

Auckland Chinese Baptist Church (English Sunday School, 23-08-2015, 1145-1245)
New Testament Survey: 1 Corinthians (7/27)

Invitation Materials

Author:

1 The Apostle Paul

Date:

Probably A.D. 53-55

Theme:

Christian lifestyle in a pagan society.

Historical Background:

- 1 Corinth was a large, bustling, wealthy city. Because of its location, goods and people from around the world flowed in and out of the ports.
- 2 It was a center of art, philosophy, and religion. It contained a number of pagan temples including large ones to Apollo and Aphrodite.
- 3 The city had a reputation for vice, immorality, and debauchery.
- 4 Paul spent 18 months establishing a church in Corinth during his second missionary journey (Acts 18.1-18).
- 5 This letter, composed three or four years later, was written in response to reports Paul received concerning problems in the church.

Characteristics

- 1 Seduction by the surrounding pagan culture and a hyper-spirituality had led the church into a host of problems.
- 2 The book is full of information about how a Christian lifestyle differs from that of the culture as a whole.
- 3 There is difficulty to understand the book because all we find in the book are Paul's responses. The content may be Paul's advice, or quotation from the letter written to Paul before he refutes the position (e.g. 7.1; 10:23).
- 4 Structurally, the letter falls into two parts. Part one (ch. 1-6) deals with four problems reported to Paul (1.11), while part two (ch. 7-15) looks at a variety of issues about which the Corinthians had written to Paul (7.1).

Outline

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| 1:1-2:5 | True Wisdom |
| 2:6-3:23 | Worldliness |
| 4:1-21 | Foolish or Wise? |
| 5:1-13 | Proud Immorality |

6:1-20	Sexuality
7:1-40	To Marry or Not?
8:1-13	Exercising Freedom
9:1-27	Run the Race
10:1-11:1	Glorifying God
11:2-34	Lord's Supper
12:1-31	Spiritual Gifts
13:1-14:40	Love is Supreme
15:1-16:24	The Resurrection

Discussion Questions

Open

- 1 Did you ever belong to a gang, political party, prestigious committee or exclusive club of friends?

Dig

- 1 What are the main issues that Paul is concerned with in chapters 1-6?
- 2 In chapters 7-12, what issues does Paul address?
- 3 How were the Corinthians abusing the truth of "freedom in Christ" (10.23-24)?
- 4 What remedy does Paul suggest for their multiple problems: 1.10; 8.1; 9.19-23; 10.24, 31; 16.14.
- 5 What might the famous "love chapter" ch 13 be the real climax of this book?

Reflect

- 1 Which of the problems of the Corinthian church do you sense are prevalent today: Misguided loyalties? Spiritual pride? Abuse of Christian Freedom? Sexual misconduct?

Invitation materials and discussion questions are taken from Serendipity Bible