

**A LOOK AT THE BOOK
1 CORINTHIANS
THE CHURCH THAT HAD EVERYTHING—EXCEPT LOVE**

Ralph Porter

Have you ever tried to buy a present for someone who has everything?

The Corinthian church was that kind of church.

It would be very difficult to pastor such a church because they had it all!

The best teachers had been there

They had heard all there was to hear from the best teachers of their day.

That list included Paul himself! As well as Peter and Apollos!

How do you follow that act?

Nevertheless, things were not well at Corinth.

Having everything except love isn't enough.

AUTHOR AND DATE

Paul's authorship of 1 Corinthians is seldom challenged.

It is supported by external evidence beginning with Clement of Rome and never seriously debated.

Internal evidence also supports Paul as the author since it refers to him by name (1:1; 16:21).

Paul wrote to the Corinthians from Ephesus.

He was there for three years, from A.D. 52 to 55.

It was probably written shortly before his departure in A.D. 55.

BACKGROUND

Corinth—

Commercial center of about 3/4 million people

Wealthy and highly cultured

Known for their intelligence

Known for artistic, cultural inventiveness

Known for licentiousness

Associated with religious worship

Mother-child cult

Temple to Aphrodite with 1000 female slaves of Venus (i.e., prostitutes)

Known for the biennial Isthmian games (second only to the Olympic games)

It's been said that:

Athens worshiped the mind

Corinth worshiped the flesh

When Paul first went to Corinth, he settled there for about a year and a half.

He went from there to Ephesus, leaving Apollos behind.

After some time had passed, Apollos went to Ephesus to see Paul.

Paul sent a letter condemning fornicators and announcing plans to visit them.

He arranged for a collection for the saints afflicted by the famine.

Later, he received news from Chloe's house about divisions and doctrinal divergences.

Paul sent Timothy but he only got as far as Macedonia.

Then Paul received a letter from the church telling of problems and asking questions.

It was at this time that Paul wrote 1 Corinthians.

PURPOSE AND THEME

Content is shaped by the various reports received.

Paul hopes to resolve the problem caused by divisions and answer their questions.

Because of its problematic structure, the book lacks unity of theme.

Since Paul applies basic principles of Christian living to each area discussed, the theme of *practical sanctification* has often been applied.

The most serious problem: ***their lack of love for one another.***

INTRODUCTION 1:1-9

GREETING 1:1-3

As is often the case, the greeting serves as a summary.

Author: Paul is speaking as God's representative 1:1

Paul was called to serve as an "apostle" - one *sent* by Jesus Christ.

Paul was called by God.

Recipients: Paul is speaking to them as "set apart ones" 1:2

Paul is writing to full-blooded "*Corinthians*"

The Corinthian lifestyle had penetrated the church:

Moral pollution & vice

Pride

Philosophical discussions

Great philosophical teachers competing with one another

Pop-mixture of liberty, pleasure and religion, all rolled into one.

Paul is writing to the church

They had been *set apart* from all this former lifestyle by Christ Jesus

They were called "*the set apart ones*" - "saints".

They share that calling with all who have called on the name of Jesus - All who have trusted him are to be *set apart ones*.

Greeting: Paul wants us to experience the grace and peace of God 1:3

What they were living in daily experience was anything but a practical outworking of God's grace and peace.

Imitating the Corinthian lifestyle is far from a demonstration of God's grace.

There is little evidence that God's grace has transformed their lives.

Their divisions, quarrels and problems are far from a demonstration of the peace that comes from God.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING 1:4-9

In our negative thinking about the Corinthian church we could miss something significant.:

This was one great church!

If you were a newcomer to town, you would be delighted to find such a church.

It was great! It had everything.

You would come to town; look around; and go back to get ready to move saying, ". . . and they have a tremendous evangelical church there!"

Their privileges:

They will be unrepensible in the day of judgment
because God is faithful,
--NOT because of themselves.

Paul is grateful because **they have received EVERYTHING.**

They were enriched in Him 1:4-5

Paul thanks God for them because of the *positional truths* he is sure are true of them.

