

1 CORINTHIANS

discussion guide

OVERVIEW FOR PART 1:

Join us as we walk through the Apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. We'll see the many cultural similarities between the pacific northwest and ancient Greece, as well as be challenged in how we are designed to live out the gospel through the local church.

In the first mini-series we will look to the first four chapters, where Paul deconstructs the counterfeit places we find meaning and significance, and makes his case for why Christ is the greatest person for us to look to for our status and hope for the future.

PART 1: WEEK FIVE "NOT YET, YOU'RE NOT"

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:3

When we announced last year that we'd been walking through 1 Corinthians, we warned everyone that Paul doesn't pull any punches. I (Pastor Donald) love Paul's writing style. He strikes such a masterful balance of grace and truth. He's pleading with the people in this church to drop the divisive one-upmanship, build up those that are new to the faith or struggling, and get on mission. He deeply loves the people of Corinth and because he loves them he can recognize some ways that they have gone sideways.

Read: 1 Corinthians 3

This passage has an edge to it. It's not the edge of an axe, trying to chop us down. It's the edge of surgeons scalpel, removing whatever in the church body is cancerous and dangerous to their future and to our future. **It has an edge because God cares about the ways we do life** and the ways in which we harm and help ourselves and

others. He cares about the unity of the Church and the unity of the Corinthian church, and certainly the unity of Doxa church.

This is the main idea I want you reflect on:

How did the seasoned Christians at Corinth end up in a place where they thought they were mature and solid, but God said, “not yet you’re not”?

With that in mind, reflect on the three ways we can harm unity in our church:

1. We go tribal:

Not Piper enough. Not Keller enough. Not Vanderstelt enough. *Too Vanderstelt*. I’m more of a Driscoll guy. I wish we were more Beth Moore. I wish we were more reformed, more liturgical, more charismatic, more spirit led, more bible, more outreach, etc. What books, blogs, and podcasts do others like?

There is clear pecking order, and you quickly put other Christians in their place on your shelves. You have a hierarchy, and if someone agrees with you, they go on the top shelf...next to you. If they care too much about stuff you don’t, then they come down a shelf. If they disagree with you on secondary issues, they come down a shelf. If they don’t look and act and talk like our tribe, they come down a shelf.

- a. *What are the ways in which you have been tribal?*
- b. *Why are we quick to make secondary things the main thing?*
- c. *Why is it a challenge to learn from other tribes sometimes?*

2. We go quiet:

Paul makes the point that personal evangelism is essential for the life of all believers, and connected to our unity. This one is less intuitive, but going on mission is a powerful unifying force in discipleship. Parents know that if your kids don’t have a plan or an activity or something to do, a mission, and you leave them alone for a while...conflict is not far off. Neglecting mission (going quiet) negatively affects our unity.

- a. When is the last time you had a significant conversation about your faith with a non-believer? How did that go? What happened afterwards?
- b. What’s the hardest part for you in regularly having conversations like that? Time with non-believers? Knowing what to say? Having the courage to say something? Something else? Share your answer with your group and ask for feedback.
- c. Our next Everyday Training (Feb 2019) will focus on evangelistic conversations. Would anyone in your group register with you to go?

Click below to sign up:

<https://doxa.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/387/responses/new>

3. We get bored:

Let's be honest. All of us experience boredom in our faith from time to time. Like any relationship, it takes effort to keep the fires going. Boredom can provide ample opportunity for division in our relationships and suck the vitality out of our faith.

- a. What are the activities, places, people, environments, etc that make you aware of the "action" happening around you in the Kingdom?
- b. What do you consider a "win" regarding participating in a Sunday gathering? What does the rest of your group define as the "win"? What things did you not think of immediately that mentioned?
- c. What's one thing you could do with your group that would put wind in the sails of your journey with Christ?

Final Thoughts

Paul explains that discipleship is a team sport. No one gets the real credit except for God. Paul is showing that he and Apollos are on the same team, the same build crew. Isn't it freeing to know that God works through the community together? It's not all riding on you or me? That's a liberating truth. If it's all on us, that is a lot of pressure!

- a. Who's on your current "ministry team"?
- b. Who would you like to be on mission with in the future?
- c. How can you take first steps towards doing that?

Conclude your time praying for each other to be unifying, courageous, and passionate believers. Consider Paul's benediction as you pray:

*May the God of endurance and encouragement
grant you to live in such harmony with one another,
in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice
glorify the God and Father
of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Romans 15:5-6