1 Corinthians Series

**The Church in Corinth**

June 18, 2023

**The Thing That Unites Us**

(1 Corinthians 1:1-9)

This letter is from Paul, **chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus**, and from our brother Sosthenes. **I am writing to God’s church in Corinth, to you who have been called by God to be his own holy people**. **He made you holy by means of Christ Jesus, just as he did for all people everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.** May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. I always thank my God for you and for the gracious gifts he has given you, now that you belong to Christ Jesus. Through him, God has enriched your church in every way—with all of your eloquent words and all of your knowledge. This confirms that what I told you about Christ is true. **Now you have every spiritual gift you need** as you eagerly wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. **He will keep you strong to the end** so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns. **God will do this**, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Introduction:

We can be distracted by differences and we get polarized by them to the point that we get off track and sometimes do harm.

(Mark 9:38-40)

John said to Jesus, Teacher, we saw someone using your name to cast out demons, but we told him to stop because he wasn’t in our group. Don’t stop him!” Jesus said. “No one who performs a miracle in my name will soon be able to speak evil of me. Anyone who is not against us is for us.

Jesus continues to say—be careful that you don’t offend the little ones that belong to me because if you do---you’d be better off drowning yourself than facing me.

The **MOST IMPORTANT** point of the entire book.

(1 Corinthians 1:30)

God has united you with Christ Jesus…Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin.

* God made us **right** with God
* God made us **pure** and **holy**
* God **freed** us from sin
* Regardless of the **style of worship**
* Regardless of your **church location**
* Regardless of your annual **budget**

We are **UNITED** with Christ Jesus because He paid the price to make us right with God—that’s more important than anything that uniquely identifies this or any other church.

(1 Corinthians 1:26-29)

Brothers and sisters, consider what you were when God called you to be Christians. Not many of you were wise from a human point of view. You were not in powerful positions or in the upper social classes. But God chose what the world considers nonsense to put wise people to shame. God chose what the world considers weak to put what is strong to shame. God chose what the world considers ordinary and what it despises—what it considers to be nothing—in order to destroy what it considers to be something. AS A RESULT, NO ONE CAN BRAG IN GOD’S PRESENCE.

**How did you get here?**

(I don’t mean what car you drive)…how did you get here so that you can offer praise to God for saving you?

**The Success Of Any Church Is Realized In The Power Of The Cross**

* The church at Corinth had a **missions problem**—instead of changing the world, the pressures of the world were changing the church.

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And **such were some of you**. But you were **washed**, but you were **sanctified**, but you were **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

* **We cannot forget that Jesus found us lost in our sins and without hope but by the Cross we are now the family of God!**
* It is the Cross that defines our fellowship
* It is the Cross that make ordinary people…extraordinary witnesses
* Our foolish attempts to make church about something besides the Cross only leads to **strife** and **division**.

**When Our Differences Become BIG, It Means The GOSPEL Becomes Small.**

* The people at Corinth had emptied the cross of its power by their divisions and created the assumptions that the Gospel was merely a good message preached by clever speakers.

(1 Corinthians 1:5-8)

After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God’s servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow. The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work.

**Without the Cross None of This Matters**

* At the Cross, we were RADICALLY changed from our former selves and our lives are now a MESSAGE of hope to an unbelieving world.

(Galatians 2:20)

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

* The Corinthians had failed to grasp the weight and power of the Gospel and as such they had become divided as they pursued their own agendas.

(I Corinthians 1:18)

The message about the cross doesn't make any sense to lost people. But for those of us who are being saved, it is God's power at work.

Conclusion:

What credit can you take for who you are today?

Without Calvary none of this matters

God I’m a sinner

I’m sorry for my sins

I believe Jesus died for my sins

I believe Jesus will forgive me of my sins

I choose Jesus