Paul never questions the genuineness of their profession!

They had received everything—at least in their heads!
They were enriched in speech—in every word
They were enriched in all knowledge
They knew all the doctrines

- * Rich in every way!
 - Great speakers!
 - Great teaching!
 - Good understanding of the Word!

The best teachers had all been there and they drank it up.
They had heard all there was to hear from the best teachers of their day.
That list included Paul himself! As well as Peter and Apollos.

They showed evidence that they were authentic Christians 1:6

Their public *testimony* was well-known

The witness concerning Christ was *confirmed* by them.
They were active in evangelism!

- * Solid testimony for Christ

They had all the spiritual gifts 1:7a

- * All spiritual gifts were evident among them

Their eschatology was right 1:7b-8

They had the right hope.
They probably even had an annual prophecy conference!

- * Eagerly awaiting the Lord's return

They knew that He would present them blameless—irreproachable.

Furthermore, Paul is sure that in spite of present indications,
In the end, *God will finish the job*
He is faithful 1:9
God did it
He called them
He is faithful
He will finish what He started

What more could you ask for?

Missing from this description is love for one another.

You can have all of the above and still be carnal!

They were lacking love and unity.

All the problems mentioned in the book arose because of one basic lack:
they didn't have genuine love for one another.

WHAT HAPPENS TO A CHURCH WHEN LOVE IS MISSING?

Divisions/personality cults 1-4
Indifference to sin in their midst 5
Legal feuds among brethren 6
Cheating one another 6
Legalistic attitudes about marriage 7
Fights over rights 8-10
Women's lib 11
Hoarding food at potlucks 11
Pride concerning spiritual gifts 12-14
Inability to correct doctrinal confusion 15
No interest in giving 16

*Is this study practical for life in the 21st century?
Does it have a message for our church today?*

If you have everything they had, but no love, you're just a bunch of noisemakers! (1 cor. 13)

It's not worth anything = nothing!

*What are we going to do about it?
What does God want you to do about it?*

*What warning is there in this for us?
What should we do about it?*

DIVISIONS 1:10-4:21

The first and most significant problem of the church without love:
Divisions and personality cults

EXHORTATION TO UNITY 1:10

Paul begins by exhorting us to maintain unity in the church.

DESCRIPTION OF CONDITIONS 1:11-12

They have their eye on the messenger, instead of on God who gave them the message.

CORRECTION OF CONCEPT 1:13-17

Paul corrects their concept of following human leaders in opposition to one another.

Each leader represents Christ, *-NOT* himself.

HE is the one who died.

They were baptized in *His Name*.

The leaders are united in *HIM*.

Each one has his own calling from the Lord.

Therefore, there should be no cause to divide the church over them.

Everyone should be serving *HIM!*

BASIS OF DIVISIONS 1:18-4:7

They had two major misconceptions:

Misconception #1: False concept of our message 1:18-3:4

Our message is not a human message

No man could have thought it up

Therefore, no man should be exalted for the message.

God gave the message.

Therefore, He alone deserves the credit for it, – NOT MAN

TWO KEY WORDS: POWER/weakness WISDOM/foolishness

Their misconception of the message is derived from the concept of philosophy.

They have viewed Christianity as a philosophy that requires human wisdom to understand.

False wisdom: Our message is not based on human wisdom 1:18-2:9

The gospel cannot be understood by human wisdom 1:18-2:9

Summary stated 1:18

The Gospel is based on Christ –NOT on human philosophies.

Foolishness of human wisdom 1:19-20

God has declared human philosophies to be foolishness.

Weakness of human wisdom 1:21-25

Human wisdom will *NEVER* lead men to God.

Election of the simple 1:26-31

Therefore, God has chosen the foolish ones from the world and saved them so that *HE* might receive all the glory.

Message given to Paul 2:1-9

Not another human philosophy 2:1-4

Based on divine power 2:5

Based on divine wisdom 2:6-9

True wisdom: Our message is based on divine wisdom 2:10-3:5

This view leads Paul into the second corrective for their misconception of the message of the gospel.

