

Chapter 33: Ye Are the Temple of God

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1. Introduction to First Corinthians

First Corinthians Chapters 1-6

When written:	Approx. A.D. 56-57
Second Letter:	<p>It is our best understanding that neither Paul's first letter to the Saints in Corinth nor their response has survived (1 Cor. 5:9). Thus, 1 Corinthians is actually 2 Corinthians, and 2 Corinthians is 3 Corinthians.</p> <p>D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,</p> <p>“In a sense, reading 1 Corinthians without knowing that it was not Paul's first communication with the members of the Corinth is like walking in on the middle of a conversation and hearing only the response of one party.”¹</p>
Where from:	From the Apostle Paul during his third missionary experience to the Saints in Corinth while he was in Ephesus.
Corinth:	<p>D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,</p> <p>“Corinth, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, was one of the Richest and most immoral cities in the world. According to the ancient Geographer Strabo, the temple of Aphrodite [Venus] on Acrocorinth (the high hill overlooking the lower city) boasted a thousand ritual prostitutes involved in aberrant rites of worship. Whether this report is accurate or not, it certainly reflects Corinth's reputation at the time.”²</p>
Why written?	Chloe (1 Cor. 1:11), a sister in Corinth reported to Paul the divisions that were occurring amongst the Saints [members of the Church. Paul may also have

	<p>received reports from others that all was not well among the members in Corinth.</p> <p>Richard Lloyd Anderson states,</p> <p>“The Corinthians correspondence total 27% of Paul’s surviving letters. This is not [because] these Greeks were so deserving that Paul continued to instruct them, but <i>because they were in a trouble spot that demanded much of his attention.</i>”³</p>
<p>Areas of Focus:</p>	<p>The first six chapters of Paul’s writings to the Corinthians focuses on four areas of major concern: (1) Fractal divisions among leaders; (2) Spiritual vs. intellectual knowledge; (3) Moral cleanliness; and, (4) Frivolous lawsuits. While the first six chapters of 1 Corinthians highlight these four areas, it is important to note that there are also other areas that Paul addressed that are noted.</p>

It is important to remember Paul is not writing to those who are investigating the truths of the gospel, but instead to those who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ. With the passing of time since their conversion, they have been influenced by the world in which they live as well as by their own lack of understanding regarding fundamental gospel principles. Paul is addressing the false understanding regarding the doctrine of the Church, that has crept into the congregations in his various letters.

As we proceed, we will address Paul’s teachings as they are found in each of the first six chapters of 1 Corinthians.

2. First Corinthians Chapters 1-6

2.1. First Corinthians 1

Russell B. Swenson states,

“The Corinthians whom Paul converted had a great transition to make in becoming Christians. They lived in a city where sexual indulgence was almost as common as eating and drinking, where gay iniquity was preverbal. As Greeks they were highly individualistic and inclined to partisanship and factions from ancient to modern times, the Greeks have been intoxicated with partisan rivalry. It was a vital aspect of democracy of its great cities, where about the greatest sin of which a person could be guilty was to be neutral. They were high strung and given to disputation and speculation. The religions to which they had belonged had emphasized little of personal morality. This was done by the state and philosophers. Highly sacramental, liturgical, aesthetic, ecstatic or emotional, and recreational activities were important essentials of their previous religious experience, but not much moral emphasis. They became far more engrossed in speculating about the resurrection and boasting of their spiritual gifts than they were in conforming to the rigorous moral code of Judaism which Paul sought to impress upon them. They had a hard time in realizing that Christianity was an exclusive religion. Theirs had been a syncretistic type of religion wherein one was permitted to belong to many cults.”⁴

Paul begins his letter to Sosthenes, the leader of the Corinth Church and its members, by stating his authority to speak as one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. He is writing to them not as an individual, but as an authorized representative of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:1-2

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother,

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs, and ours:

Paul begins by reminding them, in the Church of Jesus Christ, it is important there are no divisions among the leaders, but instead a unity of faith centered on Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:10-11

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren,...that there are contentions among you.

It has come to Paul's attention through the report of others, that contentions have arisen amongst the members of the Church. Paul is concerned, if not addressed, the contention will disrupt the unity that must exist if the Spirit of the Holy Ghost is to dwell with them.

1 Corinthians 1:12-13

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided?...

The members have divided themselves into groups, headed by various individuals in the Church. This division has contributed to the lack of unity in the Church. Paul reminds them that it is the Church of Jesus Christ, not of any man, including himself.

1 Corinthians 1:18-20

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 ...hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

Oliver Cowdery as Editor states,

“...one reason why so few, either believe or embrace it [the Gospel]. It is too simple and foolish, according to their [the wise] estimation, to be of any consequence to them. It was so considered in the days of the apostles who immediately followed the Savior; and to such an extent did the feeling prevail, that an apostle said, if a man would be wise he must become a fool: that is, to be wise, he must believe and practice those things which the world consider the most perfect foolishness, and too simple and degrading, to be believed, by any rational being. And yet, notwithstanding its foolishness and simplicity, it has the power to save them that believed; for says the apostle,...or in other words, this foolishness of God, is wiser than man, and this weakness of God is stronger than man.” [see 1 Cor. 1:25].”⁵

1 Corinthians 1:22-23

**22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:
23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;**

The truths of the gospel are not known by only the intellect. To those who believe only what they can see, the truths revealed by the spirit appear as foolish. The truths of the gospel can only be known through a combination of mind and spirit. One hears and reads and attends and then in humility asks God to know if these things are true. It is then by the spirit, or by what one feels, one comes know heavenly truths.

1 Corinthians 1:27

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“The Lord called Joseph Smith and others from among the weak things of the world, because he and his associates were contrite and humble. The great and mighty ones in the nations the Lord could not use because of their pride and self-righteousness...

“The Lord’s ways are not man’s ways, and he cannot choose those who in their own judgment are too wise to be taught. Therefore he chooses those who are willing to be taught and he makes them mighty even to the breaking down of the great and mighty...When we think of our missionary system, we can see how the weak have gone forth among the strong ones and have prevailed. The mighty and strong ones have been broken down by the humble elders of the Church.”⁶

It is essential that like those in Corinth, we also align our lives with Jesus Christ. He alone offers to us the happiness of this life and the blessings of eternity.

2.2. First Corinthians 2

1 Corinthians 2:1-2, 5

**1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.
2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.
5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.**

Paul came not to Corinth as a representative of himself with the intent of impressing the members of his abilities and talents. He came as a humble representative of Jesus Christ with the sole desire to communicate to them the verities of Christ’s resurrection and teachings. It was his desire they build their testimonies on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:7-9

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

As Paul notes, we are not here on earth by happenstance or chance. God the Father had a plan which he presented to His children in the Spirit World. As spirits, we would have the opportunity of coming to this world and gaining a physical body. As part of the Father's plan, it was necessary a Savior come to earth, experience all the challenges and adversity of life, and be without sin. He must also have the ability to pay the price of all the sins of those who would live in order to free them from Satan's captivity and to provide a way that we may return to live with the Father again. The majority of us made the decision to come to earth, despite the rebellion of Satan and one-third of our brothers and sisters who joined with him.

If we accept Jesus Christ as Our Savior and Redeemer and agree to submit our will to keeping His commandments, there is no limit to the blessings that Our Father has for us.

Spencer W. Kimball states,

“You are heirs to great fortunes, for eternal life is the greatest gift.

“What will you do with it? You are entitled to a kingdom or a queendom. You are princesses and princes. Do you prize your inheritance? Will you abdicate and relinquish your heavenly rights to all that is your due? Do you but realize what the Lord has in store for you? Do you know what you could discard in a moment of carelessness and heedlessness?

The Lord told his servants:

“...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” (1 Cor.2:9).

