

Welcome!

We are looking forward to getting into the word of God with you and digging deeper into the book of 1 Corinthians.

The book of 1 Corinthians is the first of two letters (letters are also called “epistles”) written by the apostle Paul to the church in Corinth. There are a number of epistles in the New Testament, each one written in a spirit of genuine Christian love to the various “young” churches throughout the Roman empire. Paul typically encourages each church to continue in the healthy habits he sees/hears about within each congregation and challenges them on the unhealthy/ungodly habits. His ultimate goal is to see their faith in Jesus Christ grow, flourish and be passed on to others--all to the glory of his Lord and Saviour.

We are studying 1 Corinthians using an ‘inductive’ approach, which means that our investigation will spiral outwards from **OBSERVATION** of the words, concepts and ideas that Paul has used in his letter, to understanding or **INTERPRETATION** of how these ideas are developed within the book and during the time it was written and how it links to the message of the whole Bible. Once we understand what Paul was communicating to the Corinthians in their day, we can then **APPLY** his message to our lives today.

Each lesson, therefore, will follow the **LOOK/LEARN/LIVE** format:

- **Step #1 - LOOK at the text**
 - As you read through a chapter or two of Exodus at home in preparation for our weekly meetings, you will answer a series of questions to help you understand what the author is trying to communicate in this section of the book. You will also have the opportunity to see how this passage connects to other parts of the Bible, and to reflect on how this passage teaches you to worship God better.
 - You will discuss what you learned when you get together with your small group each week.
- **Step #2 - LEARN from the text**
 - One of our large group teachers will teach on the text, drawing out biblical themes and application points.
- **Step #3 - LIVE in light of the text**
 - After the time of teaching, you will have an opportunity to answer application questions at your tables. As we grow in our knowledge of God and His word, it should affect our attitudes and our actions. This discussion time will naturally lead into a time of prayer, since we need God’s help to live as His people.

We trust that this study in God's word will be life changing because:

- The Bible consists of God's very words: "All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness..." 2 Timothy 3:16
- God's word is living and active: "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Hebrews 4:12

We are so glad that you are joining us in this study!

Kristal Toews
Pastor of Women

Greg Harris
Pastor of Discipleship

Question or comments?

Women: women@northview.org

Men: men@northview.org

Phone: 604-853-2931

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1 CORINTHIANS

Lesson #1 - Introduction

LOOK at the passages

1 Corinthians is a letter written by Paul to a specific church. In order to get acquainted with the people in this church and the issues they are facing we will investigate:

- The Church Plant: How the church began (Acts 18:1-18)
- The Bird's Eye View: Major "subsections" of the letter of 1 Corinthians.

Part 1: The Church Plant (Acts 18:1-18)

1. 5 W's (who, what where, when, why)

- **Who?** What do we learn about the people in this passage?
 - Paul
 - Aquila and Priscilla
 - The Corinthian Jews
 - The Corinthian Greeks / Gentiles
 - Titius Justus
 - Crispus

- Gallio

- **What** did God reveal to Paul about the city of Corinth?
 - What does this mean?

- **Where** is Corinth?

- **When**? How long was Paul stationed there?

Part 2: The Bird's Eye View

1. **5 W's (who, what where, when, why)**
 - **Who**? What do we learn about the people in this church?
 - 1 Corinthians 1:4-7

 - 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

- **What** are some of the main issues Paul addresses in this letter? Skim these passage to identify the big ideas.
 - 1 Corinthians 5:1-13
 - 1 Corinthians 6:1-8
 - 1 Corinthians 7:1-40

 - 1 Corinthians 8:1 - 11:1

 - 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

 - 1 Corinthians 11:17-33

 - 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

 - 1 Corinthians 14:1-40

 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-58

2. Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS
Lesson #1-Introduction
TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17

Lesson #2

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

² To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours:

³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. ⁵ For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge—⁶ God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. ⁷ Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ⁸ He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁹ God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

¹⁰ I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. ¹¹ My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. 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." ¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17