Human nature requires that the message be communicated by a divine work.

To understand divine wisdom, man must be taught by the Spirit of God.

If someone understands the truth of God as taught by a human teacher, it's not the human teacher who deserves the credit.

Divine truth is taught by the Spirit of God.

Source of understanding 2:10-11

Only the Spirit of God is able to reveal divine wisdom.

Therefore, the understanding of spiritual truth is dependent on communication with the Holy Spirit.

Requirement for understanding 2:12-16

Since we have received the Spirit, we can understand spiritual truth (12-13)

Those who are in touch with the Spirit are able to understand divine wisdom which natural people cannot understand. (14-16)

Obstacle to understanding 3:1-4

Among those who understand the truth there are levels of understanding.

Because of their spiritual condition, the Corinthians are not being taught by the Spirit.

They are similar to those who do not know the Spirit.

In the middle of this discussion Paul explains why they have not understood this truth.

He describes four kinds of people.

What were they?

Which one is different?

What's different about him?

He sees things from God's perspective.

He understands what God is doing.

No one understands him.

Spiritual truth is always taught by the Spirit of God.

People are not naturally capable of understanding spiritual truth.

Of the four kinds of people, only one is able to understand the truth of God.

All the rest see things from the same perspective
-that of the world.

Misconception #2: False concept of our ministry 3:5-4:7

The Corinthians elevate one person above another as messengers of God.

Relationship of the servant to the sender 3:5-8

All of them are only *servants*.

We cooperate with God but we don't get the credit!

We all share a common goal.

We all want to see the body grow.

God produces the only results worth bragging about—NOT PEOPLE!
Therefore, God alone deserves praise.

Relationship of the servant to the building of God 3:9-15

Paul brought them the gospel and others helped to build them up.

Each servant is accountable to God for his own work.

Relationship of the servant to the temple of God 3:16-17

The church was founded as the means by which God would glorify Himself in the world.

Those working in it ought to contribute toward this purpose, and not defile it.

Relationship of the servant to human wisdom 3:18-23

Within the framework of servanthood, there is no place for boasting.

Each servant must be dependent on God, who deserves all the credit because He has provided everything necessary.

Evaluation of the good servant 4:1-5

Therefore, the only legitimate criteria for evaluating the work of a servant is faithfulness.

Has the servant used the resources the Master has given him, to the best of his ability, for the benefit of his Master?

Summary exhortation 4:6-7

APPLICATION OF MESSAGE 4:8-21

Their pride contrasted to apostles' suffering 4:8-13

His example as a father to his children 4:14-17

His warning concerning the danger of discipline 4:18-21

DISCIPLINE 5-6

A number of problems were present in the church.

All are symptoms of the lack of love that characterized the church.

Discipline:

- 5 Indifference to sin in their midst
Lack of concern for the brother involved
- 6 Legal feuds
Cheating one another

Disorder:

- 7 False attitudes about marriage
Self-centered relationships
Legalism

8-10 Fights over rights

They accepted a number of attitudes which the world teaches:

- "To each his own!"*
- "Live and let live!"*
- "Don't make waves!"*
- "I have my rights!"*
- "You have to look out for #1!"*

Paul's responses in these situations are not exactly what the world likes to hear. To the person who understands life from the human perspective --and not from God's perspective-- they will seem a little "off the wall."

He gives us **4 PRESCRIPTIONS FOR HAPPINESS IN LIFE**

If you are in one of the three categories that Paul says sees things from the human perspective, you will never understand these prescriptions!

They just don't make sense to natural people! *"You can't live that way!"*

RX #1 6:7-8

The world says:

- "Do unto others before they do unto you!"*
- "Stand up for your rights!"*
- "You can't do this to me and get away with it!"*

Love says:

It's better to accept the wrong others may do to you than to fight over it!

