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1 Corinthians

Gospel Solutions to Man's Problems

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Introduction

2 Corinthians 7:8-9a

8 Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while—
9 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance.

I. Corinth

II. Paul's Journey to Corinth

III. Paul's Letter

IV. Imitate Me

A. Responsibility

B. Means

1. Truth

2. In Love

3. Clearly

V. Through the Eyes of a Corinthian

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UNITY 1 Corinthians 1 - 4

Introduction:

1. Sometimes the things Paul writes are hard to understand.
2. Even the Apostle Peter said that our beloved brother Paul speaks of some things that are hard to understand.
2 Peter 3:15-16
3. In this lesson we will summarize each of the first four chapters in 1st Corinthians, highlighting key verses with a focus on unity.
 - a. Paul and the apostles were united in teaching and preaching the same thing.
 - b. The problem with the church in Corinth was that there were divisions or factions. They were not united.
 - c. Paul is trying to help them.

I. Chapter 1

- 1. Opening to the book and greeting (1 Corinthians 1:1-9)**
 - a. Greetings from Paul (verses 1-3)**
 - (1) Verse 2 - "To those who are sanctified" - the word "sanctified" means to set apart for God's holy purpose.
 - (2) Corinth was a city filled with sin.
 - (3) **[Handout #1 – The Church is...]**
 - b. Thankful for God's Grace towards them. (verses 4-9)**
 - (1) Verse 4 - Paul is thanking God concerning them.

- (2) They were a congregation of God's people who were trying to stand strong in a sinful city.
- (3) Verse 8 - "Who will also confirm you to the end."
- (4) We are not sinless but we can pray for the forgiveness of our sins and know that we have a right relationship with God (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:14).
- (5) Verse 9 – "into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." We see here that Paul has introduced the topic of unity **before** he condemns them for their divisions.

2. The nature of the division at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:10-17)

a. Report to Paul – this begins information from household of Chloe concerning division (verse 10)

- (1) Verse 10a - "plead" (NKJV) "beseech" (KJV). This is the Greek word *PARAKELEO* meaning, "to call to one's side."
- (2) Verse 10b - "That you all speak the same thing."
- (3) **[Handout #2 – 4 distinct points of Unity]**
- (3) This is the **unity** that Paul is calling for – that we have no divisions, being of the same understanding of the Scriptures. We must stay true to what the Scriptures teach.

b. Chloe's household (verses 11-12)

- (1) Verse 11 - "there are contentions among you." The Greek word for contentions is *ERIS*, meaning strife (Titus 3:9).

c. Paul's initial reaction (verses 13-17)

- (1) Every member of the church in Corinth claimed to belong to some group.
- (2) This showed a lack of faith in God.
- (3) Christ cannot be divided.
- (4) In verses 14-16, Paul is thankful that we wear the name of Christ.
- (5) Verse 17a - "For Christ did not **send** me to baptize, but to preach the gospel" - the Greek word for "send" is *APOSTELLO*.
- (6) Verse 17b - "Not with wisdom of words" - This means that Paul was preaching a message from God to be believed and obeyed.
- (7) Verse 17c - "Lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect." The Greek word for "of no effect" is *KENOO* means to make empty or void, to make useless.

3. It is foolish to boast about man's wisdom (verses 18-25)

- a.** Verse 18 - "For the message of the cross." Paul is teaching the message of the cross – he is preaching Christ.
- b.** The cross reveals the power of God. The power of God shows us 4 things: The love of God, the justice of God, the value of the blood of Christ and the worth and value of a single soul.
- c.** Verse 19 - Paul quotes from Isaiah to convince the Corinthians that it is useless to challenge God in a competition of intelligence (Isaiah 29:14).

- d. Verse 20 - When Paul asks, “Where is the wise,” he is asking them what happened to their beliefs.
- e. Verse 21 - “It pleased God through the foolishness of the message.” This is not saying the message is foolish. This is how the world sees it – it makes no sense to them.

Important point - Many people take the last part of verse 21 out of its context. They point out that you only have to believe in order to be saved. You cannot just take one verse and ignore everything else.

[See Handout #3 – What Are We Saved By?]

- f. Verse 22 - The Jews were looking for a sign (a miracle) but the Greeks were seeking after worldly wisdom.
- g. Verse 24 - “those who are called.” The call goes out to all (2 Thessalonians 2:14).
- h. Verse 25 - “because the foolishness of God is wiser than men,” is referring to how God’s plan for salvation appears to men of the world - as foolish.
[See Handout #4 – The Wisdom of God.]

4. Glory only in the Lord (verses 26-31)

- a. This section reminds us to glory only in the Lord and not in ourselves.
- b. The gospel call goes out to all, but unfortunately those who depend on worldly wisdom are often not receptive to the message of the Gospel.
- c. We have righteousness when we do what God has commanded us to do (James 2:21-23).

- d. We must give God the glory and not glory in ourselves (Jeremiah 9:23-24).

II. Chapter 2

1. Paul's manner of preaching (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

a. He preached Jesus and Him crucified (verses 1-3)

- (1) Verse 1 - Through inspiration, Paul is emphasizing the family relationship in the Lord's church (Matthew 12:46-50). He stresses it is the message that is important.
- (2) Verse 2 - "Christ and Him crucified."
- (3) The message was declaring the testimony of God.

b. With demonstration of the Spirit and of the power (verses 4-5)

- (1) Verse 4 - "Demonstration." The Greek word is *APODEIXIS* meaning, "to make manifest - a showing forth of the Spirit."
- (2) If we put our trust in men, we will be misled. We must always put our trust in God and His inspired word.

2. The Wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 2:6-16)

a. The "hidden" nature of God's wisdom (verses 6-9)

- (1) **Very important!** "We" in this section it is referring to the apostles.
- (2) Verse 7 - The word mystery means that human wisdom alone cannot know. The plan of salvation could only be known when God had revealed it (Romans 1:1-3).

- (3) Verse 9 - We see it is no longer a mystery. God's plan has been revealed.

There are six phrases in verses 9-13 that help to explain the process by which the hidden mystery of God was made known.

1. "Things which God has prepared" (vs 9)
 2. "God has revealed . . . through His Spirit" (vs 10)
 3. "We have received . . . the Spirit" (vs 12)
 4. "That we might know the things . . . freely given to us by God" (vs 12)
 5. "These things we also speak" (vs 13)
 6. "In words . . . which the Spirit teaches" (vs 13)
-

b. The Spirit's Revelation of God's wisdom (verses 10-13)

- (1) Verse 13 - "Speak" means, "to continue to speak." Every word is inspired.

c. "Natural man" vs. "Spiritual man" (verses 14-16)

- (1) Verses 14 and 15 we read about the "Natural Man" and the "Spiritual Man". The "natural man" is a Christian but not inspired. God revealed things to apostles and prophets - this is the "spiritual man" – they are inspired.
- (2) Verse 16 - The apostles spoke with authority. Their message was not their own ideas. They were speaking God's word as it was revealed to them.

III. Chapter 3

1. Spiritual Growth (1 Corinthians 3:1-4)

a. The carnal nature of division (verses 1-2)

- (1) Verse 1 - Paul is explaining they could not have learned the wisdom of God without the instruction from inspired apostles.
- (2) The word "carnal" means pertaining to flesh. (Galatians 5:16-21).
- (3) Verse 2 - they had not grown spiritually as they should have.

b. Evidence of their carnality (verses 3-4)

- (1) Verse 4 - Paul is again condemning those seeking to wear his name.

