

FIRST CORINTHIANS

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# IDENTITY COMPROMISE

LESSONS FROM CORINTH

# SECOND MISSIONS OUTREACH

- ▶ After 18 months of ministry in Corinth, Paul traveled by ship to Ephesus with Aquila and Priscilla, where Paul briefly reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue. Leaving Aquila and Priscilla to continue in Ephesus, Paul traveled on to Jerusalem and then returned to his sending church in Antioch.



# THIRD MISSIONS OUTREACH

- ▶ After spending time in Antioch, Paul traveled again through the regions of Galatia and Phrygia.
- ▶ Paul arrived in Ephesus where he had left Aquila and Priscilla; he stayed there for three years: teaching, evangelizing, and sending his associates to the churches in Greece. The entire province of Asia would be evangelized within two years.
- ▶ While in Ephesus, Paul wrote *1 Corinthians*; when he subsequently traveled to Macedonia, he wrote *2 Corinthians*.





*Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly.*

1 CORINTHIANS 3.1-3

*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. . . . God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*

EPHESIANS 2.1-5

*Having believed, you were marked with the Holy Spirit (1.13-14); You are a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit (2.22); Be strengthened in your inner being by the Holy Spirit (3.16); Do not grieve the Holy Spirit with whom you were sealed (4.30); Be filled with the Spirit (5.18); Pray in the Spirit on all occasions (6.18)*

## “WORLDLY” IS NOT A GOOD THING!

*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.*

EPHESIANS 2.1-2

*Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.*

1 JOHN 2.15-16

*We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.*

1 JOHN 5.19

# THE COMPROMISED CHURCH AT CORINTH

- ▶ Partisan divisions (idolatrous aspirationalism)
- ▶ Rejection of authority
- ▶ Unbiblical relationships
- ▶ Unrestrained sexual activity
- ▶ Litigation and lawsuits
- ▶ Participating in idol feasts
- ▶ Careless representation of Christ
- ▶ “True to myself” and “my rights” attitudes
- ▶ Self-realization and entitlement
- ▶ Intoxication
- ▶ Disorder and irreverence in worship

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

<sup>2</sup> To the church of God in Corinth,

to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and <sup>1</sup> called to be His holy people,

together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—  
their Lord and ours:

<sup>3</sup> Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> I always thank my God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> For in Him you have been <sup>2</sup> enriched in every way—  
with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge—

<sup>6</sup> God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you <sup>4</sup> eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

<sup>8</sup> He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>9</sup> God is faithful, who has <sup>3</sup> called you into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

# CHOOSING CLARITY OVER COMPROMISE

- ▶ Embrace God's invitation to separate from this sinful world and its destiny and live a life set apart for Christ and God's purposes.

*“to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be His holy people”*

- ▶ called (*kletos*) - invited into privileges or function
  - ▶ sanctified (*hagiazō*) - to set apart, to make holy
  - ▶ holy people (KJV: *saints*) - separated from common condition and use; dedicated
- ▶ We have been invited by God to come out of darkness, into the privilege of being His special possession and serving His particular purposes—

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.*

- ▶ In Scripture, darkness is synonymous with sin, satanic control, godlessness, and that which is unacceptable to God. His desire is to bring us out of that conditioning status.

*“I am sending you to [your own people and the Gentiles] to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.*

ACTS 26.18

- ▶ If we have truly been made a new creation in Christ, then we will want to be set apart from sin, worldliness, and anything that would compromise us, so that we can have the honor of serving God’s highest purposes.

*Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.” In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use. Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.*

2 TIMOTHY 2.19-21

► **Pursue the true and lasting wealth of possessing Christ.**

*I always thank my God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in Him you have been enriched in every way . . .*

- We need to determine what is true wealth. What we will spend our lives working to acquire: worldly success, status, and security? Or spiritual riches?
- We are not to pursue what the pagans pursue and consider valuable (Matthew 6.31-33).
- In Christ, we have the riches of grace, His infinite merit, justification, His fullness of life, authority and power—the list is long! Nothing in this world is remotely as valuable.

*But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him.*

PHILIPPIANS 3.7-9

*My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

COLOSSIANS 2.2-3

## ▶ Build intimate relationship and seek real fellowship with Jesus.

*God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

- ▶ called (*kaleo*): to call into one's presence
- ▶ fellowship (*koinonia*): partnership, i.e. (literally) participation or (social) interaction; communion

## ▶ We can't love both Christ *and* sin. A compromised relationship is no relationship at all.

*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?*

2 CORINTHIANS 6.14-15

## ▶ Our highest privilege: to have real fellowship with Jesus and to exchange the poverty of our lives for the riches of knowing Him (*through Scripture, prayer, worship, surrender, obedience*)—

*“I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”*

REVELATION 3.18-20

► **Live in eager anticipation and readiness for the return of Jesus Christ.**

*Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

► **Anticipation means living to Christ and to finish the mission, longing for His return—**

*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

2 TIMOTHY 4.7-8

► **Readiness means living spiritually alert and rigorous, not spiritually careless, lives —**

*But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.*

1 THESSALONIANS 5.4-8

Jesus prayed that, though we live in the world, we would be obviously, even glaringly, distinct from the world (John 17.6-21), fully His and without compromise. May that be true of us.