THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

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**DATE: 10/10/2018 Wed.**

**TEXT: I Corinthians; Acts 18**

**INTRODUCTION**

Tonight, we will begin a study of the Book of **I Corinthians**

**I Corinthians** is the 46th Book listed in the Canon of Scripture

There are 39 Books found in the Old Testament

And 27 Books found in the New Testament

For a total of 66 Book

**I Corinthians** is the 7th Book of the New Testament

The order that it’s found in the Bible doesn’t necessarily equate to the time of it’s writing

The Theme of the Book is the Lordship of Christ

Let’s stand and read **vs. 1-3** together and then pray

And we’ll begin this Blessed Book by looking at several aspects about its Writing

Read **vs. 1-3**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let me introduce the Book of **I Corinthians** with its **…**

**I. AUTHOR AND DATE**

-- Paul is acknowledged as the author both by the letter itself …

At the Beginning of the Letter

**I Corinthians 1:1, 2 – *“Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,” “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:”***

At the End of the Letter

**I Corinthians 16:21 – *“The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand”***

-- And by the early church fathers

His authorship was attested to by Clement of Rome as early as 96 A.D

Clement of Rome was a first century convert who had the wonderful privilege of being taught personally by the Apostle

If we look in **Philippians 4:3** we see a Clement referred to who very well could be the same Clement we are looking at here

***“And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life”***

It seems that Clement became a leader, in fact, pastor, of the church at Rome

-- And today practically all NT interpreters concur

The letter was written around 55 A.D. toward the close of Paul's three-year stay in Ephesus

**I Corinthians 16:5-9 …**

**Acts 20:31 – *“Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears”***

It is clear from his reference to staying at Ephesus until

Pentecost (**16:8**) that he intended to remain there somewhat less than a year when he wrote **I Corinthians**

**THE AUTHOR AND THE DATE**

**II. THE CITY OF CORITH**

Corinth was one of Greece’s outstanding cities

It was the capital of the Province of Achaia

It was in Corinth that the Roman Proconsul lived

The Roman Consul was like our Congress today

A Proconsul was an official of ancient Rome who acted on behalf of the Consul

A Proconsul was typically a former Consul

In the Roman Empire, the Proconsul was the title held by a civil governor and did not imply military command

They were the Voice of Rome in its Occupied territories

**Acts 18:12 *– “And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat,”***

Corinth was a large city, perfectly situated for commercial purposes and very wealthy because of it

1000’s of traders from around the known world did business there

Greek culture flourished there; the Fine arts, Athletics, Education and Philosophy

However, as with any metropolis, so did gross sin and immorality

It was famously known for its Drunkenness, Gluttony and Prostitution

Matter-of-fact if you visited there, you were said to have been *“Corinthianzed”*

With its Wealth and Prosperity also came its Downfall

Corinth was a Cesspool of Sin

**AUTHOR AND DATE**

**THE CITY OF CORITH**

**III. THE PURPOSE FOR WRITING THE LETTER**

Paul first preached the Gospel in Athens and then traveled to Corinth and established the church there

**Acts 18:1 – *“After these things Paul departed from …***

***… Athens, and came to Corinth;”***

The accounts in **Acts 18** verifies this fact

**Acts 18:11** tells us that – ***“he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them”***

The Holy Spirit worked in a special way thru Paul

**Acts 18:5 – *“And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ”***

Many people were saved by Paul’s Preaching

Both Jews and Gentiles

Some notable people who were saved were Sosthenes, Erastus and Gaius

-- Sosthenes – Not much is known about the man named Sosthenes in the Bible

There is a quick mention of Sosthenes in the Book of **Acts** and possibly here in our text

Whether these passages speak of the same man is unknown

Both mentions of Sosthenes involve the [apostle Paul’s missionary journeys](https://www.gotquestions.org/missionary-journeys-Paul.html) though

In [**Acts 18**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/Acts%2018), Paul arrives in Corinth, where he meets fellow believers Priscilla and Aquila **– v. 2**

Being tentmakers, Paul stays with them while he plies his trade and teaches in the synagogue **– vs. 3, 4**

Sadly, the Jews reject Paul’s message, and so he moves on to preaching to the Gentiles instead

Paul goes to stay with a Gentile Christian named Justus,

Possibly due to the fact that Justus’s home was next door to the synagogue – **v. 7**

Paul’s preaching is more effective here, and Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, along with many other Corinthians, become believers

It may have been that Crispus left his position at the synagogue at this time, for we see a few verses later that Sosthenes is named the leader of the synagogue

After Paul had been in Corinth about 18 months, the Jews, led by Sosthenes, united in an attack on Paul,

Bringing him before the Roman proconsul, Gallio

The charge is that ***“This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law”*** **– v. 13**

Gallio did not feel this particular issue was worth his time – **Acts 18:15**

At that point, Sosthenes was seized and beaten as Gallio watched without interfering – **v. 17**