“The kings highway—the royal road to eternal joy and exaltation—is a hard road, full of sacrifices and restrictions and hard work. The way is narrow but it is straight, well-marked, and strongly beamed. But if you get off course, the dot and dash tapping gets dimmer and fainter till it fades out entirely.

“The permanent kingdom is yours, not for the asking, but for the earning.”⁷

Paul's witness to the Corinthians, and to us, is the Father has many blessings in store for us, if we are obedient to the covenants we have made. If we choose not to be obedient, then we lose the blessings we might have had otherwise.

1 Corinthians 2:11-12

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Marion G. Romney states,

“Prayer is the means by which men communicate with God. Revelation is the means by which God communicates with men...Without revelation, man’s intellect is wholly inadequate for the discovery of the ultimate truth with which the gospel deals.

“The principle of revelation is the key which opens the mind and the spirit of man to an understanding of the gospel. There is no other key to such knowledge. Thinkers have philosophized, poets have dreamed; and scientists have experimented; but only God speaks with a sure knowledge of all truth.”⁸

If we desire to know the things of God, we must humbly seek that direction upon our knees in humble prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ. God, the Father, will then speak to us through the whispering of the spirit of the Holy Ghost. This is the process of personal revelation.

1 Corinthians 2:14

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Why are the things of God foolishness to man? At one end of the spectrum, it is pride that gets in the way and the person refuses to humble themselves; At the other end, it is a lack of faith for the individual does not believe God will speak to them. In between there are a multitude of reasons man uses to prevent them from approaching their Father in humble communication. These individuals will not know the sweet whispering of the spirit for they do not seek to hear the Father’s voice. Therefore, they will not hear it.

Brigham Young states,

“How difficult it is to teach the natural man, who comprehends nothing more than more than that which he sees with the natural eye!...Talk to him about angels, heavens, God, immortality, and eternal lives, and it is like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal to his ears; it has no music to him; there is nothing in it that charms his senses, soothes his feelings, attracts his attention, or engages his affections, in the least; to him it is all vanity.”⁹

All is not lost. If the natural man is willing to exercise, even a particle of faith, one can know for themselves the truths of God. Here is the promise as outlined by Alma, a Prophet of God in ancient America.

B/M, Alma 32:27-28

27 But behold, if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words. 28 Now, we will compare the word unto a seed. Now, if ye give place that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold if it be a true seed, or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold, it will begin to swell within your breasts; and when you feel these swelling motions, ye will begin to say within yourselves—It must needs be that this is a good seed, or that the word is good, for it beginneth to enlarge my soul; yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding, yea, it beginneth to be delicious to me.

Ok. What do you have to lose? I suggest you have nothing to lose, but you have everything to gain. Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find. That is God’s promise to both you and me.

2.3. First Corinthians 3

1 Corinthians 3:2-3

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

Milk refers to the basic principles of the gospel, while meat referring to more advanced concepts. These often require a greater level of spiritual attunement and receptivity.

Bruce C. Hafen states,

“One essential element in [God’s] plan is the principle of ‘line upon line, precept upon precept.’ Not only does he leave to us the initiative to believe, he also imparts to his hearers only what they are ready to hear. Milk comes before meat. ‘I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.’ (John 16:12) ...Hugh Nibley has described this guiding principle as the ‘policy of reticence,’ which the Lord has always followed to protect sacred things from common misunderstandings and to protect the unworthy from damaging themselves with them.”¹⁰

We best understanding the words of the spirit when we have sufficiently prepared ourselves to receive it. Nothing causes the spirit to withdraw like contention. The emotions of envy, strife, and lack of unity are the servants of contention and when they are present, the spirit departs.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

6 I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planted any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

When we seek honor and recognition for the service, we render in bringing souls unto God in order to build his kingdom on earth, we have lost sight of the work in which we are engaged and whose work it is. We are privileged to be servants serving in the kingdom of God on earth and without the sustaining guidance and direction of the Lord, we are nothing. As John the Baptist reminded the conceited and proud Jews who believed that they would gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven solely on the basis of “... We have Abraham to our father: [He taught] for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham” (Matthew 3:9).