2. Relation of preachers to their work (1 Corinthians 3:5-17)

a. Preachers are servants used by God (verses 5-7)

- (1) Verse 6 - "God gave the increase." The Greek word here means a continuous blessing.

b. Their relation to one another and their work (verses 8-17)

- (1) Verse 8 – The Greek word for "reward" is *MISTHOS*. It means we will be paid for what we do – a contract for service rendered.
- (2) Verse 10 - "According to the grace of God."
[See Handout #5 – The Grace of God.]

- (3) “Master builder” - The Greek word is *ARCHITEKTON* meaning chief builder. Preachers and teachers are builders of God’s house. They build by converting, teaching, and encouraging others.
- (4) As we teach others, we must always build correctly on that one true foundation - Christ – He is the only Savior – He is the only foundation.
- (5) Verse 11 - "Laid" is past tense. The foundation is there now. It has already been given to us.
- (6) Verse 12 - These building materials represents converts. Some will remain faithful and stand the test of time - (the non-perishable); while others will fall away - (the perishable).
- (7) Verse 16 - Paul tells them they are the temple of God and should not be divided. The “you” in this verse is plural – it is talking about all Christians – they compose the temple.

3. Avoid glorifying in worldly wisdom or men (1 Corinthians 3:18-23)

a. Reasons to not glory in worldly wisdom (verses 18-20)

- (1) Verse 18 - We need to make sure we are looking to Christ and making Him our standard.
- (2) Paul commends wisdom from God which unites, but condemns worldly wisdom which divides.

b. Reasons to not glory in men (verses 21-23)

- (1) Those who were followers of men, glorified in men, but deprived themselves of what belonged to true Christians so they were made poorer.

- (2) Verse 23 - “You are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.”
How were the Christians at Corinth Christ’s?
[See Handout #6 – 1 Corinthians 3:23]

IV. Chapter 4 - Defense of Paul’s Ministry

1. Paul and apostles as stewards (1 Corinthians 4:1-5)

a. Servants and stewards (verses 1-2)

- (1) Verse 1 - The phrase “the mysteries of God” refers to things impossible for man to know without revelation from God.
- (2) Today we have the complete will of God given to us in our Bibles.

b. Who is the judge – Man or God? (verses 3-5)

- (1) Verse 4 - We can know our present condition.

2. Lessons in humility (1 Corinthians 4:6-13)

a. Paul and Apollos as examples (verse 6)

- (1) Verse 6 - “Now these things.”

b. Paul using irony to rebuke (verses 7-8)

- (1) Verse 8 - Paul is using sarcasm to help them realize the foolishness of their actions.
- (2) “I wish you did reign” - He did wish they were spiritually mature so they could take a leadership role in the church. He was expressing affection for their welfare.

c. Examples of the apostles (verses 9-13)

- (1) Verse 10 - Paul is using strong sarcasm. In their opinion they were wiser than Paul.
- (2) Paul reminds them of the hardships the apostles faced and gladly did so for the cause of Christ.

3. Paul's purpose in writing these things (1 Corinthians 4:14-21)

a. Not to shame but to warn (verses 14-16)

- (1) Verse 14, Paul wanted them to understand why he was using sarcasm. He was warning them as a father would warn his children.
- (2) Paul was teaching them how to be truly united. Paul wanted them to imitate him as he imitated Christ.

b. Visits from Timothy and Paul (verses 17-21)

- (1) Verse 17 - Timothy was sent to remind them of what Paul had taught.
- (2) Chapter 4 ends with a reminder that the kingdom of God is not maintained by worldly wisdom but in power.
- (3) The power to save people both then and now is in the gospel (Romans 1:16).

Conclusion:

1. Unity is powerful!
2. There are times when unity is not good.
 - a. Unity is not good when Christians are united in error.
 - b. Unity is not good when Christians are unified in failing to encourage (Hebrews 3:12).
 - c. Unity is not good when Christians are satisfied in doing nothing (Luke 10:2).
3. Unity is only wonderful when it is in harmony with God's will (Psalm 133:1).

