

First Corinthians

Written by:	Paul the Apostle of Christ
Claims Inspiration:	2:13; 11:23; 15:37
Place of Writing:	Probably Ephesus
Time of Writing:	53 — 54
Written to:	The Corinthian Church
Origin of the church:	Acts 18, about 51 AD
Location:	About 50 miles from Athens, Greece.
It was a new town:	Built in 46 BC
Population:	About 400,000
It was a center of paganism with 1,000 prostitute priestess at one Temple.	
Paul's sources of information:	
	1. Chloe's household. 1:11
	2. Stephanas and others. 16:17
	3. A letter from the Church. 7:1

<p>Paul states his authority to write a directive letter.</p> <p>Addressed to:</p> <p>The greeting:</p> <p>Paul is thankful for their gifts (their conduct is not mentioned.)</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 1</p> <p>1. Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,</p> <p>2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ — their Lord and ours:</p> <p>3 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.</p> <p>4 I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus.</p> <p>5 For in him you have been enriched in every way — in all your speaking and in all your knowledge —</p> <p>6 because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you.</p>	<p>“Apostle of Christ”</p> <p>Christians are called to be holy.</p> <p>The church is bigger than just Corinth.</p> <p>(Gentiles: grace Jews: peace</p> <p>The miracles were to confirm the spoken Word. Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3.</p>
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<p>They had the entire range of spiritual gifts.</p> <p>God will keep His word.</p> <p>God's goal for them: total unity.</p> <p>Quarrels have been reported to Paul.</p> <p>Quarrels lead to this:</p>	<p>7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.</p> <p>8 He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.</p> <p>9 God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.</p> <p>10. I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.</p> <p>11 My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you.</p> <p>12 What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul;" another, "I follow Apollos;" another, "I follow Cephas;" still another, "I follow Christ."</p>	<p>Miracles lasted until the written Word. "revelation" = "revealed word."</p> <p>The written word prepares us for the "day of Christ."</p> <p>(</p> <p>Division is usually a sin. John 17:20, 23; Galatians 5:20</p> <p>(</p>
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<p>Questions to get at the problem:</p> <p>Paul did not want to be a party leader.</p> <p>Paul's purpose among them re-stated:</p> <p>The power of God is in the message.</p>	<p>13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?</p> <p>14. I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius,</p> <p>15 so no one can say that you were baptized into my name.</p> <p>16 (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.)</p> <p>17. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel — not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.</p> <p>18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.</p> <p>19 For it is written: "I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE; THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE INTELLIGENT I WILL FRUSTRATE."</p>	<p>Crispus had been a synagogue ruler. Gaius had been Paul's host. Baptism must be in Christ's name (authority)</p> <p>Paul didn't keep close records.</p> <p>Others can handle the mechanics of immersion.</p> <p>(</p> <p>Written in Isaiah 29:14 LXX</p>
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<p>God's Wisdom is vastly superior.</p> <p>There is salvation in God's message.</p> <p>The outcome of God's way is superior.</p>	<p>20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?</p> <p>21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.</p> <p>22 Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom,</p> <p>23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,</p> <p>24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.</p> <p>25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.</p>	<p>The world has no solution to sin. Pass more laws to control people.</p> <p>(</p> <p>Not entertainment, not psychology, not current events.</p> <p>Cultural attempts to find God.</p> <p>"stumbling block" 1 Peter 2:8 "foolishness" Acts 17:32</p> <p>Power for Jews. Wisdom for Greeks.</p>
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<p>God has called very few great people.</p> <p>He chose the foolish, the weak.</p> <p>He chose the lowly, the despised —</p> <p>to show where the power truly comes from.</p>	<p>26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.</p> <p>27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.</p> <p>28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things — and the things that are not — to nullify the things that are,</p> <p>29 so that no one may boast before him.</p> <p>30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.</p> <p>31 Therefore, as it is written: "LET HIM WHO BOASTS BOAST IN THE LORD."</p>	<p>See what God initiates:</p> <p>(</p> <p>(</p> <p>(</p> <p>God's Wisdom is seen in His provision of: righteousness, holiness, redemption.</p> <p>(</p> <p>Written in Jeremiah 9:24.</p>
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1:2 I heard a story the other day of a man who encountered a bit of trouble while flying his little airplane. He called the control tower and said, "Pilot to tower, I'm 300 miles from the airport, six hundred feet above the ground, and I'm out of fuel. I am descending rapidly. Please advise. Over." "Tower to pilot," the controller began, "Repeat after me: "Our Father Who art in heaven..."

