Death is swallowed up in victory. (I Corinthians 15:54)

- C. Instead of death casting us into Hell...
 - 1. God will cast "death and hell" into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:14)
- D. Thanks be to God, which GIVETH us the victory - THROUGH JESUS CHRIST (Vs 57)
- E. Death where is thy sting? It is swallowed up in victory!

III. We Have the Greatest Motive for Servicing God!

- A. We Know the mystery that has been hidden.
- B. God has **given us** Victory over Sin, Death, and the Grave! (Verse 58)
- C. The Bible IS NOT a textbook! What we know **MUST** be applied to our life.
- D. In light of the glorious truths which Paul has given concerning the resurrection. **Paul now says,**
 - C. **"Therefore, my beloved brethren..." Because of these truths...** (Verse 58)
 - 1. We must be *steadfast*...
 - a. Stand your ground...
 - b. Be firm, be strong, be confident in your faith... (Joshua 1:8)
 - c. Knowing that you will never die, but you will be changed.
 - 2. We must be *unmovable*...
 - a. The word "unmovable" is stronger than the word "steadfast."
 - b. Be so fixed! - Be so Stable! – Be so Confident! - **Nothing will move you!**
 - 3. We must be *"always abounding in the work of the Lord..."*
 - a. Be diligent
 - b. Always doing the will of God.
 - c. Always striving to glorify Him.
 - d. Abounding means "doing more than you ever dreamed possible!"
 - e. Never become satisfied.
 - f. Press toward the Mark!
 - 4. Turn loose and "give it all you're got!" (Philippians 3:14)
 - D. **WHY? "For as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain! (Vs 58)**
 - 1. The Greek word for labor is: "*Kopos*" means "work until you are weary!"
 - 2. God promised that your labor "is not in vain." (Hebrews 6:10-15)

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11)

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson #18
THREE WORDS OF WISDOM FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL
I Corinthians 16:1-24

INTRO: Paul response to the final three questions which the church at Corinth requested his counsel. "The first was concerning an offering for the saints in Jerusalem." (Verses 1-4). The second was concerning him coming to visit them on his way back to Jerusalem (Verses 5-9). The third was concerning Timothy coming to Corinth and the way they should treat him - and all believers. (Verses 10-24).

I. Love Giving Cheerfully! (Verses 1-4)

- A. Paul had apparently already talked with them about taking such an offering.
- B. The need: "most believing Jews" had lost their jobs due to leaving the Jewish faith.
 - 1. It was extremely difficult for a "believing Jew" to find employment.
- C. Paul was not "taxing or forcing" them to take an offering.
 - 1. Such offering should be done "willingly" (Romans 15:26)
 - 2. EVERY Christians should be "a willing giver." (II Corinthians 9:6-8 & 17)
 - a. A willing giver is guaranteed a reward. (II Cor. 9:8)
 - i. NOTE the word "All."
 - ii. "ALL grace..."
 - iii. "ALWAYS have - ALL sufficiency -
 - iiii. "in ALL things..."
 - b. He is repaid by prayers (II Cor. 9:12-15)
 - c. He is repaid in money. (Luke 6:38)
 - d. You "reap WHAT you sow! (Gal. 6:7)
- D. These offerings were taken on the "first day" of the week.
 - 1. The "Lord's Day" which shows it is "an act of worship."
- E. This was a "church" ministry
 - 1. "...let *every one* of you..." (Vs 2)
 - 2. This includes "the rich and the poor."
 - 3. 'Lay by you you in store - as God has prospered you.
 - 4. God only expects us to "do what we can."
 - 5. BUT, He does expect us to "do what we can."

II. Love God's Will – Not Your Will? (Luke 22:42)

- A. We should be willing "to change our plans" to follow "God's plans!" (James 4:13-17)
 - 1. Paul had committed to come to Corinth to help them. (I Cor. 11:34)
 - a. Nevertheless, he had to "change HIS plans" three times.
 - b. He learned that "God's had a better plan for him than he had!"
- B. We learn **two things** from Paul's experience.
 - 1. First, we **MUST** use our "common sense."