Handout #1 – 1 Corinthians 1:2

The Church is . . .

1. The family of God. (1 Timothy 3:15)
2. The one Jesus promised to build. (Matthew 16:18-19)
3. The body of Christ. (Ephesians 1:22-23; 1 Corinthians 12:27)
4. The promised kingdom. (Mark 9:1; Luke 22:29-30)
5. The product of sowing the seed of the kingdom. (Luke 8:11)
6. The product of man's response to the call of the gospel.
(2 Thessalonians 2:14)
7. The church is NOT a denomination.

Handout #2 – 1 Corinthians 1:10

Paul's plead for Unity – 4 points

1. **Unity of Organization.** No division within the body. The word "body" is singular (Ephesians 1:22-23) Man-made churches are not part of the one body (Matthew 16:18-19)
2. **Unity of Speech.** All speaking the same thing:
 - * Speaking as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11)
 - * Holding the pattern of sound words (2 Timothy 1:13)
 - * Abiding in the teaching (words) of Christ (1 Timothy 6:3; 2 John 9)
3. **Unity of Thought.** This is being of the same mind by reading the same Book (Philippians 4:8)
4. **Unity of Opinion.** This is being of the same judgment by reasoning correctly from the scriptures.

Handout #3 – 1 Corinthians 1:21
We are Saved By . . .

1. Grace (Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8)
2. Mercy (Titus 3:5)
3. Jesus' Blood (I John 1:7; Romans 5:9; Ephesians 1:7)
4. Works (James 2:24; Acts 10:34-35; Philippians 2:12)
5. Obedience (Hebrews 5:8-9)
6. Endurance (Matthew 10:22)
7. Patience (Hebrews 6:12; Revelation 14:12-13)
8. The love of the Truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10)
9. Fear (Jude 23; Philippians 2:12)
10. Faith/Belief (Hebrews 11:6; Acts 16:30-31)
11. Repentance (Luke 13:3; 2 Corinthians 7:10)
12. Confession (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:9-10)
13. Baptism (Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:20-21)

Handout #4 – 1 Corinthians 1:25
The Wisdom of God

1. Naaman cured by dipping in the Jordan River (1 Kings 5:1)
2. Walls of Jericho brought down by a shout (Joshua 6:1)
3. Jesus cured the blind man with clay (John 9:6)
4. Sins forgiven on the condition of baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16)

**Handout #5 – 1 Corinthians 3:10
According to the Grace of God**

1. We are all saved by grace (Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:7)
2. We are called by His grace (Galatians 1:15)
3. Paul was made a minister by grace (Ephesians 3:7; Romans 15:15-16)
4. He labored by God's grace (1 Corinthians 15:10)
5. God's grace is abundant with faith and love (1 Timothy 1:14)
6. God's grace is for all men (Titus 2:11)
7. God's saving grace is conditional (2 Corinthians 6:1)

**Handout #6 – 1 Corinthians 3:23
“And you are Christ's” – How?**

1. By creation (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2)
2. By redemption (1 Peter 1:18-19)
3. By consecration (2 Corinthians 8:3)

“And Christ is God's” – How?

1. He is God's Son in His divine nature (Romans 1:4) and in His human nature (Luke 1:31-32)
2. God is His head (1 Corinthians 11:3)

Sources:

1. World Video Bible School - Online School Course Notes
2. “Why Can't We All Just Get Along?” - Sermon - by Ross Haffner
3. “When Unity Causes Confusion” - Bulletin article - by Ronnie Scherffius
4. Know Your Bible - by Frank J. Dunn
5. Executable Outlines - Mark A. Copeland

Lisa Kennedy is married to Trent, and they have four children: Ella, Troy, Luke, and Annie. She has a B.S. in Biochemistry and a M.Ed. in Biology Education. Lisa works as a Biology and Math teacher for Brentwood Christian School. For more than 15 years, Lisa has been involved in teaching ladies' classes, ladies' devotionals, and children's Bible classes. She has done foreign mission work in St. Lucia, Jamaica, Paraguay, Malaysia, and Mexico. Additionally, her family labored in full-time missionary work in Singapore for three years.

