



# KINGDOM POLICIES

## PART 1

Forty Daily Devotionals  
from 1 Corinthians  
(Based on the NKJV)

## Introduction

Our devotional readings for the next 40 days will take us through 1 Corinthians, the first book of the four letters that are called “Church Epistles.” First Corinthians was written after Paul received a report, probably by way of a letter, from the believers at Corinth about some problems the church was experiencing. In this letter, there were some specific circumstances and situations that the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to address. From these writings, we find some things that we can safely assume to be God’s “policy” on these issues for all New Testament believers and churches today.

## Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	9/25/20
2	1 Corinthians 1:10-19	9/26/20
3	1 Corinthians 1:20-31	9/27/20
4	1 Corinthians 2:1-10	9/28/20
5	1 Corinthians 2:11-3:4	9/29/20
6	1 Corinthians 3:5-15	9/30/20
7	1 Corinthians 3:16-4:2	10/1/20
8	1 Corinthians 4:3-13	10/2/20
9	1 Corinthians 4:14-21	10/3/20
10	1 Corinthians 5:1-13	10/4/20
11	1 Corinthians 6:1-10	10/5/20
12	1 Corinthians 6:11-20	10/6/20
13	1 Corinthians 7:1-9	10/7/20
14	1 Corinthians 7:10-20	10/8/20
15	1 Corinthians 7:21-31	10/9/20
16	1 Corinthians 7:32-40	10/10/20
17	1 Corinthians 8:1-13	10/11/20
18	1 Corinthians 9:1-8	10/12/20
19	1 Corinthians 9:9-18	10/13/20
20	1 Corinthians 9:19-27	10/14/20

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	1 Corinthians 10:1-10	10/15/20
22	1 Corinthians 10:11-20	10/16/20
23	1 Corinthians 10:21-30	10/17/20
24	1 Corinthians 10:31-11:7	10/18/20
25	1 Corinthians 11:8-16	10/19/20
26	1 Corinthians 11:17-27	10/20/20
27	1 Corinthians 11:28-12:3	10/21/20
28	1 Corinthians 12:4-13	10/22/20
29	1 Corinthians 12:14-23	10/23/20
30	1 Corinthians 12:24-31	10/24/20
31	1 Corinthians 13:1-13	10/25/20
32	1 Corinthians 14:1-19	10/26/20
33	1 Corinthians 14:20-40	10/27/20
34	1 Corinthians 15:1-10	10/28/20
35	1 Corinthians 15:11-19	10/29/20
36	1 Corinthians 15:20-28	10/30/20
37	1 Corinthians 15:29-42	10/31/20
38	1 Corinthians 15:43-58	11/1/20
39	1 Corinthians 16:1-11	11/2/20
40	1 Corinthians 16:12-24	11/3/20

## Day 1: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

*“Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God...” (1 Corinthians 1:1)*

### Two “Callings”

Unlike our letter writing today, letters in New Testament times opened with the writer’s “signature” instead of closing with it. Paul introduces himself to the church at Corinth and then immediately mentions the fact that he has been “called to be an apostle.” Paul’s calling and apostleship was one of the main issues addressed in Paul’s letters to the church at Corinth. We will see some of Paul’s strongest defenses to his calling when we come to chapter nine. Here, Paul states that he is an apostle “through the will of God.” In other words, the work and ministry of Paul was not something of his own design or creation. He had not simply decided to become a preacher. Paul was “called” to his life of ministry. In the same way, the Christians to whom he was writing had a “calling” on their lives also. He stated that they were “called to be saints” (v. 2). The Holy Spirit used the same word to describe the calling of the “saints” as He did to describe the calling of Paul.

**Prayer Emphasis: Consider** your own personal calling to live for Christ. **Ask** God to reveal His divine purpose for your life and then **strive** to accomplish that purpose. **Kingdom Policy Number One: All believers are called to ministry!**

## Day 2: 1 Corinthians 1:10-19

*“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you...” (1 Corinthians 1:10)*

### Division

Shortly after Paul’s opening greeting, and an expression of appreciation for these believers, he dealt immediately with the issue of “divisions” within this church. Note that Paul’s plea for the “brethren” (meaning Christians) was that they would come to a sense of unity in what they believed and did. Note also that he appealed to them in the “name of the Lord Jesus Christ.” The word “Lord” here clearly indicates that Paul was urging these believers to surrender to the authority of Christ in church matters, and to allow Him to be the “Lord” of their lives. Until Christ was “Lord” over each one of them individually, He could not be “Lord” over their church collectively. Looking back, you will see that Paul used the name “Christ” 10 times in the first 10 verses of this book! In fact, verse five is the only verse in the first 10 verses that does *not* contain this name. In the gospels, the name Christ usually appeared with the article “the” preceding it and was used in reference to Jesus being the anointed One – the Christ that was to come. In the letters of Paul, this word was used without the article as another name for Jesus. Someone from the household of Chloe had reported to Paul that there was division among the believers at Corinth. As a result, Paul appealed to individual believers to surrender to the Lordship and authority of Christ. In doing so, any divisions could be resolved. It is clear from Paul’s response to the groups that pledged allegiance to him, Apollos and Peter, that Christians should pledge their allegiance to the One who had died for them on the cross!

**Prayer Emphasis: Thank** God for the gift of His Son and for the salvation that He brought to fallen man. **Reaffirm** your allegiance to Him and **encourage** others to be faithful to look to Him for the strength that is necessary to all who desire to follow Christ on a day-to-day basis. **Commit** your life to His service and encourage your fellow believers to do the same. **Kingdom Policy Number Two: Christ Jesus is the One and only spiritual authority figure for the New Testament church.**

## Day 3: 1 Corinthians 1:20-31

“...in the wisdom of God...it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.” (1 Corinthians 1:21)

### The Wisdom of God

Today’s reading begins with questions. Paul wants to know how the wisdom of man compares to the wisdom of God. In placing too much faith in other men, no matter how noble and committed they might have been, these early believers were making a fatal error and exercising poor judgment. Compared to the wisdom of God, the wisdom of even the wisest men seemed foolish. Just as it did for the original Corinthian Christians who read this letter, verse 21 directs our attention from human wisdom to the wisdom of God. God’s wisdom allowed Paul to preach Christ crucified and to call people to open their hearts in faith and believe the gospel. He seems to be asking each listener to review their own spiritual qualifications and come to one conclusion: “No one can boast of anything but God’s wonderful love and grace that has been revealed to us in Christ Jesus.” In other words, no one is saved because of who they are or what they have done. All who receive salvation do so entirely because of what he has done and who he is! It was Christ alone who manifested the wisdom of God, and it was through Christ alone that believers can be made righteous before God.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Walk humbly before God. **Realize** that the only difference between you and the most wretched, fallen person you see today is Christ! **Kingdom Policy Number Three:** *Only brag on Jesus!*

## Day 4: 1 Corinthians 2:1-10

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:1)

