

- ✚ The most complete statement of Paul's theology is in Romans, but Paul's most extensive correspondence with any single church is in the Letters to the Corinthians. No other church gave Paul more problems! 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians represents the most intimate disclosure of the inner life and the workings of the early church found in the New Testament.
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### 1. Take a glance at a map of Corinth

- ✓ The city was in a very favorable location, two ports, one the east and the other to the west: Cenchræe and Lechæum. All of this overland cargo passed through Corinth on its way to the next port. Corinth like many seaports of our day (San Francisco, Miami, New York), was well off, culturally diverse, and morally debased. It was filled with pagan temples, the most prominent being the temple to Aphrodite (goddess of love) which employed over 1,000 prostitutes. The city was so immoral that even pagan Rome called it immoral! There was a coined phrase during this time that was used in the empire: "Corinthianize yourself" = the very limits of wickedness.

### 2. Into this world of immorality, the Apostle Paul went as a missionary bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- ✓ According to Acts 18, Paul's preaching caused riots, revolution, and revival. People got saved and Paul started a church where no one else would have thought it possible. Paul writes to address a church in trouble: divisions, gross immoralities, marriage problems, abuses of the Lord's supper, misuse of Spiritual Gifts, Heresies about the resurrection, etc.

### 3. The Keynote of this letter is the supremacy of Christ.

- ✓ Jesus was the solution to their problems as He is for ours. 1 Corinthians 1:1, Not a truer statement, Paul was found by Jesus on the road to Damascus; taught by Jesus Himself out in the Arabian wilderness. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:2, the Church "at Corinth" = a tough prepositional phrase because of what being at Corinth meant! "In Christ Jesus." the most important prepositional phrase in the entire Bible! Every promise and blessing of the Bible is predicated on that little phrase. It was because this phrase was true for this church, that there were solutions to its many problems and issues.
- ✓ What does it mean to be a Christian? It means to be in Christ Jesus. The important thing is Whose we are, so, the important question is Are you in Christ Jesus? "Called to be saint," the Greek is far clearer, = "saints by calling" Notice: because of our calling, we are saints, not because of our actions but because of His actions. All of mankind can be divided into two categories, the Saints and the "Ain'ts."

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:2-8, does it strike you a little funny that Paul says that He's thankful to God for them? Given all their problems? As we will see, he has little confidence in them as a people but all kinds of confidence in God! God is reliable! God will see them on from salvation to sanctification.**

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