

Study Guide on I Corinthians

by

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How to Use This Study Guide

Study Guide on I Corinthians is designed to be especially helpful in connection with Dr. Gutzke's teaching of this subject on radio or tape recordings. However, this Guide may also serve as a profitable basis for other individual, group or class study.

In using this Guide, first read through the articles. Next familiarize yourself with the "Outline of Thought," perhaps reading rapidly through I Corinthians at the same time, noting where we have made the divisions in our outline. Finally, proceed with the "Study Questions," one section at a time.

Notes of further explanation are provided in most of the sections.

The purpose of the "Study Questions" is to re-inforce your learning by getting you to summarize the teaching and write it down in your own words. You will then know the material better, understand it more thoroughly, and have it fixed in your memory. We have no set of "correct answers" for you. The object of the questions is to stimulate your thinking while letting God speak to your heart. Approach each time of study both in prayer and in faith.

You will be blessed as you use this study guide . . . in direct proportion to your own active participation.

Organize A Study Group

Why not share this study with others? We recommend that you find 8-12 persons who are interested in Bible study. Your group could plan to meet once each week or every other week in homes.

Let the group go over a passage together and answer the "study questions." Encourage each member to join in the discussion and to share matters from his own personal study and notes. Give a time for consideration of personal applications. Close with a period of group prayer.

Make your sessions informal but in order. Have some refreshments as you come together each time. Set a time limit on each meeting. We suggest an hour and a half. Encourage faithful attendance. Be considerate of your host and of one another.

When a group has a clear sense of purpose and calling in the Lord, it will provide added blessing and growth.

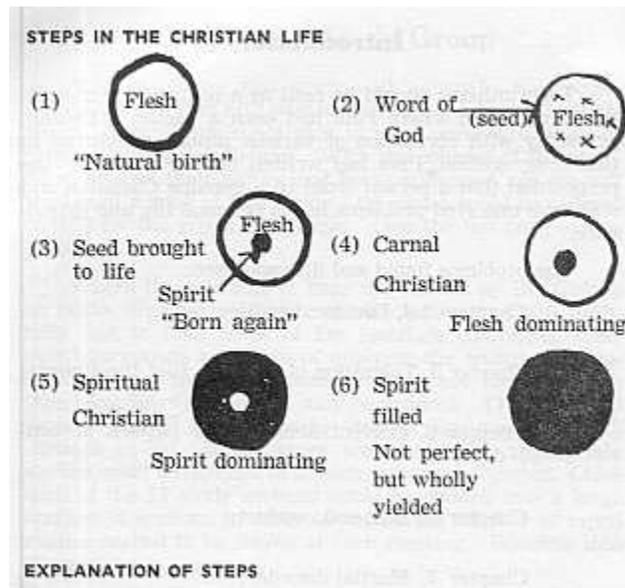
Introduction

I Corinthians should be read as a pastoral letter written to a church where Paul had been a pastor. Dealing primarily with correction of various problems existing in that congregation, Paul has written on the basis of the proposition that a person could be a genuine Christian and still have unsolved problems in his personal life and experience.

The problems found and discussed are:

- Chapters 1-4, Divisive loyalties;
- Chapter 5, Toleration of open sin (not the sinner);
- Chapter 6, Contentiousness as a pattern of conduct;
- Chapter 6, Immoral conduct;
- Chapter 7, Marital disorder;
- Chapter 8-10, Abuse of Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11, Feminism;
- Chapter 11, Congregational misconduct;
- Chapters 12-14, Pride over spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15, Doctrinal errors.

Paul's proposition, "genuine, yet imperfect," can be illustrated and understood if we think of the steps in the Christian life:



Step (1) Flesh responds only to natural senses (touch, taste, see, hear, etc.), the stimuli of this world. These things are not entirely bad in themselves. Much that is beautiful, civilized, artistic or moral can be found. But before God they are empty and vain. As natural elements, they do not relate man to God and thus are not pleasing to God. The natural man does not accept or understand this. To him there are achievements in the flesh that are seemingly far greater than what Christians perform in the Spirit.

Step (2) The natural man hears the Word of God.

Step (3) The Holy Spirit takes the Word of God the natural man has heard or received and brings that Word as seed to life in the person. Christ referred to this as being "born again." It is the process of regeneration or of the new creature in Christ.

Step (4) The Christian has two natures now, that of the flesh or the "old man" and that of the Holy Spirit or the "new man." The Christian now receives stimuli not only from this world in his fleshly nature, but the new man receives from the Spirit that impulse to obey God. These two natures are then in conflict. And when the old man is in charge, the Christian will not obey God but will do that which pleases the flesh or the ego.

