

STUDY GUIDE

Monday, June 6 – Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-3. Paul was given a special calling from God to preach about Jesus Christ. Each follower of Christ has a job to do, a role to take, or a contribution to make. One assignment may seem more spectacular than another, but all are necessary to carry out God's greater plans for his church and for his world. Be available to God by placing your gifts at his service. Then as you discover what he calls you to do, be ready to do it. A personal invitation makes a person feel wanted and welcome. We are "called by God to be his own holy people." God personally invites us to be citizens of his eternal kingdom. "To be made holy" means that we are chosen or set apart by Christ for his service. We accept God's invitation by accepting his Son, and by trusting in the work he did on the cross to forgive our sins.

Tuesday, June 7 – Read 1 Corinthians 1:4-6. In this letter, Paul wrote some strong words to the people of Corinth, but he began on a positive note of thanksgiving. He affirmed their privilege of belonging to the Lord and receiving his generous gifts; the power to speak out for him and understand his truth. When we must correct others, it helps to begin by affirming what God has already accomplished in them. **Read 1 Corinthians 1:7-9.** The church members had all the spiritual gifts they needed to live a Christian life, to witness for Christ, and to stand against paganism and immorality of Corinth. But, instead of using what God had given them, they were arguing over which gifts were more important. What do you argue about in the church that really isn't that 'important?'

Wednesday, June 8 – Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-11. Paul founded the church in Corinth on his second missionary journey. 18 months after he left, arguments and divisions arose, and some church members slipped back into an immoral life-style. Paul wrote this letter to address the problems and to clear up confusion about right and wrong so that they would remove the immorality from among them. The Corinthian people had a reputation from jumping from fad to fad; Paul wanted to keep following Christ from degenerating into just another fad. He uses 'brothers and sisters' to emphasize family. Believers share a unity that runs even deeper than that of blood brothers and sisters. To "let there be real harmony," allow for no "divisions," and "be of one mind, united in thought and purpose" does not require everyone to believe exactly the same. There is a difference between

having opposing viewpoints and being divisive. A group of people will not completely agree on every issue, but they can work together harmoniously if they agree on what truly matters: Jesus Christ is Lord of all. In your church, speak and behave in a way that will reduce arguments and increase harmony. Petty differences should never divide Christians.

Thursday, June 9 – Read 1 Corinthians 1:12-17. In this large and diverse church, the believers favored different preachers. These men spoke the word of God (and this was the only way for people to have access to it – there was no written New Testament). Paul keeps emphasizing Jesus by repeating his name just to make sure that all the people looked to him and not the human speakers. Paul makes it clear, God’s message is more important than the human messenger. With many churches and different worship styles, we could get caught up comparing and choosing leaders – which only serves to divide. True followers of Christ do not allow anything to divide them. Don’t let your appreciation for any teacher, preacher or leader, lead you into pride. Our allegiance must be to Christ and to the unity He desires.

Friday, June 10 – Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-24. Many Jews considered the Good News of Jesus Christ to be foolish, because they thought the Messiah would be a conquering king accompanied by signs and miracles. Jesus had not restored David’s throne as expected. Besides, he was executed as a criminal, and how could a criminal be a savior? The news of Christ still sounds foolish to many. Our society worships powers, influence, and wealth. Jesus came as a humble, poor servant, and he offers his Kingdom to those who have faith, not to those who do all kinds of good deeds to try to earn salvation. This looks foolish to the world, but Christ is the mighty power of God, the only way we can be saved.

Saturday, June 11 – Read 1 Corinthians 1:25-31. Is Christianity against rational thinking? Christians clearly do believe in using their minds to weigh the evidence and make wise choices. Paul is declaring that no amount of human knowledge can replace or bypass Christ’s work on the cross. If it could, Christ would be accessible only to the intellectually gifted and well education and not to ordinary people or children.