

# CONSIDERING FIRST CORINTHIANS: AN OVERVIEW

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*By the Book*™ A Chapter by  
Chapter Bible Study Series  
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## Introductory Notes for the Teacher

*First Corinthians remains a vital resource for today's church. No letter the Apostle Paul penned explores as many issues—both doctrinal and behavioral—as his first letter to this problem church. At the same time, no letter on record reveals the relentless love, unshakable dedication, and pastoral heart of the Apostle to the Gentiles more than the letter to Corinth.*

### I. The City of Corinth

First, let's take a brief look at the city where the church was located. Dubbed as the most important city of Greece, Corinth was the capital of the Roman province, Achaia. Its population smacked almost three quarters of a million. Being a seaport city, Corinth possessed huge shopping centers where people swarmed for miles to take advantage of competitive prices for the huge selection of merchandise. Adding to the commercial life of Corinth was its location on the most important east-west travel route by land.

Not only was Corinth noted for its thriving commercial life but also for its rich cultural diversity. Education was prominent in Corinth as was religion. Massive temples brought thousands of ancient worshippers to the Greek city. The famous Temple of Venus stood in the Corinthian metropolis, the temple which boasted a thousand prostitutes for assisting "worshippers." Indeed the moral decay was so grossly known that persons who were perceived as morally depraved were said to possess a "Corinthian" lifestyle. Perhaps Paul expressed best the "Corinthian" lifestyle in another letter, a letter he penned while staying in Corinth (Rom. 1:18-32).

### II. The Church of Corinth

Paul founded the church at Corinth on his second missionary tour. Luke records Paul's arrival, "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come

from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers" (Acts 18:1-3). He stayed in Corinth 18 months, working his day job as a tentmaker and evangelizing the city, both on and off the job.

### III. The Correspondence to Corinth

After Paul left Corinth, the church corresponded with him regarding some matters they felt very important (1 Cor. 7:1). The questions concerned doctrinal as well as behavioral issues—Lord's Supper, worship, spiritual gifts, resurrection, disunity, pride, and even incest! While ministering in Ephesus, Paul wrote to Corinth and sent the letter by Timothy (1 Cor. 4:17). However, matters grew worse. Thus, he sent Titus to assist them until he get could back with them (2 Cor. 7:13-15). Paul promised to visit Corinth as soon as possible and do all he could to assist them with their problems (1 Cor. 16:3-7).

### IV. A Brief Outline

- I. *The Carnalities: The Report of Sin (Chapters 1-6)*
- II. *The Spiritualities: The Reply to Questions (Chapters 7-16)*



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many questions  
we face today.*

### Conclusion

Paul answers many questions we face today. He reveals how to walk in the Spirit without succumbing to the flesh. He teaches us to continue on in the faith no matter the consequences. And, Paul gives solid moral teaching to ground the authenticity of our witness to Jesus Christ. First Corinthians is an exciting book! May our Lord richly bless you as we journey through each chapter together.

### Suggested Reading for I Corinthians

*Journey Through The Bible*, **Jerry Vines** (available at [www.JerryVines.com](http://www.JerryVines.com))

*Exploring I Corinthians (The John Phillips Commentary Series)*, **John Phillips**

*I Corinthians (The MacArthur Commentary)*, **John MacArthur**

*The Message Of I Corinthians (The Bible Speaks Today)*, **David Prior**

**Reminder: No Bible Study 12/25 and 1/1**

