

NOTES

I. UNIT ELEVEN — “*The City on a Hill*” — Paul’s “First” Letter to Corinth

A. FLASHBACK: The Birth of the Church in Corinth — Acts 18:1-21

1. Getting the Sequence Straight:

- a. Paul ministered in Thessalonica *and* Corinth while on his \_\_\_\_\_ missionary journey (Acts 15:40-18:21).
- b. Corinth was internationally known as a \_\_\_\_\_ spot.
- c. Paul’s ministry in Corinth was long, arduous, and \_\_\_\_\_:
  - (1) It lasted \_\_\_\_\_ months (18:11).
  - (2) Paul appears to have “worked with his \_\_\_\_\_” like he did in Thessalonica (1 Cor 4:12; Acts 18:1-3; 1 Th 2:9).
  - (3) Paul met two fellow tent-making missionaries who became lifelong \_\_\_\_\_ —Aquila and Priscilla—in Corinth (Acts 18:1; 1 Cor 16:19; Rom 16:3; 2 tim 4:19).
  - (4) Paul’s ministry to Corinthian Jews is brief *and* intense, but also abysmal and mutually \_\_\_\_\_ (18:5-7).
  - (5) Paul’s persecution by Jews in Damascus (Acts 9:22), Jerusalem (9:28-29), Antioch (13:50), Iconium (14:4), Lystra (14:19), Thessalonica (17:5), and Berea (17:13) may have made him want to quit \_\_\_\_\_ (Gk in 18:90 is “*stop being afraid to speak...*”).
  - (6) Paul’s ministry in Corinth results in a predominately “Corinthian” church that will eventually exhibit very *non-*\_\_\_\_\_ problems:
    - (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor 5:1-13)
    - (b) \_\_\_\_\_ in Corinthian courts (6:1-8)
    - (c) using \_\_\_\_\_ (6:12-20)
    - (d) sexual abstinence \_\_\_\_\_ marriage (7:1-7)
    - (e) \_\_\_\_\_ (10:1-22)
    - (f) participation in \_\_\_\_\_ festivals (10:20-22)
    - (g) \_\_\_\_\_ accepted immorality and homosexuality (6:9-10)
- d. Paul changes his missionary base from Greece to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (1) Paul relocated his “base” to \_\_\_\_\_, along with Aquila and Priscilla, indicating adequate leaders were in place in \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 18:18-21).
  - (2) Paul returned to \_\_\_\_\_ and spun around on his 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey (18:22-23).
  - (3) Aquila & Priscilla trained \_\_\_\_\_ and sent him to Corinth to continue the work (18:24-19:1).
  - (4) Paul arrived in Ephesus and spent two years of \_\_\_\_\_ ministry:
 

*“...all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.” Acts 19:10*

- e. Paul “\_\_\_\_\_” the Corinthians long distance
- (1) Paul writes what is most likely “\_\_\_\_\_ Corinthians,” which we do *not* have, addressing the issue of sexual immorality in the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor 5:9-11).
  - (2) Paul receives a sobering \_\_\_\_\_ report on the sad state of affairs from “Chloe’s household” (1:11), and a letter bursting with \_\_\_\_\_ about how the Story applies to life in Corinth (7:1; 8:1; 12:1).
  - (3) Paul writes a lengthy \_\_\_\_\_ letter to address all these problems. This is likely our “*First*” Corinthians (c. AD 54).
  - (4) Paul makes a short, undocumented “painful \_\_\_\_\_” to Corinth to deal with some matters face-to-face (4:19; 2 Cor 2:1-2).
  - (5) Paul sends a third “\_\_\_\_\_ letter” (which we do *not* have) probably with Titus to address a specific disciplinary issue (2 Cor 2:3-9, 13; 7:16).
  - (6) Paul goes to Macedonia and is finally joined by Titus (2 Cor 7:16), and writes his \_\_\_\_\_ letter, our “*Second Corinthians*” (c. AD 55).
  - (7) Paul visits \_\_\_\_\_ on the final leg of his 3<sup>rd</sup> journey and stays for three months (Acts 20:2; 2 Cor 12:14).

B. FLASH FORWARD: “*First*” Corinthians

1. Going “Back Stage”: The \_\_\_\_\_ Issues
  - a. Corinth is Paul’s first truly *cosmopolitan* congregation with no connection to \_\_\_\_\_ theology and scripture.
  - b. Paul has to help them forge an \_\_\_\_\_ that is consistent with The Story without the Jewish props of monotheism, covenant history, and a strong \_\_\_\_\_ moral code:
 

*“You know that when you were pagans (Gk-ethnos) you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led.” 1 Corinthians 12:2*
  - c. Paul must help them understand the novel idea of an \_\_\_\_\_ connection between orthodoxy and orthopraxy (something Greek religion did *not* demand).
2. CENTER STAGE: Four Key Players in the Corinthian Drama
  - a. “\_\_\_\_\_” – the Corinthian had adopted a “we-they” mentality based on what was socially sanctioned.
    - (1) “\_\_\_\_\_” was of enormous value in Corinth, a very “Roman” city.
    - (2) Corinthian social life was rife with “\_\_\_\_\_” that regulated all their relationships in public and private:
 

*“All those workers who are paid for their labor and not for their skill have servile and demeaning employment, for in their case the very wage is a contract to servitude.” – Cicero, 106-43 BC*
    - (3) It’s no wonder Paul is *always* having to defend himself to the Corinthians, he was a \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ *Jew!*
    - (4) Crispus, the *archsynagogos* who came to faith, was a “householder” whose \_\_\_\_\_ would have been baptized with him (Acts 18:8).
    - (5) For Corinthians, oratory was \_\_\_\_\_, and those most skilled in it were most esteemed.

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(6) The Corinthians believers had become divided into house churches built around \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_:

*“For it has been reported to me by Chloe’s people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. What I mean is that each one of you says, “I follow Paul,” or “I follow Apollos,” or “I follow Cephas,” or “I follow Christ.”* 1 Corinthians 1:11, 12

(7) Paul makes it clear that this pressure was always hanging over his head, and that it is \_\_\_\_\_ to The Story:

*“And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”* 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

(8) For Paul, the issue is always The Story, not the “\_\_\_\_\_.”

*“What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.”* 1 Corinthians 3:5-7

b. “\_\_\_\_\_” – The Corinthian believers had made \_\_\_\_\_ the center of worship rather than God (14:26-33).

- (1) Worship services had become arenas of \_\_\_\_\_-expression rather than edification (14:12).
- (2) Spiritual gifts had become a form of \_\_\_\_\_ (12:12-26).
- (3) Fellowship meals had become merely \_\_\_\_\_ gatherings reflecting culture rather than revering Christ (11:17-33).
- (4) “\_\_\_\_\_” had become an opportunity for people to gather with others just like themselves, including where they \_\_\_\_\_ and with whom!

C. OFF STAGE: Unmasking the Corinthians in Our Midst

- 1. How much of my identity as a Christian comes from my social or religious “\_\_\_\_\_” rather than the Story?
- 2. How much of my loyalty as a believers is to a \_\_\_\_\_ rather than the Story?
- 3. How much of my theology as a believer is the product of the consensus of the corporate \_\_\_\_\_ of my church rather than a lifetime of \_\_\_\_\_?