1:10 How the church is divided! "Like a mighty army moves the church of God" may be on blueprint in a song, but it has not progressed beyond that stage. In fact, someone has written a parody of "Onward, Christian Soldiers," and it runs like this:

Like a halting caravan Moves the church of Christ;
 We are feebly faltering Toward our timid tryst.
 We are all divided, Many bodies we,
 Kept apart by doctrine And lack of charity.
 Careful, Christian pilgrims! Walk in doubt and fear,
 With the cross of Jesus Bringing up the rear.
 -- J. Vernon McGee

1:12 Casey Stengel said: "It's easy to get good players. Gettin' em to play together, that's the hard part." Thanks Casey. What's true in baseball is also true in the ministry of the local church.

1:18 The print medium often intentionally distorts what we write. Over the years since I became a Christian, I have always deliberately explained that I have "accepted Jesus Christ." These words are invariably translated into "Colson's professed religious experience." I discovered that one major U.S. daily, as a matter of policy, will not print the two words Jesus Christ together; when combined, the editor says, it represents an editorial judgment.

-- Charles Colson

1:20 Upon first reading, these precepts gleaned from the gospels seem to defy human logic. A deeper study, however, will reveal that in them the Lord has outlined a wondrous pattern and a wise design for believers who want to enjoy a successful, overcoming life. Note these paradoxes:

We see unseen things

we conquer by yielding

we find rest under a yoke

we reign by serving

we are made great by becoming little

we are exalted by being humble

we become wise by being fools for Christ's sake

we are made free by becoming His bond servants

we wax strong by being weak

we triumph by defeat

we find victory by glorying in our infirmities

and we live by dying

1:26 Why Choose Me?

A Sunday School teacher was teaching a group of teenage boys one Sunday about Christ's disciples; about their abilities, their attributes, and why Jesus might have chosen them. Toward the end of the lesson a teen-aged boy who was particularly enthralled about the whole concept of calling, chosen by God, said, "Teacher, why did Jesus choose Judas?" To which the Sunday school teacher replied, "Son, I don't know. But I have a harder question. Why did Jesus choose me?"

1:27 In a 3rd-century debate on Christianity, Celsus said to Origen, "When most teachers go forth to teach, they cry, 'Come to me, you who are clean and worthy,' and they are followed by the highest caliber of people available. But your silly master cries, 'Come to me, you who are down and beaten by life,' and so he accumulates around him the rag, tag and bobtail of humanity."

And Origen replied: "Yes, they are the rag, tag and bobtail of humanity. But Jesus does not leave them that way. Out of material you would have thrown away as useless, he fashions men, giving them back their self-respect, enabling them to stand on their feet and look God in the eyes. They were cowed, cringing, broken things. But the Son has set them free."

1:28 Sociology professor Anthony Campolo recalls a deeply moving incident that happened in a Christian junior high camp where he served. One of the campers, a boy with spastic paralysis, was the object of heartless ridicule. When he would ask a question, the boys would deliberately answer in a halting, mimicking way. One night his cabin group chose him to lead the devotions before the entire camp. It was one more effort to have some "fun" at his expense. Unashamedly the spastic boy stood up, and in his strained, slurred manner -- each word coming with enormous effort -- he said simply, "Jesus loves me -- and I love Jesus!" That was all. Conviction fell upon those junior-highers. Many began to cry. Revival gripped the camp. Years afterward, Campolo still meets men in the ministry who came to Christ because of that testimony.

1:31 David Augsburger told an imaginary story about a man who had just arrived in heaven. Attracted by a large crowd, he inquired what was going on, "Oh, it's 'show and tell' time," came the answer. He was asked if he had anything he'd like to share. "Why sure," the new arrival quickly responded, "I'll tell about the big flood we had back in 1889 when I was a boy in Pennsylvania." "That will be fine," he was told, "but remember, Noah will be in the audience."