### The Futility of Human Wisdom

Paul wanted the Christians at Corinth to know one thing: He had not come to them trying to appear wise or scholarly. He came to them to share God’s truth with them and to do it in the simplest way possible. He had gone to great extremes to stick to the gospel – the story of the crucified and risen Christ. Paul’s preaching was not with wise and persuasive words. He did not rely on catchy presentations or emotional appeals to call people to accept Christ as Savior and then follow Him as Lord. He relied on the Holy Spirit of God to draw people to Jesus as he lifted Him up before them, “in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling” through his messages on the cross (v. 3). This was all done to help Paul’s readers understand that he depended entirely on the Holy Spirit and the authority of Christ to enable and empower him to preach the gospel to people. Paul spoke of those who were “mature” (v. 6) and stated that he did have a deeper message for those who were growing in the faith and knowledge of Jesus. However, even then, the message was not one filled with the wisdom of this world, but with “the wisdom of God” (v. 7). Such wisdom was beyond any that the ears of men had ever heard. No human mind could have possibly conceived the story of Christ and the cross because the cross was a despised object among the people of New Testament times. Only God himself could possibly draw anyone to salvation through the story of the cross and crucifixion.

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Refuse** to try to add anything to what God has already so clearly stated through the sacrifice of His one and only Son, Jesus. **Avoid** trying to appear wise or spiritual to anyone. **Lift** Jesus up and He will draw all men unto Himself. **Kingdom Policy Number Four:** *Just tell them about Jesus!*

## Day 5: 1 Corinthians 2:11-3:4

“...no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:11)

### *It Just Makes Sense*

Paul reminds his readers that no one possesses the ability to know another man's thoughts. In the same way, no one can better understand what God is trying to say to us than the Spirit of God Himself! It is through the leadership and direction of God's Spirit that we learn how *to be* saved and how to be servants after we *have been* saved. Since the walk and warfare of the believer is a spiritual matter, people who are not indwelt and led by the Spirit of God might consider some of what a believer is called to do to be foolish. They cannot understand why we would make such a commitment to someone who lived and died 2,000 years ago. Since we have the mind of Christ to lead us, we may often appear to be walking in opposition to what the world may consider wise, profitable, and productive. Paul concludes that believers who look to man, and man's wisdom, as their final spiritual authority are worldly, immature believers who are still in need of spiritual milk instead of solid food. It was not that they did not *need* solid teaching, but that they were *not ready* for it.

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Commit** to daily Bible reading and prayer. **Ask** God to grow your faith and your involvement in the work of the church. **Seek** out a position of service and be faithful to **fulfill** it. **Make** Jesus Christ more than your Savior – make him Lord of everything! **Kingdom Policy Number Five:** *Rely on the Spirit of God to guide you into wisdom and maturity.*

## Day 6: 1 Corinthians 3:5-15

“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed...” (1 Corinthians 3:5)

### *Means vs. Cause*

Paul wanted all believers to understand that people like he and Apollos were simply a *means* used by God to draw people to Him. The *cause* was God and God alone! He and Apollos, like others before them, were only servants who had performed their assigned tasks given to them by the Lord. Paul may have planted – and Apollos may have watered, but *only God* could make it grow! He desperately wanted the believers at Corinth to understand that God could have used anyone to do what he had done! He does remind his readers that what we do for the Lord is important, because we will all be rewarded according to our own faithfulness to what we have been called to do. However, we are to never lose sight of the fact that all servants of God are *merely* servants, and without the grace of God, we could accomplish nothing! Christ is the one and only foundation for the church and we are called to build on that one and only foundation. What we do with our time and talents is important. Works that are done for God's glory are likened to precious materials that can stand the test of fire while those that are done to be seen of men are compared to things that can be easily destroyed and totally lost. Paul is reminding us that any good that we can possibly do is the good that is done through us by the power of Christ!

**Prayer Emphasis:** **See** yourself as a tool in the hand of God. **Submit** yourself to Him and allow Him to use you in ways that will matter when you see Him in heaven! **Seek** to do things that will make an eternal difference in the lives of those around you. **Thank** Him for allowing you to be involved in His great redemption plan! **Kingdom Policy Number Six:** *The only irreplaceable person in the work of the church is God Himself!*

## Day 7: 1 Corinthians 3:16-4:2

*“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16)*

### *Love Those “3:16s”!*

While I know that it is purely coincidental, I find that some of the most powerful words in the Bible are found in the “3:16” references. The “3:16” in 1 Corinthians serves as just another great example of this fact. Later, in 1 Corinthians 6:19, Paul will remind us that every believer is the “temple of the Holy Spirit.” However, in this verse, Paul is speaking to the church as a whole. The “you” in this verse is plural in the original language while the “temple” is singular. What Paul is saying to the believers here is that we, being many, make up one body of Christ. Since the issue being addressed at this moment is division, then, in context, this verse should be viewed in the light of the subject and used to promote unity in the body of Christ. For the purposes of Christ to be fulfilled in the church, the individual parts must become one in their commitment to Christ. The Church that fails to maintain Christian unity, “defiles the temple of God” (v. 17). When men view our lives, it is important they see that we are faithful in our commitment to place Christ and His purposes above our own.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Consider your own commitment to the church. Ask yourself if you are in this for what you can give or only for what you can get. Pray for our church today, asking God to give us unity in purpose. **Kingdom Policy Number Seven:** *The way to be united as a people is to be united in our purpose!*

## Day 8: 1 Corinthians 4:3-13

*“...that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.” (1 Corinthians 4:6)*

### *Pride*

The people of Corinth were Greeks, and Greeks considered humility to be a sign of weakness. Paul concludes this section on division with a reminder that all true, Christian behavior must be measured against the “counsels” of the heart (v. 5). If anyone who ministered desired praise, then that person was instructed to wait patiently until the afterlife when “each one’s praise (would) come from God” (v. 5). If the believers at Corinth would see their own, personal ministries as Paul and Apollos saw theirs, then each one would know that we are all mere servants of Christ and Christ is the only one who should be praised at any time or for any reason! Verse six clearly indicates there is no justifiable reason for any one believer to be “puffed up” about themselves or their works. In that same verse, Paul declared that the Corinthian believers could “learn” from the examples that he, Apollos, and others set for them. The word “learn” in verse six meant “to practice what you are taught” and is very closely related to the word that is translated “disciple” elsewhere in the Bible. The kind of “pride” that Paul is warning against is the kind of pride that causes people to compare themselves to others and judge themselves against what they see in others.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Submit to Christ and his purposes. Allow His purpose to be first and foremost in your life. Compare yourself only to Christ and humility will always come easy for you. Do not allow any seed of selfishness to flourish in your own heart and life and trust others to do the same. Test your own heart for selfish motives before speaking or reacting to what someone else has said or done. **Kingdom Policy Number Eight:** *Never allow pride to lead to division!*

## Day 9: 1 Corinthians 4:14-21

*“I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.” (1 Corinthians 4:14)*

### *A Stern Warning*

Paul’s true desire was to help all believers to be everything God wanted them to be. Because he loved the Christians at Corinth as a father might love his own children, he issued a stern warning in order to try to bring about a change in some of the attitudes and behaviors among them. He knew not every Christian there would respond positively to his appeal. He also knew that some had become “puffed up,” or arrogant, and these individuals were probably the ones who were causing the division in the church (v. 18). Paul knew that a father who truly loves his children must be willing to discipline them at the appropriate times. He basically gave them two choices: Did they desire that he come to them with a “rod” (v. 21) or with a loving and gentle spirit? How they behaved as spiritual children was going to determine how he was going to behave as a spiritual father.