Step (5) When the Spirit or the new man is in charge, the Christian will obey God. The Christian will find his life fluctuating at times between Steps (4) and (5).

Step (6) The Christian in his whole conscious self may be filled with thoughts of (not about) Christ! To continue at this step there must be a fresh receiving of the Word. The manna Israel gathered in the Exodus became spoiled and wormy when stored.

Outline of I Corinthians

- 1:1- 9 Introduction
- 1:10- 4:21 Divisions in the congregation
- 5:1-13 Toleration of open sin
- 6:1- 8 Quarrelsomeness
- 6:9-20 Fleshly sin
- 7:1-40 Marital relations
- 8:1-10:33 Christian liberty — its use and abuse
- 11:1-16 Feminism
- 11:17-34 Congregational respectability
- 12:1-13:13 Spiritual pride over possession of gifts
- 14:1-40 Disorder in public worship
- 15:1-58 Doctrinal error
- 16:1-24 General instructions

Organization of Studies

80 studies are planned by Dr. Gutzke in this series. Use this chart to keep track of your place with his teaching, and for reading ahead. From this you should turn to the appropriate section of the study guide questions.

Opening Remarks	1:10-16	2: 1- 5	3: 1- 4
1: 1	:17-21	: 6- 9	: 5- 7
: 2	:22-24	:10-12	: 8-10
: 3	:25-29	:13-14	:11-15
:4-9	:30-31	:15-16	:16-23
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4: 1- 5	5:1-5	6: 9-11	7: 1- 6
: 6- 7	: 6- 8	:12-13a	: 7-16
: 8-13	: 9-13	:13b-15	:17-24
:14-17	6: 1- 4	:16-18	:25-33
:18-21	: 5- 8	:19-20	:34-40
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8: 1- 8	10: 1-11	11: 1-10	12: 1- 6
: 9-13	:12-14	:11-16	: 7-12
9: 1-12	:15-22	:17-19	:13-20
:13-18	:23-30	:20-26	:21-27
:19-27	:31-33	:27-34	:28-31
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13: 1- 3	14: 1- 5	15: 1-11	16: 1- 6
: 4- 7	: 6-11	:12-19	: 7-12
: 8-10	:12-19	:20-34	:13-14
:11-12	:20-26	:35-44	:15-18
:13	:27-40	:45-58	:19-24

Study Questions

This guide is divided into 13 sections for the convenience of classes or groups. Used weekly, study material for one quarter will be provided. On a monthly usage, combine sections 5 and 6 to make one year.

In studying each section, select a key verse that has particular meaning or application to you. Write this out on a card and carry it with you or put it up in some conspicuous place. Commit it to memory and ask God to bring it to practice in your life.

Section 1 – 1:1-31

Why was this epistle written?

To what sort of people was it written?

What caused division among the Corinthians?

What is the central message of the Christian faith?

What does the Christian have to do with pride, personal power or human wisdom?

Section 2 – 2:1-16

Who told Paul what to preach?

Why is it impossible for men to believe depending on their own wisdom?

How are men able to believe?

What type of truths did Paul preach?

Section 3 – 3:1-23

How does Paul explain the rise of divisions?

How should ministers be regarded by their congregation?

Does this mean that every minister will be the same?

What responsibilities does each Christian have?

Section 4 – 4:1-21

Is Christian stewardship limited to money?

What did Paul consider his stewardship to consist of?

How was Paul's faithfulness rewarded?

What actions had and would Paul take in ministering to the Corinthians and what was his purpose in each case?

Section 5 – 5:1-6:8

How should a church regard open sin in any member?

Why?

What should be done?

What right do Christians have to take this action?

Section 6 – 6:9-20

Who will not be saved?

Are things in this world sinful in themselves?

Illustrate.

Should a Christian despise his body in favor of his spirit?

How should the body be treated?

Section 7 – 7:1-40

What are the responsibilities of husband and wife to each other?

How does the presence of an unbeliever in a marriage affect that?

Is marriage wrong for a Christian?

What special care should Christians take in marriage?

Section 8 – 8:1-9:27

Why is knowledge alone an inadequate guide for conduct?

Should a Christian always try to stand up for his rights?

What one goal motivated all of Paul's conduct?

Section 9 – 10:1-11:34

How did Paul apply the Old Testament to Christians?

Whom should a Christian seek to please in his conduct?

Why is control of conduct in worship important?

What benefit comes from differences in conduct?

