

ORCHARD ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BIBLE FOR ALL (BFA) MATERIAL FOR SMALL GROUPS DISCUSSION

1 Corinthians – Building Community

Sermon Series

02 Feb 2020	1 Corinthians 3:1-23	Living as Wise Builders
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02 Feb 2020
1 Corinthians 3:1-23
Living as Wise Builders

INTRODUCTION

Paul has so far reminded the Corinthian church that they have been given great gifts by God in Christ: God has given them all they need to keep going to eternal life. He has also urged them to be united around the “foolish” message of Christ’s cross, instead of being divided.

OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION

1. Read 1 Cor 3:1-9
 - a. How does Paul describe these Christians (v1) and what are the visible signs of this (v3-4)?

 - b. In verses 5-9, how does Paul describe God? How does Paul describe any Christian worker?

2. Read 1 Cor 3:10-23. As Paul looks forward to “the Day” that Jesus is revealed (1 Cor 1:7), what does he say will happen at that time?
 - a. v12-13

 - b. v14-15

3. What three warnings does Paul give the Corinthians in this passage?
 - a. v10, 13

 - b. v17

 - c. v18

4. What three things is Paul telling us about God’s relationship to the church?
 - a. v6-9

 - b. v10

 - c. v16

APPLICATION

5. Using this passage, how would you respond to a friend who said the following:
 - a. “I’ve given up telling people about Jesus. It never seems to work. I’ll never make anyone a Christian”.

 - b. “I really only like to listen to (insert name of your favourite preacher); he’s just so much more inspiring and interesting than any other speaker I’ve heard”.

 - c. “We spend too much time thinking about what church should be like: we just need to get out there and tell people about Christ”.

DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS

The church is built on the foundation of Christ, in-dwelled by the Holy Spirit, and grown by God Himself.

GROUP/PERSONAL REFLECTION

Think for a moment about what in your life is:

- Helping you grow as a Christian.
- Hindering your growth.

What are you going to change?

Have you realized that the church belongs to God and not to you?

His wishes and plans for it are more important than your preferences. Is there any part of your attitude towards church which you need to change?

Write down three prayer points, based on this passage.

09 Feb 2020

1 Corinthians 4:1-21

Living as God's Stewards

INTRODUCTION

How can we recognise the real from the fake? Paul knew that some leaders in the Corinthian church were imposters: they were not good stewards of the true gospel message which had been silenced by their substitute message. Paul gives us three key qualities of a true steward of God Word.

OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION

1. Key Quality 1. Read 1 Cor 4:1-7.
 - a. What do those entrusted with church servant-leadership need to do (v2)?

 - b. v6 tells us some of what this means. What should church leaders *not* do?

 - c. Whose judgement does Paul *not* care about (v3)? Whose judgement does he care about and when will this judgement happen (v5)?

2. Key Quality 2. Read 1 Cor 4:8-13.
 - a. It appears the fake teachers have been promising the Corinthians wealth and power. From the passage, how does Paul describe himself and the other apostles?

 - b. What is Paul's experience of real Christian ministry and how does it compare to that of His master, Jesus Christ? (See Luke 9:58 and 1 Peter 2:21-24)

3. Key Quality 3. Read 1 Cor 4:13-21
 - a. How does Paul describe his relationship with the Corinthians? Why does he think of himself in this way?

 - b. Considering the kind of life that Paul lives (as examined in Qn 2), what kind of life does he want the Christians in his care to have (v16)?

APPLICATION

4. Why might it be tempting for a church minister to "go beyond what is written"? How can we help our pastors make sure they don't do this?

5. Based on this passage, how would you respond if after Sunday service, a member of your small group is annoyed with the preacher. "I can't believe he said [act forbidden by Bible] is wrong," she says. "I mean, life is more complicated than that. I've got a friend visiting who does not come to church much; what's he going to think? Can't he tone it down a little?"

DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS

A faithful steward of God's Word preaches a cross-centred message, lives a cross-centred life, and encourages cross-centred followers.

GROUP/PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Are there areas of your life which you would rather your pastor did not preach from the Bible about?

