

1 CORINTHIANS

gospel formed relationships / discussion guide



OVERVIEW FOR PART 2:

Join us as we walk through the Apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. We'll see the many cultural similarities between the pacific northwest and ancient Greece, as well as be challenged in how we are designed to live out the gospel through the local church.

In the second mini-series we will see how God designs relationships and the inner workings of church life, even when things are hard.

PART 2: WEEK TWO What You've Done is Not Who You Are

Text: 1 Corinthians 6:1-11

The Christians in Corinth are bringing one another to court for trivial matters that could be and should be addressed in the church. The courts were not so much used to settle matters of justice but instead were a means for gaining status, honor and position. The courts were often used by those with wealth and status to tread upon those less fortunate and gain even greater supremacy over others. The thing that is so reprehensible is that a Christian brother is using an unrighteous court system to take advantage of another brother in order to get a leg up in society. Not only does this defraud the brother but it is making a mockery of the gospel and shaming the church in the public square.

Although Paul confronts their actions, he knows their behavior is connected to how they view who they are. This represents a Gospel identity crisis. They have forgotten who they are in Christ and as a result are engaging in ungodly behaviors in order to get an identity or status. They have Gospel Amnesia. They've forgotten that they are saints who will one day judge the world and the fallen angels. If that is the case, why can't they judge trivial matters of everyday life? They are holy ones set apart for God's purposes in the world. They have been washed clean – forgiven from sin – in Jesus Christ. They have been sanctified – made holy – through the work of the Spirit. And they have been justified – declared righteous – by God. And though this is all true, they are living like it's not, and going to those who are still identified as sinners to judge whether their own behavior with one another is sinful.

Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God so why should they submit to the judgment of those who are sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, men who practice homosexuality, thieves, greedy, drunkards, revilers and swindlers. Paul reminds them that this is who they were – they were also defined by their sin. But, he clarifies, this is not who you are any longer. Because of Jesus, what you've done is not who you are. And that should change what you do. What God has done to us and who we are as a result should lead to a change of behavior. In the case of disputes and feeling defrauded, Paul says: Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? The thinking behind this is: If Jesus was willing to suffer for our sin. If Jesus was willing to be defrauded for us. If Jesus, who did no wrong was so terribly wronged so that we might be forgiven and become God's holy children, why wouldn't we in turn be willing to suffer wrong and be defrauded to show what Jesus has done for us and in turn help others believe the same thing for themselves?

When our behaviors do not display the truth of who God is and what He has done for us in Jesus Christ we need to remember the gospel, remember our gospel identity and engage in gospel-formed behaviors as a result.

Read: 1 Corinthians 6:1-11

1. What has God done to change our identity and who are we as a result?
2. How should our new identity in Christ change how we treat one another?
3. Where do our behaviors display that we have Gospel Amnesia (we've forgotten what God has done and who we are in Christ)?
4. What Gospel truths do we need to remember and believe and how should that affect how we treat one another? For instance, if you are withholding forgiveness, you need to remember God has forgiven you through what Jesus suffered so you can forgive someone else even though you may have suffered.