

Church in the Community part 1

Introduction

Studies based on book of 1 Corinthians

*"I am writing to God's church in Corinth, to you who have been called by God to be his own holy people."
1 Corinthians 1:2a*

Location: Greece. 45 miles from Athens.

Strategic significance:

Had controlling access to two Seas. Aegean Sea 5 miles to east and Ionian Sea on west.

This combined with proximity to Athens gave it a position of commercial and military importance.

Features of city:

- Position made it "prosperous" and "rich" according to historians.
- Population: at peak 700,000 (200,000 free & 500,000 slave).
- Proud, philosophical city with many teachers promoting their speculations.
- To be called a "Corinthian" at the time was the lowest accusation you could make against person. They knew exactly what you meant. A person of no morals, filled with lust, focused on pleasure and loose living.
- Good description found in Romans 1:18-25 (Paul wrote this whilst in Corinth).

Author: Paul "This letter is from Paul...and from our brother Sosthenes." 1 Cor 1:1

Paul's first visited was on second missionary journey in Acts 18 (first of three visits).

4 letters written by Paul to Corinthians. 2 lost, including a previous one.

Date of writing: Scholars agree spring AD55/56 whilst on 3rd missionary journey, writing from Ephesus.

Prompting:

1. His first letter (1 Cor 5:9) seemed to get misunderstood.
2. Chloe's household told of disorder (1:11)
3. Seemed to have had a delegation from church with questions (16:17 & 7:1)

Content: To deal with relationship between Christians and surrounding pagan culture, divisions within the Church, the ordering of Church practices such as communion and the use of spiritual gifts. Also deals with personal morality...sex, marriage, celibacy & love.

Key issue: The spirit of Corinth had got into the church!

"For it sounds as if more harm than good is done when you meet together." 1 Corinthians 11:17

"I am writing to God's church in Corinth, to you who have been called by God to be his own holy people. He made you holy by means of Christ Jesus, just as he did for all people everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours." 1 Corinthians 1:2

I. Keep your calling to be holy in mind.

- i. Remember you are set apart for God. (v 1-3)
- ii. Be thankful that you are enriched by God. (v 4-6)
- iii. Be eager for Jesus return (v7)
- iv. Confident that you are blameless because of Christ (v 8-9)

"The Church of God needs no new visitation of power from God. She needs the realisation of the power she already has, the appropriation of the forces already resident within her." Cambell Morgan