**Prayer Emphasis: Avoid** God’s chastening by heeding God’s commands! **Remember**, the chastening hand of God against sinning believers is a sure sign that they are truly God’s children! **Kingdom Policy Number Nine:** *Remember that God chastens those whom He loves!*

## Day 10: 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

*“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you...” (1 Corinthians 5:1)*

### *Unimaginable!*

Thus far, Paul has had to deal only with the problem of spiritual *division* in the church. He now had to begin to deal with spiritual *disorder* within the church. A second major concern in the report received on the new church at Corinth centered in their failure to deal with a sin issue within the membership. Pride is a dangerous thing because it is the opposite of love in the sense that it promotes self over others. The same pride that caused disunity among the church membership also caused an indifference to a very bad situation. A member of the church was having an affair with “his father’s wife” (v. 1). The language in that verse clearly indicates that this was an affair with a stepmother. This kind of relationship was clearly prohibited by Old Testament law (Lev. 18:8 and Deut. 22:22). This situation did not seem to shame some of the church members at all! It was difficult for Paul to understand how these people could be filled with so much pride while it was commonly known that something like this was going on in their church. He encouraged the church to take disciplinary action against this believer in order to bring about remorse and repentance. Verse nine seems to indicate there was an earlier letter written by Paul to this same group of believers. In that letter, he warned them not to associate with “sexually immoral people” whether unsaved or, especially, saved. His recommendation? Expel the sinning brother from the fellowship (v. 13). They were to be very careful to avoid any situation that was such a blatant violation of God’s principles.

**Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Policies** may sometimes seem harsh, but they are always in the best interest of the church. We should judge ourselves by comparing our own lives to God and His Word on a regular, daily basis. In doing so, we will certainly avoid having to be judged by others. **Kingdom Policy Number Ten:** *Do not make excuses or allowances for disorderly conduct.*



## Day 11: 1 Corinthians 6:1-10

*“But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!” (1 Corinthians 6:6)*

### Lawsuits among Believers

A third concern in the report brought to Paul was the inability of the believers at Corinth to resolve personal conflicts and disputes among themselves. It should be made clear that Paul was referring to civil matters here and not criminal matters. Paul reminded these Christians that they were to ultimately judge the world. How could a people that God deemed capable of someday judging the world not be capable of judging such civil matters among themselves without having to drag one another to court? Paul questioned how it could be possible that, among all these prideful, arrogant people, there was not a single person among them that was able to judge disputes among fellow Christians. Instead of settling their personal differences as Christians, the Corinthian believers were obviously going to law against one another while the unbelieving world watched them doing it. Please understand this does not grant permission for the church to deal with criminal matters and not report criminal activity to the proper authorities. Whether one Christian decides to forgive the other or not, matters such as molestation should be reported and recorded for the safety of others.

**Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Policy** never allows us to violate the law. Failure to report a criminal act is wrong. **Pray** daily for the many people who work with children in our church. **Express** love and appreciation to one of them today. **Kingdom Policy Number Eleven:** *Work out personal, civil matters within the church and report criminal behavior to proper authorities.*

## Day 12: 1 Corinthians 6:11-20

*“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful...” (1 Corinthians 6:12)*

### Abusing Our Christian Liberty

At some time in the past, some of the believers in Corinth had been guilty of the sins listed earlier in verses 9 and 10. However, things were to be different in their moral lives now that they had been saved. It seems that some must have been clinging to their personal freedom by being slow to let go of some of their sins. Paul was quick to remind them that inappropriate behaviors exercised under the umbrella of liberty could lead to activities that were spiritually “lawful” but not spiritually “helpful” (v. 12). Christians are not to partake in things that are not spiritually beneficial. Certainly, sexually immorality is not beneficial in any way. There is no excuse for believers to behave in such ways. We are to be uniting ourselves with the Lord and becoming one with Him rather than becoming one with the world. Paul states that sexual sin is a sin against our own body. It is here, in verse 19, that we are reminded that our physical body is the abode, or temple, of the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit dwells within us, and since our lives are not our own, but have been “bought at a price,” we are to honor God in our body (v. 20). Peter will later tell us that the price with which we were bought was “the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:19).

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** the story of Joseph running away when another man’s wife enticed him to commit an immoral act with her. **Ask** God to give you the wisdom to know when to fight and when to flee. There is no shame in running away from any situation that would bring dishonor to the name of Christ. **Kingdom Policy Number Twelve:** *“Flee sexual immorality” (v. 18).*

## Day 13: 1 Corinthians 7:1-9

*“Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me...” (1 Corinthians 7:1)*

### Some Difficult Questions

One of the questions the Corinthian believers wrote to Paul about was whether Christians should marry. We will deal with Paul’s response to this question in the next few devotionals. Paul concludes that it is a “good” thing if a “man” can live without being married (v. 1). It is important to note that the word translated “man” in 7:1 is from a Greek word that can mean a person of either sex. However, Paul’s inclusion of the word “man” and “wife” in verse two provides some indication that we have some “man to man” talk going on here! Paul stated it was a “good” thing if a person could live single and not sin. However, since that was not the case with most people, even Christians, then it was best that believers be in a committed, marital relationship. In a marriage relationship, a person was able to better live without giving in to sexual immorality. The world would have us believe that sexual immorality is a very normal and acceptable thing. Not so for the believer! Marriage partners should avoid depriving one another unless it is for a specified time of fasting and prayer. Obviously, verse eight reveals that Paul was not married. Since Paul had once been affiliated with the Pharisees, and since marriage was a requirement for membership into that sect, we have to assume that Paul was either a widower or divorced.

**Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Policies** may seem stringent, but they are always written for our best interest and to our best benefit. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirteen:** *Sexual relationships are restricted to a legally married man and woman.*

## Day 14: 1 Corinthians 7:10-20

*“Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband...And a husband is not to divorce his wife.” (1 Corinthians 7:10-11)*

### Marriage and Divorce

It is very clear from these verses that God’s best plan is that married people learn to live with one another and that divorce should be avoided whenever possible. We are not to assume that God loves a divorced person any less than He loves someone who has never been divorced. We should also avoid concluding that divorced people are not eligible for service or qualified to do things for God. Paul clearly states that what he is about to teach is something he received from the Lord. In yesterday’s reading, he basically said, “If you aren’t married, and you can be that way without strong temptation to commit sexual immorality, stay unmarried.” In today’s verses, he basically says, “If you are married, then do everything within your power to stay married.” If an unbelieving person leaves their spouse simply because they are a believer, then the believing person is not bound to try to force that person to remain married to them. However, if a believer can live in peace with an unbeliever, then the marriage vow should be honored. Every Christian couple should do everything possible to build a strong, healthy marriage. If you have been divorced and are now remarried, then be fully committed to this marriage and do everything within your power to make it a success.

