

“VOICE OF PAUL-x-LUKE” SERIES

This series shows how the writings of the apostle Paul and his traveling-&-writing assistant Luke, all tie in together to construct “the basic frame of the entire New Testament” from 16 of its books. Under Paul’s unique influence, all these writings emphasize *God forging His People into a new kind of Followership whose “growth policy” involves embodying every kind of people & heritage.* It is within the framework of this people-building endeavor that (1) the Forgiving-&-Restoring Power of Jesus especially gets to be displayed, and where (2) its best participants are those whose lives have God’s Presence “pouring forth” within them.

study #23: Paul Writes Corinth Letters A and then B(1Cor)

— covering **1 Corinthians** —

ACTION #1. Remember how close to his heart the city of Corinth had been to Paul personally! Now, while still in Ephesus just across the sea, Paul stayed in touch both by writing numerous letters and also visiting them. Corinth’s churches had many obvious problems, and Paul’s correspondence provided them with critical spiritual guidance. Read **1 Corinthians 1:10-17** and also **3:3-8**, and then discuss:

- what exactly were the “reports” Paul had heard of Corinth’s churches? (dissect details from the verses!)
- Paul scolds them for using certain names, but what does it seem they were also misusing “baptism” for?
- what would you say is Paul’s bottom-line problem with the different Corinth churches being “divided”— what message was it conveying to everyone looking on?

ACTION #2. A major topic Paul addresses in this letter is the Corinthians’ famous problem with “immorality.” Read **1 Corinthians 5:9-12** and then discuss:

- Paul mentions an *earlier* letter he had also sent them (v.9)—what had *that* topic been about?
- what is Paul specifically *clarifying* about what he had said in his earlier letter?

ACTION #3. Half of this book of **1 Corinthians** is made of Paul answering a list of “questions” the Corinthian churches had written to *him* about in a letter of their own. Take a quick look at the verses **7:1** and **7:25** and **8:1** and **12:1** and **16:1** and then discuss:

- what phrase does Paul use in this letter to signal the next topic he is going to answer?
- list some of the topics the Corinth churches asked about, and which would *you* like to hear more on?

ACTION #4. Paul was super smart enough to sneak a Major Lesson into every one of the topics the Corinthians had asked him about: the Lesson of “Stewardship” (*properly serving God with what He gave you*). Read **1 Corinthians 3:10-17** and **12:12-21** and **12:29—13:3** (maybe choose just 1 at a time, for time’s sake), then discuss:

- in these passages, which is your favorite verse and why?
- what would you say is the major point of each of these brief passages?
- how does the passage relate to “Stewardship” (*properly serving God with what He gave you*)?

EXTRA... FOR THOSE MOTIVATED, DEVOTED, & WITH SOME SELF-COMMAND:

GOLD CHALLENGE ...read ahead (& maybe journal about) for next study: **2 Corinthians** + **Acts 20:1-2**

PENGUIN CHALLENGE ... (=daily reading + cover full NT+Psalms during series): read **GC** plus **Psalms 131-140**