RX #2 6:19-20

The world says:

- "If it feels good, do it!"*
- "Satisfy your desires. Don't let your hang ups keep you from enjoying life."*
- "It's only human to respond that way. That's the way we were made."*

Love says:

***While all things are permissible, not everything is beneficial.
Happiness comes from recognizing that we belong to God and He lives in us.
Live to glorify God rather than to satisfy self.***

RX #3 7:3-5

The world says:

- "Your body is yours; you decide what you want to do with it."*
- "You have your rights!"*
- "When you don't get what you want, make the other one pay!"*
You can use your body as a bargaining tool to get your way.

Love says:

Satisfy your mate's needs and your own needs will be satisfied.

RX #4 8:9, 13; 9:12

The world says:

"You have your rights!"

"You're free; enjoy it!"

"Don't let anyone else tell you what to do!"

Love says:

Know what your rights are,

but surrender your rights for the good of others.

Paul introduces three instances where, because of their lack of love for one another, the church has failed to exercise its proper role in discipline:

FORNICATION 5:1-13

The first problem concerns known fornication in the church.

They have remained silent and failed to discipline the person involved.

Circumstances described 5:1-2

Fornication committed 5:1

Inaction resulted 5:2

Paul condemns the church for their failure to respond appropriately.

Command stated 5:3-5

Because they have failed to act, Paul condemns the man and commands that when they gather together, they do the same.

Command illustrated 5:6-8

The command to deliver him to Satan involves separation from the church, handing him over to the realm of Satan, the world.

The principle involved in the discipline is illustrated by the purging of leaven.

As in the feast of unleavened bread, there should be a complete break from the old way of life—and from those who practice it.

Command clarified 5:9-13

Paul clarifies the principle of separation, explaining that he means they should stay away from those who profess faith in Christ who are guilty of fornication—NOT unsaved people!

He recognizes that they can't lead unsaved people to Christ, unless they maintain contact with sinful people!

LAWSUITS 6:1-11

The second matter concerning discipline in the church is the issue of lawsuits between believers.

Circumstances lamented 6:1

They were taking their personal grievances against one another to the civil courts.

Correction suggested 6:2-8

Reason for correction 6:2-3

Since believers will judge the world and the angels, they ought to be able to settle differences between believers.

Suggestions for correction 6:4-7

Better solution 6:4-6

Therefore, they should pick out believers who are wise to resolve such conflicts between them.

Best solution 6:7

An even better solution would be for the cheated person to accept the loss of something that is rightfully theirs!

Severity of problem 6:8

Rather than sacrifice their own rights for the good of another person, they are themselves guilty of offending others.

They are fighting for their rights, and even cheating their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Court officials described 6:9-11

To help them become more aware of what they are doing, Paul describes the lifestyle of the judges they are taking their problems to.

He then compares them with believers.

These people have little to offer Christians to help us resolve our conflicts.

Thus it would be better to take our problems to the church, rather than to the civil courts.

MISUSE OF THE BODY 6:12-20

The final matter concerning discipline involves personal discipline, rather than collective discipline.

Paul discusses our attitude toward the use of the body.

The church at Corinth has apparently been influenced by local attitudes concerning the body and wants the freedom to use their bodies as they please.

The principle which governs Paul's argument is that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit for a purpose.

It is to be the instrument God uses to reveal His glory.

Principle of liberty 6:12

Because of the purchase of the believer, all restrictions have been removed.

However, the freedom which God has given to people may be perverted or misused.

Some things are not profitable because a person can be controlled by them, rather than by the Spirit and can thus fail to glorify God.

Illustrations of abuse 6:13-18

Paul supplies illustrations of gluttony and sexual abuse, which are misuses of the freedom of hunger and sex.

Eating 6:13-14

Sex 6:15-18

Proper use of the body 6:19-20

He warns us to control our bodies so that God may continue to be glorified by our actions.

DISORDER 7-14

Paul next turns to several specific difficulties and disorders which they asked him about.

CONCERNING MARRIAGE 7:1-40

The first specific concern they raise relates to the issue of marriage.

Purpose of marriage 7:1-9

Paul begins by explaining God's purpose for marriage.

Although Paul considers it better not to marry, he acknowledges that marriage is God's answer to people's sexual needs 1-2

Because of this purpose for marriage, each partner has a responsibility to the other.