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** God has no perfect children! **Praise** God for your marital partner and **pray** for them daily. Do everything within your power to **make them feel loved and appreciated**. **Kingdom Policy Number Fourteen:** *Honor your marriage vows!*

## Day 15: 1 Corinthians 7:21-31

*“You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.” (1 Corinthians 7:23)*

### *A Secret to Success in Marriage*

Within these verses that contain part of Paul’s response to the questions the Corinthian believers asked about marriage is a very important truth for success in any relationship, whether fraternal, social, vocational, or marital. In verses 21–23 Paul explains that the believer, who has been “bought at a price,” is now a servant of the Lord as well as a servant to any worldly master. As such, the saved servant should no longer view his service as being to his earthly master alone, but to his heavenly Master as well. When we serve others, we should serve them as if we are doing that service to Christ. When we consider our marital relationship, and the responsibilities thereof, we should view our commitment to that relationship as a service to Jesus Christ. The key to a strong marital relationship is submitting to and serving one another as we honor the Lord in our commitment to one another. It is not difficult to see the urgency in Paul’s words when he states, “the time is short” (v. 29). Paul was encouraging these believers to make their devotion to the Lord a priority in their lives. When they did that, all other relationships would fall into place.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Allow no relationship or responsibility to become more important than your relationship with Christ. **Be obedient** to the Lord and all other relationships and responsibilities in your life will benefit from it. **Serve** him and you will learn how to **serve** others. **Kingdom Policy Number Fifteen:** *It is impossible to be fully committed to Christ and not be committed to our marriage and other earthly relationships.*

## Day 16: 1 Corinthians 7:32-40

*“...that you may serve the Lord without distraction.” (1 Corinthians 7:35)*

### *Undivided Devotion*

One of the reasons Paul chose to remain unmarried was so he could serve the Lord “without distraction” and an undivided devotion. Speaking to those who desired to serve Jesus, Paul stated he would prefer they be “without care” or, as some translations read, “free from concern” (v. 32). He went on to explain that an unmarried person could be completely devoted to the Lord’s work while a married person had to serve the Lord while being careful not to neglect any marital responsibilities. As a result, Paul felt that the married person might have conflicting interests. It was no different for men or women. The unmarried woman could be totally devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit while the married woman, because of her marriage commitment, had to take into consideration her earthly responsibilities and find a way to serve both the Lord and her family. Paul encouraged those who lost a spouse to consider staying single and suggested that it might be better if they decided not to remarry. However, they were free to remarry if they so desired. If they did remarry, they were to be careful to marry someone who was a Christian. As such, it would be easier to serve God without conflict and with an undivided devotion.

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Be committed** to Christ, whether single or married. Seek to **serve** the Lord with your spouse. **Make** your commitment to Christ a central point in your marital relationship. **Kingdom Policy Number Sixteen:** *Whether married or single, serve the Lord with an undivided devotion.*

## Day 17: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

*“Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.” (1 Corinthians 8:1)*

### The Second Question

The first word of chapter eight, “Now,” lets us know Paul has said what he is going to say about marriage, and he is ready to move on to the next question. Another matter of concern to the believers at Corinth was about eating meat that had been sacrificed to idols. Meats that had been offered to pagan gods were often eaten by the pagan priests, shared in a fellowship meal by the pagan worshippers, or sold in the market. Some Christians believed eating this meat meant they were condoning, or maybe even participating in, the worship of idols. Not all believers agreed with that opinion. They believed that, since an idol was nothing, and there was only one true God, then meats offered to idols were just cooked on a pagan grill! As such, these affordable delicacies could be purchased and eaten without anyone coming to any spiritual harm. Paul agreed, but asked the believers to be considerate of new, immature believers who might not have come to this knowledge and to be careful not to eat these meats if it caused confusion. They were to especially avoid eating these meats in the pagan temple itself since that might cause others to think they were participating in idol worship.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Always be considerate of new Christians and seek to **live** in such a way to be an encouraging witness to them. **Kingdom Policy Number Seventeen:** *Exercise your Christian liberties cautiously and with concern for others.*

## Day 18: 1 Corinthians 9:1-8

*“Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?” (1 Corinthians 9:1)*

### Privilege vs. Priority

Paul begins the next section of his letter with a long list of questions concerning privileges. Most translations of the Bible include 12 questions in the first eight verses of chapter nine. Paul is following up on his comments about Christian liberty and using Barnabas and himself as an example. He mentions several things that servants to the church might be allowed to do. Paul believed that it would be fine if he were to marry. After all, Peter, and the Lord’s brothers, were married and still in ministry. He also believed that it would be appropriate for him and Barnabas to accept financial support from the churches. After all, weren’t soldiers compensated for their commitment to their nation? Didn’t farmers have the privilege of eating from the fruit of their gardens and vineyards? Couldn’t a shepherd rightfully have some of the milk produced by his flock? Paul considered these things privileges which men like he and Barnabas could appropriately accept. However, for Paul, and others like him, it was not just a matter of what *could* be done as much as it was a matter of what *should* be done. Accepting such privileges should be allowed with priority given to the work of the church and the cause of Christ. We should never allow ourselves to indulge in any privilege that makes the work of the ministry a lower priority in our lives. Weigh every personal “right” to make sure it is the “right” thing to do at the current time and in the current situation.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Evaluate your schedule to see if you are placing privileges above priorities. **Kingdom Policy Number Eighteen:** *Keep God, and your responsibilities to Him, first and foremost in your life.*

## Day 19: 1 Corinthians 9:9-18

*“For it is written in the law of Moses, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.’ Is it oxen God is concerned about?” (1 Corinthians 9:9)*

### *The Right Answers!*

Almost every translation of the New Testament begins verse nine with “For it is written in the law of Moses.” As it is with all of life’s questions, the answer to the questions about Christian liberty is found in the Word of God! If we choose to seek answers to the questions about what a Christian can do from men, we will find ourselves torn between several opinions with many of them seeming to sound right. Or we, like many, can choose to take a poll of counselors until we find someone who says exactly what we want to hear. However, the issue of Christian liberty must always come down to what God says to you from His Word. When it comes to issues of liberty, we should be careful not to impose our personal convictions on others. Although, neither should we allow others to impose their spiritual preferences on us. Paul had the right to do whatever any of the other apostles were doing, if, and only if, it was something God was directing him to do. Our Christian rights never supersede God’s right to ask us to do anything He may desire. If God wants us to refrain from eating meats, taking salaries, marrying a wife, or anything else, then we should be faithful to whatever He tells us. The right answer is to always do what allows us to reach more people for Christ.

