



THAT MESSED-UP CHURCH

Week of February 25
1 Corinthians 7:17-24, Galatians 5:6¹

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?
- What life transition (graduation, marriage, job change, retirement, etc.) has been most difficult for you? Which one was easiest? 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 Rachel Vaughn 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

The Hebrew scriptures (what we call the Old Testament) were the only scriptures available to the early church. The Law of Moses established a high standard for what God required of his followers. The death and resurrection of Jesus fulfilled the law and established a new covenant, but it did not render the old law obsolete. The early church fought between honoring Jewish traditions and allowing freedom to the Gentiles. Which rules had been overturned? Which principles should they uphold? How were they to know the difference? Faithful believers, all wanting to honor God with their lives, sat on opposite ends of these questions.

Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-24

- What does Paul mean by “remain in the situation God called him to”? Does this mean our lives will never change?
- Why would Paul care if a man chose to be circumcised? What might seeking circumcision say about the man's faith?
 - How could this passage allow room for a more diverse body of believers?
- Parts of this passage could raise modern cultural concerns. How does the context of Paul's intended audience change how you read these verses?

Read Galatians 5:1-6

- How does this passage enhance your understanding of Paul's message in 1 Corinthians?
- Circumcision is not a common debate in the modern church. What other topics or issues does the church wrestle with today?
 - What wisdom can these passages provide for us?
- What does it look like for faith to be expressed through love?

Reach One More Practice

- How can you express your faith through love this week?
- 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, thank you for calling each of us to you. Give us eyes to see your kingdom from our unique vantage point. Help us to love well and share the freedom only you can bring with those around us. Amen.*

For further study

- For more about the **Reach One More** initiative, see www.reachonemore.cccomaha.org.
- 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 of these books may be available at the CCC resource booth to purchase on-site.