1 Corinthians 3:10-11

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

If one were to alter the doctrine of Jesus Christ as found within His Church, then it would no longer would be the Church of Jesus Christ. It would then become the Church of the individual whose gospel was now being taught. Jesus gave this direction when He visited those in ancient America following His resurrection.

B/M, 3 Nephi 27:8, 11

8 And how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses' name then it be Moses' church, or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel.

11 But if it be not built upon my gospel, and is built upon the works of men, or upon the works of the devil, verily I say unto you they have joy in their works for a season, and by and by the end cometh, and they are hewn down, and cast into the fire from whence there is no return.

According to the direction of the Lord Himself, His church is to be called by His name and be built upon His gospel. If it is not, then it is not His church.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

**16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?
17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.**

This scripture is similar to 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. It is for this reason that the interpretation for one is often offered for the other. It is my opinion that these specific verses refer to the body of the members [saints], while the verses in 1 Corinthians 6, have a different meaning.

D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,

“The temple of God spoken of in these verses is the body of believers in Christ, that is, his Church, and ‘the Spirit of God dwelleth *among* or *within* you [plural].’ If any man defiles the temple of God—meaning an apostate who distorts the doctrine and draws disciples after him—he will be destroyed by God.”¹¹

Paul is concerned with the divisions that have occurred within the Church at Corinth among its leaders and members. It is in this context that Paul is referring to the body of the believers in Christ or His Church for the divisions, if not repaired, will adversely affect the members of the church.

1 Corinthians 3:19

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness [Gr. cunning, villainy].

Once again Paul reminds those in Corinth and elsewhere of the infinite knowledge of God in contrast to the finite knowledge of man. Man's knowledge, in comparison to God's advanced understanding, is foolishness or simple mindedness. We patiently observe those individuals during their teenage years whose superior knowledge seems to know no limit in comparison to their simple-minded parents. When this trait continues into adulthood, we then seek to avoid, if possible, their demonstration of pride and arrogance. God is infinitely more patient with us, but there are times when He too must find our actions foolish.

2.4. First Corinthians 4

1 Corinthians 4:4

4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

Paul has his critics who continue to find fault with him so they might also dismiss his teachings. In a humble manner, Paul acknowledges his imperfections and nothingness, but his qualities are not the issue. The issue is that he is a qualified servant of the Lord who has been given a message to deliver regarding their salvation. In the final analysis, he will be judged, not by them, but by the Lord regarding how he fulfilled his stewardship to them.

Ezra Taft Benson states,

“The prophet will not necessarily be popular with the world or the worldly.

“As a prophet reveals the truth it divides the people.

“The honest in heart heed his words, but the unrighteous either ignore the prophet or fight him. When the prophet points out the sins of the world, the worldly either want to close the mouth of the prophet, or else act as if the prophet didn’t exist, rather than repent of their sins. Popularity is never a test of truth. Many a prophet has been killed or cast out.”¹²

While these words have direct reference to the Lord’s Prophet, they also have application to those who serve as his anointed servant. When the assignment comes from the Lord to His servant to deliver a message to those who are in need of repentance, the reception is similar. The reception of the message by the recipient is in direct proportion to their degree of righteousness.

1 Corinthians 4:6

6 ...that ye might learn...that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

Paul reiterates his counsel to the leaders of the Church. They are not to consider themselves superior to others. When their focus shifts from learning the will of Jesus Christ in regard to the care of the members, to their own will, they will fail. It is essential they learn to support each other in their primary focus to further the work of Jesus Christ and in unity seek to build the kingdom of God on earth.

1 Corinthians 4:16-17

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

Paul concludes this portion of his writings by reference to the problems of fraction and its solution.

Paul’s solution to their division is to follow his inspired direction based upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. If they will do so, their congregation will experience a return of the spirit. When they experienced division and contention, the spirit departed from them and they were then left on their own. This resulted in yet a further departure from the doctrine of Christ.