**Prayer Emphasis: Avoid** accepting what others do (or do not do) as what is right (or not right) for everyone. **Allow** God to lead and grow you as you spend time with Him in His Word. **Kingdom Policy Number Nineteen:** *Preferences and privileges are open to opinion, but convictions must be based on God’s Word.*

## Day 20: 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

*“...I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;” (1 Corinthians 9:19)*

### *The Ultimate Goal*

Why should a believer be so concerned about what others might see and think? Paul answers that question in the first verse of our reading. We are to be concerned about what everyone thinks about *us* because we want to change what everyone thinks about *Christ*. The goal of every Christian should be to lead others to a personal faith in Jesus Christ. If that means we compromise on some of our preferences and sacrifice some privileges along the way, so be it. Although Paul knew he was no longer under the law, he honored the law and attended synagogue worship so he might have more opportunities to win his fellow Jews to Christ. He did not force Judaism on his Gentile listeners, but simply preached salvation through Christ to them. Paul was willing to do whatever he could do without compromising God’s commands if it would help him win someone to a saving knowledge of Christ. His decisions about preferences and privileges were based on what would allow him more opportunities to preach the gospel. When he spoke of running a race, he was speaking in terms which any Greek would understand. They were familiar with races and crowns. They honored their sports heroes and champions and held them in the highest esteem. Paul is trying to help them understand that winning others to Christ is to be the goal for all believers.

**Prayer Emphasis: Never** lose sight of the real goal! **Remember** that Christ came to seek and to save those who were lost and that He has now given that great responsibility to the church. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty:** *Remember to keep the main thing (preaching Christ) the main thing.*

## Day 21: 1 Corinthians 10:1-10

“...we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.” (1 Corinthians 10:6)

### **Don't Be All Tied Up in "Nots"**

Paul has been answering questions about Christian liberty and specifically dealing with some issues (like eating meats that had been offered to idols) that became a cause for some of the division in the church at Corinth. Obviously, some felt free to eat the leftover offerings from pagan temples and others felt it was a wrong thing for a Christian to do. Anytime that one Christian attempts to impose a personal preference on another Christian, an opportunity for division is created. Some believe very strongly about some things for which there is no specific chapter and verse in the Bible. In those cases, we should honor our personal beliefs about such things without trying to impose them on others. However, where there is a Scriptural precedent, then it should apply to all believers. Period! Since the Corinthian believers were so concerned about what they *could* or *could not* do, Paul decided to give them a short list of things that they definitely *should not* do! They should not be ignorant of Bible history and the ways God has dealt with His people in the past (10:1). They should not be idolaters or be involved in pagan activities (10:7). They should not commit sexual immorality (10:8). They should not test the Lord's patience as Israel had done in the past (10:9). These issues all had a Scriptural precedent and were, therefore, applicable to all the Corinthian believers.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Base your personal life on Scriptural certainties and there will be no confusion as to what you should and should not do. **Search** out biblical answers to your spiritual questions. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-One:** *Don't get all tied up in "nots" that are "not" Scripturally based.*

## Day 22: 1 Corinthians 10:11-20

“Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” (1 Corinthians 10:11)

### **Be Careful!**

We should learn from what we read about those who attempted to follow God in the past. God had a very good reason for recording everything that is given to us in the Bible. It is our responsibility to seek out biblical truth and apply it in our daily lives. We are urged to “take heed” so that we can avoid falling into the same traps and temptations as our spiritual ancestors (v. 12). It is best to remember there is no temptation out there that has not been faced before. Anything that anyone in Bible history ever did to dishonor God could find its way into our lives. However, God is faithful to us, in that, although He will allow us to be tempted, He will not allow us to be tempted beyond that which we can bear, and He will faithfully show us a way to avoid sinning when we are tempted. How does He show us those ways to escape from falling into temptation's snares? One of those ways is through the lives of those who walked with Him in the past. We can all learn from Joseph's story and how he ran away from the temptations presented by the wife of his master, and we can learn from the sad story of David, a good man who fell into a very dark situation that brought havoc to the lives of many people.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Read from your Bible daily and apply what you read to your personal life. **Learn** from the stories that God has carefully recorded for us. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-Two:** *It is always best to read, and heed, the lessons God has provided for us in the Bible.*

## Day 23: 1 Corinthians 10:21-30

*“Let no one seek his own, but each one the other’s well-being.” (1 Corinthians 10:24)*

### *The Final Answer*

It may seem that Paul has talked a long time while trying to answer the question about eating meats offered to idols, but he has used this question to address the much broader issue of Christian liberty and, as a result, has dealt with other issues along the way. Paul’s final answer sounds much like what Jesus said when he stated that a Christian could not serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). Paul clearly states that a Christian, “cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons” (v. 21). Even if some things are “lawful” for a believer, it is always best to choose to do what is most beneficial to the church body as a whole (v. 23). As Christians, we should think more about what is best for the body of Christ and what will make it stronger. We must learn that our personal freedoms should not become a hindrance to others. Therefore, Paul’s final answer is that we should be careful to avoid doing things that may hinder the spiritual growth of others, while avoiding becoming too legalistic in our thinking just so that we might appease the personal preferences of others. It is not always going to be easy, but we all have the Holy Spirit to help us to make the right decisions along the way.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Realize there will always be those who will be judgmental and critical of us no matter how hard we try to live godly lives. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-Three:** *When it comes to personal preferences, always seek a biblical precedence and the best benefit of the cause of Christ and His church.*

## Day 24: 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:7

*“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)*

### *“All to the Glory of God”*

Paul’s “Final Answer” that we read about yesterday was based on three principles that are clearly defined in the last three verses of chapter 10. Whatever decisions we make about what we eat or drink, we should make that decision with the glory of God in mind. In other words, do what you do for the glory of God alone and not to follow some other person or to seek glory for yourself. He then stated that he tried to please others as much as possible and that he tried very hard not to be a cause for someone else to stumble. He also stated that he based his decisions about preferences on what was good for others more than on what was good for him. The principle is this: “God and his glory should be the first consideration in all of our decisions, what is in the best interest and is most edifying to others is second, and we come last.” It sure sounds a lot like what Jesus said when he told us to, “love the Lord your God with all of your heart” and to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37-39). Paul urged the believers at Corinth to follow his example since he was following the example of Christ. He then praised the Corinthian Christians for holding fast to the teachings that he passed on to them. His comments on prayer reemphasized the fact that whatever the believer does, whether in public life or in private prayer, God’s glory is to be the strongest consideration.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Practice putting God first, others second, and yourself last. **Memorize** the “Great Commandments” and **make** them a priority every day. We are never more like Christ than when we are humbly putting God first and others second. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-Four:** *Obey the Great Commandments to love God with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself.*

## Day 25: 1 Corinthians 11:8-16

“...neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man...” (1 Corinthians 11:11)

### Public Worship and Private Lives

In yesterday’s verses, we read where, at least at that time, a man was to pray with his head uncovered while a woman was to pray with her head covered. In complying with these simple rules, believers showed their submission to God and God’s plan for authority in relationships. Paul continued this line of reasoning by saying that man (meaning Adam) was not created from woman (meaning Eve) but woman was created from man. Every man since Adam has been created from a woman. In this sense, we should understand that God did not create man and woman to operate independently of each other. Both are to work and worship together in such a way that brings glory to God. Submission was not just something that should be exhibited in public worship. If it was not something that was carried home from church with them, then the humility and submission that was exhibited in the public worship and prayer services was nothing more than those public prayers and offerings made by the Pharisees when they desired to *appear* to be spiritual. Christians should be as submissive to God’s authority in their private lives as they are at public worship. This all ties back to freedom. In verse 16, Paul states this was not to become a point of contention within the church.

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Submit** your life to God, whether in public worship or in the privacy of your home. **Show** genuine humility in your life roles – especially in the role that you are called to fulfill at home. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-Five:** *Be submissive to God’s authority in private as well as in public.*

## Day 26: 1 Corinthians 11:17-27

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.”  
(1 Corinthians 11:26)

### The Lord’s Supper

When our private, personal lives are not fully committed to the Lord, it will soon begin to show in our public worship. In the case of the Corinthian Christians, one of the ways it was being manifested was in the way they were abusing the Lord’s Supper. They turned what was intended to be a very private and personal memorial for believers into a public feast that drew large crowds – with many people coming for the physical food more than the spiritual blessing. Because of the way these believers were observing the Lord’s Supper, Paul felt they were doing more harm than good when they served it. This proved to be yet another cause for division among the believers. In an observance intended to show forth unity, they had division. In a supper intended to show forth humility, they were serving themselves first and leaving others with nothing while some were even partaking of the wine in excess. To partake of this supper in an unworthy manner meant to do it in such a way that did not memorialize the suffering of Christ or to honor His great gift of salvation. By turning this supper into a public feast, they were dishonoring the Lord and they were certainly not using it as a living witness of what He had accomplished for them on the cross.

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Refuse** to lose your intimacy with God. **Protect** your spiritual life by carefully observing the way you go about the things you do for God. **Live** in such a way that your entire life will be a living witness of what God has done in your heart. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-Six:** *Be what you should be in your personal time with God, and you will more likely be what you should be in public worship.*



## Day 27: 1 Corinthians 11:28-12:3

*“But let a man examine himself...” (1 Corinthians 11:28)*

### Self-Examination

The only way to correct the division and disorder in the Church at Corinth was for every individual to examine their own life and make the necessary change in their own attitude and actions. Each person was to examine (test or prove) himself before partaking of the Lord’s Supper. This was to be done every time that the supper was served. This allowed this special service to be a remembrance of Christ and His supreme sacrifice and a reminder to all believers that we should be willing to live sacrificial lives also. The Lord’s Supper was not a time for self-indulgence but, rather, it was a time for self-examination. The bigger picture of “Christian liberty” needs to be remembered as we continue to study this book. Thus far, we have seen the pursuit of personal liberties and preferences among the believers lead to disunity, division, and disorder. As such, the church, when operating as individual units, had become dysfunctional. The word “now” in 12:1 is an indicator that Paul is moving on to the next question. Ultimately, the answer to this next question will prove to be the answer to almost all the issues in the church. One thing was sure; God’s Spirit was to be the *cure* and not the *cause* for confusion and division in the church.

**Prayer Emphasis: Search** your heart for selfish motives behind your service in the church. Strive to do ministry that is Christ-centered and not self-centered. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-Seven:** *Allow the observance of the Lord’s Supper to be a reminder to check the motivations of your heart and service.*

## Day 28: 1 Corinthians 12:4-13

*“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:4)*

### Unity in Diversity

We see the word “diversities” and “differences” three times in 1 Corinthians 12:4–6. It is very interesting that those verses also have the word “same” in each of them. The word “diversities” was used to describe the gifts that were bestowed upon individuals in the church while the word “same” was used to describe the God from whom they were received. “Diversities” was about the various *services* that Christians could provide for one another while “same” was about the *source* that enabled the believers to serve each other in a supernatural way. It is obvious that the desires of the flesh led to selfish ambitions in the church at Corinth, and those selfish ambitions led to disunity. Since the gifts were given to allow all the members to be strengthened by the ministry of the individual members, then the church would find unity in their diversity. Nine specific gifts are mentioned in verses 7-10, with each one serving to make the entire church body stronger. The gifts were selected and distributed by the Holy Spirit. Take a moment and circle the word “one” every time you find it in verses 11-13. Only God could take *different* people and use them in *different* ways to bring the church to a place of being *one* in Him!

**Prayer Emphasis: Live** to benefit the church body as a whole and not just yourself and your individual needs. **Consider** the needs of the whole church when you make decisions about service. **Seek** to discover your personal, spiritual gift and **employ** it in service to the Lord and His church. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-Eight:** *God brings unity to the church by empowering and enabling individual believers to serve Him in different ways.*

## Day 29: 1 Corinthians 12:14-23

*“For in fact the body is not one member but many.” (1 Corinthians 12:14)*

### *Mutual Dependence*

Just like the human body is not made up of one part, but many, so the church is made up of many individuals who serve as a part of one, complete body for Christ. No individual part of the body should ever consider itself *superior* or *inferior* to any other. Each part of the body has a mutual dependence upon the other parts. Verse 18 tells us that God, Himself, “set” the different parts “as He pleased.” Just as the human body is no accidental result of some haphazard action or event in the past, so it is with God’s spiritual body, the church. There is a divine design in the way the church is put together. Through that design, the church is enabled to pursue and accomplish a divine purpose when we work together for the Lord. No one part of the body should think that it could operate independently or separately from the others. If any part of the body is severed from the whole, the severed part will soon die, and the body will suffer a great loss of ability or mobility. Without all the parts being fully functional, the church itself cannot be fully functional. We all need each other if we are going to succeed in our divine mission.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Value the ministries of others. Express appreciation to someone who serves in a different ministry than yours. Pray for our church volunteers and workers on a regular basis. **Kingdom Policy Number Twenty-Nine:** *We should never think we could fully accomplish God’s will alone or apart from a local church body.*

## Day 30: 1 Corinthians 12:24-31

*“But our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it.” (1 Corinthians 12:24)*

### *“Honor”*

The word translated “honor” in verse 24 is a word that means “value” or “price” and is translated that way in other places in the New Testament. By putting all the different “parts” of the body together, and making them mutually dependent upon one another, God has created a ministry plan that gives value to every member of the church. As such, there are no big or little jobs in God’s church! Every member is vitally important to the overall ministry. Verse 25 clearly states there should be no division in the body because each part of the body should have an equal concern one for the other. The unifying head of the body is Christ. Verse 28 says God “appointed,” or, literally, *assigned* different people to different roles of service and *equipped* them to serve in those capacities. Can all serve in the same ways? How awkward would it be if everyone in the church decided to preach a sermon in next Sunday’s worship service? How confusing would it be if everyone decided to lead in prayer at the same time? How much harmony would we have if everyone decided to present a musical special of their choosing at the same time? When we realize that none of the individual parts of the body could be functional without the full participation and support of the others, we learn that all believers bring great value to the church.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Value your Christian friends and fellow church members. Support them in their efforts to serve the Lord. Respect their role and the service they provide to the church. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty:** *Every believer has the potential, and the responsibility, to bring great value to the church.*

