

Teaching Guide



*ADULT BIBLE STUDY
IN BASIC ENGLISH*

**1 CORINTHIANS:
THE CHURCH IN A
SECULAR WORLD**

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BAPTISTWAY

Dallas, Texas

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN BASIC ENGLISH
TEACHING GUIDE
1 CORINTHIANS: THE CHURCH IN A SECULAR WORLD**

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1 CORINTHIANS: THE CHURCH IN A SECULAR WORLD

Introduction for Teachers

The purpose of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The teaching guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Supplemental Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

The Bible text printed in the lesson material is from the NEW LIFE Version of the Bible (NLV), an inexpensive translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary. The NLV is available from Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, Oregon 97013; e-mail christian@canby.com; telephone (orders only) 1-800-324-9734.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious law-keeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students, or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, however, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

Prayer is sometimes specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

The writers and editors wish you success and give you prayerful support in your teaching of this Adult Bible Study in Basic English.

Bible Study in Basic English is published by the Baptist General Convention of Texas and follows the same curriculum plan as the Bible Study for Texas materials, but has no Texas emphasis. Teachers may wish to purchase Bible Study for Texas lesson comments and teaching guides (\$1.95 each per quarter) as additional resources. These may be ordered through your church or directly from the Sunday School/Discipleship Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798, e-mail baptistway@bgct.org; FAX 214-828-5187; or toll-free telephone 1-800-355-5285.

About the writer

Bob Coder wrote the introduction and all thirteen lessons of the teaching procedures for this study. He and his wife, Lenora, live in Allen, Texas, and are members of the First Baptist Church of Richardson. After taking early retirement, Bob and Lenora served more than four years on the mission field in London and Zimbabwe. Bob has previously written numerous lessons and teaching procedures for youth as well as for adult Bible Study in Basic English, and has been involved in teaching English as a second language. The Coders have four children and twelve grandchildren.

Teaching Guide

Unit 1 DEALING WITH DISHARMONY Lesson 1 WHY CAN'T YOU PEOPLE GET ALONG?

Lesson Focus

The class will understand that Christians who argue and divide into groups work against God's plan for unity in the church.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 1:11-17

Background

1 Corinthians 1:11-17

Memory Verse

"God is faithful. He chose you to be joined together with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."—1 Corinthians 1:9

Connect with Life

1. Give a quick introduction to the study theme and unit titles for this series of lessons. Use a Bible dictionary or commentary on 1 Corinthians to describe the immoral and idolatrous nature of Corinth as a typical seaport city that brought together people from all parts of the Greco-Roman world. Emphasize the difficulty of Paul's task in starting and building a strong church in such a place.
2. Call attention to the several difficult words or phrases used in the titles for the study theme, unit, and lesson titles, as follows:
Disharmony: disagreement (point out that the prefix *dis* means "not in" harmony or agreement); thus, the church members in Corinth were not in harmony, or did not think and act alike.
Secular: (see "Word List" in the study guide).

Get along: to agree with and show kindness to others.

Guide the Study

3. Before the session, prepare a letter in the form of a scroll. Simply roll up a long strip of paper at both ends to give the appearance of a scroll. Write 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 inside the scroll. Let someone (preferably a male voice) open the scroll and read it as if it were Paul speaking his own words.
4. Comment that this letter was written in the First Century, a few years after Christ died on the cross. Call attention to the scroll form of the letter. Explain how people in that day wrote letters on animal skin or rough, heavy paper, and rolled them up on round sticks of wood.
5. Discuss the form of Paul's letter as compared to a letter written today. Explain that he put his name at the beginning of the letter (verse 1), named the recipient (verse 2), then gave the customary greeting of loving-favor and peace. Mention that "loving-favor," or grace, was a greeting used by the Greeks and Romans, while "peace" was the usual greeting of the Jews (verse 3).
6. Refer to verses 4-9 of the Bible text in the study guide. Recall that Paul had started the church at Corinth when he was on his second missionary trip. Relate how he was now writing to them as old friends and fellow believers in Christ. Explain how in verses 4-9 he was expressing to the Corinthian his thanks for their strong points. Mention that he would later write some very strong words to them about the problems he had heard of in the church. Describe the church of Corinth as small groups of Christians meeting in different homes across the city, not a large group meeting in a church building as we generally do today.
7. Divide the class into groups of 4-5 persons.

Let someone read 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 from the Bible text to the entire class. Then advise each group to refer to these same verses and the section titled "Who Are You Following?" in the study guide to answer these questions:

- (1) What was the problem?
- (2) How did Paul know about the problem?
- (3) Why was Paul glad he had baptized only a few of the Christians?
- (4) What did Paul want the people of the church to do?

Allow adequate time for them to respond to the questions, then ask each group to answer one or more of the questions.

8. Call attention to the second paragraph under "Who Are You Following?" Suggest that Paul asked the three questions in verse 13 to help the Christians realize that human leaders could not take the place of Christ. State that he did not expect them to answer, though the obvious responses would have had to be "no." Note that Paul had a little trouble remembering exactly whom he had baptized, but wanted to make the point that the person who baptized them was not due any special honor. Remark also that Paul did not favor any group, including the one that went by his name.