2.5. First Corinthians 5

1 Corinthians 5:1-2

**1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.
2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.**

It appears that there was a member of the congregation who had entered into sexual relations with his step-mother. In spite of being guilty of breaking the law of chastity, and subsequently receiving disciplinary action, instead no action was taken. Paul is astonished at their lack of concern for the spiritual well-being of the individual or its effects upon other church members.

1 Corinthians 5:3-5

**3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,
4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

Paul was concerned the leaders in the church of Corinth would treat a sin as serious as sexual relations, a sin second only in seriousness to sin against the Holy Ghost and murder, that no church action was taken on behalf of the individual. Paul calls them to repentance and to take action which is to excommunicate the individual thereby cancelling his membership in the church. If they do not take disciplinary action regarding this individual, the spirit of the Lord would be grieved and withdraw. If the individual did not repent, the spirit of the Lord would then withdraw from them personally.

Harold B. Lee states,

“When we let members lead a double and destructive life, instead of doing them a favor as we suppose, we damage them, sometimes, irreparably. We must let the light of gospel standards shine fully, and not try to deflect the penetrating rays of its standards. The gospel is to save men, not to condemn them, but to save, it is sometimes necessary to confront and to discipline as the Lord has directed us. When individuals are on the wrong path, our task is to redirect them lovingly, and not to watch idly from our vantage point on the straight and narrow path.”¹³

1 Corinthians 5:6-7

**6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveth the whole lump?
7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:**

Gerald N. Lund states,

“Leaven, or yeast, is a symbol of corruption because of its tendency to spoil. Christ warned the disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, defining it as their false teachings and their hypocrisy. (See Mat. 16:6-12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1). Following the actual Passover, the Israelites were commanded to observe the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, not only abstaining from any leaven for seven days, but also

purging it out of their houses. (See Ex. 12:18-19). Knowing that leaven is a type or symbol of corruption helps us see the beauty of this requirement. After deliverance from death and bondage by the blood of the Lamb, we are to purge all wickedness, pride, and hypocrisy from our lives.”¹⁴

1 Corinthians 5:9, 11, 13

9 I wrote unto you [in an epistle] not to company with fornicators:

11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,

“Here Paul is saying that we should not do what gross sinners do, nor be influenced by them, nor spend our time going to places they frequent. We should admonish sinners and love them, but stay away from their evil ways (see also 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15). Paul also says it is not his or the Church’s business to judge and regulate the whole world. but rather to keep the Church pure and leave the world to God. The original Greek of verse 13 is strong: ‘Drive out the wicked man from among you.’”¹⁵

Paul’s strong counsel to the members of the church to avoid association with the sinner may be related to the fact that the city where they lived was a very wicked city. The lures of sin would be present everywhere and would demand the members constantly be on guard in order to avoid its influence. The fact that Paul raises his stern warning infers that many had already been impacted by the evil surrounding them.

2.6. First Corinthians 6

1 Corinthians 6:4-5, 7

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

It would appear that it was a common practice among church members who were unable to resolve differences among themselves to take the matter to a court of law. Paul’s counsel is this should not occur amongst the membership of the church. They should not involve the legal system to settle their differences. Instead, they should choose a wise individual within the church to render a judgment. If they cannot accept this decision, they should then drop the matter. If they continue the matter, they will create hard feelings with their brother and this should not occur. Any gain they may achieve will not be sufficient compensation for the harm they have done to their brother.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuser of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, no covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

In verses 9 and 10, Paul lists those sins that constitute major sins committed by men that without repentance will exclude the individual from entrance into the kingdom of God. These sins were also some of the sins that members of the church in Corinth had previously been guilty of. As serious as these sins are in the eyes of God, if the individual is willing to forsake these sins and to undergo true repentance, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, they can be forgiven. Once again, they can qualify for membership in the church and in the kingdom of God hereafter. What a special message, not only for the members in Corinth to hear, but for all those seeking for the truth everywhere.