## Day 31: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

*“Love never fails...” (1 Corinthians 13:8)*

### *The Unifying Ingredient*

Some scholars think that the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter was composed separately from the rest of this letter and then inserted here, almost like the words of a song or poem might be inserted into a sermon. Whether it was composed prior to or at the same time as the rest of the letter, it is still, no doubt, divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit. Paul is emphasizing that all spiritual gifts are to be exercised in, and empowered by, the love of God. Without love, our efforts will just sound like a lot of noise that gains attention for a moment and then is soon forgotten. This is a beautiful section of Scripture that accomplishes several important things: 1) it helps us understand what love is (v. 4); 2) it helps us understand what love is not (v. 5); 3) it helps us understand some of the things love does and does not do (v. 6); 4) it reveals some things love always does (v. 7); and 5) it includes one thing love never does (v. 8). All of this might not be as clear to the church as it would be later when their understanding would be enlightened and expanded. Corinth was famous for its production of bronze mirrors. However, although they were functional, and served their purpose, the image they displayed was far from perfect. Paul wanted these believers to understand that the love they expressed while attempting to serve the Lord would help to cover their personal and spiritual imperfections.

**Prayer Emphasis: Seek** to serve in love. Let love be your one, true motivation for service to Christ in the church. **Express** love to others, especially to those in your family. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-One:** *Love is the only true motivation and empowering force for any Christian act or service.*

## Day 32: 1 Corinthians 14:1-19

*“Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts...” (1 Corinthians 14:1)*

### *“Pursue”*

The word translated “pursue” in verse one means to run after or to seek something diligently. Here, Paul is encouraging the Corinthian believers to forsake the pursuit of their personal preferences and selfish ambitions and to pursue love. At the same time, he told them they should “desire” spiritual gifts. Both words imply that the believer is to show some initiative in their pursuit of spiritual gifts. The last part of verse one places a special emphasis on the gift of prophecy. The emphasis on tongues in verses 2-10 is a clear indicator that the members of the church at Corinth placed a special emphasis on that gift and the gift was being used by so many that no one was able to benefit from the confusion it was causing in the services. Those who exercised the gift of prophecy, however, were said to benefit the church by strengthening, encouraging, and comforting its members. Speaking in tongues seemed to be more for self-edification. Paul was not commanding them not to speak in tongues. He was, though, teaching them that public worship was for the edification of the body as a whole and not for the showcasing of individual gifts. The fact that Paul uses the word translated “tongues” 21 times in 1 Corinthians and only three other times in the remainder of his letters is a pretty good indication that there was some abuse in this area of gifting within this church.

**Prayer Emphasis: Seek** to use your spiritual gift so that the entire church can be strengthened, encouraged, and comforted. **Ask** God to help you discover and develop your personal, spiritual gift. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-Two:** *Believers are to show some personal initiative in the area of spiritual giftedness.*

## Day 33: 1 Corinthians 14:20-40

*“Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers...” (1 Corinthians 14:22)*

### *A Sign for Unbelievers*

Verse 22 of today’s reading clearly states God’s intention for the use of tongues. They are “for a sign...to unbelievers.” The word translated “sign” here is translated “miracle” in other places in the New Testament. The Day of Pentecost was a perfect example of how tongues could be used to gain the attention of unbelievers so they could hear the gospel message in a clear and distinctive manner. On Pentecost, the fact that various people heard foreigners speaking in their own languages caused them to stop and listen. It was a “sign” to them that something supernatural was taking place. Believers, Paul argued, would benefit more from prophecy. Verse 26 clearly indicates that people with different gifts were allowed to exercise their gifts in church services. However, all exercising of spiritual gifts had to be done in such a way that the entire body was strengthened. Notice that Paul used the word “if” when he spoke of tongues being used in a public service (v. 27). This is a clear indication that tongues were not a part of every service and certainly not a requirement for public worship. “If” someone spoke in tongues, and “if” there was no one there to interpret, the speaker was instructed to “keep silent” and speak to himself and God (v. 28). Two or three “prophets” were to speak in the public services, and the people were to carefully consider what was taught.

**Prayer Emphasis: Refuse** to restrict the moving of God’s Spirit in worship services. It is fine to have an order of service, but the Spirit should feel free to interrupt us anytime He so desires. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-Three:** *All spiritual gifts are appropriate when used at appropriate times and in appropriate ways.*

## Day 34: 1 Corinthians 15:1-10

*“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you...” (1 Corinthians 15:1)*

### *Keeping Things in Perspective*

The word “moreover” is a clear indicator that Paul was again moving on to another subject. It seems that he saved the best reason for the church to operate without strife and confusion for last. When weighed against the soon return of Christ, and our short-lived opportunity to do His work here, any issue that might cause division in the church should seem petty and unimportant. Paul clearly stated that what he was going to say about the resurrection was information he had received (been taught) and was passing on to them (vs. 3-4). Just as surely as Jesus appeared to Peter, the 12, and more than 500 of the brothers, He was to soon appear to these Corinthian believers. Paul’s humility is clearly exhibited in verses 8 and 9. It is obvious that his former role as a persecutor of the church left him with many sad memories and deep regrets. However, God’s grace transformed this *persecutor* into a *preacher*, and Paul did not allow God’s grace to be wasted on him. He sought to live and serve in such a way that God’s grace would not have been bestowed upon him “in vain” (v. 10).

**Prayer Emphasis: Realize** that a proper perspective about the soon return of Christ and the rapture of the church causes all our religious differences to seem ignoble and unimportant. **Serve** Christ today like you really believe He could return before tomorrow. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-Four:** *Keeping your eyes on the skies will help you to keep your eyes on the prize!*

## Day 35: 1 Corinthians 15:11-19

*“Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.” (1 Corinthians 15:11)*

### *It is not About Us!*

Paul wanted the church members at Corinth to know that he did not consider himself either vital or irreplaceable when it came to ministry. Speaking of the other apostles, Paul said the message could have come from any of them, and it would have had the same power and life-changing effect upon them. It was the Corinthians’ personal faith in the *message*, and not the *messenger*, that saved them. Paul then turned his attention to addressing some issues concerning the bodily resurrection. To deny a bodily resurrection was to deny that Christ Himself had risen from the dead. Paul wanted these Christians to understand the serious consequences that accompanied this kind of unbelief. A gospel without the resurrection was “empty” (v. 14). Furthermore, if there was no resurrection, then the apostles, including Paul, should be dealt with as false witnesses. By faith, Paul was able to boldly conclude that, “Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (v. 20). In the Old Testament, the first fruits were an indicator of what was to follow, only in more abundance. As such, the resurrection of Christ was to be an indicator of the fact that all believers could look forward to a bodily resurrection and a reunion with all of those who have gone to heaven before us.

