

1 Corinthians

“Problems in the Church”

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Background

- An ancient city of Greece
- Situated on the Isthmus of Corinth
- Commanded the land-routes between Northern Greece and the Peloponnese
- Built on the north side of Acrocorinth (Gk. *Acrocorinthus*, “Upper Corinth”)
 - Rises 1,883 feet above the plain and served the Corinthians as their fortress



GREEK MAINLAND

*to
Ionian Sea*

to Athens
→

Lechaenum ●
Corinth ●

ISTHMUS OF CORINTH

● **Cenchreae**

PELOPONNESUS

*to
Aegean Sea*



Mediterranean Sea

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Acrocorinth



Background

- Became a major Mediterranean trade center
 - As a result, Corinth had great prosperity
- Acquired a reputation for luxury and its name became proverbial for sexual license
- A center of the worship of Aphrodite, whose temple stood on the summit of Acrocorinth
 - 1,000 female slaves in the temple of Aphrodite dedicated to worshiping her
 - Paul's warnings against fornication
 - 5:1; 6:13, 18; 7:2; 10:8

Background

- At Corinth there was a synagogue where Paul debated every Sabbath to convince both Jews and Greeks (Acts 18:4)
- According to Paul's repeated pattern, recorded in Acts, he made the synagogue at Corinth his first base of evangelistic operations (Acts 18:5)
- When the Jews rejected God's Word (Acts 18:6), he went next door (Acts 18:7) and continued proclaiming the gospel and many of the Corinthians became Christians (Acts 18:8)

Dates

- AD 49—Priscilla and Aquila were among the Jews expelled from Rome by Claudius' edict
- AD 50—Paul left Athens and went to Corinth where he first met Priscilla and Aquila
- AD 51—Paul before Gallio (Acts 18:12)
 - Due to Gallio's ruling (Acts 18:14-16), Paul continued teaching the gospel with the protection of Roman law at Corinth a total of “a year and six months” (Acts 18:11) and in other parts of the Roman world for the next 10 years

Dates

- AD 52—Paul left Corinth (Acts 18:18) and arrived in Ephesus (Acts 18:19)
- Stayed in Ephesus for about three years
- AD 55—1 Corinthians was written while Paul was at Ephesus where he stayed “until Pentecost” (16:8)
 - Apparently Paul's last year in Ephesus since about a year later (2 Cor. 8:10; 9:2) he was in Macedonia (2 Cor. 2:12-13; 7:5)

Key Words & Phrases

- **Lord** (68 times); **our Lord** (10 times)
 - 1:2, 7-10; 5:4; 9:1; 15:31, 57; 16:23
- **Wise, wiser, wisdom** (30 times)
 - 1:17, 19-27, 30; 2:1, 4-7, 13; 3:18-20; 6:5
- **Call, called, calling** (17 times)
 - 1:1-2, 9, 24, 26; 7:15, 17-18, 20-22, 24
- **Love** [agape] (13 times)
 - 4:21; 8:1; 13:1-4, 8, 13; 14:1; 16:14, 24
- **“Do you not know”** (10 times)
 - 3:16; 5:6; 6:2-3, 9, 15-16, 19; 9:13, 24

Theme

- Thematic statement (1:10)
- The problems in the congregation were due to:
 - Failure to obey (submit to) Jesus as Lord
 - Worldliness (chs. 1-3)
 - Antagonism and criticism toward God's messenger (ch. 4)
 - Arrogance concerning fornication (ch. 5)
 - Lawsuits (ch. 6)
 - Lack of love (ch. 13)

Worldliness

- 1:11-17
- 2:1-5
- 3:1-11, 18-23
 - 1 Jn. 2:15-17

Arrogance Concerning Fornication

- 5:1-2, 6

Lawsuits

- 6:1-11

- The outrage: those doing the prosecuting or suing were members of Christ's body and those engaged in wrongdoing and defrauding were members of Christ's body
- *Apolouo (wash)*: twice in Greek NT
 - 6:11; Acts 22:16 (in the middle voice)
 - “you got yourselves washed” (6:11)
 - “get yourself immersed and get your sins washed away” (Acts 22:16)

Verses to Remember

- 1:13, 18, 21, 24, 30-31
- 2:2, 5, 8
- 3:5-6, 9-16
 - Apollos, Paul → servants (5)
 - You believed (5) → God gave the increase (6)
 - You (God's people) are God's building (9) → built on the foundation (10) → Christ (11)
 - “If anyone builds” (12) (Builds what?)
 - **The building** (What building?)
 - **God's building—you**: God's people (9)

Verses to Remember

- “on this foundation” (12) → Christ (11)
 - God's building is built on Christ (9)
- “Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw” → built on the foundation (not “with”)
 - Thus, “If anyone builds on this foundation: gold, silver...” → The building (God's people) are either fireproof or combustible
 - **Fireproof** materials used in their temples: *gold, silver, precious stones*
 - **Combustible** materials used in their huts: *wood, hay, straw*

Verses to Remember

- “Each one's work” (13) → “anyone builds” (12)
 - Work that is built → God's building (the church; God's people)
 - “Work” = God's people
 - “Are you not my work in the Lord?” (9:1)
- “will become clear” or “known” (13)
 - whether fireproof or combustible (12)
- “work...endures” (14): any of God's people saved
- “work is burned” (15): any of God's people lost
- “you are God's temple” (16) → God's people

Verses to Remember

- 4:2, 6, 11-13, 16
- 5:6-7, 13
- 6:7, 9-11, 18-20 (3:16-17)
- 7:5, 7-16, 23, 35, 39
- 8:1—inflates (4:6, 18-19; 5:2), 9, 11 (Rom. 14:15), 13 (forego your freedom if necessary, Mk. 7:19; 9:42; Rom. 14:14)
- 9:14, 16, 22, 24-27 (v. 24—*stadion*: 600')

Verses to Remember

- 10:8, 10-13, 15-16, 23-24, 31-33
 - To the glory of God and the salvation of souls
- 11:1 (Phil. 2:7; 2 Cor. 8:9), 3, 25-26
- 12:12-14, 26, 31
- 13:10
- 14:15, 19-20, 26-28, 34, 40
- 15:1-2, 10, 17, 33, 57-58
- 16:1-3, 9, 13-14

Memory Verse Review ***(Mark—Romans)***

- Mk. 7:37b
- Lk. 2:52
- Jn. 20:30-31—“And truly...”
- Acts 4:12
- Rom. 11:33

Memory Verse for 1 Corinthians

1:10

“Now I plead with you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly *[completely]* joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment”