

Summit Woods Baptist Church
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

Remember to begin your study early in the week so that you have time to really think (and keep thinking) about the passage without being rushed, and come prepared to share with the others in your group what you are learning as you invest time studying God's Word.

Now that you've gotten an overview of the letter as a whole, we will begin walking through the letter in smaller pieces over the next several months. *As we dig into the details, remember to keep the big picture in mind.*

❖ Review

Last week you noted some key words and ideas related to the problems Paul addresses and his goals for the church in Corinth. Hopefully your lists included things such as:

- Key ideas = wisdom vs foolishness, God/spiritual vs world/flesh
- Common heart problems = arrogance, selfish focus, division, factions, openly sinning
- Different areas addressed = choosing favorites, sexual sins, secular courts, singleness/marriage/divorce, food offered to idols, proper behavior in worship, the church as a body, spiritual gifts, the resurrection
- Paul's goals = unity, humility, love, God focus, gospel focus, church focus, building up

Last week you also wrote a short summary statement. Hopefully it included ideas similar to:

- Stop being divided but love each other and work together for the kingdom of God.
- Be humble and not arrogant and work for building up within the church and being good witnesses outside the church so that God is glorified.
- Don't be arrogant and caught up in the world's foolish ways, but live by the Spirit in love and humility and service, according to God's wisdom.

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-3.

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The main clauses remain to the left, and the supporting clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops or explains previous clauses. Suggested themes in the text are provided in the box on the left. As the class progresses, you will have the opportunity to learn how to do this yourself.

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I. Couriers	1:1 Paul, <u>called</u> by the will of God to <u>be</u> an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,
II. Recipients	2 To the church of God <u>that is</u> in Corinth, to those <u>sanctified</u> in Christ Jesus, <u>called to be</u> saints together with all those who in every place <u>call</u> upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:
III. Packages IV. Senders	3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Who are the senders? (see verse 3)

a. What details do we learn about each of them?

2. What are the packages? (see verse 3)

a. What is grace? (see Rom 3:22-24 & 5:1-2; 2 Cor 8:9; Eph 1:7 & 2:4-10; Titus 2:11-14 & 3:3-7)

b. What is peace? (see John 16:33; Rom 5:1-2 & 15:13; Eph 2:13-20; Phil 4:6-7; Col 1:19-20)

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(Note: It is important to make sure that we derive our definitions for words like *grace* and *peace* from the Scriptures.)

3. Who are the couriers? (see verse 1)

a. How did the will of God call Paul? (see Acts 22:3-21 & 26:4-20)

b. Why is Sosthenes called 'brother' to both Paul and the entire church at Corinth?

4. Who are the recipients? (see verse 2)

a. The Greek word *ekklesia* that is translated as 'church' in verse 2 was a common word for any group of people assembled together (e.g., a town hall meeting). It was Paul's word of choice to describe the gatherings of God's people in the cities to which he wrote. According to verse 2, how does Paul distinguish the people gathered together as the church from any other gathering?

b. Why describe this 'church' as being 'of God'?

c. The word 'sanctified' means set apart, made holy, consecrated, devoted to. 'In Christ Jesus' in verse 2 is a location. How does that help you understand what it means to be 'sanctified'?

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d. According to verse 2, what is a saint?

e. Who are 'their' and 'ours' at the end of verse 2?

5. What is the most often repeated verb in the passage?

a. There are two 'callings' in verse 2. Who does the first calling? Who does the second calling?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-3 again.

➤ More on the senders

6. How do you rightly treat a father?

7. How do you rightly treat a Lord?

➤ More on the packages

8. "Grace and peace" is Paul's common greeting to the churches. According to scholars, 'grace' may have been a Christianizing of a common Greek salutation (the Greeks used a variation from the same root word to say "greetings") and 'peace' was a common Jewish greeting. While this may have influenced his word choice, in light of the gospel why do you think he so often chose these words?

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9. How does one receive this grace and peace from God?

➤ More on the couriers and recipients

10. What is the significance of 'in every place' in verse 2?

11. As an apostle, Paul does have a special role of authority in the church by which he will instruct them. But where in these verses do you see Paul already pointing to unity, especially to his unity with them? To their unity together as the church?

12. How might Paul's use of plural language in these verses influence how you view your life as a Christian?

➤ Additional Reading: Read Acts 18:1-18

Acts 18 tells about the beginnings of the church in Corinth and the dynamics happening in the city at the time Paul planted the church there. (Note: The Bible does not give us enough information to know for sure if the Sosthenes mentioned in 1 Cor 1:1 is the same Sosthenes mentioned in Acts 18:17. Many scholars believe it is probable, but there is not enough information to be definitive.)

❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-3 again.

13. What did Paul expect his original audience to think, feel, and/or do after hearing his words?

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- a. What should we think, feel, and/or do as a result of our hearing his words?

14. How might you be a courier of God's grace and peace?

15. In the past, when you have read Paul's letters, have you spent this much time thinking about the opening greeting verses or have you skimmed past them to get to the content of the letter? Has your study this week influenced the way you will read Paul's greetings in the future?

16. After thinking through these verses this week, for what can you praise God?

In preparation for Sunday, pray for Pastor Bret as he prepares to teach us from God's word. Pray for our congregation to be ready to receive the message. Pray for unity within our congregation. Pray that we will live daily as those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus.