

**Life Group Leaders Guide**

**The Challenges of Doing Life Together**

***The Book of 1 Corinthians***

*Based on the Sermon Series*

***“Church In The Wild”***

*by Pastor Ben Cross*

***First Baptist Church of Eugene***

***Published: September 2015***

***Version 1.5***



# The Challenges of Doing Life Together

## *The Book of 1 Corinthians*

To Our Valued Leaders,

We all have to live together with people in life. Whether the situation involves a close friendship, a roommate, a spouse, a small group, a family, an office, a campus club, a neighborhood, a team, or even a church congregation, the challenges of doing life together are real. For example:

Have you ever faced...?

- Cliques and/or power struggles in your family, workplace, or community organizations which you are part of?
- People who treat you like they are spiritually or intellectually superior to you?
- Immorality that surrounds your everyday life, including your church life?
- Believers who are acting nothing like believers?

Have you ever wondered...?

- What is the proper way to exercise your rights, especially when a friend wrongs you, or you feel that a matter of principle is at stake?
- How we are to handle singleness and marriage in the face of so many attacks on the health of both of these life-situations?
- How to deal with the battle of the sexes?
- What is the path to respecting one another's personalities, gifts, and passions?
- How eternity can ever make a difference in how we live together today?

The church in Corinth was located dead center in the third largest city of the Roman Empire. The challenges of living a Christian lifestyle in the middle of this pagan culture began to influence the behaviors of the church and create confusion of "where the lines should be drawn." Paul had heard a long list of complaints (including factions, incest, court cases, and freedom gone wild) - all from the spiritual Christian hub of Corinth. How could this have happened? Could it ever happen to us? How do we begin to respond and resolve these real life issues today? Welcome to our journey together through 1 Corinthians and *The Challenges of Doing Life Together*.

Paul's written instructions to the Corinthians is a practical and relevant teaching to help each of us learn how to face and deal with the 'Challenges of Doing Life Together'.

I hope you enjoy the journey through 1 Corinthians as much as we did preparing this guide for you!

Let's get started...



# The Challenges of Doing Life Together

## (1 Corinthians)

Sermon Date	Scripture	Passage Title	Page
	<i>Kick-off Gathering</i>	<i>The Challenges of Doing Life Together</i>	3
Oct 4	1 Cor. 1:1-3	An Introduction to 1 Corinthians	7
Oct 11	1 Cor. 1:1-9	Washed, Working, and Waiting	8
Oct 18	1 Cor. 1:10-17	Is Christ Divided?	9
Oct 25	1 Cor. 1:18-31	God's Wisdom Displayed	10
Nov 1	1 Cor. 2:1-5	God's Power Demonstrated	11
Nov 8	1 Cor. 2:6-16	God's Secret Revealed	12
Nov 15	1 Cor. 3:1-23	It's All Yours!	13
Nov 22		State of the Church Address-An Annual Report	
Nov 29	1 Cor. 4:1-21	Straight Talk About Spiritual Leaders	14
Dec 6	1 Cor. 5:1-13	When Christ's Body Requires Radical Surgery	15
Dec 11-20		Christmas Worship Services-Serve as a Group During Break	
Dec 27		Group Break	
Jan 3	1 Cor. 6:1-11	Christians and Court	16
Jan 10	1 Cor. 6:12-20	Our Bodies & Sexual Sin	17
Jan 17	1 Cor. 7:1-24	Concerning Life's "Situation" When Saved: Remain with God	18
Jan 24	1 Cor. 7:1-24	Concerning Life's "Situation" When Saved: Remain with God ( <i>cont.</i> )	19
Jan 31		Fellowship or Serve as a Group	
Feb 7	1 Cor. 7:25-40	Concerning Singles: Fly Solo, If You Can	20
Feb 14	1 Cor. 8:1-13	Concerning Disputable Things: When Being Right is Wrong	21-22
Feb 21	1 Cor. 9:1-27	Concerning Disputable Things: Run to Win	23
Feb 28	1 Cor. 10:1-13	Concerning disputable Things: Good Lessons from Bad Examples	24
Mar 6	1 Cor. 10:14-22	Concerning Disputable Things: Are You Two-Timing God?	25
Mar 13	1 Cor. 10:23-11:1	Concerning Disputable Things: That They May Be Saved	26
Mar 20	1 Cor. 11:2-16	Concerning Public Worship: Honor Your Head	27
Mar 27		Fellowship/Communion or Serve as a Group	
Apr 3	1 Cor. 11:17-34	Concerning Public Worship: Honor Your Body	28
Apr 10	1 Cor. 12:1-11	Concerning True Spirituality: The Spirituals	29
Apr 17	1 Cor. 12:12-31	Concerning True Spirituality: Body Life	30
Apr 24	1 Cor. 13:1-13	Concerning True Spirituality: The Ultimate Sine qua Non	31
May 1	1 Cor. 14:1-25	Concerning True Spirituality: Edify Others with Clarity	32
May 8	1 Cor. 14:26-40	Concerning True Spirituality: Edify others with Order	33
May 15		Fellowship or Serve as a Group	
May 22		Fellowship or Serve as a Group	
May 29	1 Cor. 15:1-19	Concerning the Gospel: Resurrection Certainty	34
Jun 5	1 Cor. 15:20-34	Concerning the Gospel: Resurrection Logic	35-36
Jun 12	1 Cor. 15:35-58	Concerning the Gospel: Resurrection Victory	37
Jun 19	1 Cor. 16:1-5	Concerning the Collection: Give as Given	38
Jun 26	1 Cor. 16:6-24	Lead Like Jesus: A Velvet Covered Brick-Year End Review	39
	Appendix	Group Communion - Facilitators Guide	40
	Appendix	Profile of a Disciple	41-42



# An Introduction to 1 Corinthians

## *1 Corinthians 1:1-3*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. It is so great to begin this year's study. What is one thing that you are especially excited about as we dive into the book of 1 Corinthians?
2. As we begin this exciting journey, I would like you to think about the following questions:
  - a. Have you ever received a letter from a friend where he/she confronts you for an offense, or you are reprimanded at work from your boss?
  - b. What was your initial reaction?
  - c. What benefit, if any, did you find in this experience
3. Let's have someone read this passage which sets the stage for Paul's letter to the Corinthians.
  - a. Have someone else read the story a second time. (Option: use a second translation to add value and context)

### Discovery Questions:

1. The words Paul uses to identify himself and the Corinthians in the opening lines of his epistle are very deliberate (vv. 1-3). In light of the issues he will address with them, why do you think he describes himself as "*called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus?*" And why do you think he calls his readers as "*those sanctified in Christ and called to be holy ones (saints)?*"
2. What can we learn about the nature of the church, especially since Paul refers to a local church (believers living on earth in a given location – *Corinth*) with the same language (*church of God*) used elsewhere in the New Testament to refer to the universal church (all believers for all time)?
3. In your own words, how would you describe the "*grace and peace*" we receive from God? What do you think it looks like in a believer's life?
4. From what you know about ancient Corinth and what Paul writes in this epistle, what parallels can you draw with Eugene and Springfield and your own church?
5. What does Paul *being an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God* mean to you? How does that affect the way you read his epistles, especially when he writes things that run crossways with your thoughts or feelings and today's cultural norms?
6. What is one thing that struck you, or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked, or that confuses you, about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. In what ways are you struggling with *being in the world but not of it*?
2. Have you ever wanted to live in a Christian commune, get "off the grid", and disconnect from society? What motivated you to think this way? In what ways would that kind of separation from the world possibly short-circuit your ability to live, love, and lead like Jesus?
3. How should you, as a Christian, engage with our culture? What does it mean for you to be authentically spiritual in a secular world?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Washed, Working, and Waiting

## *1 Corinthians 1:1-9*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. How do people tend to disappoint you in life? How do you tend to react when that person is someone you don't know? When it is someone you know well, like your spouse, or a child, or a close friend?
2. Let's have someone read this passage which begins with thanksgiving.
  - a. Have someone else read the passage a second time. (Option: use a second translation to add value and context)

### Discovery Questions:

1. Why does Paul thank God for the very things that are now a source of problems among the Corinthians (vv. 5-7)? How is God's faithfulness (v. 9) important in this?
2. Identify the truths about God you find in vv.1-9.
3. Identify the truths about believers you find in vv. 1-9.
4. Choose one truth from each list and explain why they are personally important to you.
5. How does the truth you selected about God tie-in with the truth you selected about believers?
6. What is one thing that struck you, or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked, or that confuses you, about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. How have you seen the truths you selected at work in your life?
2. How do you tend to fall short in relation to these truths? How would you like to see them affect your life?
3. What is one thing you would like to do to see your life changed in one of these areas? Please be specific.
4. Or, how is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Is Christ Divided?

## *1 Corinthians 1:10-17*

### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. Who has been a “hero” of the faith for you? What is one way you would like to become more like him or her?
2. Let’s have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul’s letter to the Corinthians.

### **Discovery Questions:**

1. How many churches would you guess are in Eugene/Springfield?
2. If Paul were writing this passage to us today, what Christian labels or celebrities would he likely insert in this text?
3. In what ways does the problem of Corinthian divisions show up today in the church?
4. How does this passage contrast sharply with the previous passage?
5. What is the difference between what Cloe’s people reported to Paul and the sin of gossip?
6. Paul uses sarcasm throughout this Epistle. Where do you find it in this passage? Is sarcasm a legitimate form of communication for a Christian? If so, when? If not, why?
7. How can words of eloquence (skills of oratory) empty the gospel of its power?
8. What is one thing that struck you, or was new to, you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked, or that confuses you, about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Application Questions:**

1. Can you share a time when your admiration of a Christian leader put him/her on a pedestal? What are the dangers of doing this for you and for the one you admire?
2. How can you appropriately express appreciation to Christian leaders and, at the same time, keep Christ central?
3. How can you appropriately embrace the distinctives of your local church (or denomination) and, at the same time, respect, honor, and fellowship with believers who do not share these same distinctives?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week’s prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? How could pray for you? For our church family?

# God's Wisdom Displayed

## *1 Corinthians 1:18-31*

### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. How would you describe your status in the world? Would people consider you to be wise, intellectual, influential, or from a prestigious family?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### **Discovery Questions:**

1. Paul contrasts "the message of the Cross" with "the wisdom of the world." Read Isaiah 53:4-6, 1 Corinthians 15:3, Philippians 2:6-11, and Colossians 1:19-23.
  - a. What is the message of the Cross?
  - b. Why is this message foolishness to those who are perishing?
  - c. Why is it the power of God to believers?
2. Why did God choose to express his power through foolishness, weakness, and lowliness?
3. What does this reveal about the divisions in the Corinthian church (1:12)?
4. Is Paul rejecting education, science, philosophy and other academic disciplines? If not, then what is he rejecting?
5. Paul uses four terms to describe what Christ is to those who know him—wisdom (Colossians 2:2, 8-10), righteousness (Romans 3:22), holiness (Galatians 2; 20), and redemption (1 Peter 1:18-19). How would you define each one?
6. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Application Questions:**

1. In what ways are the unbelievers you know more like the Jews who wanted miraculous signs (practical evidence) to prove the gospel, or more like the Greeks who wanted philosophical proofs?
2. What is one way you can get through to such people with the truth of the Gospel?
3. What is one insight from this passage you would like to take to heart for your own life?
4. How would you like this truth to affect the way you think and behave?
5. What steps can you take to cooperate with God in bringing this about?
6. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# God's Power Demonstrated

## *1 Corinthians 2:1-5*

### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. What convinced you to first believe in the gospel—factual evidence, intellectual reasoning, emotional attraction, the lives of people you know?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### **Discovery Questions:**

1. How did the wisdom of God in the Cross of Christ affect Paul's life and conduct in ministry?
2. How is the Spirit's power demonstrated in our lives? Read Ephesians 5:17-21.
3. What does it mean to preach, not with eloquence, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power? Read John 16:8-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10.
4. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Application Questions:**

1. In what ways have you experienced the Spirit's power through your life—where you realize what is happening in or through you is a "God-thing" and not from your natural abilities?
2. In what ways are you not seeing the Spirit's power in your life? Why do you think this is happening?
3. What steps can you take in your thoughts or behaviors to partner with God in seeing this change?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. Let's pray for our brothers and sisters who are being persecuted for their faith.
3. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# God's Secret Revealed

## 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

### Warm-up Questions:

1. In light of a great deal of interest in "spiritual" things in the Eugene/Springfield area, how does the idea of a "spiritual" person in our society today differ from the spiritual person according to Paul?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. From this passage, how would you describe the difference between God's wisdom and human wisdom?
2. What point is Paul making in his quote of Isaiah 64:4?
3. "*We have the mind of Christ*" and "*we are subject to no man's judgment*" have been slogans of cults and individuals who accept no authority beyond their own opinions. In light of the context of this passage, what do think Paul means by these statements?
4. In Paul's day (much like ours), philosophers were respected as people who could search out deep truths. In contrast, how does Paul say ultimate truth/spiritual truth is truly discovered?
5. How does the condition for receiving spiritual wisdom differ from those necessary to gain the world's wisdom? Why is that significant for unity in the church (the larger context of this passage)?
6. The Corinthians were measuring "truth and success" by how powerful, influential, and articulate someone was. How is that idea communicated today? How does that square with the Gospel?
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. Was there a time when you experienced the Holy Spirit enabling you to understand God's wisdom in the Scripture? If so, how has this affected your attitudes and behavior? If not, what do you think you should do about this?
2. Do you have the mind of Christ as Paul speaks about in this passage? If so, how has this affected your daily choices?
3. What is one truth from this passage that is most personally relevant to you?
4. How do you fall short or want to grow in this area?
5. What action can you take this week to pursue this desire?
6. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# It's All Yours!

## 1 Corinthians 3:1-23

### Warm-up Questions:

1. What is one thing you've recently done to help build up Christ's church in some way?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. In what sense are the Corinthians "spiritual" and in what sense are they "fleshly"? (Note: "worldly" should be translated "fleshly" in this passage) Can a Christian be both "spiritual" and "fleshly"? Why or why not?
2. Read Galatians 5:16-24, where Paul contrasts "fleshly" and "spiritual" attitudes and behavior. What does the fact that those who know Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (v. 24), mean to you?
3. Even though leaders/teachers in the church will undergo a stricter judgment (James 3:1) when their works are evaluated, do you believe I Cor. 3:10-17 only applies to leaders/teachers? Why or why not?
4. What does it mean that we are "of Christ"? In what sense is Christ "of God"?
5. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. Are you more like the "fleshly" or "spiritual" person described in this passage and Galatians 5? Please explain.
2. What qualities of being "spiritual" are you wanting to see grow in your life this year?
3. How does knowing that "all are yours" (Christian leaders, the world, life, death, the present and future) and "you are of Christ and Christ is of God," motivate you to be spiritual?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Straight Talk About Spiritual Leaders

## *1 Corinthians 4:1-21*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. What significant symbol of trust were you given early on which later resulted in something funny happening—maybe babysitting, housesitting, key to Dad’s car, preparing a meal for special guests, caring for a pet, etc.? What mess did you make while entrusted with this duty?
2. Let’s have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul’s letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. Describe in your own words the distinct meanings of *servant* and *steward* and how they go together for the Christian leader.
2. What is the difference between a “clear conscience” and being “innocent”?
3. What lesson do you learn from Paul’s example that it is a small thing to him to be judged by others, that he doesn’t even judge himself, and for us to wait for the Lord’s judgment before drawing conclusions about a person’s motives in life and ministry?
4. Corinthian factions judged one another by the reputation of the leader they followed. What then does Paul mean by the proverb he quotes in verse 6?
5. What does Paul mean by not going “beyond what is written” in order to avoid the pride and shame of comparing one leader against another?
6. What attitude problems were present in the Corinthian church to provoke Paul’s statements of sarcastic irony in verses 8, 10, and 18-19?
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. Judging people’s motives, including a leader’s motives, is presumptuous. What insight(s) from Paul’s confrontation of the Corinthians is most helpful for you to not do this?
2. How would you respond to Paul’s comments in vv. 8-13, or to the threat of his discipline as an apostle in vv. 18-21, if your church received this letter from him?
3. Paul calls us to imitate his way of life. What quality of Paul’s leadership would like to see developed in your life?
4. How will this chapter affect the way you pray for your pastors and elders? For parents and civic leaders?
5. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week’s prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# When Christ's Body Requires Radical Surgery

