

1 CORINTHIANS

1-4

6 STUDIES FOR EVENING CHURCH



1CORINTHIANS 1:1-9 THE CHURCH OF GOD

TO PONDER:

When's the last time you slipped into despondency about the state of your own spiritual life?

When's the last time you slipped into despondency about evening church?

What drives such discouragement?

THE CHURCH IN CORINTH

Acts 18 describes Paul's visit to Corinth. You might like to read it.

Flick through the letter of 1Corinthians to acquaint yourself with some of the issues that the apostle has to deal with. What's your impression of the church in Corinth?

THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CORINTH



1Corinthians 1:1-3

What do you notice straight away about the focus of the apostle?

Why is this important?



1Corinthians 1:1-9

"These verses resound with the apostle's confidence of God's grace to the Corinthians in the past, the present & the future."

Ponder & discuss that statement.

How do the 2 phrases “sanctified (made holy, set apart for God) in Christ Jesus” and “called to be holy” fit together?

How can the apostle be so thankful & so confident for the Corinthian church given what comes in the letter from 1:10 onwards?

EVENING CHURCH

What’s our connection in evening church to the truths of this passage?

Do you think its possible to be realistic about the problems & weaknesses of evening church & yet remain optimistic?

Do you think there is a danger of being overly positive about evening church?

According to the truths of this passage... when I’m feeling despondent about my spiritual life or discouraged by evening church... what would be helpful & wise steps to take in moving forward?

SOME EXTRA VERSES TO READ & REFLECT UPON...



1Corinthians 6:9-11; Romans 8:28-30; Philippians 3:10-14; 1John 3:1-3

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evening church studies on 1Corinthians 1-4 (based on the Sunday night teaching series)



1CORINTHIANS 1:10-25

THE FOOLISH POWER OF GOD

TO PONDER:

What do you find difficult about sharing the gospel?

How much of your difficulty is to do with the message itself?

What are your expectations when it comes to evangelism generally?

WORDS OF HUMAN WISDOM



1Corinthians 1:10-17

What sort of quarrelling has broken out among the Corinthian church?

The quarrelling is a symptom of the disease Paul calls human (or worldly) wisdom. What is at its centre? (3:18-21 might be helpful too.)

THE WORD OF THE CROSS



1Corinthians 1:18-25

What is the word (or the message) of the cross that Christ sent Paul to preach? (check out 1Cor 15:1-11)

In what ways might you describe this word as “foolish”?

In what ways might you describe this word as “weak”?

How does the description illustrate what Paul says of himself in 4:1-5?

Why might this be a disturbing passage to us?



1Corinthians 4:14-21

What do these verses teach us about Christian leadership?

What response is the apostle looking for?

How are these verses a good summary of the issues percolating through chapters 1-4?

Take some time to consider whether your view of success & what you aspire to is shaped by the message of the cross. Talk it through with your heavenly Father.

Flick back through 1Corinthians 1-4 & these studies & your Bible talk notes. Consider the comforts, the challenges, the convictions that God has been raising with you by his Word & his Spirit.



1CORINTHIANS 4

THE SERVANTS OF GOD

TO PONDER:

What do you think of as the successful Christian life? Which Christians around you do you aspire to imitate? Why?



1Corinthians 4:1-7

What lessons of leadership does the apostle offer here?

How do such lessons contradict the wisdom of the world so infecting the Corinthians' thinking?



1Corinthians 4:8-13

How does Paul describe himself & the other apostles? What do you think he has in mind?

How does this description compare with how the Corinthians view success & themselves (note the irony!)?

How does the word of the cross undercut human boasting?

What's the link between verses 10-17 & 18-25?

What's the significance do you think of the apostle choosing the word "power" in v18, as opposed to the word "wisdom"?

What do you notice about the apostle's explanation(s) in 1:18-25 of how someone moves from perishing to being saved?

In 2005 DPC & evening church will be particularly focussing on Presenting Christ to every person. Ponder & discuss the impact this passage should have on the way we think about evangelism... our willingness.... our convictions.... our expectations.... our level of confidence... our prayerfulness...

How should this passage help us & guide us in our organisation of evangelistic events this year?

Devote time as a group to be praying together for our evangelism & for particular people you are in contact with who are now perishing. Why not commit as a group to be praying for these people regularly.



1Corinthians 1:26-2:5

THE FOOLISH PEOPLE OF GOD

TO PONDER:

Christians are often excited by the fact that a celebrity is a believer. It's often thought to be a great boost to our gospeling. What do you think of this?

FOOLISH PEOPLE



1Corinthians 1:26-34

What's the apostle's point?

How does this point tie in with what his argument so far from 1:10?

Is what Paul saying true of just the Corinthians or is it always true?

What do you think Paul means by the phrase, "nullify the things that are"?

How does the description of Christ Jesus (v30) both bring us down & build us up? (Take the time to savour it!)

What do we need to understand about our church from these verses?

THE BUILDING OF GOD



1Corinthians 3:10-15

Who are the builders & who is the building in this illustration?

What's Paul's point?

What's the warning & who is it directed at?

How does the warning tie in with 4:1-5?

THE TEMPLE OF GOD



1Corinthians 3:16-17

What do we learn here of God's view of his church (in Corinth & in evening church)?

Prayerfully consider the impact 1Cor 3 should have on our attitude & perspective about evening church.



1CORINTHIANS 3:1-4:5

THE FIELD @ TEMPLE OF GOD

TO PONDER:

How do you generally measure the health of a church?

How would you describe the health of evening church?

THE PROBLEM



1Corinthians 3:1-4

How is their quarrelling “worldly”? (1:10-17 & 3:18-21 are helpful)

In what situations are we in danger of worldliness?

THE FIELD OF GOD



1Corinthians 3:5-9

Who are the farmers & who is the field in this illustration?

What’s Paul’s point here? How does it tie with vv1-4?

How does this point answer their “worldliness”? How does it correct their focus?

FOOLISH PREACHER



1Corinthians 2:1-5

What’s Paul’s point?

How does it relate with his argument so far from 1:10?

What’s the connection between the word of the cross & how that word is delivered?

What’s the apostle’s opinion about preaching techniques & style?

How does this passage help us to know what to look for in our leaders (& what to pray for them)?

Evening church should be shaped & characterised by the word of the cross of Christ. Devote some time to be praying this through.



1CORINTHIANS 2:6-16

THE SECRET WISDOM OF GOD

TO PONDER:

Why is it both a comfort & a challenge that leading someone to Christ is always about more than just convincing them the gospel is true & authoritative.

THE MESSAGE OF WISDOM



1Corinthians 2:6-10a

What's the message of wisdom in v6?

What's the difference between the wisdom of the world & the true wisdom of God?

How do these verses help us understand Paul's point back in 2:4-5?

THE SPIRIT OF GOD



1Corinthians 2:10-16

How is the Spirit of God described in these verses?

How is *what* the Spirit reveals described?

In what ways is the Christian person described?

How is it that the Spirit can reveal the wisdom of God?

How do these verses explain the fact that the message of the cross is foolish to those who are perishing (1:18)?

What does Paul think of Christians as broader & more knowledgeable than unbelievers? How does this impact your outlook on life?

"True spirituality is profoundly tied to the cross of Christ and to nothing else." What do you think?

We have much to give thanks to God for! Spend some time doing that together.