Lesson #2

LOOK at the passage

1 Corinthians is a letter written by Paul to a church he has planted. First century letters followed basic patterns, and the apostles adopted this literary form and “christianized it”, adding in regular elements. Almost every New Testament letter has the following format:

- Salutation (the name of the writer, name of the recipient and a greeting).
- Thanksgiving (this often included a prayer for spiritual blessing).
- Body (this explains what the sender wanted to say, addressing the need or the problem of the recipients).
- Paraenesis (ethical instructions and encouragement)
- Closing (a final greeting, benediction or blessing).¹

Today you will be reading through the salutation and thanksgiving, and will get started on the body of the letter. As you work through the homework you will get better acquainted with the authors and the recipients of this letter, and will start to formulate an image of the issues in the church which “occasion” this letter. Why does Paul need to write this letter? You’ll soon find out!

1.5 W’s & How (Who, what, where, why, when, how)

- **Who** are the main characters in this passage? List everything you learn about the following individuals or groups.
 - The Corinthians
 - Paul
 - Sosthenes (see also Acts 18:17. In which city are the events of Acts 18 taking place?)

¹ Simeon Trust teaching materials on the Epistles, page 7-10

- Apollos (see also Acts 18:24-28). Apollos is originally from Alexandria. Where is that?

- Cephas (see John 1:42, Galatians 1:18, Galatians 2:9 etc)

- Jesus

- God

- **What** is the tone of this passage?

- **What** is the passage about? (What are the main repeated words and ideas?)

- **What** is Paul's specific appeal to the Corinthians in this passage (verse 10)?

- **What** are the Corinthians quarrelling about (verse 12)?

- **What** does Paul see as the purpose for which he was sent as an apostle to Corinth (verse 17)?

- **Where** is Corinth? Locate it on a map.

- **When?** What timeframe does Paul have in mind as he gives the Corinthian Christians instructions in this letter? (verses 7-9)
 - When is “the end” he is speaking about in verse 8?

 - With this “end” in mind, what is his goal for the Corinthians?

 - What does he affirm about God as he puts this goal before them (verse 9)?

 - Are there specific circumstances in your own life in which you are relying on God’s faithfulness in order to stay firm to the end?

- **Why** does Paul give thanks to God for the church in Corinth? List the reasons mentioned in verses 4-9).

- **Why** is Paul thankful that he baptized so few of the Corinthian Christians?

- **Why** does Paul NOT want to preach the gospel with wisdom and eloquence?
 - What does this mean? Does it mean that our preachers / teachers shouldn’t strive to be communicators (do sermon reviews / teaching reviews)?

- What tension is Paul identifying here for anyone who preaches or teaches?
- **How** did Paul hear about what was going on in the Corinthian church? (verse 11)

2. Whole Bible Connections

- Paul identifies himself as someone called to be an apostle of Christ. Why? How do we know he is an apostle, and that he has authority to speak words of correction and encouragement to the Corinthian church?

Read Acts 9:1-31 (Note: "Saul" is Paul's Jewish name)

- What do you learn about "Saul" in verses 1-14?
- Acts 9:15 describes "Saul's" call as an apostle. What do learn here? What job description is he given by God?
- What does he do after he becomes a Christian? What roadblocks does he encounter and how does he overcome them? (verses 19-31)

Now read Acts 11:19-26. What else do you learn about "Saul" here?

Now read Acts 12:24-13:12. What else do you learn about "Saul" here?

- How is his “call” from God clarified in this passage?
- What do you learn from 13:9?

So, let's summarize our findings a bit:

- What did Paul do between his first “call” and his second “call” to ministry (between Acts 9 and Acts 13)?
- What role did other Christians play in helping to clarify his “call”? What does this teach you about the nature of our relationships within the church?
- By what / whose authority does Paul guide, teach, direct, correct the Corinthian congregation? Who are all the ‘people’ who have affirmed his ‘right’ to do so?

Keep all this information at the back of your mind as you continue studying what Paul says throughout 1 Corinthians. Before he even travels to Corinth...

- He has been authorized to speak words of encouragement and correction by God, by the head apostles (Peter, James etc) and by a body of believers who know him well.
- He has shown himself to be a “team player”, wanting to partner with people in sharing the gospel.

- One the primary issues that Paul addresses in 1 Cor.1:1-17 is the rampant disunity and quarrelling among the Christians there. The necessity for unity among Christians is a key theme throughout the New Testament (read John 13:34-35, and John 17:20-23.)
 - As you reflect on your involvement in local churches throughout the years, would you say that your interactions have been characterised mostly by disagreement and quarrelling, or by unity and selfless love for your brothers and sisters in Christ?

 - Regardless of how you answered the question above, spend some time in prayer asking God through His Spirit to give you a greater appreciation for the importance of Christian unity, and to enable you to have your life be evidenced by your love for other Christians.

3. Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17

Lesson #2

TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-2:5

Lesson #3

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. ¹⁹ For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;

the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”

²⁰ Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 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. ²² Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ Brothers and sisters, 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.

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. ²⁸ God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no one may boast before him. 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.

³¹ Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

2 And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ² For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

³I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. ⁴My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, ⁵so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.

- **What** is the passage about? (What are the main repeated words and ideas?)

- **What** is the link between this passage and the preceding one? (Paul begins the passage with the word “for”, so he is basing this discussion on what he said before).

- **What** is the *power of God* in this passage?

- **What** does Paul call the *wisdom of God* in this passage?

- **What** do Jews seek, and how do they view the message of *Christ crucified*?

- **What** do Greeks seek, and how do they view the message of *Christ crucified*?
 - What do people in our time seek, and how do they view the message of Christ crucified?

- **What** does Jesus *become for us*?
 - What does this mean?

- **What** evidence does Paul provide that he did not speak with *eloquence or human wisdom*?

- **What** does *a demonstration of the Spirit's power* refer to? Does the immediate context of this passage or the book of Corinthians provide us an answer? Why or why not?
- Upon **what** does Paul want the Corinthians' faith to *rest*?
- **Why** does the world need the *wisdom of God* preached to them for salvation?
- **Why** does God call/choose the foolish, weak, and despised in the world?
- **Why** was Paul's message and preaching not filled with *wise and persuasive words*?

So - to summarize what you have been reading:

- **How** will the Corinthian church be unified? What do the Corinthians need to understand if they are to combat disunity? If you need help pulling it together, focus on 1:26-31.

2. Whole Bible Connections

In this passage, Paul quotes two Old Testament passages. Reading each of these passages in context will give us a deeper understanding of Paul's intended meaning in this passage.

- 1 Corinthians 1:19 references Isaiah 29:14. Isaiah was a prophet sent to call the Northern Kingdom (Israel) to repentance in 740 BC. Read Isaiah 29:13-16 to understand the context of Paul's reference.
 - What are the problems the Lord identifies in Isaiah 29:13-16?

 - What does the Lord say he will do to correct these problems?

 - What, specifically, are the people basing their worship of God on (verse 13)?

 - Paul references this passage for a reason. How does reading this Old Testament passage help you understand Paul's concern for the Corinthian church?

- 1 Corinthians 1:31 references Jeremiah 9:24. Jeremiah's words come approximately 120 years after Isaiah's, in the context of God permitting the Babylonian empire to decimate the Southern Kingdom (Judah) because of their repeated sin and contempt for God. Let's read a few of the surrounding passages to see the rationale for God's judgement.
 - Read Jeremiah 8:8-12. What problem(s) does God identify?

 - Read Jeremiah 9:12-14. What problem(s) does God identify?

- Read Jeremiah 9:23-26. What solution(s) does God identify?

- Narrow in specifically on Jeremiah 9:26. What, ultimately, needs to happen to our heart in order for us to please and obey him?
 - What does this mean?

 - Is your “heart circumcised”? Why or why not? How do you know?

 - If you don’t fully understand the language of this passage, read Ezekiel 36:22-32, focussing on verses 24-27.

- Paul references this passage for a reason. How does reading these Old Testament passage help you understand Paul’s concern for the Corinthian church?

3. Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-2:5

Lesson #3

TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-16

Lesson #4

⁶We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. ⁸None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹However, as it is written:

“What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived”—
the things God has prepared for those who love him—

¹⁰these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹²What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. ¹³

This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. ¹⁴The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. ¹⁵The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, ¹⁶for, “Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-16

Lesson #4

LOOK at the passage

In his initial efforts to address the factions in the Corinthian church, Paul has reminded them that people need to align themselves with God's wisdom (Jesus Christ), not human wisdom. In this section, he identifies what they need in order to know how to understand God's wisdom. Who can help them discern spiritual realities? Work through this passage and find out.

1. 5 W's & How (Who, what, where, why, when, how)

- **Who** are the main characters in this passage? List everything you learn about the following individuals or groups.
 - God

 - The Spirit of God

 - The person without the Spirit

 - The person with the Spirit

 - To **whom** does Paul *speak a message of wisdom*?

- **Who** teaches Paul the words he speaks?

- **What** is the tone of this passage?
- **What** is the passage about? (What are the main repeated words and ideas?)
- **What** is the mystery that has been hidden? (consider what Paul has talked about so far in 1 Corinthians)
- **What** is the evidence that the *rulers of this age* do not understand *God's wisdom*?
- **What** does the *person without the Spirit* consider the *things that come from the Spirit of God*?
- **When** was God's plan established?
- **Why** have Christians received the *Spirit who is from God*?
- **How** should the principles in 2:10-13 impact our own Bible study?²

² Question from St. Helen's Bishopgate study on 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, Thinking it Through, question 4.

2. Whole Bible Connections

1 Corinthians 2:13 says: *This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit...*

Read the passages below, and make notes on what these passages teach regarding the inspiration of Scripture and the authority of the Bible.

- What do the gospels teach about who inspired / authorized the apostles to write scripture?

Read John 14:22-27.

- Who is speaking?
- Who is he speaking to?
- What will happen after he is gone? (see verse 26).
 - What does this verse imply about the words later written by these disciples (the New Testament)?

Read John 15:26-16:16

- Who is speaking?
- Who is he speaking to?
- According to John 15:26 and 16:12-15. What is the “job” of the Holy Spirit?
- What is the “job” of the disciples?

These passages indicate that the disciples were charged by Jesus to ‘testify’ about Jesus under the guidance / direction / recollection of the Holy Spirit. Testifying

3. Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-16
Lesson#4
TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 3

Lesson #5

3 Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? ⁴ For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere human beings?

⁵ What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. ⁶ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. ⁹ For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.

¹⁰ By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

¹⁶ Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person; for God’s temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

¹⁸ Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become “fools” so that you may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness”; ²⁰ and again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.” ²¹ So then, no more

boasting about human leaders! All things are yours,²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours,²³ and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

1 CORINTHIANS 3

Lesson #5

LOOK at the passage

As we have learned, Paul's main focus at the start of this letter is to combat the Corinthians' tendency to "pick sides" between various human leaders. This section is no different: he ends it saying, "So then, no more boasting about human leaders!" (3:21).

In order to further his argument against this practice, Paul has approached the same issue from different angles for the past 2 chapters. In this segment of scripture, Paul "levels the playing field" by reminding the church that all leaders are dependent upon God and accountable to him; His standard is the only one which ultimately matters. How will God judge them and on what basis? Read this passage and figure it out.

1. 5 W's & How (Who, what, where, why, when, how)

- **Who** are the main characters in this passage? List everything you learn about the following individuals or groups.
 - The Corinthians (how does Paul describe them?)

 - Paul & Apollos

 - God

 - The Holy Spirit

- Who is the *one who plants*?

- Who is the *one who waters*?
 - In the context of the Corinthian church, what does this mean?

- Who will be rewarded according to their own labor?

- Who are co-workers in God's service?

- Who are God's field/building?

- Who are the "builders" of the building?

- Who is the "anyone" in verse 12 referring to?

- Who is God's temple?

- What is the tone of this passage?

- What is the passage about? (What are the main repeated words and ideas?)

- What evidence does Paul provide that he cannot address the Corinthians as *people who live by the Spirit* but rather that they are *acting like mere humans*?

- **What** “materials” do the builders build with?
- **What** does it mean that a builder’s work survives or not?
- **What** is the reward that is given to the builder whose work survives?
- **What** does it mean to *destroy God’s temple*?
- **When** will the work of the builders be evaluated and tested?
- **Why** would a builder receive a reward?
- **Why** would God *destroy “that” person*?
- **Why** does Paul command that the Corinthians stop their boasting?

2. Whole Bible Connections

In this passage, Paul quotes two Old Testament passages. Reading each of these passages in context will give us a deeper understanding of Paul’s intended meaning in this passage.

- 1 Corinthians 3:19 Paul quotes Job 5:13 to demonstrate that other scriptural passages attest to ‘the wisdom of the world [being] foolishness in God’s sight’. Read Job 5:1-16 to understand the context of Paul’s reference.
 - What does Job 5:1-16 tell us about human power and human wisdom?
 - What does Job 5:1-16 tell us about God’s power and God’s wisdom?

- In Job 5:8, what does the speaker of this speech (Eliphaz the Temanite - see Job 4:1) encourage Job to do as a result of this knowledge?

- 1 Corinthians 1:20 references Psalm 94:11.
 - Read Psalm 94:1-11. What is this psalm about?

 - Why do you think Paul quotes this verse to the Corinthian church? What does he want them to understand or remember?

- How does reading these verses in context help you to understand Paul's intended meaning in this passage?

3.Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 3
Lesson #5
TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 4

Lesson #6

⁴ This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. ³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.

⁶ Now, brothers and sisters, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what is written.” Then you will not be puffed up in being a follower of one of us over against the other. ⁷ For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

⁸ Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have begun to reign—and that without us! How I wish that you really had begun to reign so that we also might reign with you! ⁹ For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like those condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to human beings. ¹⁰ We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored! ¹¹ To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. ¹² We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; ¹³ when we are slandered, we answer kindly. We have become the scum of the earth, the garbage of the world—right up to this moment.

¹⁴ I am writing this not to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. ¹⁵ Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. ¹⁶ Therefore I urge you to imitate me. ¹⁷ For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will

remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

¹⁸Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you. ¹⁹But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. ²⁰For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. ²¹What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a rod of discipline, or shall I come in love and with a gentle spirit?

- The apostles (a group which includes Paul)

- Timothy

- **Whose** judgment is Paul awaiting?

- **What** is the tone of this passage?

- **What** is the passage about? (What are the main repeated words and ideas?)

- **What** has Paul been entrusted with?

- **What** is one of the chief effects of not going *beyond what is written*?

Paul calls the Corinthians *rich, wise, honored, strong*, and people who *reign*:

- **What** evidence from the passage do we have to say whether Paul is speaking sincerely or sarcastically?

- **What** does Paul intend to do when he arrives, Lord willing, in Corinth?

- **When** will the faithfulness of teachers be judged?
- **Why** is Paul only focused on the fact that *it is the Lord who judges me*?
- **Why** did Paul send Timothy?

2. Whole Bible Connections

In our current culture, we encounter prosperity teaching and celebrity preachers, who give the impression that being a minister of Christ will lead to wealth and to glory on this earth. When you read 1 Corinthians 4:8, it seems like Paul was encountering the same attitude from the leaders of this church. One resource puts it this way, *“In distancing themselves from a gospel of the cross [the leaders] had rejected any idea of costly self-sacrificial discipleship. They wanted to be kings now rather than to wait and follow Christ through suffering to glory; to pick up their crowns rather than their crosses and follow him”*.⁴

Paul challenges this assumption by reminding them of what the apostles have experienced (4:9-12). Let’s examine a few other passages to see how his words mesh with the rest of scripture.

- Read Matthew 10:16-42. In this passage Jesus is commissioning his disciples to help him in his work.
 - What does Jesus say to warn them?
 - What does Jesus say to encourage them?

⁴ St. Helen’s Bishopgate Curriculum, 1 Corinthians 4:1-21 Study notes.

