

First Corinthians 1:1-17

A Godward beginning—1:1-3

- 1) The writers—1:1
 - a) The delegated authority of Paul an apostle
 - i) Not by his own choice, authority, words, or opinions
 - b) The assistance of Sosthenes
 - i) Probably the same man mentioned in Acts 18:17.
 - ii) Perhaps he was the actual writer/amanuensis of this letter?
- 2) The readers—1:2
 - a) Specifically—to remind Corinth of God’s expectations for their daily lives
 - i) Unique—the congregation of God in Corinth
 - ii) Set apart—those in Corinth who had been set apart in Christ Jesus
 - iii) Holy—those in Corinth who were called holy ones
 - b) Generally—to remind Corinth they were not superior to other congregations
 - i) All true worshippers in other congregations of God around the globe
- 3) The prayer—1:3
 - a) Expressions of God’s goodness

An example of Godward gratitude—1:4-9

- 1) Directed to God the Father—1:4
- 2) Gives evidences of God the Father’s grace in their lives—1:4-7
- 3) Encourages them regarding God the Father’s future work in them—1:8
- 4) Reminds them of God the Father’s character and activity—1:9

The obvious evidence of fleshly, man-ward division of loyalties—1:10-17

- 1) He states his desire for genuine unity among them—1:10
 - a) The social perversion of divisions (σχίσμα *schisma* # 4978)
 - b) He encourages restoration (καταρτίζω *katartizo* # 2675)
- 2) He gives evidence to the contrary—1:11-12 (this was not doctrinal but social)
 - a) The social perversion of contentions (ἔρις *eris* # 2054)
 - b) This makes them vulnerable to attack from the outside.
- 3) He clarifies the issue with a series of questions—1:13
 - a) Concerning unity, redemption, and immersion/allegiance
- 4) He reminds them of God’s purpose for his ministry—1:14-17
 - a) Paul’s limited number of immersions—1:14-16
 - b) The focus and style of Paul’s ministry—1:17
 - i) Paul is not disparaging immersing believers. He is emphasizing the particular focus of ministry.
 - ii) He avoided the carefully crafted rhetoric for which Corinth was known.
 - iii) Faith in human effort/skill/ability diminishes faith in the power of God’s gospel.

Take-home truth: Disunity in the congregation dishonors the One who made the congregation.