

## *Acts 1 Study and Discussion Questions*

### *Lesson Eight: Corinthians, Part 2 – 1 Corinthians 8-16*

#### Read 1 Corinthians 8-9.

- 1) Which verse in chapter 8 summarizes that chapter? **Verse 9 summarizes Paul's teaching: "Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak."**
- 2) In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul illustrated the principle he taught in chapter 8 by applying it to a "right" that he gave up so that no one could question his motives in ministering. What was this right (include verse numbers)? **1 Corinthians 9:14-15a says that Paul had the right to earn a living from preaching the Gospel; however, he did not use this right.**
- 3) According to 1 Corinthians 9:9-10, what is more important to God: obedience to the letter of His laws (the literal interpretation of the word) or obedience to the spirit of the law (the general purpose or intent of the word (see Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 31-32, 33-35, 38-39, 43-44)? How does your answer relate to what Paul said in the 1 Corinthians verses? **Paul quotes the Law of Moses as saying, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain" and goes on to say that this law was given by God *for us*, applying it not to an animal but to a worker's right to earn a living from his or her efforts. Here in Corinthians, and also in the Sermon on the Mount, Scripture teaches that God expects us not just to follow the letter of the Law but the much greater truths it exemplifies. We ought to ask, "What does this command teach me about the heart of God and how can I conform my heart (and behavior) to be like His?"**
- 4) Revisit 1 Corinthians 9:19-22. Paul surely did not mean to imply that he acted under false pretense, disguise or hypocrisy. How did he "become all things to all (people)" and how might you do the same (be as specific as possible)? **Paul was able to address the Jews as a Jew, since he himself was a circumcised rabbi. Yet when he addressed the Gentiles, he never encouraged them to become Jewish but considered the issues unique to them that would not apply to Jews. When he was with those of more sensitive conscience to the restrictions of the law (from which Christ freed us), he gave up his freedom so he wouldn't be offensive. When he was with those Gentiles who felt no obligation to Moses' civil and ceremonial law, Paul exercised his freedom from those laws (i.e. dietary restrictions of the law). Personal sharing**

#### Read 1 Corinthians 10.

- 5) In verses 1-6, Paul reminded us that Christians today live under God's covenant blessing, just as Israel had while journeying to the promised land of Canaan. To which lusts did Israel fall prey, despite God's blessing on them (10:1-11)? **Idolatry (verse 7), sexual immorality (verse 8), testing the Lord (verse 9), and grumbling (verse 10)**
- 6) Keeping in mind all you have read in 1 Corinthians 8-10, reread 1 Corinthians 10:11-12. In what area of your life do you need to submit your rights and exercise self-discipline, so that you don't fall victim to the lusts of your own sinful nature? **Personal sharing**

#### Read 1 Corinthians 11-12.

- 7) According to 1 Corinthians 11:3-16, was there an underlying principle the women in the Corinthian church were ignoring? If so, what was it? **Some believe the women were *ignoring a principle of marriage* in which the husband has authority over his wife (based on their understanding of the term "head" in 11:3). Others understand the "authority over her own head" (11:10) to be a woman's God-given right to public prayer and prophesying. In this case, some Corinthian women may have been *ignoring the rights of other worshippers* by using their God-given rights in the public worship services in a distracting manner (disregarding customary, cultural attire that identified them uniquely as women).**

- 8) According to chapters 8-10, some Corinthians apparently insisted on exercising their freedom to eat meat offered to idols. In chapter 11, Paul addressed the two issues of women refusing to wear culturally appropriate head coverings and the insistence of some church members on prioritizing their appetites over honoring the Lord's Supper. What one basic sin of the heart underlies both of these two issues (as well as the problem Paul addressed in chapters 8-10)? **Self-indulgence (or demanding one's rights) over humble submission to the rights and preferences of others**
- 9) Paul equated the church of Christ to a human body in order to illustrate the separate function of each part and the unity of the whole. How could you demonstrate your appreciation for other members of your local body of Christ in a practical way, especially to the "parts" (individuals) who usually receive fewer honors? **Personal sharing**

Read 1 Corinthians 12-14.

- 10) List the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12:4-8 and Ephesians 4:11-13 and the singular purpose of all the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7, Romans 12:5, and Ephesians 4:12-13). **The gifts of the Spirit in these lists include: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in different tongues, interpretation of tongues, apostleship, teaching, helping, administration, serving, encouraging, contributing to others' needs, leadership, showing mercy, evangelism, and pastoring. All the gifts are given for the common good of building the other members up and maturing them.**
- 11) What point did Paul make about love in 1 Corinthians 13 that relates to the context of his teaching on spiritual gifts? Can you draw a connection between this particular point and Paul's exhortations in chapters 8-11 to the Corinthian church (refer to your answer to Question 8 for help)? **Paul told his readers that demonstrating love is far more important than exercising a spiritual gift. Furthermore, he says that spiritual gifts are for the good of others, not for selfish purposes. It seems that Paul was concerned about some who proudly exerted their gifts, rather than exercising them with an attitude of service. Self-indulgence and self-promotion are common threads in the issues outlined in the previous chapters: insistence upon the right to eat meat previously offered to idols, women refusing to show a sign of submission by covering their heads, some (probably the wealthy) indulging in the agape meal that accompanied the Lord's Supper to the exclusion of others, and the attitude that some had gifts that were superior to others.**
- 12) On what basis did Paul promote the spiritual gift of prophecy as superior to the spiritual gift of tongues (or languages) in 1 Corinthians 14? **Paul used the gift of prophecy (speaking forth God's truth for the strengthening, encouragement, and comfort of others [14:3]) as an example of a gift that is superior because it is used for the good of others. By contrast, the gift of "tongues" (or languages) cannot benefit others since the language is unknown to them. Furthermore, although tongues are a sign for unbelievers (verse 22), Paul stated that they can also leave unbelievers confused or offended (verse 23).**
- 13) The principle of orderliness in the Church (14:26-40) is based upon the fact that God Himself is peace-loving and orderly (1 Corinthians 14:33). Selflessness, love, and orderliness (all discussed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 8-14) are presented throughout the Bible as qualities of God (i.e. Genesis 1 [order], John 3:16 and 1 John 4:7-10 [love], John 3:16 and Philippians 2:5-8 [selflessness].) Which of these qualities do you most need God to build into you and what practical step will you take today to exhibit it? **Personal sharing**

Read 1 Corinthians 15-16.

- 14)** 1 Corinthians 15 is one of the key New Testament treatises on the all-important doctrine of the Resurrection. What do you learn from 1 Corinthians 15:35-58 about the resurrected bodies of believers? There will be continuity and (as a result) a retaining of identity when we move from the earthly body to the resurrected body (15:35-44). The resurrected body will be glorious, powerful and spiritual (15:44), and like the resurrected body of Christ (15:48-49). Those alive at the return of Christ will be transformed from their earthly bodies to their heavenly body “in the twinkling of an eye” (15:52). The dead will receive their new bodies first and then those still living after them (15:52). It will be a time of great (and ultimate) victory over death (15:54-57).
- 15)** Specifically, how does 1 Corinthians 15:58 encourage you? **Personal sharing**