- Read Philippians 2:1-11. What does it look like to follow in the footsteps of Jesus?

- Read 2 Timothy 4:1-8. In this passage Paul is commissioning Timothy to carry on his work.
 - What does Paul say Timothy should expect?

 - How does he encourage him? What is Paul looking forward to?

- Read James 3:1-2. What sobering truth does this add to the discussion?

In light of what you have read in this section, spend some time praying for the leaders of our church: that they would be found faithful and be encouraged to persevere in the midst of their work.

3. Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 4
Lesson #6
TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 5

Lesson #7

⁵ It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife. ² And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? ³ For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. ⁴ So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵ hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

⁶ Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? ⁷ Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

⁹ I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—¹⁰ not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹ But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister ^a but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people.

¹² What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? ¹³ God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked person from among you."

- **Who** is the church not to judge?

- **What** is the tone of this passage?

- **What** is the passage about? (What are the main repeated words and ideas?)

- **What** are all the problems that Paul is addressing?

- **What** does Paul say they should do about these problems?

- **What** is the main theme?

- **Why** does Paul address these problems?
 - What is his goal for the sinner?

 - What is his goal for the congregation as a whole?

- **How** is your worldview challenged by reading verse 9-11?

This passage encourages us not to avoid ‘ungodly’ people who have different sexual morals or religious affiliations:

- **How** can we do this in a way that honors God?

- **How** should we “expel the wicked person”? How would we go about applying these principles? Can you think of any other scripture passages that help your understanding of this?

Spend time in prayer, asking God to specifically open your eyes and heart to **how** you need to apply the instruction from this chapter.

2. Whole Bible Connections

Paul refers to the Passover Lamb (v7) and unleavened bread (v8) in this chapter. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was a reminder to Israel of how God had rescued them from Egypt (by means of the Passover) and brought them to the land that God had promised them. Read the following scriptures to understand the history of these references. Write down everything you learn about the Passover lamb, yeast, and unleavened bread.

	Passover Lamb	Yeast	Unleavened Bread
Exodus 12			
Deuteronomy 16:1-8			

John 19:31-37 (focus on verse 36)			
1 Peter 1:17-21			
Galatians 5:7-9			

In 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, who does Paul say our passover Lamb is? How do the scriptures support this?

- In light of what you have learned about the Passover Lamb, why is it significant that Paul mentions this?
- From everything you know and have learned about yeast and unleavened bread, what does the yeast represent in this this passage?
- What do you think Paul is trying to get the Corinthians to understand in chapter 5 by including the reference to the Passover Lamb and unleavened bread?

3. Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 5
Lesson #7
TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 6

Lesson #8

⁶ If any of you has a dispute with another, do you dare to take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord's people? ² Or do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? ³ Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! ⁴ Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, do you ask for a ruling from those whose way of life is scorned in the church? ⁵ I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? ⁶ But instead, one brother takes another to court—and this in front of unbelievers!

⁷ The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? ⁸ Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers and sisters. ⁹ Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

¹² "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything. ¹³ You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." ¹⁷ But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. ¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality.

All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. ¹⁹ Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 CORINTHIANS 6

Lesson # 8

LOOK at the passage

We live in a very litigious society. Have you ever noticed the “beverage is hot!” warning on your coffee or tea paper cup from a cafe or restaurant? It’s there for a reason! Maybe you recall that in 1992, a woman sued McDonald's after she burned herself with hot coffee and the jury awarded her a lot of money! Businesses, organizations, and people sue each other every day. This chapter teaches about how we should conduct ourselves in disputes, especially among other Christians. It also teaches us how we should conduct our physical bodies, as they can be used for sin or to bring honor and glory to God. We will see that the Corinthian church was justifying their sexual immorality. We too can easily justify our immorality as we get caught up with the message of our modern culture as it communicates to us that sexuality is a personal right to be exercised any way an individual wishes. This chapter is full of application for us in regards to how we should behave as Christians: in regards to settling disputes and our sexual behaviour. Paul continues to be direct and clear as he gives instruction for living a holy life that honours God.

