

## THE CORINTHIAN PROBLEM: DIVISION

(I Corinthians 1:10-17)

When Paul speaks *Now* in I Corinthians 1:10, he moves from thanksgiving to reproof.

1. In trying to aim the Corinthian believers toward unity, (a) what was Paul's 3 instructions to them; and (b) the declaration he had received about them from the house of Chloe? (I Corinthians 1:10-12)

(a) Instructions:

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) Declaration Paul Received From Chloe:

At this point, Paul begins to fire questions at them: . . . *Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?* And then he says, . . . *I thank my God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name* (such as exists between the Redeemer and the redeemed) (I Corinthians 1:13-15). *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of non effect* (I Corinthians 1:17).

## CORINTHIANS INTRODUCTION

We will cover some of the history and background of Corinth because to understand what Paul was up against with the Corinthian Church, it is invaluable to know.

### City of Corinth

At about A. D. 50 Paul traveled to Corinth, which was a prosperous commercial center to carry on an 18 month home missionary campaign.

The city was built on a narrow neck of land which joined northern and southern Greece. All traffic from north to south funneled through the narrow strip. Corinth had natural seaport facilities and a strategic location that made it a thriving ship-ping center. <sup>1</sup>

The waters around southern Greece were treacherous, timely and dangerous, so the east-west traffic traveled to Corinth to avoid such travel perils. They could unload their cargo, drag it across the narrow four-mile section of land and reload it which saved them several hundred miles of travel around the southern tip of Greece.

About 200 years before Paul arrived in Corinth, a Roman General named Lucia Mummius had plundered and sacked the city in 146 B.C. Julius Caesar rebuilt it in 46 B. C. as a military outpost

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1. Beacon Bible Commentary, Volume 8, p. 296.

and a commercial center of the empire. The city attracted merchants, vagabonds, fortune-hunters, and pleasure seekers. One writer describes the population in these words:

**The riff-raff of the world was there . . . Scoundrels who found life uncomfortable in their own towns drifted to Corinth. The busy port was notoriously more immoral than any other in the Roman Empire; and that tendency was encouraged because of the temple of Venus (Aphrodite), the sensual Greek goddess, still held sway over the new Roman city. <sup>1</sup>**

So notorious was the depravity of Corinth that the name of the city “had actually passed into the vocabulary of the Greek tongue; and the very word ‘to Corinthianize’ meant ‘to play the wanton’ “ To-day, except for seven Doric columns which are still standing, and some scattered ruins of masonry, there is nothing left of this proud city except rubble. <sup>1</sup>

### The Church at Corinth

The Church at Corinth was very unruly; you might say it was a problem Church. The early Corinthian Church had many complications in the attempt to separate themselves from there sinful environment.

### Date of Writing

It is believed that I Corinthians was the first and oldest writing of Paul, probably A. D. 55 or A. D.59.

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1. Beacon Bible Commentary, Volume 8, p. 296,297.

## FIRST STUDY

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### SET APART (I Corinthians 1:1,2)

In his writing to the Corinthians, he reminds them that they are *sanctified*, set apart *in Christ Jesus*, called to be saints.

1. Why do you think Paul included. . . *all that in every place (that) call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's?* (I Corinthians 1:2; p.3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In all ages of time, it has been a temptation for groups of Christians to claim that they are the only Christians. But Christ cannot be fragmented. There is no Church which can claim an exclusive right to Christ.

### SPIRITUAL RECOGNITION AND PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (I Corinthians 1:3-9)

1. In Paul's prayer of thanksgiving in I Corinthians 1:4-7, name 5 points for which Paul thanks God.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) \_\_\_\_\_