

When Church Becomes Messy: First Corinthians

2 – GREETINGS & THANKSGIVING (1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-9)

I. Greetings (1 Corinthians 1:1-3)

A. The Author (1 Corinthians 1:1)

- The author was the apostle Paul, who founded the church in Corinth.
- Paul identifies himself as one who was called to be an apostle by the will of God.
- Sosthenes was a companion of Paul and was not a co-author of this epistle.
- He may have been the synagogue ruler publicly thrashed by the Gentiles.

SCRIPTURE Acts 18:17

B. The Recipients (1 Corinthians 1:2)

1. The Church Described (1 Corinthians 1:2a)

a. The Church of God

- Can be translated “God’s church.”
- This description reflects that the church belonged to God, not any man.
- The church was located in the Greek city of Corinth.

Historical Note: Corinth

Corinth was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia. It was the most important city in Greece. Land traffic between the north and south of the province had to pass through Corinth. Much of the commerce between Rome and the east was brought to its harbors. Corinth has three harbors. Corinth was located on a narrow isthmus. Time and safety required that cargo and smaller ships would be hauled across the isthmus. In the Roman era, Corinth was a city of wealth, luxury and immorality. The city had no rivals was the city of vice. The phrase "To live like a Corinthian" meant to live a life of reckless spending and debauchery. The inhabitants of Corinth were naturally devoted to the Greek god of the sea, Poseidon. Their greatest devotion was to the Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite. The Temple of Aphrodite had a thousand priestesses, who were religious prostitutes. The Temple drew worshippers from all over the ancient world. Corinth had a population of 200,000 freed men and 500,000 slaves. There was a large population of Jews in Corinth.

b. Sanctified in Christ Jesus

- Sanctified means to be cleansed of sin and separated from the world.
- They were set apart for Jesus.

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c. Called to be Saints

- They were designated as saints.
- Saint means sacred (physically pure, morally blameless or religious, ceremonially consecrated):—(most) holy (one, thing)

2. Addressed to Others (1 Corinthians 1:2b)

- Paul also addressed the letter to all believers so they can learn from it.

C. Paul's Greeting (1 Corinthians 1:3)

- Paul pronounces a traditional blessing of grace and peace to his readers.

II. Paul's Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Corinthians 1:4-9)

A. Paul's Consistency in Prayer (1 Corinthians 1:4a)

- Paul was consistent in thanking God for the Corinthian believers.

B. The Basis for Thanksgiving (1 Corinthians 1:4b-9)

1. The Grace of God (1 Corinthians 1:4b)

- Paul thanked God for His grace that was given to them through Jesus' work.

2. Their Enrichment (1 Corinthians 1:5)

a. The Enrichment of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:5a)

- Through Jesus, they were enriched in everything.

SCRIPTURE

2 Peter 1:3

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

b. The Areas of Enrichment (1 Corinthians 1:5b)

1. Speech

- Jesus has enriched us in the ability to speak the truth.

2. Knowledge

- Jesus has enriched us in an understanding of the truth.

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3. Their Testimony (1 Corinthians 1:6)

- Paul was thankful that the testimony of Christ's salvation was confirmed in them.

4. Their Giftedness (1 Corinthians 1:7a)

- Paul was also thankful that they were not lacking in any gift.

5. Their Anticipation (1 Corinthians 1:7b)

- Paul was also thankful that they were living with an anticipation of Christ's return.

6. Their Assurance (1 Corinthians 1:8)

- Christ will confirm us to the end.
- The purpose of the confirmation is that we will be blameless.

7. The Faithfulness of God (1 Corinthians 1:9)

- The basis for their assurance is the faithfulness of God.
- God is the one who called us into fellowship with Christ.