1. 5 W's & H (Who, What, Where, When, Why, How)

- **Who** are the main characters in this passage? List everything you learn about the following individuals or groups.
 - The Corinthians

 - Paul

 - Jesus

- God

- Christians (in general)

- **What** is the tone of this passage?

- **What** is this passage about? (What are the main repeated words & ideas?)

- **What** is the main point in verses 1-11?

- **What** are the Corinthians doing wrong?

- **What** should they be doing instead?

- **What** does Paul teach about the Kingdom of God?

- **What** does Paul remind these people that they were (v.9b,10)? And then **what** happened to them (v11)?

- **How** does being reminded of this changed identity make a difference when considering how to settle a serious dispute?
- **Why** is it better to be wronged and cheated?
- **What** is the main point in verses 12-20?
- **What** is the body **not** meant for?
- **What** is the body meant for?
- **What** else do you learn about the body?
- **Why** does Paul teach to “flee from sexual immorality” (v18)?
- **How** are you most vulnerable to being tempted toward sexual immorality? What does it mean in practice for you to “flee”? List practical steps to help you resist sexual temptation.

Need help?

1. *Pray. If you are a Christian you have the power of the Holy to Spirit to overcome sin. Email requestprayer@northview.org if you would like the prayer chain to be praying for you.*
2. *Seek professional help. Email care@northview.org to arrange a free appointment to talk about your issue.*
3. *Share. With 1 or 2 trusted Christian friends, talk about your struggle and ask them to pray with you.*
- 4.

2. Whole Bible Connections

As Paul addresses disputes in the Corinthian church, he identifies two major issues.

First, the Corinthians thought that they were wise, but Paul points out that they can't even solve the disagreements that arose in their midst. How wise are they, really? Second, there seems to be more at stake than 'fairness'. It seems that the Corinthians didn't understand the gospel and weren't responding in love. While it's not easy to overlook a matter, especially when someone has wronged you, Paul wants his readers to be prepared to respond rightly in a way that honours Christ.

Judging the World

- Think about the irony: the Corinthians are asking those who don't have God's wisdom to judge them, but Paul reminds them that in the future Christians will judge the world (v2).
- How should this future reality impact the Corinthians when they deal with the day to day issues among themselves?

Being Wronged

Sometimes non-Christians sin against us, and sometimes Christians sin against us. Even though two people belong to Christ, they are not yet fully perfected, and we may sin against our brothers and sisters in Christ. When these wrong/evil/wicked things happen, especially from the hand of a fellow Christian, you have a choice how you respond. Paul's question is pointed, "Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated?"

- Read through the following passages and take note of what they teach regarding our response to injustice and our desire for fairness. While some of these passages talk about injustice done to us by non-Christians and “the wicked” rather than that which we experience at the hands of other christians, the principles behind our ‘ideal’ response is the same.

	Psalm 37	Romans 12:14-21
What will be the outcome of the wicked?		
What is promised to the righteous/blameless? How does this motivate you to endure being wronged/cheated?		
What commands are given for the righteous/blameless to follow, even when they have been wronged?		
Is there a specific verse in this passage that provides comfort to you when you		

think of situations in which you have been wronged?		
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- If you can't settle your dispute with a fellow Christian, how costly will it be for you to let it go entirely? Are you willing to do that? Is the cost worth it?

If you aren't sure HOW to settle a dispute, or whether you should stand up for yourself or let something go, Northview staff members are willing to walk alongside you and help you discern possible steps forward. Feel free to email care@northview.org and set up an appointment with one of our care pastors.

3. Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 6
Lesson #8
TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 7

Lesson # 9

7 Now for the matters you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." 2 But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. 3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. 5 Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 I say this as a concession, not as a command. 7 I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

8 Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. 9 But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

10 To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. 11 But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

12 To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. 13 And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. 14 For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

15 But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. 16 How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

17 Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. 18 Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. 19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts. 20 Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.

21 Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you—although if you can gain your freedom, do so. 22 For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord's freed person; similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ's slave. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings. 24 Brothers and sisters, each person, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.