1 Corinthians 5-7
Sexual Integrity

Gina was baptized into Christ in 1996 and married Bryan the following year. Together, they have served the Lord in full-time ministry in Roanoke, Texas, and Malvern, Arkansas. Today, Gina continues to support Bryan as he preaches regularly while also working in a secular profession and serving as an elder at the 9th & Main congregation. They are blessed with three faithful children who have all obeyed the gospel—two grown and on their own, with the youngest preparing to leave home soon. Gina and Bryan are excited to see what the next phase of life holds as they continue to serve the Lord together.

1 Corinthians 8–10 – Love for Others: Are we letting our freedoms get in the way of God’s Plan?

Theme: Love is a choice to deny self, edify others, and glorify God, even when it’s hard or when we think we already are.

Key Scriptures: Ephesians 5:2, Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23

Corinth was a diverse church in an idolatrous city that faced tensions over eating idol-sacrificed meat. Paul teaches that love sacrifices personal freedoms and turns from idolatry to protect others’ faith, promote the gospel and glorify God.

1. 1 Corinthians 8: Love Limits Freedoms for Others’ Consciences

- "Knowledge _____ up, but love _____" (8:1).
- “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and _____ all mysteries and _____, and though I have _____ faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have _____, I am _____.” (I Corinthians 13:2)
- "If food makes my brother stumble, I will _____ again eat meat" (8:13).
- How does choosing restraint show love? (e.g., avoiding actions that tempt others)

2. 1 Corinthians 9: Love Denies Self for the Gospel

- "... Nevertheless, we have not used this _____, but all things lest we hinder the _____ of Christ" (9:12b).
- "I have become _____ things to _____ men, that I might by all means save _____" (9:22).
- When have you sacrificed a "right" to serve someone?

3. 1 Corinthians 10: Love for God's Glory

- "All things are _____ for me, but not all things are _____; all things are _____ for me, but not all things _____" (10:23).
- "Let no one seek his _____, but each one the other's _____" (10:24)
- "do _____ to the _____ of God" (10:31).
- How can daily choices glorify God and bless others?

Encouragement:

- "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but _____ receives the prize? Run in such a way that _____ may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is _____ in _____ things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I _____ and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have _____ to _____, I myself should become _____" (9:24-27).

Reflection Questions

- When have you chosen love over being “right”? What was hard?

- How can you adapt to serve someone this week?

- What daily choice can glorify God and bless others?

Lisa Hendrix is married to J.J. Hendrix, and they have 5 children. J.J. and Lisa work and worship with the Azle congregation in Azle, TX. She works for the Brown Trail School of Preaching and the Brown Trail church of Christ in Bedford, TX as the Finance Manager/Bookkeeper.

Lisa continues to homeschool her children and is extremely thankful to have a job that allows her the freedom to bring her children with her to work. She enjoys overextending herself, watching Korean Dramas, sugar and creamer with her caffeine, and hiding her chocolate from her kids.

We Can Have Orderly Worship

1 Corinthians 11-14

Lisa Hendrix

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 14:40

Introduction: Our cultures and societies are constantly changing. While those may be changing, our God is unchanging. God desires us to look to His Word for the answers to our problems and dilemmas. As we study chapters 11 to 14 of 1 Corinthians, let's do so with a desire to follow God and not our own ideas.

1. The Importance of Order

2. How Culture can Affect Our Assemblies

a. Do cultural differences mean we cannot worship together?

b. How do the roles of women and men fit into the assembly?

3. The Lord's Supper

- a. Are we doing this right?

- b. Is the Lord's Supper a time for fellowship or a time for reflection?