What is the purpose of the Lord's Supper?

Section 10 – 12:1-31

What gifts does the Holy Spirit give?

Do all Christians receive the same?

Why are gifts given to any?

Are all gifts of the same importance?

Section 11 – 13:1-13

What makes any gift valid and helpful? Why?

What characteristics of love are mentioned?

Why is love superior to knowledge? to faith? to hope?

Section 12 – 14:1-40

What is important in speaking?

What instruction is given about speaking in "tongues"?

Describe public worship as pictured in this section.

What is the purpose of public worship according to this section?

Section 13 – 15:1-16:24

Summarize the message of the gospel.

Why is the resurrection essential?

How is the effect of Adam and Christ on human nature described?

How did Paul as a minister promote giving?

How should individual Christians live and regard one another?

How should they regard Christ?

Study Notes

- 1: 2 To persons who have responded to the call of a SEPARATED course. "Sanctified" – Applied to these genuine, yet imperfect Christians. Means "set apart" to a particular use and is included in the call from God.
- :5b They have knowledge, yet are hard to live with, as children.
- :12 The prominence of "I" causes contention.
- :13 Only Christ should count; He was crucified.
- :17 "Not to baptize" – Not to make followers to himself but "to preach the gospel" – to make disciples of Christ.
- 2:2 "Know" – esteem. "Christ, and him crucified" – This is what the gospel holds out to others.
- 3:2 "Milk" – Compare Hebrews 6:1-2. When talking to beginners, speak of ultimates – heaven, hell, repentance, salvation, Holy Spirit, regeneration.
- Chapter 5 The "open sin" was one about which there was no question in anybody's mind, not even the nations who knew not the Law.
- 5:1 "Fornication" does not necessarily refer to a specific type of sin but indicates some irregularity in the man-woman relationship.
- "Not named" – not named acceptably.
- : 2 "Puffed up" – full of self, confident.
- "Taken away from" – from the public testimony of the church.
- : 5 "Deliver unto Satan" – This comes from the Talmud (Jewish tradition), and the exact meaning is lost today. Possibly it means to "let him get his fill of it, then you can deal with him."
- A pastor who discovers open sin in the church must do something about it . . . or leave the church.
- :11 "Not to eat" – dissociate in public from such.
- 6:9-10 Does not mean those who fall into a sin, but those who make it their habit. Sheep dislike mud; pigs wallow in it. Jesus is the shepherd of the sheep.
- :11 All this is done for you. There is no reason to be as above.
- :15 Paul's argument is based on the Christian's belonging to Christ.
- 7: 6 Some of what Paul says has to do with the social situation in Corinth. The Lord speaks in matters of personal integrity.
- 8: 8 The Christian is not bound by a pattern.

:9 But he is not free to do as he pleases.

:12 When your action hurts or hinders a weak conscience, "ye sin against Christ." Christ died for him.

10:23-33 Provides gist of chapters 8 and 9.

:27 We must allow others to do what we wouldn't, unless it sets a bad example.

:28 Paraphrased: "This is what worldly people do. Thought you wouldn't mind." The Christian should mind under that condition.

Chapter 11 We misunderstood Paul if we say he told women to keep quiet, for why should he instruct them in dress for prayer and prophecy?

12:1 Spiritual gifts are enablements for service derived from the indwelling Holy Spirit. They are not natural gifts such as voice, fluent speech, strong physique. The gifts are given without direct significance as to spiritual growth.

Compare: *Spiritual Gifts*

For some – specific
Can have one and not others
Temporary, according to need
No index of spiritual maturity

Spiritual Fruits (Gal. 5:22- 23)

For any
If have one, will have others
Eternal
Index of spiritual maturity

:9 "Faith" to do things.

:28 Some are gifted by the Spirit to help, others to lead.

14: 1 The "fruit" of love is to be pursued with longing as being possible and worthy. Spiritual gifts are to be desired, but above all the gift of declaring the Word of God to others.

14:23-25 Church meetings should be conducted with practical designs upon the unbeliever and the unlearned.

15:12-14 Our resurrection is as real as the resurrection of Christ.

:15-34 The certainty of Christ's resurrection is based on
(1) testimony of the apostles (:15)
(2) implications of the gospel (:16-17)
(3) faith of all Christians (:18-34).

:57-58 The certainty of the resurrection gives meaning to any suffering the Christian may endure.

16:12 Did Apollos have the squabbling over personalities in mind when he refrained from appearing where his presence might aggravate matters?

:22 The simple test for worthiness in fellowship.