

# correcting carnality

1 CORINTHIANS

## Sermon Series Notes



### "God's Cure For Carnality" (I Corinthians 1:1-17)

Danny Hodges NT3400

Intro: Paul's ministry in Corinth is found in Acts 18. Corinth was one of the most pagan cities in history. There were many temples and shrines to idols, but two gods were the most famous. At the temple of Aphrodite 1,000 prostitutes served as priestesses. Then there was the temple of Apollo, the god of music and poetry, but also the god of male beauty. Nude statues of Apollo could be seen throughout the city. Apollo was the GQ god of the day. There were theaters, one outdoor that seated 18,000 and was the site of the gladiatorial games, and another indoor which seated 3,000 and was the site of plays and musicals.

Paul spent a long time in Corinth (at least a year and a half, Acts 18:11,18), sharing the gospel as well as teaching the Word of God.

Read I Cor. 1:1-9

Despite all the spiritual gifts being manifest in the church of Corinth, this church was carnal. Despite all the time Paul spent there, and all the teaching they received, the Corinthian Christians were not moving on toward maturity. They were allowing their pagan past to influence their new life in Christ.

Carnality: The flesh; the sin nature

Paul's main motive in this letter: CORRECTING CARNALITY.

#### I. THE CARNALITY IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH

\* I wanted to let you know some of the issues that will be addressed in this study, just so you can plan which week you want to conveniently skip church

\* Fights and quarrels/lawsuits between believers; Pride/Lack of submission to spiritual authority; Sexual sin; Marriage problems/Divorce; Carnality in their regular worship services & at the Lord's Table

#### II. THE FIRST CARNAL ISSUE: DIVISION/DISUNITY

##### A. The Blessedness Of Unity/Peace

\* Psalm 133; Prov.17:1

\* Eph.4: 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

\* Col.3: 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

\* Rom.15: 5 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,

\* John 17:20-23

## B. The Cause Of Disunity

\* The Corinthians were divided because people were choosing one church leader over another church leader. What was it that motivated some people to follow Apollos rather than Paul, or Peter rather than Apollos? Different personalities, priorities, giftings, ways of doing things

\* Note: Even the group that said "we follow Christ" was carnal, because they had no submission to men like Apollos or Paul or Peter - God ordained leaders in the church.

\* One of the most damaging fruits of carnality is division/disunity. It ruins marriages, families, and churches. It is one of the greatest schemes of the enemy, to incite believers against one another, or make them independent of one another.

## C. Other Examples

\* Numbers 16:1-3, 8-11 ----- 7:3-9

\* The longer (and more often) you are together with someone in a relationship, the greater the threat of disunity/division.

- "My wife and I were happy for 20 years, and then we met."

- We learn one another's imperfections more so over time Repeated disputes among the apostles as to who was the greatest.

\* Joshua 22: 10-12, 24-25

\* Ezra 3:10-13; This was a potentially divisive thing. The older generation compared the new work with the old work. See Haggai 2:2-5, 9 (note the promised peace of v.9).

\* Acts 6 (church growth); Acts 15 (doctrinal dispute)

\* Phil.4: 2 I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other *in the Lord*.

## III. THE CURE FOR DIVISION/DISUNITY.

\* The key to correcting all carnality: THE CROSS (See I Cor.1:13-17). How many times is Jesus Christ mentioned in the first seventeen verses of I Cor. 1? Issues of carnality will not be solved with words of human wisdom (not through an intellectual message). The only way to solve the issues of carnality is by focusing on Christ and the cross.

\* Col.3: 5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature

\* Rom.8: 13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live

\* Unity/peace can only happen and be maintained when, in our imperfection, we continually come to the cross

## CONCLUSION

\* The ultimate answer to vertical and horizontal alienation is not intellectual, political or social, but spiritual.

\* See Eph.2:14-17; In Biblical times, there was no greater more more unrelenting barrier between people than the one between Jew and Gentile. The Jews believed the Gentiles were created to fuel the fires of hell! In Herod's Temple, there was a wall that separated the Court of the Gentiles from the rest of the Temple, and on this wall were inscriptions in Latin and Greek forbidding Gentiles to enter. Josephus spoke of these inscriptions, and excavations in 1871 and 1934 discovered two of these inscriptions. They read: No foreigner may enter within the barricade which surrounds the sanctuary and enclosure. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death. If the cross can reconcile Jew and Gentile, it can reconcile anyone!

\* The power of the message of the cross is one that can bring peace to any relationship. It is not a complicated message. It is not based on human wisdom. It is very simply based upon death. Jesus died, but the power of God raised Him from the dead. That same power is available to us, if we are willing to die

\* The most important reconciliation is being reconciled with God.

\* II Cor.5: 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

\* Reconciliation with God makes possible reconciliation with one another. Every Christian has experienced the power of the cross when they first gave their lives to Christ. But in order to continue to live with that power resting upon us requires coming to the cross again and again that's what communion is all about