- c. Should we even eat in our buildings?

4. Spiritual Gifts

- a. Why do we have different gifts?

- b. Does that mean some of us are better than others?

- c. How should they be used when we assemble for worship?

5. God's Desire for Orderly Worship

Conclusion: To worship God in a pleasing manner, means to worship Him how He wants. It is a Christian's duty to study God's Word to find out how He wants to be worshipped.

Athena Scherffius is married to her high school sweetheart Ronnie Scherffius for almost 32 years this October. They have 7 amazing kids, including 3 wonderful daughters-in law and one awesome son-in-law, 3 grand babies with 2 more on the way. She is originally from Tennessee but has lived in Texas for almost 9 years. She now lives in College Station where her husband is a full-time instructor at the Texas School of Preaching. Athena has taught bible class ever since she was 14 years old starting in the cradle roll class. Since then, she has taught every age from babies to teen girls, up to ladies' classes. She has spoken at various Ladies Days through the years. She loves teaching other women about God's word and the joys of being a wife and mother. She homeschools, loves her family, loves to draw, cook, sew, and enjoys photography. This is also her first time at TLC.

Victory Of The Resurrection
1 Corinthians 15

- I. Gospel of the Resurrection (1-4)**
 - A. Preached and believed (1, 2)
 - B. According to the scriptures (3, 4)

- II. Witnesses of the Resurrection (5-11)**
 - A. The Twelve (5)
 - B. A multitude (6)
 - C. James (7)
 - D. Paul (8-11)

- III. Necessity of the Resurrection (12-19)**
 - A. Some deny (12)
 - B. Consequences of denying (13-19)
 - 1. Christ is not risen (13)
 - 2. Fruitless faith (14)
 - 3. Apostles: false witnesses (15)
 - 4. Sinful state remains (16-18)
 - C. Miserable state (19)

- IV. Certainty of the Resurrection (20-34)**
 - A. Christ the firstfruits (20-22)
 - B. Death destroyed (23-28)
 - C. Folly of baptizing for the dead (29)
 - D. Paul's life in jeopardy (30-32)
 - E. Be not deceived but aware (33, 34)

- V. Glory of the Resurrection (35-49)**
 - A. Foolish questions (35-38)
 - B. Differing bodies and differing glories (39-41)
 - C. The resurrected body (42-44)
 - D. The first and second Adam (45-49)

VI. Victory of the Resurrection (50-58)

- A.** Necessity of a spiritual body (50)
- B.** We shall all change (51-53)
- C.** Victory over death (54-57)
- D.** Admonition to steadfast faithfulness (58)

Stephanie Griffith lives in Bedford, Texas where she and her husband worship at the Brown Trail Church of Christ. She has been a Children's Bible class teacher since she was 19 years old and a Ladies Bible class teacher for more than ten years. She has a degree in Elementary Education and taught in the public school system full time and part time for 12 years. She currently has a part time job teaching writing to young children on an online platform. Robert and Stephanie have 3 children – Alyssa Gibson, who with her husband Luke lives in the DFW area where Luke works as a veterinarian, Tara - a graduate of Southwest School of Biblical Studies and now a student at Freed Hardeman University, and Caleb who works with the Brown Trail School of Preaching and is doing graduate work with Heritage Christian University while preaching part time in the DFW area.

1 Corinthians 16 and Final Thoughts on the Book

Review of Chapters 1-15:

Who were the Corinthians? (1:1-9):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The Corinthians had problems that needed to be resolved!!!

A. 1:10:

B. 4:8:

C. 5:1-2:

D. 6:1-8:

E. 7:

F. 8:12:

G. 10:14:

H. 11:17-34:

I. 12-14:

J. 15:12:

K. 16:1

Chapter 16

16:1-4 – Paul instructed them to “lay something aside” on the first day of the week so that “there be no collections when I come.”

There was a _____!

Five Exhortations in 16:13-14:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.