25 Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. 26 Because of the present crisis, I think that it is good for a man to remain as he is. 27 Are you pledged to a woman? Do not seek to be released. Are you free from such a commitment? Do not look for a wife. 28 But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.

29 What I mean, brothers and sisters, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they do not; 30 those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; 31 those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

32 I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. 33 But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— 34 and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. 35 I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.

36 If anyone is worried that he might not be acting honorably toward the virgin he is engaged to, and if his passions are too strong and he feels he ought to marry, he should do as he wants. He is not sinning. They should get married. 37 But the man who has settled the matter in his own mind, who is under no compulsion but has control over his own will, and who has made up his mind not to marry the virgin—this man also does the right thing. 38 So then, he who marries the virgin does right, but he who does not marry her does better.

39 A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. 40 In my judgment, she is happier if she stays as she is—and I think that I too have the Spirit of God.

- **What** instructions does Paul give to these different groups of people:

Circumcised Men	
Uncircumcised Men	
Slaves	
Free people	

- **Why** is Paul giving these instructions? What is the underlying theme which unites his instructions to these groups (verse 20 and 24)?

- Summarize Paul's instructions from these paragraphs, in your own words: ⁶
 - 7:1-7
 - 7:8-9
 - 7:10-11

⁶ St Helen's Bishopsgate and Lee Gatiss

- 7:12-16

 - 7:17-24

 - 7:25-40
-
- **What** part of the chapter do you personally find most challenging? Why?

2. Whole Bible Connections

Read 1 Corinthians 7:17 - 24 again and mark every occurrence of the word *called*.

- What do you learn about being called?

- What *calling* is Paul talking about?

- What kinds of situations were the Corinthians in when they were called?

- What should they do?

Read the following passages and take notes on everything that has to do with calling or being called and what someone's life should look like after responding to this call.

2 Peter 1:1-11

Romans 1:1-7

2 Timothy 1:6-11

- What does a Christian have after responding to God's calling to salvation that they did not have before?
- What situation were you in when you were called? Did anything change? Did anything stay the same?
- How do we often use the term "calling" in our Christian circles? Is this how these verses use the term? What is different/same?
- Prayerfully consider your life: do you behave like someone who has been called by God? Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you the power of God to live a holy life, pleasing to him.

3. Reflect

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 7
Lesson #9
TEACHING NOTES

1 CORINTHIANS 8

Lesson # 10

8 Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. 2 Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. 3 But whoever loves God is known by God.

4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” 5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), 6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

7 But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. 8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? 11 So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. 12 When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.

- Jesus

- God

- **What** is the tone of this passage?

- **What** is this passage about? (think about any repeated ideas or words)

- Mark the following keywords from chapter 8 and record **what** you learn about them:
 - Idol/idolatry/gods

 - Knowledge

- **Why** is Paul writing about food sacrificed to idols?

- **How** is this chapter connected to chapter 7?

There seems to be two groups that Paul is talking with about this issue: those with “knowledge” and “the weak”.

2. Whole Bible Connections

Read v. 11-13

- Summarize what Paul is saying:

- What does it mean to “sin against them” v12?

- What is Paul’s motivation for saying that he would never “eat meat again” v.13? What verses in this chapter reveal his motivation?

Read Romans 9:1-5

- Who is Paul writing about?

- What is Paul saying he would do for these people?

- What do you learn about Paul?

- Even though Paul is writing to different people and about two different groups of people in his letter to the Romans and the Corinthians, what is his underlying motivation for his two messages?

Read Philippians 2:1-8

- From this passage, what does it look like to look to the interests of others?

- What reason does Paul give when he instructs the Philippians to “look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” (v4) ?

- How do these verses impact your perspective of what the most important things in life are?

- How do these verses impact your attitude to restrain/give up your rights for your brothers and sisters in Christ?

Optional Memory Verse

1 Corinthians 8:9 NIV

Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak.

3. Reflection

ADORATION: What can you praise God for, based on this text?	CONFESSION: What might you need to confess to God, based on this text?	SUPPLICATION: What can you ask God for, based on this text?

1 CORINTHIANS 8
Lesson #10
TEACHING NOTES