## *1 Corinthians 5:1-13*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. In matters of discipline at home or at work, do you tend to be harsh, permissive, inconsistent, or helpful? Explain.
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. Why does Paul call for the man's immediate dismissal, rather than telling the church to follow the process of church discipline Jesus outlined in Matthew 18:15-17?
2. What do you think Paul means when he tells the church to "deliver this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh"?
3. From the yeast analogy, what is Paul's concern if this situation is allowed to go on without discipline?
4. What truths are you reminded of about the Christian life when Paul writes, "*Clean out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened*"?
5. Why is there a difference between the way Christians relate to those outside the faith and the way they relate to believers?
6. How do you reconcile Paul's teaching here with that in I Cor. 4:3-5 and Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:1) about not judging?
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. If you were a Corinthian church member, how would you explain to your unsaved neighbor why this man had been expelled from the church?
2. Are there any sins that a professing Christian could practice that would make you refuse to associate with him or her? If so, what are those sins? If not, why not?
3. Without naming names, is there a professing believer you know who is secretly committing one of the sins Paul lists in this passage—sexual immorality, greed, idolater, reviler, drunkard, swindler? Would you be willing, for their sake and the sake of the church's integrity to gently urge him/her to repent? If so, when will you do this? If s/he refuses to listen to you, what will you do next?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Christians In Court

## *1 Corinthians 6:1-11*

### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. What is one of the craziest disputes you've ever observed in a church body? How do you, or other members of your church, settle disputes between believers?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### **Discovery Questions:**

1. Why is it scandalous to Paul for a Christian to take another believer to court in front of unbelievers?
2. If a Christian feels that another Christian has cheated him, what do you think he should do?
3. What do you think he should do if the one he accuses is unwilling to submit to the judgment of some particular body of believers?
4. Three times in this passage Paul asks the question, "Do you not know...?" (vv. 2,3,9) What is the single focus of these three questions for the believer?
5. Why does having lawsuits prove that the Corinthian have been "defeated" (v. 7)?
6. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Application Questions:**

1. It's probable that Paul's teaching here is derived from Jesus' teaching in Luke 6:27-28. How do you think you should apply this teaching?
2. Christian A has cheated Christian B with the confidence that B would not dare take A to court. How would you deal with A in a biblical fashion?
3. When is it appropriate for you to relinquish your rights as an American in a dispute with a believer or unbeliever, and when is it appropriate for you to assert them? Note Paul's example in doing both in Acts 16:37-39; 22:25-29; 25:10-11.
4. How does knowing who you are in Christ affect your response to someone who has wronged you?
5. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? How can it help our church do the same?

# Our Bodies & Sexual Sin

## 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

### Warm-up Questions:

1. As we start this week's passage I would like you to think about the following questions:
  - a. Do you like your body? Do you wish the Lord had given you a different one?
  - b. How does your attitude about your body affect the way you treat it?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. What are all the reasons Paul gives in this passage for not having sex outside of marriage?
2. How does uniting with someone sexually affect a person afterward?
3. The phrase "*everything is permissible for me*" was a slogan of one of the Corinthians factions who felt they were reigning with Christ already (4:8) and they were liberated from rules in this creation. As a heretical group in Rome put it a few decades later, "for a king, there is no law prescribed." They cited Matthew 17:25-26 as proof that they could do as they pleased, and the Corinthians may have been thinking along similar lines. Where do you see this kind of attitude in the American culture today? In the church?
4. The phrase "*food for the stomach and the stomach for food*" was another Corinthian slogan. Both Jesus and Paul taught that the physical act of eating and digesting is morally neutral and do not affect a person's spiritual state (Matthew 15:10-20). The libertine Corinthians believed that sexual acts were in the same category: what the body did had no effect on the spirit. How does Paul refute this claim?
5. What does it mean to be one with a prostitute in body and to be one with Christ in spirit? Is it possible to be one with both? Why or why not?
6. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. How do you feel about Paul's statement that your body does not belong to you, that it was bought by Christ?
2. How does knowing that your body is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit on earth impact the way you treat your body in terms of how you dress, eat, drink, exercise, and behave sexually?
3. What is one insight from this passage you would like to apply to your life? What will you do this week to pursue that desire?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Life's "Situation" When Saved-Remain with God

## *1 Corinthians 7:1-24*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. As we start this week's passage I would like you to think about the following questions:
  - a. If married or engaged, tell us how you met and grew into love. How did you know this was "the one"?
  - b. If dating, tell us what attracts you to your boy/girlfriend.
  - c. If not dating at this time, what are the qualities that you would look for in a mate?
  - d. If single, and happily so, tell us what advantages you are finding in being single.
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. What is Paul's general rule for life following one's new birth as a believer in Christ (vv. 17, 20, 24)?
2. Whereas 6:12-20 dealt with sexual promiscuity, in 7:1 Paul quotes another slogan by a faction within the Corinthian church that advocated sexual abstinence even within marriage. How might this relate to the problem in 6:12-20? What reasons does Paul give for rejecting this view (vv. 2-5, 9)?
3. What is the underlying principle about sex in marriage from verses 3-5?
4. Why does temporary abstinence help a spouse devote him/herself to prayer (v. 5)?
5. Paul was single and lived a celibate life. He calls both marriage and celibacy a grace gift from God (*charismata* – v. 7). How does this affect your view of marriage and those who choose to remain single? (6-7)
6. In each of the following passages, whom does Paul advise to marry, and why? (vv. 8-9; 36-38)
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. Sometimes new Christians make crazy changes in their lives based on their newfound "freedom" in Christ. If this is true about you, what problems did that cause you, which could have been avoided by applying Paul's principle? When is pursuing a change in circumstances appropriate?
2. How has your marital status (married, divorced, widowed, or single) given you unique opportunities to serve Christ?
3. Whether you have never been married, are currently married, divorced, widowed, or single, what is one way you can show your "undivided devotion" to the Lord this week?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Life's "Situation"

## When Saved-Remain with God (*cont.*)

### 1 Corinthians 7:1-24

#### Warm-up Questions:

1. Describe a low point in your marriage or a relationship with a good friend and how you worked things out.
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### Discovery Questions:

1. As a result of the notion in 7:1, what were some of the married people concluding (vv. 10-14)? How does Paul deal with these errors?
2. In what sense is an unbelieving spouse and children "made holy" (sanctified) by the presence of a believing spouse in the home (v. 14)? How does verse 16 help you in understanding what Paul means?
3. What principles does Paul give for Christians who wonder what to do in mixed marriages where the non-believing spouse is unhappy and wants out of the relationship? (vv. 15-16)?
4. What does the fact that conservative biblical scholars (who are unequivocally committed to the authority of Scripture and sound biblical interpretation) differ broadly on the matter of divorce and remarriage suggest to you?
5. Paul is very clear about God's ideal in marriage; however, in every life situation Paul cites in this passage (vv. 1-7, vv. 8-9, vv. 10-11, vv. 12-16), he makes some kind of concession in marriage in the face of human frailty. What lesson can we learn from this?
6. Why does God hate divorce? (Malachi 2:16). Why did God divorce Israel? (Isaiah 50:1; Jeremiah 3:8)
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?