**Prayer Emphasis: Discipline** yourself to prioritize the preaching of the gospel over arguing doctrines with other believers. **Believe** that our time and opportunity to share the gospel will soon be over. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-Five:** *It is the message and not the messenger that is important!*

## Day 36: 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

*“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:22)*

### *Adam vs. Jesus*

Since we are all descendants of Adam, we have all inherited his death sentence. However, our becoming related to Christ allows us to inherit his resurrection and eternal life. Christ went before us into death and resurrection and paved the way for all of us to follow. The resurrection of Christ was the final (and fatal) blow to Satan. Through it, all of Satan’s dominion, authority and power were destroyed. The last enemy to be destroyed will be death. After His return, and our resurrection, Christ will hand this world over to His heavenly Father. All people are related to Adam by natural birth. Only those who have experienced the supernatural, new birth are related to Jesus. Any person can become a Christian. It does not matter how sinful you have been or how little you know about the Bible and church. Salvation is found in a Person, and not a place or a practice. All you have to do to be saved – and to be secure in the belief that you will go to heaven when you die – is to simply ask Jesus to come into your heart and save you. Right now, right where you are, you can pray a very simple prayer – something like this: “Dear Lord, I know that I am a sinner and that I do not deserve to go to heaven. I believe that you died on the cross to pay my penalty for my sin. I now ask you to forgive me of my sin and to come into my heart and save me. Amen.”

**Prayer Emphasis: Accept** Christ as your Savior today. If you have already accepted Christ, then **share** him with someone else. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-Six:** *All people, everywhere, need to be born again if they desire to experience heaven when they die.*

## Day 37: 1 Corinthians 15:29-42

*“So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.”  
(1 Corinthians 15:42)*

### *A Perfect Body*

Can you imagine how wonderful it would be to live in a perfect body? The body in which I currently reside is far from perfect. In fact, it is so imperfect that it will someday quit on me altogether and die. When that happens, it will be so useless that, after whatever reusable parts can be harvested, the remains will be burned or buried until the day of the resurrection. My current body is perishable! However, my new body, the one I have on order from God & Son, is imperishable! It will never get sick, fail me in any way, or die. One day, the human part of me will be put away in dishonor only to be raised again in glory. It will be put away in weakness only to be, eventually, raised in power! It will be put away as a natural body that will return to nature itself, but it will be raised a supernatural body that can return to God! Just as surely as there is a natural body in which I now reside, there is a spiritual body in which I will someday reside. To get to that spiritual body, I must live through this current phase of life in the natural. When I die, the part of me that belongs here will stay here, but the part of me that belongs to God will go to be with Him in heaven. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. We must leave this old body behind when we die knowing with full faith that God will give us the spiritual body that He has promised to us.

**Prayer Emphasis: Respect** your earthly body. Take good care of it. **Realize** it is God’s temple and that the Holy Spirit abides with us here. **Thank God** for his presence within you. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-Seven: *The Holy Spirit lives within you. Be a good roommate!***

## Day 38: 1 Corinthians 15:43-58

*“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...” (1 Corinthians 15:51)*

### *The “Mystery”*

After answering the many questions the believers at Corinth asked, Paul decided to answer an unasked question. After discussing the resurrection of the dead in Christ, Paul then explained how things will be for those who are alive when Christ raptures His church. The interest of every listener had to be peaked as the one reading the letter said, “Behold I tell you a mystery.” A New Testament “mystery” was something that was not known before but was now being revealed to believers in New Testament times. That is why Paul had to “tell” them what the “mystery” was. Paul went on to explain that one day a trumpet will sound. When it does, believers who are alive on earth at the time of the resurrection of the dead will be “changed.” Our corruptible bodies will, in a time compared to the “twinkling of an eye,” become incorruptible – never to be weakened again by age or threatened again by sickness or death (v. 52). The curse on Adam will be eternally broken, and Satan’s temporary victory in Eden will have been totally and finally reversed. Paul began to offer thanks to God for “the victory” then and there (v. 57)!

**Prayer Emphasis: Imagine** what the day described in these verses will be like for you. **Visualize** you being resurrected or raptured and then changed into a complete person that can never again fail or disappoint anyone ever again – especially God! **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-Eight: *Looking forward to the Lord’s return will keep us looking around for something to do for God today!***

## Day 39: 1 Corinthians 16:1-11

*“Now concerning the collection for the saints...” (1 Corinthians 16:1)*

### God's Finance Plan

The believer that realizes the work done for Christ in this life is not “in vain” (15:58) will be willing to invest in ministry so that it can continue to reach people until the day of the resurrection and rapture of the church. The word translated “in vain” in the final verse of yesterday’s reading literally means “empty.” When we invest in God’s Kingdom, we are not going to come up “empty.” It is clear from today’s verses that God fully expects every believer to give to the work of the church on a regular, systematic basis. Our giving should be based on a percentage of what God has given us. If all believers would be faithful to the teaching of verses 1-2 of this chapter, there would be no need for special “collections” to support worthwhile causes (v. 2). Notice that Paul wisely disassociated himself from the handling of the church’s money (v. 3). The Corinthians, as lay people, were to select those who would handle the money collected in the offerings and make sure this money got to where it needed to be. Paul let them know that he planned to come and spend some time with them, but, until he could, he was going to send Timothy to minister to them.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Review your giving history and see if you have been faithfully investing in the work of the church. **Commit** to being faithful with a regular gift that reflects your appreciation for what God has given to you. **Kingdom Policy Number Thirty-Nine:** *Trust God enough to be faithful to Him in giving.*

## Day 40: 1 Corinthians 16:12-24

*“My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.” (1 Corinthians 16:24)*

### In Closing

As Paul began to close this letter, he touched on several issues of importance. Apparently, one of the things the church communicated with him about was a visit from Apollos (v. 12). If you recall, Apollos was a favorite preacher among many of the believers in this church (See 1:12). Paul obviously relayed their request to this well-loved preacher, but, as of that time, had to report to the church that Apollos was not able to make a commitment to visit with them. Take a moment to review these closing verses and circle the word “love” every time you see it. Just as love had been the answer to most of the problems in the church, love now will be the key ingredient to their sustaining a ministry for Christ until His return. Verse 14 says it all! They were to do everything that they did in love. Verse 22 declares that the one, true measure for ministry is love. If anyone in the church refused to season their talk, or walk, with love for Jesus Christ, then that “accursed” one was to be separated from the body before their spirit could contaminate the rest of the church. In these closing verses, some translations include the words, “Anathema,” which means “separated” or “cursed” and “Maranatha,” which was an exclamation meaning “Come!” Paul’s prayer was that the return of the Lord would be very soon! Amen!

**Prayer Emphasis:** Pray for those who preach the gospel. **Express** your appreciation to someone who has committed his or her life to ministry. **Kingdom Policy Number Forty:** *Pray for the soon return of Jesus and work for Him until your prayer is answered!*

Thank you for reading through 1 Corinthians with us. If we can help you, or minister to you in any way, please contact us at [gary@seminolebc.com](mailto:gary@seminolebc.com) or call us at 850-562-8069.