

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The Church at Corinth

Why did Paul write to them?

What was Corinth like in Paul's day?

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What do you think of when someone mentions Las Vegas?

- Sin City
- Run by The Mob
- "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas"

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I've never been there, and have no desire to

- Based on movies & friends who've been there I think of:
- Overwhelmingly bright lights & crowds
- Flashy celebrity entertainment
- Gambling, prostitution, crime & money

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Corinth had been a prominent city of ancient Greece until Rome destroyed it in 146 B.C.

- Julius Ceasar rebuilt it 100 years later, 50 years before Christ was born
- Paul showed up about 50 years after Jesus changed the course of history

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Roman Corinth had been around for about 100 years when Paul came

- It was on a narrow strip of land between the Aegean & Adriatic Seas, with seaports on both...
- A bustling hub of international commerce, degenerate culture & idolatrous, heathen religion

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*The most well known house of worship was the **Temple of Aphrodite**, "goddess of love"*

- Serving worshipers with 1,000 temple prostitutes
- A steady source of income. Why leave it to the Pimps?

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The city thrived on commerce, entertainment, vice & corruption

- Pleasure seekers came from far & wide for a holiday from morality
- "To act like a Corinthian" was synonymous for debauchery & prostitution

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Of the 700,000 people living in Corinth at the time

- Two-thirds or more of them were slaves
- Thousands of non-residents passed through continually

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*Let's see how Paul landed there in **Acts 18:1-18a***

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What is the nature & reason for this letter from Paul?

- Paul lived in Corinth for 18 months, building the church
- Because of intense Jewish opposition, he moved into the home of Titus Justice
- He financed his ministry by making tents with Aquila & Priscilla
- Though he now worked mainly among the Gentiles, Crispus, the leader of the synagogue and other Jews were won to faith in Christ

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About ten years after he left, while he was ministering in Ephesus...

- Men from the Corinthian church came requesting help with quarrels & divisions among them...
- And seeking his counsel in other important issues challenging their lives of faith

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I Corinthians is Paul's response to their problems & questions

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He has deep relationship & great influence with these people

- How did he approach them in addressing these troubling issues?
- He had real authority (Biblical authority is relational)

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Paul writes to them as a devoted, loving parent

- **Keeping Christ at the center of everything**
- He is affirming & personal while correcting & instructing them
- While drawing them out of the Corinthian culture...
- It is challenging keeping the culture out of them

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He greets them by reminding them who he is in God's service

- He reminds them who they are in Christ
- He prays blessings for them in God's name

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He affirms his thanks to God for His work in them

- He reminds them of God's ultimate purpose in their lives
 - Trusting in God's faithfulness to all He has called them to
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Then he steps right into the biggest threat against them...

- Divisions among them because of human definitions
- **Worst of all!** They are dividing **who Christ is** in them together

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He then identifies the source of their divisiveness:

- They have confused the gospel message
- Corrupting God's heavenly wisdom with earthly wisdom

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He reminds them of ministry accountability before God

- And that they've lost sight of who he (Paul) is

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He then addresses three active occurrences of sin they are ignoring

- Incest, worldly litigation & sexual immorality

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Paul now begins to offer Biblical counsel for the issues they asked about

- Various concerns surrounding marriage
- Freedom & responsibility in an idolatrous culture
- Conduct & spiritual gifts in public worship
- Realities about the resurrection: Christ's & ours

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Lastly – giving to help persecuted saints in Jerusalem

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He concludes with future plans, encouragements, & exhortations of love for them