#### Application Questions:

1. When do you think it is permissible, biblically speaking, for a Christian who is divorced to remarry another believing spouse?
2. Paul's teaching about divorce here primarily relates to the false idea that to be spiritual meant to forgo sex in marriage (7:1). What principles might he suggest to a person considering divorce for other reasons (e.g., cruelty, neglect, and emotional trauma)?
3. In what ways would the faithful practice of biblical discipline (Matthew 18:12-20) by local churches help in dealing with the matter of remarriage when a couple in the church family divorce?
4. Keeping grace and truth in balance, how should the church (and you as individual) respond to believers who have divorced without biblical grounds and then remarried another spouse? What, if anything, should be required of them to be a part of the church's (and your) fellowship?
5. Without naming names, are you aware of any marriages between Christians that are in trouble? How can you come alongside them and help "save" their marriage?
6. What programs are available at your church to help people prepare for and be enriched in their marriage relationship?
7. What implications does Paul's teaching in this passage have for your life? What truth or truths would you like to take to heart?
8. How would you like this to affect your priorities and actions?
9. What steps do you think you should take during the next week or so along these lines?
  - How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Singles Fly Solo, If You Can

## *1 Corinthians 7:6-9, 25-40*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. Have you ever tried to play the role of a matchmaker? How did that turn out?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. What difference, if any, is our response to what Paul writes when he bases his teaching on the teaching ministry of Christ or on his own advice as an Apostle of Christ? (e.g., vv. 6, 10, 12, 25)
2. Do you think the present crisis Paul refers to in verses 26 and 29 applies to our situation today? Why or why not?
3. How can "those who have wives...live as they had none (v. 29), or those who mourn or are happy live as if they were not (v. 30), or those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it (v. 31)?" What does this mean and how should a person do this in practice?
4. Whether people marry or not, what are the overriding issues?
5. Even though our English translations often miss this, Paul is careful to use two different Greek words when talking about a married man's interests being "*divided*" in verses 34 and the importance of having an "*undistracted*" devotion to Christ in verse 35. Is it possible to have divided interests from the demands of marriage and still be undistracted in your devotion to Christ?
6. Verse 35 supplies the most crucial clue in the whole Bible for determining whether or not marriage is appropriate for a single person. What is it?
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. How might the culture and programming at your church be off-putting for a single person? What specific efforts do you believe your church can take to change this?
2. How does knowing that singleness is good (vv. 8, 26) and a grace gift from God (v. 7) affect your perception of being single?
3. If you are married, do you have any single friends? If you are single, are you taking any initiative to connect with couples? If not, why?
4. What are some specific ways you can intentionally honor singles to make feel welcome and that they belong?
5. What are some specific ways you can unintentionally dishonor single people and make them feel awkward and unvalued?
6. How does knowing that Jesus was single encourage you as a single?
7. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Disputable Things: When Being Right Is Wrong

## *1 Corinthians 8:1-13*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. As we start this week's passage I would like you to choose one of the following scenarios and discuss as a group how you would respond.
  - *You have a roommate at college:* They are a new believer. Throughout his adolescence his life was dominated by drugs, sex, and rock music. For them the three are inseparably linked. Now they are a Christian, but have a novice understanding of God and the Gospel is so unsophisticated that, for them, obedience to Jesus is inseparably linked to purging one's life of rock music. You were raised in a Christian home, and you love Christian rock and decent rock music in general. What are you going to do with all those new CD's you just bought?
  - *You're a member of the local Rotary Club:* You're at a club board meeting in the president's home. His wife has graciously prepared a delicious meal for everyone present. They are Italian, and it's a part of their custom to enjoy a nice glass of wine with their evening meal. And this is not the grocery store stuff. This is expensive wine. Everyone at the meeting is very comfortable with enjoying the wine. As a believer should you?
  - *You're a youth pastor:* Even though you know there are R-rated movies that may be permissible for a Christian to watch, you suspect that as a leader by going to an "R-rated" movie you may be giving tacit permission to your youth to attend any R-rated (or worse) movie and thus derail their progress in Christ during these critically formative years. An unbelieving couple from the neighborhood that you have been working hard to develop a relationship with calls and asks you and your wife to attend a movie with them, and then after the movie go out for dinner. The movie happens to be rated "R", but it's for reasons you can tolerate morally. It also deals with subject matter that will easily lend itself to a great discussion about God and life that could lead to a presentation of the gospel. What do you do?
  - *You invite some neighbors over for an evening together, and your elderly mother is staying with you at the time:* In the middle of the evening you discover that your neighbors play Pinochle. You love Pinochle, but as you set down to the table, in the back of your mind, you remember your mother saying that in no uncertain terms how evil it was to play with face cards. The cards aren't a concern to you. You've settled that in your mind. It's Mom. You wonder if it's okay to be doing this because you know Mom wouldn't approve. Besides, it's Sunday night. Do you wait for Mom to die, or do you play cards?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. Paul confronts another faction in the Corinthian church whose error was in the way they were handling "disputable things"—non-moral issues in life that carried a lot of cultural baggage. Standing fast in their liberty in Christ, they engaged freely in these behaviors even though it was harmful to other believers. Paul presents four principles to guide our behavior in the grey areas of life:
  - The Principle of Love: *Love is superior to knowledge.* (8:2-3)
  - The Principle of Liberty: *Sound theology leads to liberty.* (8:4-6, 8)
  - The Principle of Conscience: *What we believe has as much to do with our bios (life experiences) as it does our Bibles.* (8:7)
  - The Principle of Community: *How we behave helps or hinders God's work in others.* (8:9-12)What, if any, clarification do you need regarding these principles?

2. What does Paul mean by the “strong” and the “weak” brother/sister?
3. How is it that what is not sin for one group is sin for another?
4. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

**Application Questions:**

1. Where in your life is one person’s “freedom” another person’s “stumbling block”? (e.g., alcoholic drinks, style of clothes, style of music, standard of living, political causes)
2. Of the issues where you have been on the “weak” side, how did you feel toward those who ignored your vulnerability?
3. Why is it important to carefully protect the integrity of your own conscience?
4. Have you found that when you are willing to compromise your conscience in doubtful areas you are more willing to compromise your conscience with truly moral issues? Explain.
5. Share a time when you were engaging in an activity not prohibited in the Bible, but you discovered that a believer who observed you doing this was deeply offended. How did you respond? How is this situation different from discovering that your behavior caused another, less mature Christian, to stumble into sin?
6. How have you seen your conscience change over the years as you have grown in your understanding of the Gospel?
7. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

**Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week’s prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Disputable Things

## Run To Win

### *1 Corinthians 9:1-27*

#### Warm-up Questions:

1. In any given situation, do you think you are more likely to do what you want, or what someone else wants? Do you think this is good or bad, and why?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### Discovery Questions:

1. Why is fully recognizing our rights, as Paul does with the Corinthians, important in restraining our liberty to enjoy them?
2. What does Jesus' incarnation teach us about what it means to be in the world but not of it?
3. What does Paul mean that *he becomes all things to all people that he might save some*? Did this mean he was a people-pleaser?
4. Salvation in the Bible includes many different facets: justification/regeneration, sanctification, and glorification. Briefly define each in your own words and describe how and when each happens in the life of a believer. Which aspects of our salvation are unconditional and conditional (i.e., which do and do not depend on our good works)? (See Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 8:1-25, esp. vv. 1, 12, 17; 2 Peter 1:3-11, esp. vv. 3, 5, 11)
5. What, if any, aspect of our salvation can be lost?
6. What is the imperishable crown that a Christian laborer receives? Does this conflict with the truth that our acceptance before God is a gift of grace? What is the difference between acceptance and approval?
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### Application Questions:

1. What rights have you willingly given up in order to be more effective in reaching a lost person with the Gospel? If none, why?
2. In what respect are you doing *anything short of sin* to win people to Christ?
3. Imagine for a moment when you will stand before Christ and give an account for how you applied the grace he invested in your life to serve his Kingdom. If that were to happen tonight, how would you feel—ashamed or confident (1 John 2:28)?
4. If you believe you would have regrets at Jesus' return, what needs to change in your life to remove that regret? How can we help you with that?
5. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Disputable Things

## Good Lessons from Bad Examples

### *1 Corinthians 10:1-13*

#### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. As a child, in what ways do you remember “testing” or “pushing the envelope” with your parents? How did your parents respond when you tried this?
2. Let’s have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul’s letter to the Corinthians.