Both partners have the right to expect their needs to be fulfilled by the other. 3-5

Since Paul is expecting the persecution to continue to increase, he encourages God's people not to marry. 6-7

He recognizes that not all people are able to live like this, because of sexual desires. 8-9

He does not condemn them for that desire, but suggests that they should marry.

Instruction about marriage 7:10-40

Paul continues to give instructions concerning marriage for the married (10-24), as for the unmarried (25-40).

For the married 7:10-24

Married believers 7:10-11

Paul instructs married believers to remain together or, if they insist on separating, they are not to remarry.

They may either stay separated or return to their spouse.

Mixed marriages 7:12-24

Unbeliever wanting to stay 7:12-14

In mixed marriages, the couple should stay together, if the unsaved person desires.

In that way the saved person is able to influence the unsaved person's life and perhaps bring them to the Lord.

Unbeliever wanting to separate 7:15-16

When the unsaved person no longer wants to stay, they may separate.

They should not be forced to stay together.

No permission is given to remarry, however—at least not explicitly.

Principle of remaining as God called us 7:17-24

In general, Paul states the same principle for marriage as for the other areas of life:
God's children should remain as they were when God called them to salvation.

Married people are better off to stay as they are.

Those who are married shouldn't try to change that.

For the unmarried 7:25-40

Paul also has recommendations for unmarried people.

Unmarried young 7:25-35

Unmarried people can serve the Lord better without the burden of family responsibilities.

This is especially true in the midst of affliction.

Therefore, they are better off not to marry.

Parents of virgins 7:36-38

In the special case of a virgin daughter, or perhaps a committed companion, who is becoming older, and it is felt they ought to marry, the parent, or companion, may approve marriage.

This is an acceptable alternative.

Widows 7:39-40

The same is true of a widow who wishes to remarry.

CONCERNING MEAT OFFERED TO IDOLS 8-11:1

The second difficulty Paul discusses concerns meat offered to idols.

The problem arises from their former relationship to pagan practices.

Those who ate accused those who didn't of immaturity.

Those who didn't eat accused those who did of carnality.

Paul never discussed who was right!

Principle explained 8

Paul begins by laying foundational principles.

Both sides of the discussion have logical arguments to defend their view.

The fundamental principle is that genuine love for one another supercedes knowledge.

In Christ we have liberty to do as we wish, as long as we submit to the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Our spirituality does not depend on our use of—or lack of use of—such things. 4-6

However, no one should use his knowledge of liberty in Christ to cause another to stumble. 7-12

We should be willing to surrender our liberty for the good of our brother. 13

Principle illustrated 9

Paul illustrates this last principle from his own life.

Although he could insist on his rights as an apostle (1-14), he has chosen to surrender his rights (15-23), to be acceptable to all and not be an offense to others (24-27).

Peril of participation 10:1-22

He warns them of the peril we face when we insist on doing what we want, without regard for others.

Israel insisted on her own way in the desert and was judged by God. 1-13

Israel thought they were safe because they were God's people, yet they died there.

The Corinthians should be careful lest they fall as Israel did.

If we insist on having our way, we will be guilty of idolatry and subject to divine judgment also. 14-22

Principle applied 10:23-11:1

Paul concludes this discussion with a practical application to their situation.

We ought to keep our liberty in proper perspective. 23

We ought to use it in a way that will not harm our brother's conscience. 24-30

Top priority should be placed on glorifying God, not on obtaining our rights. 31

We should imitate Paul's example and do everything possible to avoid offending others. 10:32-11:1

CONCERNING WORSHIP 11:2-14:40

The final area of disorder Paul presents concerns worship.

Covering for women 11:2-16

He instructs them concerning the necessity of covering the woman's head.

Basis in divine order 11:2-6

The woman should cover her head in recognition of the order God has established in the universe.

He has established a chain of command which begins with God and passes down through Christ, then to man, and finally to women.

The woman was to wear the veil as an evidence that she was subject to her husband's authority.

