

Overview of 1 Corinthians

Why study this book:

Paul explains many doctrines that directly relate to the matters of sin and righteousness. He does so in order to call believers to wholehearted, holy living amidst division, disorder and difficulty in the local church. Paul gives Christians straight forward advice and inspiration of God's perspective on many hot topics facing the church.

Author:

The author is Paul, the apostle and church planter. He wrote 1 Corinthians during his third missionary journey. External sources include: Clement of Rome (A.D. 95), Ignatius (A.D. 110), Polycarp (A.D. 135), Tertullian (A.D. 200)

Date:

Paul pens this letter to the church at Corinth while on his third missionary journey in Ephesus. He was in Ephesus for three years (Acts 20:31) placing the date of this letter around A.D. 55.

Setting and Background:

The city of Corinth prospered as a major trade city while being known as one of the most morally corrupt places during Biblical times. Paul founded the church on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1) and heard about the sin issues going on there during his third missionary journey. Most of the believers could not consistently separate themselves from their old, selfish, immoral and pagan ways. Paul wrote this letter in order to correct these behaviors within the church.

Main Point:

To help believers learn how to separate from their old, sinful ways that lead to destruction personally and within the church.

Outline:

- I. Introduction (1:1-9)
 - a. Salutation (1:1-3)
 - b. Thanksgiving (1:4-9)
- II. Disorders in the church (1:10-6:20)
 - a. Divisions among believers (1:10-4:21)
 - b. Immorality among believers (chap. 5)
 - c. Lawsuits among believers (6:1-11)
 - d. Moral laxness among believers (6:12-20)
- III. Apostolic answers to church questions (chaps. 7-14)
 - a. Concerning marriage and celibacy (chap. 7)
 - b. Concerning eating meats offered to idols (8:1-11:1)
 - c. Concerning women's head-coverings (11:2-16)

- d. Concerning the lord's supper (11:17-34)
- e. Concerning the gifts of the spirit and their use in the church (chaps. 12-14)
- IV. Paul's answer to deniers of the resurrection (chap. 15)
 - a. Certainty of the resurrection (15:1-34)
 - b. Consideration of objections to the resurrection (15:35-37)
 - c. Concluding appeal in light of the resurrection (15:58)
- V. Paul's final counsel (chap. 16)
 - a. Concerning the collection (16:1-4)
 - b. Concerning his personal plans (16:5-9)
 - c. Closing exhortations and greetings (16:10-24)¹

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1. 1 Corinthians – John MacArthur (Bible Study)
 2. New American Commentary: 1 Corinthians
 3. The Quest Study Bible
 4. The NLT Study Bible
 5. The Gospel Transformation Bible
 6. The Maxwell Leadership Bible
 7. Believer's Bible Commentary