#### **Discovery Questions:**

1. After reminding the Corinthians of the discipline needed to “run the race” (9:24-27), in I Cor. 10:1-5, Paul cites the events related to Israel’s exodus from Egypt (Exodus 13-17). Why was this reminder necessary in view of his warning in this passage?
2. What “sacraments” is Paul pointing with his example of Israel? What point is Paul making by showing that these “sacraments” failed to protect Israel from God’s anger?
3. How do the four examples from the Israel’s past (Numbers 10-15) in verses 6-10 relate to the Corinthian situation?
4. What can we learn about sin when we see that grumbling and testing the Lord resulted in the same deadly consequences as idolatry and sexual immorality?
5. What does it mean to “test” the Lord?
6. How does verse 12 capture the essence of Paul’s warning to believers in this passage?
7. Why is it significant that every temptation you encounter is “common” to other people (v. 13)?
8. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### **Application Questions:**

1. If you were engaged in sharing the Gospel with a couple who live next door to you, would you attend a New Year’s Eve party at their home that you suspected might include drunkenness (Note Jesus’ example in Matthew 9:9-11 and Luke 19:1-10)? Could you be “all things to all men” (9:22) in this situation and, at the same time, be able to resist temptation and “be careful that you don’t fall” (10:12)? Please explain.
2. What temptations do you most consistently seem to face?
3. Has there been a time in your life when you tested the Lord? How does Paul’s statement in verse 13 encourage you or frustrate you?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week’s prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Disputable Things Are You Two-Timing God?

## *1 Corinthians 10:14-22*

### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. What kind of environment were you raised in: 1) a permissive environment; 2) a strict, but forgiving environment; or, 3) a legalistic environment (strict and shaming)? How did it impact you? Give an example.
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### **Discovery Questions:**

1. What do drinking the cup and eating the bread mean? How is that a "participation" in Christ's blood and body (see Luke 22:19-20; John 6:53-57)?
2. Why mention eating the Hebrew sacrifices (v. 18) in this context?
3. How do these two illustrations relate to Paul's instruction to avoid participation in the feast at pagan temples?
4. When is jealousy righteous? When is it not? Why is it important to know that the Lord is a jealous God?
5. Why do you think Paul commands us to "flee" from idolatry, rather than to resist it or stand against it?
6. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Application Questions:**

1. What examples exist today that parallel what Paul strictly forbids the Corinthians to participate in at the pagan temple restaurants?
2. You have a colleague at work with whom you've been sharing the Gospel. S/he is Hindu. You invited your friend to attend church with you and s/he accepts. Then, the next week, your Hindu friend invites you to join him/her at one of their sacred dinners where the meal is first offered up to their gods before it is consumed. How do you believe Paul would instruct you to handle this situation?
3. Your child has a new friend at school, and s/he invites your child to a sleep-over at her/his house. When you drop your child off, you notice that the house is decorated with images and articles related to neo-paganism (astrology, goddess worship, etc.) and as you chat with the parent, you discover that one of the games the kids will be playing that evening is with an Ouija Board. What would you do?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Disputable Things That They May Be Saved

## *1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1*

### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. As we start this week's passage I would like you to think about a couple of question:
  - a. What is the difference between the challenge of living by wise principles in the grey areas of life and living by safe, black-and-white rules that define what is and is not permissible?
  - b. What dangers are inherent in each of these approaches?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### **Discovery Questions:**

1. How is Paul's argument against idolatry and immorality similar (v. 23; see 6:12)?
2. In what sense is a Christian "free" (v. 24; see 8:1, 13)? How does this freedom apply to eating sacrificial meat sold in public meat markets (vv. 25-27)?
3. Idolatry can take on many forms. What are two "idols" you see "worshipped" by people around you? When do you find yourself attracted to these idols? How can you guard against this?
4. How does Paul's "don't-ask-don't-tell" approach to social occasions with unbelievers strike you?
5. What is the difference between "causing a person to stumble" and "offending their preferences, opinions, or convictions"?
6. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Application Questions:**

1. As for making judgments calls in life's "grey areas", what principles, so far in this study, have you found most helpful?
2. How do Paul's principles apply to a current situation you are facing?
3. Is your present circumstance one in which you should bend for the sake of the Gospel or refuse to bend for the sake of the Gospel?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Public Worship

## Honor Your Head

### *1 Corinthians 11:2-16*

#### Warm-up Questions:

1. How did you wear your hair 15 years ago?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### Discovery Questions:

1. The word "head" in v. 3 primarily means "source" (as in headwaters, fountainhead), not "authority" (as in prominent, chief) though it does carry that meaning as well). Does this make a difference in your understanding of what Paul is saying here? If so, how?
2. What do you think is the underlying concern that Paul has with the Corinthians that required correction regarding the decorum of men and women in worship?
3. What do you think is meant in this passage by being "covered" or "uncovered"?
4. Paul appeals to culture (vv. 2-6), creation (vv. 7-12), and conscience (vv. 13-16) in making his case as to why it dishonors a man's head for him to pray or prophesy in public with his head covered and it dishonors a woman's head for her to pray or prophesy in public with her head uncovered. What do you think is going on here culturally that was so significant that Paul's admonition about coverings in public worship was in complete concert with a clear and reasoned conscience?
5. Regarding creation, what does Paul mean that man is the image *and glory of God*? Woman is also image of God (Genesis 1:26-28; Paul assumes this), but is *the glory of man*. What do you think this means and what point is Paul making here regarding coverings in public worship?
6. In emphasizing the importance of male headship, how does Paul also emphasize equality between the sexes? (cp. vv. 7-9 and 11-12)
7. Why do you think angels are brought into Paul's argument?
8. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### Application Questions:

1. Do you think women should cover their heads in public worship today? Why or why not?
2. If not, then how should Paul's underlying concern in this passage about God's glory expressed in headship and keeping a clear distinction of the sexes in public worship be practiced today in worship decorum?
3. Do you think the common practice of churches should influence how your church functions (v. 16)? Why or why not?
  - How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning Public Worship

## Honor Your Body

### *1 Corinthians 11:17-34*

#### **Leader's Note:**

1. Consider taking the bread and cup together at the end of the group discussion.
2. Use the "Leaders Communion Guide" at the back of this curriculum.

#### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. Ask one or two group members to describe how they prepare to receive the elements for the Lord's Supper.
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### **Discovery Questions:**

1. What essential truths about the Lord's Supper and Jesus' work for us can you glean from vv. 23-26?
2. Why is the Lord's Supper an essential part of our task of spreading the Gospel (v. 26)? How should this fact affect the way we celebrate it?
3. Notice the repeated phrase "come together" (vv. 18, 20, 33, 34). What does the emphasis on "coming together" and the significance of receiving the elements representing Christ's body say about the nature of the church and the egregiously wrong behavior of the Corinthians?
4. Why should we be careful to avoid taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner (vv. 27, 29-30)?
5. What does Paul mean by partaking of the Communion elements in "an unworthy manner" and how does that relate to doing so "without discerning the body"? (vv. 18-22; 28-29; 31) What or who do you think Paul is referring to here with the phrase "the body"?
6. What in particular here is Paul commanding to examine regarding ourselves before participating in the Lord's Supper?
7. In 4:3-5, Paul says he does not judge himself but lets the Lord judge him. In 11:28-31, he says we should examine and judge (discern) ourselves so that we will not receive disciplinary judgment from the Lord. What kind of self-examination/discernment/judgment do you think Paul commands and what kind does he rebuke?
8. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### **Application Questions:**