1 Corinthians 6:14

14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

This is a special verse for it not only addresses and confirms the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but also the resurrection of all individuals who have lived upon the earth. None will be denied. All who die, will live again. This is the gift given by God the Father, through His Son Jesus Christ, to each of us.

The words of the children's song, "Did Jesus Really Live Again?" offers comfort to all.

“Did Jesus really live again?
Yes, when the third day came,
He wakened and he left the tomb;
He called Mary's name.

“Did Jesus come to those he loved?
Yes, people touched his feet,
And of the fish and honeycomb
He did truly eat.

“And there were nail-prints in his hands
And a spear wound in his side.
Did Jesus really live again
After he had died? Oh yes! And so shall I!”¹⁶

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

I believe the correct meaning of 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, is that it is our bodies that are temples of God and within each of us dwells the spirit of God. When we defile our bodies by breaking God's laws, we pollute our temples. We are no longer clean in the eyes of God. As a result of our actions, the spirit of God is grieved and departs from us. Without giving attention to our temple and the necessary cleansing, we will lose the spirit of God and forfeit the blessings the Lord had for us.

LeGrand Richard states,

“There are many who think that their bodies are their own and that they can do with them what they will. However, Paul makes it plain that they are not their own, for they are bought with a price, and ‘if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.’”¹⁷

The reference in these two verses to “your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost...which ye have of God,” refers to our physical body in combination with our spirit as a temple. The words, “For ye are bought with a price,” has direct reference to the Atonement of Jesus Christ as He liberated us from the grave through His sacrifice in the garden and on the cross. While it is true that Jesus suffered for the sins of all mankind, He did so by taking upon Himself our individual sins. The Atonement, thereby, became personal and unique for each individual and He then became not just a Savior, but my Savior and Redeemer, and your Savior and Redeemer.

3. Conclusions

We rejoice in the words of Paul to the members of the church in Corinth. The concerns he addresses contain words of both caution and insight for each of us.

1 Corinthians Chapter 1: Paul states his authority to speak as one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. He reminds the leaders in the Church of Jesus Christ, it is important there be no division among the leaders, but instead a unity of faith. It has come to his attention that contentions have arisen among the members of the Church. Paul reminds them it is the Church of Jesus Christ, not of any man, including himself. The head of the Church is Jesus Christ. All who serve Him are His servants. We must never forget that salvation comes through Jesus Christ, and none other. Christ chooses as His leaders, from the contrite and humble not from the great and mighty ones.

1 Corinthians Chapter 2: Paul came to Corinth as a humble representative of Jesus Christ with the sole desire to communicate to them the verities of Christ's resurrection and teachings, He reminds them if they accept Jesus Christ as Our Savior and Redeemer and agree to submit our will to keeping His commandments, there is no limit to the blessings Our Father has for us. If we choose not to be obedient, then we may lose the blessings we might have otherwise received. In order to know spiritual truth, we must humble ourselves and through study and prayer seek God's direction.

1 Corinthians Chapter 3: Paul instructs the members in order to increase their understanding of the principles of the gospel, they must begin with basics of the gospel (“milk”), and then seek to advance their understanding (“meat”). (see 1 Corinthians 3:2). We best understand the words of the Holy Ghost when we have sufficiently prepared ourselves to receive it. It is important we do not alter the teachings we have received from Jesus Christ. If we do so, it is no longer the Church of Jesus Christ, but of another individual. The body to which Paul refers (1 Corinthians 3:16-17), is the body of the Church. If the contentions which exist are not resolved, it will adversely affect the members of the Church.

1 Corinthians Chapter 4: Paul has critics who continue to find fault with him so they might also dismiss his teachings. In the final analysis, he will be judged, not by them, but by the Lord. Paul reiterates his counsel to

the leaders not to consider themselves superior to others. When they experience divisions and contentions, the spirit departs from them, and they are then left on their own.