Basis in creation 11:7-12

A second reason for wearing the covering is based on the creation.

Man was made in the image and glory of God.

Woman was made in the image of man, and for him.

Therefore, she should cover her head when she comes before the Lord.

Basis in physical characteristics 11:13-16

The final reason the woman should cover her head is based on the physical characteristics of man and woman.

On a man, long hair does nothing to attract our attention to the man.

It's not especially beautiful.

The woman's hair, on the other hand, is her glory.

To avoid drawing attention to herself, she ought to cover her head when praying or prophesying.

Lord's supper 11:17-34

Paul corrects them for disorders at the Lord's table.

Rebuke 11:17-22

He rebukes them because, rather than draw attention to the Lord's death, they call attention to the divisions among them.

While some are gluttonous, others are hungry.

Reminder 11:23-26

Paul reminds them of the institution of the Lord's table and its significance.

Resultant appeal 11:27-34

He then appeals to them to correct the abuses and to conduct themselves properly at the Lord's table.

Failure to respond appropriately will result in divine judgment.

Spiritual gifts 12:1-14:40

The last problem related to their worship is their use of spiritual gifts.

They have placed incorrect emphasis on the gift of tongues.

The believers at Corinth had apparently decided that this was the most significant gift of the Spirit.

Paul points out that tongues is only one of the gifts, and not the most important one at that.

Diversity of gifts 12:1-31a

Argument from experience 12:1-3

Paul first argues, on the basis of their own experience, that all who confess Jesus as Lord do so because they have been led by the Spirit of God.

Tongues is but one of many possible evidences that we have the Spirit within us.

The recognition of Christ's person is more conclusive and is universal.

Diversity of gifts explained 12:4-11

Spiritual gifts are sovereignly given to all believers by the Spirit of God.

Each gift benefits the whole body.

Diversity of gifts illustrated 12:12-31a

While the gifts are given for the use of the entire body, different men receive different gifts according to the will of the Spirit.

All the gifts are necessary for the body to be complete.

While tongues is an important gift, it is not the only gift, nor the most important gift.

Superiority of love 12:31b-13:13

The demonstration of love is more important than any gift.

Worthlessness of service without love 12:31b-13:3

Their service for the Lord is worthless if it is not accompanied by love.

Characteristics of love 13:4-7

True love seeks the best for the one loved, without considering the merit of the person loved.

Contrast between love and gifts 13:8-12

Although gifts are important, they are only temporary and imperfect, while love is perfect and will last forever.

Conclusion 13:13

Rather than seek the gift of tongues, we would benefit more from pursuing faith, hope, and love, especially love.

That is the characteristic they have failed to seek previously.

Exercise of gifts 14:1-40

The treatment of the place of tongues in worship is concluded with a presentation of the proper use of tongues in the church.

Superiority of prophecy to tongues 14:1-19

To place tongues in proper perspective among the gifts, Paul demonstrates the superiority of prophecy to tongues.

It is better to minister in words that are understandable rather than in unintelligible sounds.

Purpose of tongues 14:20-25

The purpose of tongues was not use in the worship of the church, but rather as a sign for unbelievers.

In that sense Paul speaks in tongues more than they do.

However, it was not intended for use in corporate worship.

No evidence is presented that they were ever used in private worship either.

Principles regulating tongues 14:26-35

When tongues are used in corporate worship certain regulations should be observed.

Necessity of order and control 14:26-33

They are to be used in an orderly, controlled way, so that they will edify rather than distract from worship.

Necessity of women's silence 14:34-35

Women are to remain silent.

This may be an indication that in the worship at Corinth, women were actively involved in the use of tongues.

Attestation of authority 14:36-38

Paul points out that those who claim to speak for God will recognize his authority and submit to it.

Conclusion 14:39-40

They will not fight over the issue.

Paul has no desire to stop the practice of speaking in tongues, but he appeals for order in the use of the gift.

