

I CORINTHIANS 1:1-9

INTRODUCTION...

- **THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD**
 - Our desire to is to teach through the whole Bible Genesis to Revelation
 - **Acts 20:27** – “**For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.**”
 - We have finished Romans - and will now move on to I Corinthians...

THE BOOK OF I CORINTHIANS...

- **THE AUTHOR OF I CORINTHIANS...**
 - Paul – the same Paul who whose life we followed from Acts chapter 13 to 28
 - Paul who wrote the book of Romans (*14 total epistles in the New Testament*)
 - He opens the letter with his greeting – “**Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ...**”
- **THE CITY OF CORINTH...**
 - Corinth was a beautiful, very prosperous, and influential city in the Roman Empire...
 - It was a city that had been completely destroyed by Rome in 147 B.C.
 - Rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. - became the capitol of Achaia (*modern Greece*)...
 - It was the cultural center of the region - hosted the Corinthian games (*Olympics*)...
 - It was a large city with 500,000-750,000 population...
 - The port of Corinth...
 - 2 ports - Cenchrea on the east (*Aegean sea*) / Lyceum on the west (*Adriatic*)
 - Corinth sat on a 4-mile stretch of land - separated the Aegean from the Adriatic seas...
 - It was the major trade route between the eastern and western Roman Empire...
 - To go around the peninsula was a journey of over 250 miles - dangerous sailing...
 - All the ships would come to Corinth - rather than sailing around - went over land!
 - They would pull the ships on rollers from the port of Cenchrea to Lyceum...
 - In 1893 a canal was finished between the 2 ports - 170 ft. deep - still used to this day
 - Immoral city...
 - Corinth was infamous for its idolatry and sexual promiscuity...
 - At the top of the highest hill in Corinth - there was the Acropolis (*2000 ft.*)
 - On top of the hill was the temple to Aphrodite - the goddess of love...
 - Every night 1000-temple prostitutes would come down into the city...
 - The Greeks had a term ‘Corinthianized’ - meaning to be immoral or evil!
 - This is the place where Paul began a church!
 - Towards the end of Paul’s 2nd missionary journey he came to Corinth...
 - **Acts 18:7-11** - Paul spent 1-½ years in Corinth teaching the people the Word of God...
 - On Paul’s 3rd missionary journey he went to Ephesus...
 - Paul heard about problems in Corinth - and wrote the letter - 53 A.D.
 - Paul devoted his entire letter to the church to address these problems...
 - **The problems in the Corinth church - the same problems we have in the church today**

- Making the study of Paul's epistle a powerful tool for correcting the church

- OVERVIEW ...

- o 16 Chapters / 437 verses – the Book of I Corinthians...
- o Paul had 3 main purposes in writing his epistle to the church...
 - 1st - to correct moral problems and divisions that had arisen in the church...
 - 2nd - to answer several questions the church had written to ask him about...
 - 3rd - to establish Paul's right as an apostle and leader to correct the church...
- o Key Verse:
 - The church in Corinth had gotten caught up in pride - lost sight of Jesus...
 - **I Corinthians 1:26-29** - "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty."
- o Outline – we will TRY to cover about ½ a chapter each week...
 - **I Corinthians 1:1-9** - Introduction - intension of the letter...
 - 1st - **I Corinthians 1:10-6:20** - Problems in the church...
 - 1st - division in the church - I Corinthians 1:10-4:21
 - 2nd - Lack of discipline in the church - I Corinthians 5:1-13
 - 3rd - Legal problems within the church - I Corinthians 6:1-8
 - 4th - Lack of purity in the church - I Corinthians 6:9-20
 - 2nd - **I Corinthians 7:1-15:58** - Answers to questions...
 - 1st - Marriage - I Corinthians 7:1-40
 - 2nd - Idols - I Corinthians 8:1-11:1
 - 3rd - Worship - I Corinthians 11:2-34
 - 4th - Spiritual gifts - I Corinthians 12:1-14:40
 - 5th - The resurrection - I Corinthians 15:1-58
 - **I Corinthians 16:1-24** - Conclusion...

PAUL'S GREETING TO THE CHURCH IN CORINTH... VS. 1-9

- WHO WROTE THE BOOK - WHO HE WROTE IT TO... VS. 1-3

- o Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ...
 - Where Paul had opened up his letter to Corinth calling himself a servant of Jesus...
 - He boldly refers to himself as an apostle by the will of God to the church in Corinth...
 - As Paul seeks to correct the problems in the church - he 1st emphasizes his authority...
 - Often we feel like 'who are we' to be able to tell others about Jesus...
 - We think we don't have enough knowledge - or are not good enough - no authority...
 - Yet we are also called to be an apostle - not an "Apostle" - one of the 12...
 - But one who is sent out - with authority - to preach the Gospel of Jesus...
- o Sosthenes our brother - **Acts 18:17**
 - Sosthenes was the new ruler of the Synagogue in Corinth...
 - He was the replacement for Crispus who was removed for believing in Jesus...
 - Led by Sosthenes - the Jews brought Paul to Gaius - the Roman ruler of Corinth...
 - They wanted Paul to be beaten – but instead they took the punishment....

- We are told the Greeks took Sosthenes - and beat him instead (*Paul was left alone*)
- But now hear we read about Sosthenes again - now as a believer in Jesus!
- Some people have a harder time coming to Jesus than others...
- God is willing to do anything - to convince you that you need Jesus...
- Because the consequence for not believing is far worse than any hardship in this life...
- Sosthenes had to be beaten - in order for him to realize he needed Jesus
- If it takes sickness - loss of relationship - total lack of money - God will allow it...
- So we can see we need Jesus - so that we know we are saved - going to heaven!
- o To the church of God at Corinth...
 - The church of God is not a building - it is not a particular denomination...
 - There is only one church of God - the Body of Christ...
 - No matter what name - no matter what traditions - we are all part of God's church!
 - We are the church of God - in the bukid of Himamaylan - part of Jesus' church!
 - To those who are sanctified - called to be saints (*along with all who call on Jesus*)...
 - This letter was not just for the church of God at Corinth - it is for everyone!
 - It is written to us because we are called to be - sanctified saints (*perfect/passive*)...
 - We get the wrong idea about 'saints' (*the word means holy - or set apart*)
 - We think people become saints because of what they did - good works/miracles...
 - In fact it is not what we do - it is what God did that makes us saints...
 - We are saints - 'holy' / set apart - because of what Jesus did on the cross for us!
 - **Hebrews 10:10** - "We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."
 - The church in Corinth was carnal - immoral - rebellious - but saints!
 - If God can look at the church in Corinth - as see them as saints - there is hope for us!
 - We also have our days - when we are immoral - rebellious...
 - But God looks down on us - and sees Jesus - and calls us saints!
- THE GRACE OF GOD... (4 THINGS) vs. 3-9
 - o 1st - Grace to you and peace... vs. 3
 - The Grace of God...
 - Judgment is getting what I deserve - mercy is not getting what I deserve...
 - But Grace is getting what I do not deserve - a free gift from God...
 - We earned the right to go to hell through our sin and rebellion - judgment...
 - Instead God gave us the incredible gift of righteousness and heaven - through Jesus!
 - Peace with God...
 - Before we were saved - we lived in certain expectation of God's wrath and judgment
 - There was no peace in our lives - only the fear of death - and punishment...
 - **Hebrews 10:27** - "There will be nothing to look forward to but the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies."
 - When we have the Grace of God - the free gift of salvation - we have peace with God!
 - You cannot have true peace - rest in the knowledge we are forgiven - without grace...
 - o 2nd - The cost of Grace... vs. 4
 - Grace is free to us - but it cost Jesus everything - it was paid for in the blood of Jesus...
 - If you went to buy a TV and it cost P100 - what kind of TV would it be...

- If you went to buy a TV and it cost P100,000 - what kind of TV would it be...
- The more expensive something is - the more valuable it must be...
- God loves us so much there was nothing - even His life - He was not willing to give!
- **Romans 8:32** - "Since God did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't God, who gave us Christ, also give us everything else?"
- Paul thanked God ALWAYS for the grace that had been given...
 - Considering all the problems the church of Corinth was having - grace was GOOD...
 - We all have our moments - our shortcomings - all the more reason...
 - To be VERY thankful - ALWAYS - for the good grace of God freely given to us!
- o 3rd - God's grace makes us complete... vs. 5-7
 - We are absolutely complete because of God's grace - He has given us everything!
 - All speech - all knowledge - all gifts come through the grace of God!
 - **Ephesians 1:3** - "How we praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we belong to Christ."
 - We often look at our abilities - our talents - when it comes to what we can do...
 - But when we look to ourselves - we end up limiting God...
 - We have already been given all speech - knowledge - gifts - from God by grace!
 - And God gives us whatever we need to have in the hour when we need it - by faith...
 - Too often in Christianity we become complacent - things become routine...
 - What once was a stretch - prayer in front of others - is now comfortable....
 - Part of growing in God - is continuing to step out in faith - doing new things...
 - Seeing what new speech - knowledge - or gift God might want to use in our lives!
- o 4th - Security because of Grace... vs. 7-9
 - Past - present - future...
 - We were saved by grace - past - all of our sins taken away by the cross of Christ...
 - We are empowered by grace - present - we have been given EVERYTHING...
 - We are also secure in God's Grace - future - as we wait for Jesus return...
 - We can be absolutely secure as we wait for the rapture of the church...
 - Because God will confirm us - hold onto us until the day He takes us home
 - Because God sees us as blameless - forgiven by the work of the cross...
 - Because God is faithful - and God cannot fail!
 - As we have received God's grace - we have peace - purpose - and rest...
 - All because of what Jesus did for us on the cross - because of His love for us!