

GROW Guide

May 5, 2024

Theme: Community in Christ
1 Corinthians 1:1-9

CONNECTING QUESTIONS

What is a powerful letter you received?

Tell about a memorable moment from church in childhood...and if church was not part of your childhood, who welcomed you into the church?

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life. Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ. We rejoice with Christians all over the world today. Help us to grow as your people toward the fullness of eternal life with you. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

CONTEXT

Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen indeed, Alleluia. We are learning to be, Community in Christ, learning about the formation of the early Christian community from Acts and 1 Corinthians. How did they build community when they had diversity and conflict? Let us look at what we can learn from them. Being in one building will help us live as one community and focus our attention and resources on being community and on being good neighbors. Being community in Christ is BOTH growing in faith and carrying on the work of Jesus Christ. So glad you are here!

From Pastor Sarah Henrich at EntertheBible.org:

In response to a letter from the Corinthians making various inquiries about worship practices and ethics, as well as a personal report from “Chloe’s people” (1 Corinthians 1:11) that the congregation Paul has founded has fallen to quarreling, Paul writes to the Corinthians, directing them to approach their ethical dilemmas and resolve their interpersonal conflicts on the basis of their unity as members of the body of Christ. The letter recasts themes apparently popular among the Corinthians, such as knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual gifts, in light of the reversal of status implied by the news of “Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2).

LOOK AT THE BOOK

- Open to 1 Corinthians 1. Who is the author of the letter?
- Find Acts 18:17. How is this a clue as to whom Sosthenes may be?

- What title does Paul ascribe to himself? Google that title. What does it mean?
- How would you typically begin a letter? In Paul's day, there was a formula for starting a letter like this one. The sender identifies themselves then greets the recipient.
- In 1 Corinthians 1:2, how are the people being addressed? Where is this letter going? Remember now, few people were literate, so why do you think Paul addresses the letter as he does?
- What are two gifts for the blessing in 1 Corinthians 1: 3? Where have you heard these words before during worship? Why do you think they are said there?
- In verse 5, how does Paul claim God's people have "been enriched?" Which would you prefer?
- Verse 6 says something has been "strengthened" among the people. What is it? When have you experienced this?
- What is going on behind the scenes is that the Corinthians church is experiencing divisions from a multitude of issues, and they don't trust Paul. Knowing this, how might Paul be trying to set the foundation for some healing?
- Our focus words this week are: gratitude, recognition, sharing. Which word are you drawn to? Why?
- Notice the subject of the verbs in this reading. Who is doing much of the work? In verse 8, what is the promise?
- In verse 9, Paul writes a core foundational promise to a church in distress. What is that promise?
- What does it matter that we were called into fellowship with Jesus?
- Google Luther's Small Catechism, Article Three of the Apostle's Creed. How does that explanation of that article begin? How does it connect to verse nine?
- What do you want to talk about that has not been brought up yet?

TAKING IT HOME

Write and send one letter this week to build someone up.

Text a younger person with a word of promise: God is faithful.

God of the promise, you call your people together into your one mission in Christ's name. Make us brave, grant us peace, challenge our expectations, and empower us to truly follow your Spirit's lead. You are our one God who calls us together as one people, and we thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.