The text leaves it unclear as to who beat Sosthenes and why

**v. 17** simply says it was the crowd there

Speculation is that one of two things may have happened

1) the Jews were angered that Sosthenes had been unable to persuade Gallio to try Paul and so made him the scapegoat; or

2) the Greeks outside the court beat Sosthenes because he was a Jew trying to stir up trouble in their city

The second mention of a man named Sosthenes in our text here – **v. 1**

Here, Sosthenes is a brother in Christ and was either a voice in the crafting of the letter or its scribe

If this is the same Sosthenes as the man who opposed Paul in [**Acts 18**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/Acts%2018)**,** it would be yet more evidence of the transforming power of the Gospel

Knowing the power of God and the fact that this Sosthenes was known to the people in Corinth,

It is certainly a possibility that they are the same man; however, no one can say for sure

-- Erastus – Erastus was a coworker of the [apostle Paul](https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Paul.html), a civil servant in Corinth, and a believer in Jesus Christ

**Romans 16:23 -** *“****Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you,”***

As the ***“chamberlain”*** he would have been the director of public works

Therefore, Erastus would have been quite an influential man

His duties likely included the upkeep of civic buildings and city streets and the collection of public revenue;

In some cases, he even may have acted as a lawyer of sorts in public disputes

Erastus may have overseen the maintenance of Roman infrastructure, such as aqueducts and sewers

Paul resolved to go to Jerusalem

On his way, he passed through Macedonia, where he must have seen some exciting opportunities for ministry

So, he sent Erastus, along with [Timothy](https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Timothy.html), to Macedonia while he moved on

**Acts 19:22 – *“So he (Paul) sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season”***

It is unknown whether Erastus was already with Paul or whether Paul contacted him in Corinth by letter;

Either way, it is clear that Erastus was heavily involved in practical ministry and missionary work

The last mention of Erastus is found in **II Timothy** which was the last letter written by Paul

**II Timothy 4:20 – *“Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick”***

From the wording of this verse, it seems that Erastus did travel and minister with Paul at some point before returning to his public office in Corinth

What can we learn from Erastus?

In spite of his prominent rank, Erastus regarded ministry as his top priority, …

… even leaving his work in Corinth to spread the gospel in foreign lands

He did not, however, neglect his public duties, but was a servant of the people such as Paul describes in [**Romans 13:3, 4**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/Rom%2013.3%E2%80%934)

We can see from Erastus’s example that we too should continue to serve the Saviour as our ultimate goal in life

Rich or poor, we can serve God cheerfully and faithfully in whatever position He grants us

-- Gaius - Several men in the New Testament share the name Gaius, a common name in the first century

All of these men were involved in the ministry of the apostles in one way or another

Gaius of Corinth was one of two men Paul baptized there

**I Corinthians 1:14 – *“I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;”***

Later, toward the end of his 3rd Missionary Journey, when Paul wrote his [Epistle to the Romans](https://www.gotquestions.org/Book-of-Romans.html), he was staying in Gaius’s home, and Gaius included his greetings to the church in Rome

**Romans 16:23 – *“Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you”***

The apostle knew that he had invaded Satan’s playground

And that he was fighting directly against the hounds of hell

Paul only left Corinth because of his desire to keep a feast in Jerusalem

**Acts 18:21 – *“But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will”***

On his return from Jerusalem, Paul would stay 3 years in Ephesus

**Acts 20:31 - *“Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears”***

And while at Ephesus, word came of the condition of the church at Corinth

**I Corinthians 1:11 – *“For it hath been declared unto me***

***of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you”***

Paul would send Timothy and Erastus to Corinth

**I Corinthians 16:10 – *“Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do”***

**Acts 19:22 - *“So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season”***

**I Corinthians 4:17-19 …**

This First Epistle was carried by Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus

And it deals with the practical daily conduct of the believer

It also deals with the public walk of the assembly

The 2 outstanding reasons for the Epistle were …

-- The Various Defects and Delinquencies that had come about in Doctrine

-- Those Defeats and Delinquencies had transformed themselves into Daily Practices in the church

This inspired letter exposes the worldliness and foolishness of the professing believers

And calls upon them to make Jesus Lord

The letter encourages a godly order

The letter is a call onto personal holiness

It counsels the saints regarding social and family difficulties

It helps them in their relationships with the lost and saved

**I Corinthians** leaves no room for speculation concerning the future state of the believer

Paul writes that if we don’t believe in the future resurrection of the believer than your faith is in vain

In the closing matters he talks about the collection of the saints

The state of things in the assembly at Corinth was indeed sad, grievous, and heartbreaking

Paul does not condone their failures, but he believes that love is the best way to treat any situation

The Tone of the Letter is distinctly an Epistle of Reproof

And it is Intensely Practical

**CONCLUSION**

My prayer is that as we study through this Blessed Book

That we will let God speak to our hearts about any area that might need fixing or improvement

And that we will all come to the conclusion that …

Jesus Christ is Lord

**AUTHOR AND DATE**

**THE CITY OF CORITH**

**THE PURPOSE FOR WRITING THE LETTER**