- a. We should pray, study, & ask God for wisdom to make decisions. (Proverbs 3:5-6)
 - i. "...lean not to our own understanding"
 - ii. That does not mean to "Put your brain in neutral and don't think."
 - iii. Some Christians say, "I'll just pray and trust God."
 - d. We must trust God, but **"do our part."** (Joshua 7:7-11)
 - i. He expects us to: "do what we can - God will do the rest." (Acts 12:5-10)
 - ii. Peter "did what he could" God "did what he couldn't do!"
- 2. Second, we **MUST** always follow "the will of God."
 - a. We may have "made plans" but may have "made a mistake."
 - b. **NEVER** go contrary to the "will of God."
 - i. Never say, "Will, I told them I would do it....so I have to do it! Paul did do that!
If Paul didn't do it - we should not do it."
 - i. Admit "you made a mistake, ask forgiveness - move on.
If Paul can admit he was wrong - so can we! (I Cor. 16:7)"
 - c. **NEVER** go contrary to the "will of God" to "please people."
- 3. There are two things that many Christians do when facing a decision or action.
 - a. One: For fear of "making a mistake" they do not make any decision.
 - b. Two: They make a decision "on the spur of the minute" with no prayer.
 - i. God will **ALWAYS** guide you in decision making (John 7:17)
- C. Paul was "in Ephesus when writing this letter to the church in Corinth. (I Cor. 16:8)
 - 1. Paul saw an "open door" and never wanted to "miss an opportunity."
 - 2. He shared that with the church in Corinth - and followed the will of God
 - a. There was a "great door/opportunity" opened to him.
 - b. No Christian **SHOULD EVER** miss an opportunity to be used of God!

III. **Love One Another as I Have loved You.** (John 13:34-35)

- A. Jesus Christ "Love us and gave himself for us!" (Ephesians 5:1-2)
 - 1. I am to love you - with the same love that Christ loved me!
 - 2. You are to love me - with the same love that Christ loved you!
- B. The love knows no boundaries (I Corinthians 16:10-24)
 - 1. Timothy: In spite of Timothy be a very young man - Paul loved him. (I Timothy 4:12)
 - a. He joined Paul in the ministry (Acts 16:1-5)
 - 2. Apollos: In spite of Paul and Apollos have a disagreement, they loved each other.
 - a. Paul clearly had "no envy or jealous" against Apollos taking his place.
 - 3. Stephanas: Paul had won and baptized this man and his family. (I Cor. 1:16)
 - a. He was addicted means, when he saw any need - he volunteered to help."
 - b. He laboureth means, "his household toiled to the point of exhaustion."
 - 4. Fortunatus and Achaicus: These two are not mentioned in any other place in scripture!

- a. They encouraged Paul and they financially supported him.
- 5. Aquila and Priscilla: Paul worked together then as "tent makes." (Acts 18:1-3)
 - a. They volunteered their house as a place for Paul to start the church. (Romans 16:3-5)
 - b. They risk their life for Paul. (Romans 16:4)

Paul speaks with kind, tender and respectful words about each of these "brethren" regardless of who they were. Paul had a "heart felt" love for all those at the church at Corinth. He had just shared with them "his love for his friends and co-laborers. He closed by saying, *"...submit yourselves onto such and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth."* (Verse 16)

All of those who had faithfully serve with Paul as he served the Lord, were greatly rewarded. Because of the faithfulness and love for the Lord Jesus, they now have their names, their love, their dedication recorded in the inspired Word of God. These people have had their names and their love read my multiplied millions of people over the last two thousand years. What a reward - to have your name in the Word of God!

The goal of every Christian should be "to love one another EXACTLY as Christ has love us and given himself for us!"