Some important principles to remember:

1. All genuine believers are baptized by the Spirit of God 12:1-3, 13
2. Gifts are abilities given to believers for service within the church 12:4-7
3. The Spirit of God decides what gifts are needed in the church and distributes them according to His plan—*not* ours. 12:4-7, 11, 18
4. All gifts are important to the body. 12:12, 14-21
5. The less visible parts of the body are more important than the visible. 12:22-25
6. If you must seek a gift, go for an important one—*not the spectacular*. 12:28-31
7. ***Spiritual fruit is more important than spiritual gifts!*** 12:31-13:13

Love comes first in priority.

Other spiritual fruit receives more emphasis in Scripture than all the gifts put together.

Don't get hung up on the secondary!

Any spiritual gift used without love is just noise!

Gifts used with an attitude of superiority are pure noise!

To emphasize the spiritual gifts is to emphasize the temporary.

To emphasize love is to emphasize what will never pass away!

8. Understandable communication is preferable to non-understandable communication. 14:1-19

This is true whether the communication is *with* God or *about* God.
9. Tongues were given as a sign for unbelievers--NOT for believers. 14:20-22.
10. Church worship should be orderly and edifying. 14:26-40

DOCTRINE 15

The final major issue Paul discusses is doctrinal.

Questions have been raised concerning the resurrection which Paul attempts to answer.

NECESSITY OF THE RESURRECTION 15:1-34

Paul first demonstrates why the resurrection is necessary.

Confirmation of Christ's resurrection 1-11

The resurrection is an integral part of the gospel. 1-4

The gospel is composed of two essential elements:

Christ's death,

confirmed by His burial;

Christ's resurrection,

confirmed by His appearances to numerous witnesses.

Paul mentions a list of witnesses, the majority of whom were still alive who provide irrefutable testimony to His resurrection. 5-11

Consequences if Christ be not raised 12-19

He then demonstrates the necessity of Christ's resurrection by listing the consequences for the gospel if Christ had not risen from the dead.

In essence, his message would be meaningless without the resurrection.

Christ's resurrection is as important as His death.

Consequences of Christ's resurrection 20-28

The positive consequences of the resurrection are also presented.

Through Christ, resurrection can come to all people, just as death came on all people through the death of Adam. 20-22

The resurrection also gives evidence that others will follow Him, each in their proper order.

Consequences if we have no resurrection 29-34

Paul also demonstrates the necessity of the resurrection by listing the logical contradictions if there were no resurrection of the saints.

While it is not clear how baptism for the dead was used, it is clear that it is a meaningless ritual if there is no resurrection.

It seems apparent that those who are denying the resurrection were practicing it. 29

It would also be illogical for the saints to risk death if there is no resurrection. 30-32a

They might as well just eat, drink, and be merry. 32b-34

NATURE OF THE RESURRECTION 15:35-57

After demonstrating the *necessity* of the resurrection, he goes on to teach us about the *nature* of the resurrection.

Illustration from nature 35-41

Paul begins by illustrating how the two types of bodies can differ while still being related to one another. 35-41

Interpretation of illustration 42-49

He then interprets that illustration from nature in order to teach us about the resurrection. 42-49

Instruction concerning living saints 50-57

Having discussed the resurrection of the dead saints, Paul describes the transformation of those still alive at the Lord's return. 50-57

Either by death or by transformation without dying, both the dead and the living will be raised.

EXHORTATION FROM THE RESURRECTION 15:58

The hope of this resurrection or transformation should stimulate us to dedicate ourselves to working for the Lord.

PERSONAL MATTERS 16

The book concludes with several practical and personal matters.

COLLECTION 1-4

Paul instructs them concerning the collection he wants them to gather.

TRAVEL PLANS 5-9

Then he expresses his desire to visit them.

RELATIONSHIP TO CO-WORKERS 10-12

Paul advises them about Timothy's mission.

EXHORTATION TO FAITH AND LOVE 13-14

He exhorts them to steadfast faith and love.

RESPECT FOR LEADERS 15-18

Paul gives them instructions concerning the proper respect which should be shown for their leaders.

GREETINGS 19-21

Finally he concludes with greetings and a benediction.

BENEDICTION 22-24