1. What insight from this passage is most relevant to your present life?
2. How would you like this to affect your priorities and behaviors?
3. What steps can you take, with God's help, to begin putting this into action?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning True Spirituality

## The Spirituals

### *1 Corinthians 12:1-11*

#### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. What was the best gift you've ever received or gave to another? What was the occasion?
  - a. How many different kinds of work or service situations have you had since you finished school? Which did you find the most satisfying?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### **Discovery Questions:**

1. Obviously, a person can say the words "Jesus is Lord" without being inspired by the Holy Spirit. What do you think Paul means in verse 3?
2. In ancient times, it was universally accepted in paganism that some people, who were in especially close touch with the divine, had special spiritual endowments. Usually, this was understood in terms of trances, ecstatic speech, and the like. Paul points out in verse 2 that the pagan idols themselves are mute, but, as he pointed out in chapter 10, the demons associated with the idols are not and they speak through the pagan devotee! After Pentecost, there were some within the Christian church who manifested spiritual capacities that appeared similar to what was happening in the pagan temples, like speaking in tongues they did not understand.
  - a. From what you've learned about the mindset of some of the factions in the Corinthian church, and those who saw themselves as "the truly spiritual people", what warning or problem does Paul surface in verses 1-3 regarding their fascination with, emphasis on, and status from the gift of tongues?
  - b. Why is the "content" rather than the "experience" of speech most important?
  - c. Note: Tongues is clearly the central focus of Paul's concern as it is the only gift mentioned in all three listings (chapters 12-14), and its proper practice in public worship is the entire focus of chapter 14.
3. Paul associates the broad spectrum of Spirit-endowed gifts, service, and workings in the church with the Persons of the Holy Trinity (vv. 4-6). What does this say about the nature and value of all this variety in the spiritual capacities God gives his children? What does it say about the role these capacities play in the church enjoying the presence and power of God?
4. In your own words, explain the purpose for which God endows his people with these spiritual capacities (v. 7). What are the implications of this fact in your own life?
5. What is Paul's point in verses 8-11?
6. What gifts in this list would you want more information about?
7. Do you think either list is intended to be exhaustive? Why or why not?

#### **Application Questions:**

1. Of the gifts listed here, do any have your name on it? How so?
2. Take time to go around the group affirming the strengths and gifts you see in one another. Take turns having one person sit in silence while the others affirm his or her strengths.
3. Afterward, have each person share what they learned from this time. For example: Were they surprised by what they heard? Are they presently engaged in a ministry in a way or capacity that is consistent with what the group affirmed about them? If not, why?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?

#### **Prayer/Share:**

1. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another?

# Concerning True Spirituality

## Body Life

### *1 Corinthians 12:12-31*

#### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. If you had to compare your function in the Body of Christ to some part of a human body, how would you respond—a hand, eye, brain cell, liver? Why?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### **Discovery Questions:**

1. How are Christian believers like a human body? (vv. 12-13)
2. The word "by" in the phrase "baptized by one Spirit" means "in" or "with". The Spirit is the instrument of this immersion into the Body of Christ. Who is doing the immersing? How does this event in the Christian's relationship with God differ from being "filled with the Spirit" in Ephesians 5:18?
3. What does the metaphor of the body say to Christians who feel inferior to other Christians (vv. 14-20), Christians who feel superior to other Christians (vv. 21-24), and of all of us (vv. 25-26)?
4. How does what Paul writes in v. 18 encourage or discourage you? Why?
5. What does Paul mean when he says it is good for the Corinthians to "eagerly desire the higher gifts" (see v. 28)?  

Note: the form of the Greek word "eagerly desire" could be interpreted as a command—"you (should) eagerly desire..." ), or it could be understood as an indicative, a statement of fact—"you eagerly desire..." Both work well in the context, with it being a command as most likely. What would Paul's point be if it meant it as a command? As a statement of fact?
6. What is an even more excellent way to function as a church than putting greater emphasis on the greater gifts? (v. 31)
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### **Application Questions:**

1. Functioning as a corporate body is a difficult concept for Americans, especially in the Northwest, to grasp with our strong tradition of rugged individualism. How do you see yourself functioning as a "member" of your church family?
2. Do you struggle with feeling that you have little value to offer the church? If so, why?
3. What needs do you notice that are being unmet in our church family? Why have you noticed them? What might that say about your gifts and calling?
4. If you are not presently engaged in a ministry that is well-suited to your interests, talents, gifting, and passion, what action can you take to start moving in that direction this week?
  - How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning True Spirituality

## The Ultimate Sine Qua Non

### *1 Corinthians 13:1-13*

#### Warm-up Questions:

1. As we start this week's passage I would like you to think about one of the following question:
  - a. What is a line from one of your favorite love songs as a teenager?
  - b. In what concrete way(s) did you receive or show love during the past week?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### Discovery Questions:

1. Given the Corinthian's quest for sensational spiritual gifts and power, what is Paul's point in verse 1-3? Why are tongues, prophecy, faith, generosity, and even martyrdom worthless without love? Relate this to 8:1 and 12:7.
2. In your own words, what is love? List the seven characteristics of what love is, and the eight that it is not. (vv. 4-7)
3. What does Paul mean by the phrase "but when the perfect comes"? Why won't the gifts of prophecy, knowledge, and tongues be necessary at that time?
4. Why is love greater than faith and hope?
5. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### Application Questions:

1. Have group members rewrite each of the "love is..." qualities to show what love should look like in their specific situation at home, work, neighborhood, and church.
2. Which aspects of love in a given environment do you find hardest to practice consistently and why?
3. Which one will you work on this week?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning True Spirituality

## Edify Others with Clarity

### *1 Corinthians 14:1-25*

#### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. As we start this week's passage I would like you to think about one of the following questions:
  - a. When you are in a setting where everyone is speaking a language you do not know, how do you feel?
  - b. Have you ever been in a church service when someone led in prayer or preached in a language you didn't know and no one was there to translate it in your language? Did you benefit at all from the prayer or preaching? Why or why not?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### **Discovery Questions:**

1. Things that were flashy, exciting, and powerful attracted the Corinthians (they knew the love of power more than the power of love). In what ways do you see that tendency in churches today?
2. How does what Paul teaches here about the priority of intelligent corporate edification affect your approach to and expectations of a public worship service?
3. Is there anything about the way you participate in a church service that needs to change in light of what Paul teaches here? If so, what steps can you take to put this into practice?
4. In the context of your spiritual gifts, what is one way you want to "follow the way of love" this week?
5. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### **Application Questions:** Same questions as above

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning True Spirituality

## Edify Others with Order

### *1 Corinthians 14:26-40*

#### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. Describe an incident where you chose to obey someone in authority over you, even though you did not agree with him/her.
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### **Discovery Questions:**

1. What is wrong with letting everyone in the worship service speak aloud in tongues at once (vv. 23, 27-28)?
2. What reasons does Paul give for saying that "women should remain silent in the churches" (vv. 32-40)?
3. How does this square with what Paul says about women praying and prophesying in worship services in chapter 11?
4. What do you think Paul means by "the Law" in verse 34? How does this relate to the theological basis he gives in chapter 11 from Genesis and creation?
5. What do you think was happening with the Corinthian women in their church services that was "dishonoring"? In view of this, and what we learned in chapter 11, in what specific way do you believe the women were to remain silent in the church services? Paul does not address single women here. What is your take on that?
6. How does what Paul instructs in this passage, as well as the entire letter, relate to the issue of authority? (vv. 36-40)
  - What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### **Application Questions:**

1. Do you struggle with submission to authority? If so, why?
2. When you read a direct command in the Bible that does not set well with you, how do you respond? Is it okay to question such things? If so, how?
3. How is all this about prophecy and tongues relevant to you and order in our church?
4. How is what Paul instructed about women remaining silent in the church relevant to order in our church?
5. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### **Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning the Gospel Resurrection Certainty

