

A Healthy Church: Prelude to God's Giftings (Part One)

Relevant Bible Verses: 1 Corinthians (specifically Chapter 1)

Message Notes:

- There are five main sections/parts of Corinthians or, alternatively, five main issues that Paul is addressing. The first he addresses is Divisions in the Church, the second is problems with sex (sleeping around), then food issues (there was a split in the Church around whether or not it was okay to eat food offered to idols), problems in the Corinth Church's weekly gatherings (people were overeager to share and were distracting to newcomers, preventing them from hearing the gospel), and the Resurrection (some people in the Church didn't believe it had happened or, even if they did, didn't think it was important/relevant)
- The Gospel is not just a moral leading. It's an announcement that Jesus has opened a new spiritual reality.
- There is a tendency for charismatic Christians to skim through Corinthians, only reading the parts with the Holy Spirit and the power of giftings. We need to have a desire to read God's word in its entirety, or we will not know all of what God is telling us.
- Corinthians touches on subjects that help establish a healthy Church. We should want to establish a healthy Church that is ready to accept God's presence and gifts. Christianity is about more than just God's grace, though it is immensely important, but it is also about accepting that we also need to pursue sanctification and obedience.
- In Corinthians, the word originally used for Church is Ecclesia, or, the Called Out Ones. We are *called out* to be sanctified as God's holy people. We came to Jesus as our Savior, but he is also our Lord.
- We are not of this world. It is not our home. We are 'set apart'. Sometimes we accept this easily, other times we enjoy this world too much and don't want to leave it.
- 'Not of this World' does NOT mean geographic separation. We are called to be *set apart* living *among* those of this world for the purpose of God's will.
- We need to remember WHO we are, and WHOSE we are.
- The presence of God with us distinguishes us as the children of God (the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit distinguishes us from all others on the Earth).
- The purpose we have been set apart for is *not our own*. We are set apart for God. If you believe your whole purpose is to be an example, God is telling us that

there is so much more for us. You are chosen. You are sanctified, set apart, for God's purposes, to save the world.

- Paul begins his letter to the Corinthians with thanksgiving. Despite all the issues in the Church in Corinth, he thanked God for them. Despite all our faults, God has moved in our lives, worked in various ways, and we should be thankful for that. The presence of God has enriched us all, and has made us distinguishable from the world.
- It is important for the Church to be healthy and a way to do that is through God's word. ALL of his word, not just the parts we like.