

1 CORINTHIANS OUTLINE

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I. Introduction (1:1-9)

- A. Salutation (1:1-3)
- B. Thanksgiving (1:4-9)

II. Division Over Leaders (1:10 – 4:21)

- A. Appeal to end leader-centered factions (1:10-17)
- B. God, not human wisdom, is the source of salvation life (so only he is worthy of allegiance) (1:18-31)
 - 1. Worldly wisdom impotent in knowing God (1:18-25)
 - 2. The gospel's contradiction of worldly wisdom confirmed by fact the church consists mainly of "nobodies" (1:26-31)
- C. Example of Paul's preaching (2:1 – 3:4)
 - 1. He kept the focus on the message of Christ crucified (2:1-5)
 - 2. The gospel does not comport with worldly wisdom, but it is true wisdom for those mature enough to grasp its implications for living (2:6-16)
 - 3. Corinthians were (and still are) too worldly (as shown by their division) to appreciate Paul's message as meaty (3:1-4)
- D. Leaders (like Paul and Apollos) are fellow workers in building God's church not competitors (3:5-9)
- E. Caution and warning to those building on foundation laid by Paul (3:10-17)
 - 1. Caution to build according to God's will (3:10-15)
 - 2. Warning to any who would destroy the congregation (3:16-17)
- F. Warning about worldly wisdom and command not to boast in men (3:18-23)
- G. God's stewards are answerable to God, so until the Lord's return boasting in any of them is at best premature (4:1-5)
- H. Command not to supplement the gospel with worldly wisdom and additional reasons not to factionalize over leaders (4:6-13)
 - 1. They are not to supplement the gospel with a spirituality based in worldly wisdom, as that leads to factionalizing over leaders (4:6)
 - 2. The qualities in which they boast (or find attractive in leaders) were a gift from God not a personal achievement (4:7)
 - 3. Their gravitating to leaders on the bases of social status and prestige in the present age, which is the root of their division, is inconsistent with the fact our exaltation as Christians is still future (4:8-13)
- I. Admonishment and appeal to the congregation and a comment specifically to those opposing him (4:14-21)

III. Reported Problems in the Church (5:1 – 6:20)

- A. Tolerating the man with his father's wife (5:1-13)
 - 1. Situation identified and the command to deal with it (5:1-5)
 - 2. Impropriety of boasting of their spirituality and exhortation to act (5:6-8)

- 3. Clarification of prior letter (5:9-13)
- B. Lawsuits among believers (6:1-11)
- C. Sexual immorality (6:12-20)
 - 1. Rejecting the rationalization (6:12-17)
 - 2. Prohibition stated directly (6:18-20)

IV. Matters the Church Wrote About (7:1 – 11:1)

- A. Marriage Issues 7:1-40
 - 1. Error of denying sex within marriage (7:1-7)
 - 2. Widowers and widows (7:8-9)
 - 3. Divorce between Christian spouses (7:10-11)
 - 4. Divorce between Christian and non-Christian spouses (7:12-16)
 - 5. Basic principle that Christian conversion does not require changing social relationships (7:17-24)
 - 6. The case of betrothed women ("the virgins") (7:25-40)
 - a. Advice in light of the present distress (7:25-28)
 - b. Need to live as end-time people (7:29-35)
 - c. Reassurance re decision about marrying betrothed (7:36-38)
 - d. Reminder for the virgins who do marry (7:39-40)
- B. Food Offered to Idols (8:1 – 11:1)
 - 1. Christian behavior is not predicated solely on knowledge (8:1-6)
 - 2. Brotherly love requires in this situation that they forego eating in the temples (8:7-13)
 - 3. Response to those challenging the prohibition of attending temple meals by calling into question his apostolic authority (9:1-23)
 - a. Response re his not accepting their material support (9:1-18)
 - b. Response re his seemingly wishy-washy conduct in matters of social relationships (9:19-23)
 - 4. Exhortation to put great effort into Christian living (9:24-27)
 - 5. Baptism and participation in the Lord's Supper will not save them if they continue eating meals at the idol temples (10:1-5)
 - 6. Warning not to follow Israel's example (10:6-10)
 - 7. Those attending cultic meals with a sense of security must wake up to the danger (10:11-13)
 - 8. They must stop attending the temple meals (10:14-22)
 - 9. Sacrificed meat that is later sold in the marketplace for home consumption (10:23-11:1)

V. Conduct in the Assembly (11:2 – 14:40)

- A. Maintaining cultural sexual distinctions in attire (11:2-16)
 - 1. Given continuing relevance of sexual distinctions for those in Christ, it is inappropriate to reject cultural sex distinctions in attire when speaking publicly to or on behalf of God (11:2-6)
 - 2. Further reason why a man should not wear the covering but a woman should and a word on mutual dependence (11:7-12)
 - 3. Appeal to cultural analogy of long hair (11:13-16)

- B. The Lord's Supper (11:17-34)
 - 1. The problem of maintaining social divisions (11:17-22)
 - 2. Their keeping of the Supper was inconsistent with its original intent (11:23-26)
 - 3. The seriousness of their sin regarding the Supper (11:27-32)
 - 4. The solution (11:33-34)
- C. Exercise of Spiritual Gifts (12:1 – 14:40)
 - 1. The presence of the Spirit in one's life is a function of one's relationship with Christ (12:1-3)
 - 2. The Spirit's gifts are too diverse to permit any one gift or group of gifts to serve as the exclusive sign of the Spirit's presence (12:4-11)
 - 3. Body of Christ analogized to human body (12:12-30)
 - a. Just as human body is a unity made up of many diverse members, so it is with the body of Christ (12:12-14)
 - b. The body consists of *different* parts (12:15-20)
 - c. No part of the body is dispensable (12:21-26)
 - d. As with the human body, God has assigned different roles to different parts in the body of Christ (12:27-30)
 - 4. Exhortation to be enthusiastic about the "greater gifts" (12:31)
 - 5. Discussion of love (13:1-13)
 - a. Love, not some spiritual gift, is the indispensable quality in a Christian's character (13:1-3)
 - b. Practical description of the love he's talking about (13:4-7)
 - c. Love is superior to spiritual gifts (13:8-13)
 - 6. Command to be enthusiastic especially about the gift of prophecy (14:1-5)
 - 7. Speaking in tongues does not benefit the hearers (14:6-12)
 - 8. Only words that edify are fitting for the assembly (14:13-19)
 - 9. As with believers, speaking in tongues will not benefit unbelievers but prophesying will (14:20-25)
 - 10. The principle of edification applied to prophecy and tongues (14:26-33a)
 - 11. Women are not to participate in the prophetic process in the assembly (14:33b-36)
 - 12. Conclusion of regulation of prophecy and tongues (14:37-40)
- VI. Correcting a Mistaken View of the Resurrection (15:1-58)
 - A. The gospel includes the bodily resurrection of Christ (15:1-11)
 - B. Logical conclusion of denying resurrection of the dead (15:12-19)
 - C. But Christ has been raised and is the firstfruits of Christian's who have died (15:20-28)
 - D. Additional argument for truth of the resurrection (15:29-34)
 - E. Dispensing with a foolish objection to a bodily resurrection (15:35-44)
 - F. Support for claim of a spiritual body (15:45-49)
 - G. Conclusion of argument about the resurrection body (15:50-57)
 - H. Exhortation not to be moved from this conviction (15:58)

VII. Closing (16:1-24)

- A. Mechanics of collection for poor saints in Jerusalem (16:1-4)
- B. Travel plans (16:5-11)
- C. Apollos's return (16:12)
- D. Concluding exhortations (16:13-18)
- E. Final warning (16:19-24)