How would you respond if your pastor shows you an area of your life where you are self-centred and not cross-centred?

How can you give thanks for, and pray for, ORPC's pastors from what God's Spirit has said in this Bible passage?

16 Feb 2020

1 Corinthians 5:1-13

Living in Sexual Purity

OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION

1. Read 1 Cor 5:1-5.
 - a. What has Paul heard happened in this church?

 - b. How have other church members reacted?

 - c. What should they be doing?

 - d. What does Paul hope this will result in? What does this tell us about the aim of Biblical church discipline?

 - e. Read Matthew 18:15-17. How does Paul's commands reflect Jesus' teaching?

2. Read 1 Cor 5:6-8. Paul pictures this man's sin as "yeast" in the "dough" of the Corinthian church. If the sin is not dealt with, what will happen (v6)?

3. Read 1 Cor 5:9-13. Paul reminds his readers "not to associate with sexually immoral people" (v9).
 - a. What *doesn't* Paul mean by this (v10)?

 - b. What does Paul mean (v11)?

4. Paul talks about who Christians should judge. He quotes Deuteronomy 17:7 – "Expel the wicked man from among you" and applies this to the New Testament church.
 - a. Whose business is it not for the church to judge (v12)? Who will judge them?

 - b. Whose business is it for the Christian community to judge?

APPLICATION

5. The church is often tempted to judge the world while refusing to judge itself.
 - a. Why do you think many Christians instinctively don't want to think about church discipline or confront public sin by other believers?

 - b. How does refusing to judge sin in the church end up harming the church itself, especially those trapped in their sin?

DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS

The man's sexual immorality was a single serious infection, but the church's lack of discipline was a complete failure of the immune system. Sin that no one deals with becomes sin that everyone will have to deal with.

If God declares something is sinful, we must not cultivate an indifference to it, regardless of cultural acceptance of the issue. We want to love God so much that we hate the sin that God hates, both in ourselves and in others. To refuse to judge sin in the church is to obscure the gospel.

GROUP/PERSONAL REFLECTION

Do you grieve when people in ORPC stop trusting in Christ, leave the church and live without him? How does this grief translate into action to prevent such things from happening?

Is there a Christian you know who needs you to help them by confronting them about a particular repeated and public sin? What can you do to help them today?

23 Feb 2020

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Living with Integrity

OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION

1. Read 1 Cor 6:1-8.
 - a. What else has been happening in the Corinthian church (v1, 6)?

 - b. These people clearly want to get what they feel they deserve – even if it means going to court. What attitude does Paul recommend instead (v7)?

 - c. Read Philippians 2:5-11. What will inspire Christians to give up what they deserve, instead of insisting on it?

2. Read 1 Cor 6:9-11.
 - a. Why does sin matter so much (9-10)?

 - b. If a church does not discipline people who live like that, they might be “deceived” (v9) into thinking that it is fine. Why does this matter?

 - c. What is the great news that Paul reminds us about?

 - d. What truth do you think Paul wants to emphasize by repeating the word “were” in v11?

3. Why is it scandalous that Christians are taking each other to court in front of non-believers?

4. Read Luke 6:27-38. How are Paul's words in 1 Cor 6:7 consistent with Jesus' teachings?

APPLICATION

5. If a Christian today feels he has been cheated by another Christian, what do you think he should do? (Consider 1 Cor 5:11, 6:1-11)

DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS

1 Cor 6:9-11 anticipates the themes of 1 Cor 6:12-20. Paul reminds the church that unrighteous people will not inherit the kingdom of God: they are not members of the kingdom, nor will they share in its eternal reward.

GROUP/PERSONAL REFLECTION

Thank God for the great truths of 1 Cor 6:11.

Why should 1 Cor 6:11 motivate you to utterly turn from greed, cheating, sexual sin, slander, and all other sin? Meditate on these truths this week, and remind yourself of them when you are tempted to sin.

Ask God to:

- Help you to help the ORPC community by taking sin seriously.
- Give ORPC courage when difficult decisions need to be taken.
- Help you personally with a sin you are struggling with.