## *1 Corinthians 15:1-19*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. "If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times..." Regarding what issue was that true of your parents with you? How about you with your kids or your students or your employees?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. Why does Paul remind them of the Gospel? (vv. 1-2)
2. What about Christ is of "first importance"? (vv. 3-8)
3. Why stress Christ's appearances? (vv. 5-8)
4. In summary, what three kinds of evidence does Paul give that Christ was indeed raised from the dead?
5. Why the stress on God's grace? (vv. 9-11)
6. What is the underlying problem in Corinth that prompted the need for this discourse? (v. 12) Whose resurrection, in particular, was in question in the minds of some in the Corinthian church? How was their view on the resurrection influenced by the dominant worldview of their culture?
7. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. If you had to explain four facts of the Gospel to an interested friend, what would you say?
2. How would you offer convincing reasons for believing in the Gospel for those who explain it away?
3. Where would you be now if not for God's grace in your life? In what specific ways has the resurrected Christ transformed you?
4. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning the Gospel

## Resurrection Logic

### *1 Corinthians 15:20-34*

#### **Warm-up Questions:**

1. If you had to write an old-fashioned, rhyming epitaph for your tombstone, what would you write?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### **Discovery Questions:**

1. What false teaching is being spread among the Corinthians? (v. 12) How would Greek dualism, the predominant world-view of that day, have influenced the Corinthians toward this false teaching? (Note the response to Paul's sermon on Mars Hill regarding Christ's resurrection by the Greek philosophers in Acts 17.)
2. Locate the 11 "ifs" in verses 12-19 and 29-34. From these statements, if there is no resurrection of the dead, what problems emerge both for the Corinthians and for Paul?
3. What central proof does Paul continually point to as evidence for the hope of the believer's resurrection?
4. Why is our faith in Christ useless and pitiable, if He has not been raised? What did His resurrection prove and accomplish?
5. Most scholars believe when Paul speaks of some Corinthians being baptized for the dead, he is referring to some form of vicarious baptism (i.e., the living being baptized in water on behalf of the deceased, believing their physical baptism will benefit the destiny of the deceased in the spirit realm in v. 29). How would this behavior be utterly absurd, if there is no physical resurrection of the dead?  
Note: Baptism for the dead is never taught anywhere in the Bible. It is only mentioned here descriptively as something a few Corinthians were doing at the time. Such practice is not found anywhere else in the early church or in church history for the centuries following. There is no parallel found in ancient pagan ritual as well. It smacks of a "magical" view of sacramentalism of the worst kind, where a ritual rite, performed for someone else, can have a saving effect on someone who never believed in Christ before they died.
6. Does it surprise you that Paul does not "blow a gasket" over what appears to be an egregious departure from the Gospel?  
Note: One possible solution is, although he does not condone their behavior in any way, Paul does not see what they are doing as being as heretical as we might imagine, because maybe they were actually being baptized for loved ones who had believed in Jesus and were saved, but for whatever reason had died without being baptized in water.
7. What does the idea of "firstfruits" (vv. 20, 23) reveal about the way Christ's resurrection relates to ours?
8. From the firstfruits analogy (vv. 21-28), what insights do you see about our future? What do we learn about the Trinity in this paragraph?
9. How does the firstfruits analogy regarding Christ's resurrection guaranteeing our resurrection fit into God's future? (vv. 23-28)
10. Why is it important that Jesus is fully human as well as fully divine? (v. 21)
11. In this chapter we see an example of how believing in a certain doctrine about Christ (His resurrection) determines whether or not you're saved. What other doctrines do you believe carry this same level of importance?
12. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

**Application Questions:**

1. What difference does the resurrection and knowing that ultimately death will be destroyed make in terms of hope and courage in your life right now?
2. How does knowing that every enemy of Christ will eventually be put “under his feet” shape your attitude toward Jesus and toward those who oppose him in society today?
3. From Paul’s argument, why is your resurrection from the dead not only inevitable but absolutely necessary for God’s ultimate victory and glory? What new sense of purpose does this give you?
4. In life’s hardships, especially in serving God’s will as *strangers and sojourners in a foreign land*, have you ever felt the kind of futility that says, “*Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*”? How did believing in the resurrection help you out of that malaise?
  - How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

**Prayer/Share:**

1. Is there anything in relation to last week’s prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning the Gospel Resurrection Victory

## *1 Corinthians 15:35-58*

### Warm-up Questions:

1. Try to remember your earliest encounter with death. Maybe a relative died when you were a child. How did the people around you act in that situation? How did you feel and act?  
(Optional: As a teen, what did you like least about your body? As an adult, what do you fear about your body?)
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

### Discovery Questions:

1. What practical problem undercuts belief in the resurrection (v. 35)? How does Paul's analogy with the seed deal with this objection (vv. 36-38, 42-44)?
2. What does this analogy teach you about the resurrection body?
3. How does the analogy of the different types of bodies (vv. 39-41) relate to the initial objection?
4. What is the point of the comparison between Adam and Christ? (vv. 45-49; also vv. 21-22)
5. Identify the contrasting features of the bodies of those who descend from the first and last Adam? (vv. 42-50)
6. What do you think "We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed" means? (v. 51)
7. What does the last trumpet signify? (v. 52)
8. Why must all natural bodies be changed, even those that have not died? (vv. 42-44, 50, 53)
9. What is the relationship between death, sin, and God's law? (vv. 55-56)
10. What practical difference is the hope of the resurrection to have in the lives of believers? (v. 58)
  - What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

### Application Questions:

1. If you are one of those who "are of heaven" (v. 48), how has that affected your life?
2. Whose death was the toughest for you to experience? What did you learn through it?
3. What is the most comforting thing here for you as you consider the reality of your own death? What difference should it make to your life that death is defeated?
4. How has God given you victory over sin recently? (v. 57)
5. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Concerning the Collection

## Give as Given

### *1 Corinthians 16:1-5*

#### Warm-up Questions:

1. In what ways are you involved with Christians in other countries?
2. Let's have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

#### Discovery Questions:

1. Identify at least three important reasons it was appropriate for the churches in Europe and Asia Minor to support financially the suffering believers in Jerusalem.
2. Identify as many principles as you can about giving and the handling of church finances from verses 1-5.
3. The word for "collection" that Paul uses in verse 1 was familiar to the society of his day as referring to giving that is "over and above" what was normally received in taxes, etc. How would you compare this special collection to the practice of giving in our church today? What does this special collection suggest about our regular patterns of giving as believers?
4. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### Application Questions:

1. If what you gave in support of your church's financial needs, including its in-house ministries, its community mission and care, its international mission and care, and other special projects was actually *in keeping with your income*, would the amount you are presently giving change?
2. Is you're giving as a Christian consistent, intentional, planned or unplanned, sporadic, and/or random?
3. In other epistles, Paul refers to giving as an act of worship (Philippians 4:18), a participation in the reward of a missionary's Gospel ministry (Philippians 4:17), an emulation of Jesus Christ in the grace of His giving (2 Corinthians 8:1-9), an investment in one's own fruitful life (2 Corinthians 9:6), a cheerful endeavor (2 Corinthians 9:7). Has that been your experience with giving? If not, why?
4. Do you set aside the "firstfruits" of your income at the beginning of the month for the support of gospel ministry or does God get what's left-over at the end of month? How does God feel about his children giving him their left-overs in worship? (Malachi 1:6-14)
5. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### Prayer/Share:

1. Is there anything in relation to last week's prayer requests that you would like to share?
2. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Lead Like Jesus

## A Velvet Covered Brick

### 1 Corinthians 16:6-24

#### Warm-up Questions:

1. Share a time when you either received “tough love” from a parent or friend, or when you had to show “tough love” to another. What was your/their response?
2. Let’s have someone read this passage so we can continue to study Paul’s letter to the Corinthians.