1 Corinthians Chapter 5: Paul is extremely concerned because a member had been guilty of breaking the law of chastity and no action was taken against the member. He is astonished at their lack of concern for the spiritual well-being of the individual or its effect upon other church members. Paul calls the leaders to repentance and declares if they do not take action, the spirit of the Lord will withdraw from their presence.

1 Corinthians Chapter 6: It would appear that it was a common practice among church members who were unable to resolve differences among themselves to take the matter to a court of law. Paul's counsel is this should not occur amongst the membership of the church. They should not involve the legal system to settle their differences. Paul's counsel is they should seek to resolve the differences, fairly with one another, including forfeiting the need for justice when dealing with a brother or sister.

Dallin H. Oaks states,

“I reject two extremes.

“1. Some have asserted that a conscientious Christian can *never use the courts to resolve disputes...*

“Modern revelation directs that a person who has killed, robbed, stolen, or lied shall be delivered up and dealt with according to the laws of the land.’ (D&C 42:79, 84-86.) Those laws are, of course, administered in the civil and criminal courts...

“2. At the opposite extreme, some Latter-day Saints have apparently assumed that there are *no religious restraints on participating in litigation*, thus succumbing to the popular notion that every wrong must have a legal remedy, properly enforceable in court.

“This attitude has contributed to an expensive public problem. Any conscientious reader of the public press over the past few decades has seen many reports of lawsuits that can fairly be characterized as abusive or frivolous.”¹⁸

Paul concludes Chapter 6 by stating our body is a temple given us of God, and it is to be kept clean and pure from sexual sin as well as other human indulgences. When we choose to violate or ignore God's laws, Paul warned, we will not escape His punishment.

It is my belief the issues Paul addresses in his writings to the Corinthians, also have application in our day. As we prayerfully consider his words of counsel and admonition, we may even find that they have direct application to our personal lives. Upon discovering this truth, may we also take the necessary steps to put our lives in harmony with God's law.

In the next chapter, we will continue our exploration of the words of Paul in his letter to the Corinthians

Footnotes

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- ¹ *New Testament Apostles Testify of Christ*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 128-129.
- ² *New Testament Apostles Testify of Christ*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 128.
- ³ *Guide to Acts and the Apostles' Letters*. Provo: FARMS, 3rd Edition, 1999, 41, italics added.
- ⁴ *The New Testament: The Acts and the Epistles*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union Board, 1915, 111-112.
- ⁵ *Messenger and Advocate*, Vol. 1 (October 1834-September, 1835), Vol. 1 January, 1835 No 4, 55.
- ⁶ *Church History and Modern Revelation*, Vol. 1. Salt Lake City: The Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1953, 255.
- ⁷ "Kings and Priests," in *BYU Speeches of the Year, 1966*. Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1966, 17.
- ⁸ "Revelation," in *Conference Report*, April, 1964, 122-123.
- ⁹ Quoted by Robert B. Millet, "Putting Off the Natural Man: 'An Enemy to God.'" *Ensign*, June, 1992, 8.
- ¹⁰ *The Believing Heart*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1990, [Second Edition], 6.
- ¹¹ *New Testament Apostles Testify of Christ*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 132.
- ¹² "Fourteen Fundamentals in Follow the Prophet" in *1980 Devotional Speeches of the Year* [1981]. Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 29; see also *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1988, 133.
- ¹³ *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996, 116.
- ¹⁴ *Jesus Christ: Key to the Plan of Salvation*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991, 64.
- ¹⁵ *New Testament Apostles Testify of Christ*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 133.
- ¹⁶ Words: Mabel Jones Gabbott, 1910-2004. (c) 1977 IRI. Music: Royce Campbell Twitchell, 1939-2011. (c) 1977 IRI. (*Children's Songbook*. 2010 Intellectual Reserve Inc., 64.
- ¹⁷ *A Marvelous Work and Wonder*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1950, [Tenth Printing 1957], 383.
- ¹⁸ *The Lord's Way*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991, 155-156.