



THAT MESSED-UP CHURCH

Week of February 4
1 Corinthians 4:14-21¹

Overview

Paul's letter to the Corinthians addresses needs and problems specific to that local church. But for a 2000-year-old letter, many of the topics will ring true to us today as well. Cultural diversity and religious pluralism were obvious in 1st Century Corinth and are also rampant in our 21st century world. Paul cares deeply about both right living and right thinking for Christians, and so should we. Read the letter with a view toward Paul's primary purposes: the health and "building up" of the body of Christ, and actions which further the gospel. Keeping these themes in mind will help you understand the "why" behind Paul's guidance and admonitions to the Corinthian Christians.

Group Objectives

Relationships and Life Transformation are the primary purposes of community groups.

- Reflect on this past Sunday's message and other devotional reading.
- Pray together and provide encouragement for other group members...how can you "build one another up" this week?
- Pray for God's call to reach your "one more."

DNA statement(s) tie-in

- ***We are On Mission to Reach One More.*** Every person matters to God, so every person matters to us. God invites every one of us to join him in his great mission to **reach one more** – one more coworker, neighbor, family member, and friend.
- ***We are All for Jesus.*** Jesus saves us from our past, remakes us to be like him, heals our broken places, and is coming back as our king. Only Jesus is worthy of our allegiance, and worldly division has no place for those who follow him.

Conversation Starters

- What stood out to you from this week's sermon?
- Who has been an example to follow in your own life? Why?

Listening to God

- Where did you experience God last week?
- How were you able to join God on mission?

¹ This discussion guide was written by Elaine Rodeck and edited by Dawn Gentry. For additional content, see the [sermon online](#) and the reading plan [found here](#).

Learning from God's Word: Bible Study Discussion

In this week's text, Paul writes to the church at Corinth as a loving father would write to his children.² Paul became their father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Paul asked the church to imitate him as he imitates Christ.³ Paul was led by the Holy Spirit in his Christian life. The Holy Spirit will also lead us in our lives of discipleship as we seek to follow and become more like Jesus.

Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-21

- What stood out to you from these verses as we read them?
- What do you find most challenging about this text?
- What do you find most encouraging in this text?
- Why do you think Paul asked the church at Corinth to imitate him?
- For what reason did Paul send Timothy to the church at Corinth?
- Who are you influencing? Who is influencing you?
 - Why is it important to have allegiance to Jesus alone?
- How do you sense God calling you to respond to this passage?
 - Is there an example to follow? A command to obey?

Reach One More Practice

- This week pray that God would reveal how you can imitate Christ in the presence of your "one more". Next week, share with the group what you learned from this experience.
- What are you learning about yourself in this season?
 - What are you learning about God?

Prayer Prompts

- Invite members of the group to share requests.
- Allow time for silent reflection on the following prompts.
 - *Jesus, we offer our lives to you alone. May we always seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Forgive us when we follow too closely the pattern of this world and offer our allegiance to anyone or anything else. Help us to seek to proclaim your gospel and put the needs of others first. Amen.*

For further study

- For more about the **Reach One More** initiative, see www.reachonemore.cccomaha.org.
- For practical ideas you can implement as you reach one more, see <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzdVE7HNsqM-FEzli5Etuzj379W7kUsxO>
- Bible Project Videos: Guide to 1st Corinthians: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/1-corinthians/>
- Right Now Media Series – "Bible Backroads" – great background on Corinth, suitable for families: <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/806863>
- Ben Witherington, *A Week in the Life of Corinth*
- NT Wright, *1 Corinthians* (N. T. Wright *For Everyone* commentary series)
- Anthony Thiselton, *1 Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical and Pastoral Commentary*

Some copies of these books may be available at the CCC resource booth to purchase on-site.

² Paul was more than just a church planter; many of his letters carry this pastoral and familial language. See also 1 Thess 2.

³ See also 1 Cor 11:1.