#### Discovery Questions:

1. Although Paul wants to come to Corinth, he will delay his coming for a while (vv. 5-9). Why do think he is intentionally delaying his arrival?
2. What can we learn about the priorities, attitudes, lifestyle, and practices of the early Christians from Paul’s closing remarks in verses 10-20?
3. Knowing the drama around the person of Apollos that we learned about in chapter 3, what does verse 12 reveal about Paul and Apollos as leaders?
4. Given all the hard things Paul wrote to this church, how do you account for the warmth of verses 19-24?
5. Why do you think Paul takes the quill from his secretary (Sosthenes? 1:1) to whom he has dictated this epistle and writes the final lines “in his own hand”? How does what he handwrites in verses 22-24 capture the essence of his approach as a leader with the Corinthian church?
6. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
  - Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
  - What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus, Holy Spirit)
  - What does this passage teach you about people?

#### Application Questions:

1. Which of Paul’s concluding exhortations in verses 13-14 do you need to apply at this time in your life?
  - a. Be watchful (on your guard).
  - b. Stand firm in the faith.
  - c. Have courage (act like men).
  - d. Be Strong.
  - e. Do everything in love.
2. Each one in the group chooses two or three topics from the list below and shares the most impactful insights you learned from this study of 1 Corinthians.

a. Wisdom	f. Sexual Morality	k. Spiritual Gifts
b. True Spirituality	g. Marriage	l. The body of Christ
c. Divisions in the Church	h. Rights and Freedom	m. Love
d. Judging	i. Temptation to Sin	n. Resurrection
e. Spiritual Pride	j. The Lord’s Supper	o. Giving
3. Have you noticed any areas (thoughts, attitudes, opinions, behaviors) in which you have changed as a result of our time in 1 Corinthians? If so, how have you changed?
4. Looking back over our study, are you satisfied with your follow-through on areas you expressed a desire to make some specific application? Did you find the support of the group helpful? If not, why?
  - How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
  - How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus? How can it help our church do the same?

#### Prayer/Share:

1. In light of the passage we have just shared, what are some ways we could pray for one another? We could pray for you? For our church family?

# Communion Guide

## *Tips, Suggestions and References*

### What we believe

- Communion (or the Lord's Super) is an **expression** of our faith in Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Savior. We believe it is a **symbol** of Jesus Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross and is to be done in **remembrance** of Him. The key is found in the phrase: "do this in remembrance of me" (Lk.22:19; 1 Cor.11:24-25).

### Why do we value the Lord's Supper?

- The Lord Jesus placed a supreme value upon it; (Matt 26:26-29, Mk. 14:22-25, Lk. 22:17-20)
- The early church highly regarded it; (Acts 2:42,46; 20:7, 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

### What is the meaning of the Lord's Supper?

- A special time of remembering what Jesus has done for us. It is His body and blood which are remembered in the Lord's Supper.
  - Remember the Past: What He did on the cross.
  - Remember the Present: Our current relationship with Him.(1 Cor. 10:16-17)
  - Remember the Future: His promised return.(Lk.22:16)
- A time of thanksgiving (The Lord Jesus took the bread, and "having given thanks, He broke it...")
- A time of fellowship with other believers. Reminder of the unity we have in Jesus Christ.

### Who should take part in the Lord's Supper?

- Assembled believers in Jesus Christ (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 11:27-32).
- **Leaders Note:** It is important not to allow any peer pressure, or make assumptions that everyone knows, understands or wants to take communion in this private of a setting.
- It is for believers whose hearts are prepared before the Lord (1 Cor. 11:20-22, 27)
- Ask yourself:
  - Is there any unconfessed sin in my life?
  - Do I need to restore any broken relationships in my life?
  - Do I need to recommit myself to the Lord?

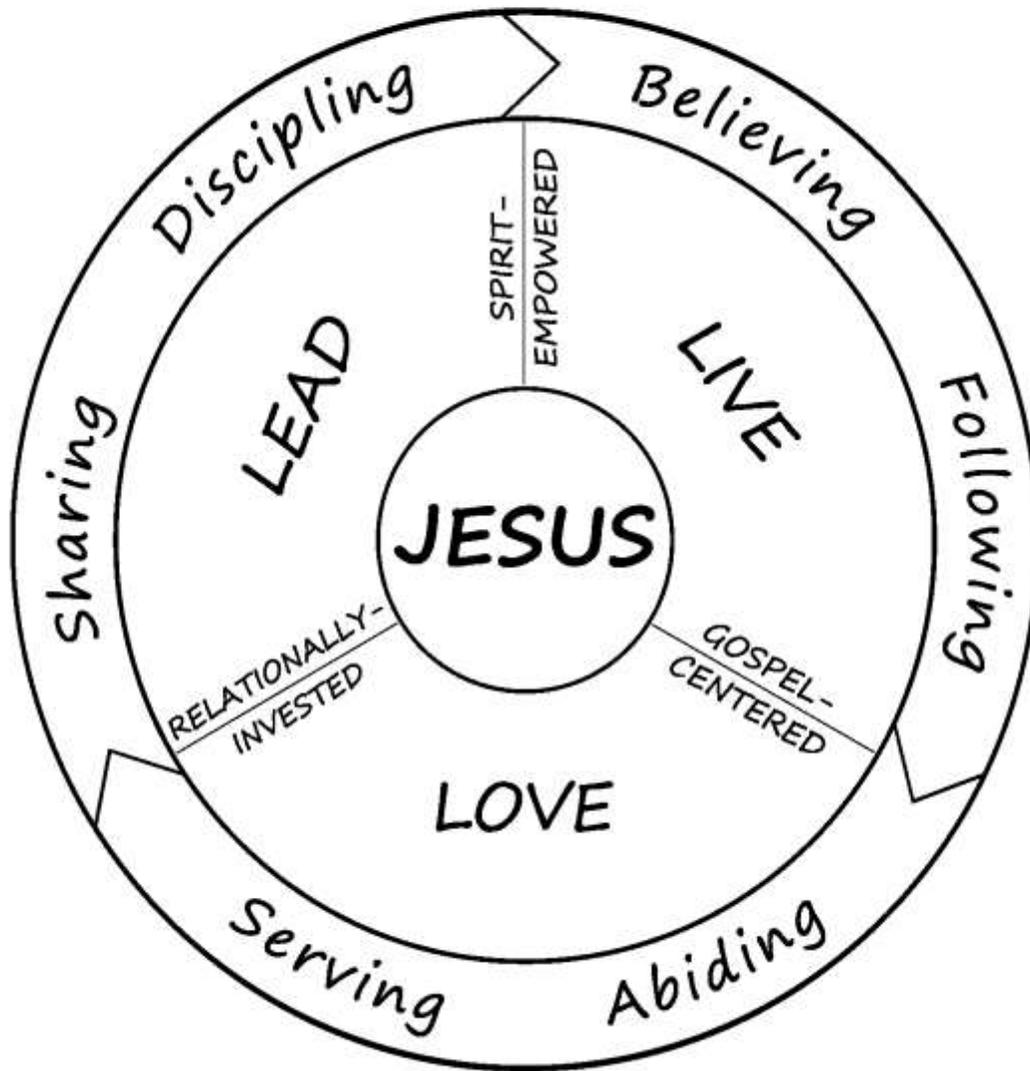
### Resources:

- Bread (A form of flat cracker by its nature represents the sinless body of Christ)
- Cup (Grape juice)
  - Special cups are not required. Any variety or size of cups can be used. Small 1 ½ oz. cups can be purchased at many local stores: Dollar Store, Christian Book Stores, etc.

### General Group Flow

- Open with a short devotional.
  - The What and Why of Communion, or,
  - Passages leading up to the Last Super.
- Prayer of thanksgiving for the bread.
- Read the Scripture verse
  - Take the bread together.
- Prayer of thanksgiving for the cup.
- Read the Scripture verse
  - Take the cup together.
- Close in Prayer

# GOD'S GLORY



# Profile of a Disciple

*(Fill In The Blanks)*

