

1ST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

Christian Answers to Real Life

THE LETTERS TO CORINTH

During Paul's second missionary trip, he founded the church in Corinth during an 18 month stay in the city (Acts 18:1-17). After leaving the city, he remained involved in the care and guidance of the church through letters.

1 and 2 Corinthians are two of these letters. They address problems the church in Corinth was facing and answer questions the church had.



THE CITY OF CORINTH

Corinth was an important city in Greece, 70 mi. west of Athens, on the neck of land that unites mainland Greece and the Peloponnesian peninsula. Because of its location, it was an important commercial center and a cross-road of the ancient world.

The city had a temple to Zeus but its chief deity was Aphrodite (Venus). In her temple, professional prostitutes led the rites of her worship. In fact, to *corinthianize* came to mean prostitution.



THE CITY OF CORINTH



THE ANCIENT CITY OF CORINTH



An Unlikely Place for a Church

Given Corinth's idolatrous and sensuous culture, it was a very unlikely place for a church. Yet the city experienced one of the greatest revivals in the N.T. and received some of the greatest teachings of the N.T.

Romans 5:20

²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

God always wins!

And What A Church!

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

¹ Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes, ² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those **sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints** together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...

In the middle of a decadent culture, the church was “**sanctified by Christ**” and “**called to be saints!**”

And What A Church!

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ that **in every way you were enriched in him** in all speech and all knowledge—⁶ even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—⁷ **so that you are not lacking in any gift**, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ **who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.** ⁹ **God is faithful**, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Stick Together!

1 Corinthians 1:10-17

¹⁰ I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. ¹¹ For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is **quarreling among you**, my brothers. ¹² What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." ¹³ **Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?**

Stick Together!

One of the enemy's favorite strategy is "divide and conquer."

He knows that a house divided against itself cannot stand. (Matt. 12:25)

Paul reminds the saints in Corinth: "Stick together!"



Divine Wisdom

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, **it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.**

God chose to impart wisdom and the way of salvation through the simple preaching of His word! **When the word of God is preached, miracles happen!**

Divine Wisdom

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

²² For **Jews demand signs** and **Greeks seek wisdom**, ²³ but **we preach Christ crucified**, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God**. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Everything we need is in **Christ!**

The Simple Gospel

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 (CEV)

¹ Friends, when I came and told you the mystery that God had shared with us, I didn't use big words or try to sound wise. ² In fact, while I was with you, I made up my mind to speak only about Jesus Christ, who had been nailed to a cross. ³ At first, I was weak and trembling with fear. ⁴ When I talked with you or preached, I didn't try to prove anything by sounding wise. **I simply let God's Spirit show his power.** ⁵ **That way you would have faith because of God's power and not because of human wisdom.**

Maturity and Wisdom

1 Corinthians 2:6-9 (CEV)

⁶ We do use wisdom when speaking to people who are mature in their faith. But it isn't the wisdom of this world or of its rulers, who will soon disappear. ⁷ We speak of God's hidden and mysterious wisdom... ⁸ The rulers of this world didn't know anything about this wisdom... ⁹ But it is just as the Scriptures say, "What God has planned for people who love him is more than eyes have seen or ears have heard. It has never even entered our minds!"

Maturity is a prerequisite for wisdom!

The Spirit of God Imparts Wisdom

1 Corinthians 2:6-9

¹⁰ these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

Close and Personal With The Spirit of God

The only way to know and grow in the things of God is to become close and personal with the Spirit of God!



The Natural and Spiritual Persons

1 Corinthians 2:6-9

¹⁴ **The natural person** does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because **they are spiritually discerned.** ¹⁵ **The spiritual person** judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. ¹⁶ “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But **we have the mind of Christ.**



The Natural and Spiritual Persons

The **natural person** is one-dimensional, insensitive to the Holy Spirit, and dominated by the material world.

The **spiritual person** is multi-dimensional, responsive to the Holy Spirit, aware of the material world, but also aware that the material world is not the whole of reality.

The spiritual person has the mind of Christ!



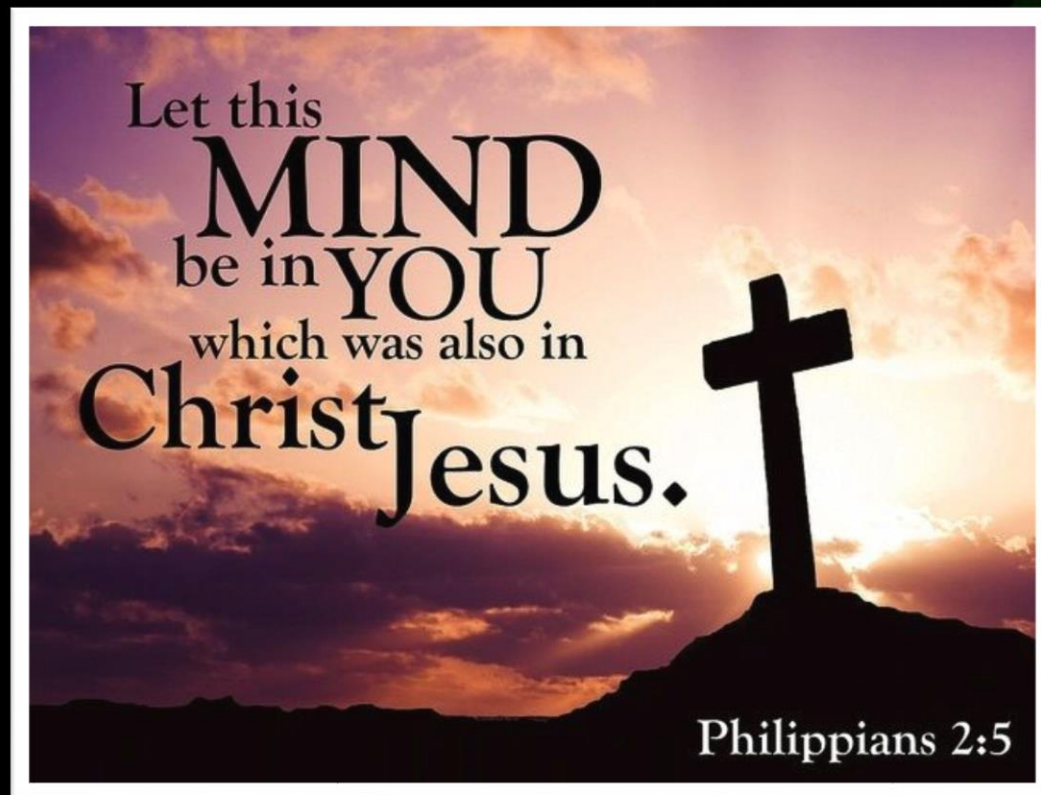
Wisdom and Holy Living

In 1 Corinthians, Paul will teach and challenge the church in Corinth to live out their faith in holiness—right living in a wrong world. But he starts this discussion by laying a foundation for divine wisdom or “right thinking.”

In effect, Paul is saying, ***if you think like God you will act like Him!***



Living TRUTH



THE LETTERS OF PAUL