

Foundations Bible Study – I Corinthians
Lesson 6

Scripture Readings:

- I Corinthians 11:17ff and chapter 14

Lesson

I wanted to have one more closing lesson on the book and related topics because I feel the topics discussed by Paul are still very important for the church and our lives today. It is apparent that the church in Corinth had many problems. Some are bigger than others, some are silly, and most are just plain ol' greed, power and selfishness. I want to address two of them in this lesson. In the discussion I hope you can share about what you think are the biggest problems in the church today.

First I want to address what seems to be the problem in chapter 11:17ff. It seems the church was having fellowship dinners after communion each Sunday. The people who brought the food ate first and then the rest could eat. What happened most Sundays is they ran out of food. The worst thing about it was the people who needed to eat the most; the poor and working poor got no food at all. The "Fat Cats" got food and got fatter.

I am not saying we run out of food at our dinners, or that there is privilege as to who goes first in line. But in general how are we caring for the poor in our communities and are we concerned that many children and adults go hungry every day? I am afraid I just eat and get fatter and fatter. This is not so much a problem in the forefront of the church's activities. I believe I have seen folks make a run to Price Cutter when the food gets low at dinners. But, it seems to me that I don't think of the poor much at all. The poor here in my midst or the poor around the world don't really affect my daily routine at all. I do not feel rich by any means, in fact after the bills are paid and gas is bought, I often spend more money that I am paid that month. Yet compared to others here and world wide I am a king!

I just want to point out to myself and others that the problems of 2000 years ago are still here with us in our modern society. It causes me pain in two ways: I eat too much, and I don't care enough for others. Secondly I think the church should take up this matter more fervently.... After all isn't one of our callings to feed the hungry?

The second discussion has to do with the worship services at Corinth, found in chapter 14. Christian worship for the past 30 years has been a hot topic in most circles. Contemporary, Progressive, and the new one Emergent, I think a lot of the talk is just language things. This discussion of Paul's does bring to light the need to evaluate and change worship styles. We can become stagnate in a few

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weeks and maybe most of us have. I remember my pastor growing up once saying to a study group as he was talking about having communion every Sunday:

“When you do something every week it loses its meaning.”

He did not want to have communion every Sunday. Well I did and still do believe communion should at least be offered every Sunday so.... As a smart-alec 15 year old, I said:

“Well we sing and pray and listen to you preach every Sunday. I guess that loses its meaning also.”

I got in big trouble from my dad for that, but my mother didn't say a word. She was on my side. I just want us to look more closely at how we gather on Sunday mornings. Is there more we can do, is there less we should do, are there different things we can do and even be to have more... meaning and passion in our times of worship. I think so. What do you think?

Maybe if Paul wrote today he would do a 180, he might say you all need more excitement and feeling in your worship. I'm not sure; I just wanted to make this point about Paul's letter to Corinth. And I wish I could talk to others about this as well, if you have any suggestions let me know.

I liked this study on I Corinthians, it was a little more hard for me to write than the others, but that is OK. We all need to be challenged by the Bible more and I hope this study speaks to you at least once in a while. And remember that the “Love Chapter” is here in this book; just maybe if we lived that out more in our daily lives we would feed the poor and gather to worship with excitement and passion. At least I have that hope.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. Do you think much about the poor? Do you know any poor people; have any friends below the poverty line?
2. Is worship uplifting for you?
3. What would you change about the worship service you attend?
4. What do you think are the biggest problems in the church today?