Encourage Application

9. Ask the class to answer these questions: (1) What was the problem in the Corinthian church? (2) Why did Paul want them to stop arguing and dividing into groups? (3) Why does God want Christians to "get along"?

10. Ask a class member to read the "Memory Verse" from the study guide. State that God wants us as the church and as Christians to be joined together in unity. Emphasize that when Christians argue and divide into groups, they work against God's plan for unity.

Additional Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. Comment on how Acts 1:15 tells us that when Jesus died on the cross, there were only about 120

believers. State that these 120 Christians became "the church." Describe how, according to Acts 4:4, that number grew to about 5,000 men, and that Acts 4:32 says, "The many followers acted and thought the same way." Repeat the phrase, "...acted and thought in the same way." Remark that in today's lesson, we find that Christians in the church at Corinth were no longer acting and thinking in the same way.

Guide the Study

2. *Public Speaking.* You may want to introduce the idea that Paul was a very well-educated and intelligent man and that he readily spoke out to kings, wise men, and public officials as well as to people on the street. Explain that during the First Century, wise men (or philosophers), gathered daily in public places to talk about the great issues of life. Mention that someone who could speak and argue well during this time became very popular and that many people would "follow" and believe whatever these men said. Tell how in Athens, Paul was asked to speak to a group of these wise men, and they listened intently until Paul spoke about the resurrection of Jesus. Then they would no longer hear him. Remark that Apollos, one of the preachers in Corinth, was known as a very good public speaker and that perhaps is why one of the four groups in the Corinthian church said they were "followers of Apollos" (1 Corinthians 1:12). Finally, note that in 1 Corinthians 1:17, Paul stated that the reason he did not "use big words..." was that if he did, "...the power of the cross of Christ would be taken away."

3. *The Four Parties.* Provide brief explanations of the four groups into which the Corinthian church was divided. Explain that the three leaders named each had a different personality. Thus, they may not have been especially friendly toward one another, but did not seem to have any real argument between them. Describe the four parties as follows:

Paul. The apostle and writer of this letter to the Corinthians; a missionary who started the church in Corinth; a strong, well-educated and

hard-working Christian who was the main force in spreading the Good News to that part of the world.
Apollos. *A good public speaker, popular for his ability to speak and preach so well in a time when educated men spent much time talking about the great issues of life (philosophy).*

Peter. *One of the twelve original disciples of Jesus who often spoke for the group; one of the three disciples closest to Jesus; a leader who would appeal to the Jewish members of the Corinthian church, though he probably did not live in the city.*

Christ. *No leader is named for this group, but Paul included it as one of the problem groups as well. Perhaps the members of this group were simply against the other three groups, or it could be that they thought of themselves as being better in some ways than the others.*

Teaching Guide

Unit 1 DEALING WITH DISHARMONY

Lesson 2 REMEMBER THE CROSS

Lesson Focus

The class will identify the meaning of the cross of Christ in their relationship with God and fellow Christians.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2

Background

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:13

Memory Verse

“God Himself made the way so you can have new life through Christ Jesus.—1Corinthians 1:30a

Connect with Life

1. Direct class members to find the Memory Verse for today’s. Instruct them to read the verse silently several times. As they do this, draw a large cross on the chalkboard. Draw the outline only, or turn the chalk on its side to make the cross solid. Point to the cross and remark that this is *the way* Paul said that God made “... so you can have new life through Christ Jesus.” Write: *Remember the Cross* on the chalkboard above the cross. Explain that this is the title of the lesson and the way God provided for us to be right with God. Draw a large circle around the cross and remark that in this study we will focus on the cross.

Guide the Study

2. To explore the first segment of the Bible text, instruct the students to listen for two ways people respond to the message of the cross. Read the Bible text aloud. Advise them to follow the Bible text in the study guide as you read 1

Corinthians 1:18-25. Ask for responses to the listening assignment. If necessary, narrow the search down to verses 18a and 25 (those who think of the cross as foolishness), as well as 18b and 23-24 (those who believe that Christ died on the cross to save them from the punishment of sin).

3. Remind the class that in last week’s Bible study, Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth about dividing into groups and following different leaders-himself, Peter, and Apollos. Recall how Paul told them not to argue, but to agree with one another. Suggest that in the Bible text today, Paul continued his thoughts about the cross from 1 Corinthians 1:17b. Say that he then began to tell them to keep their eyes on the cross, and to always remember that Christ died there so that anyone who trusted in Him could have life that lasts forever.

4. Remark that Paul’s writing is sometimes difficult to follow because he jumps back and forth in his thoughts, but that he always went back to his main point (see *Paul’s Way of Writing* under Additional Teaching Ideas). Suggest that in verses 18-21, his main point is that people we consider wise-teachers, scientists, doctors, lawyers, philosophers, and engineers-can do many wonderful things, but that their greatest wisdom does not equal even the least of God’s wisdom.

5. Tell class members to look in the study guide at the section entitled, “What Are You Looking For?” Ask them to find two things people want before they will believe that Jesus died on the cross and was then resurrected. Help them identify signs or miracles (something to see) and knowledge or wisdom (something to know) as the two things people expect before they will believe. Comment that many people cannot accept God’s simple plan for salvation on faith alone.

6. Allow a class member to read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 aloud. Call attention to verse 26 in which Paul reminds the Corinthians of who they were before they became believers. Observe that verse 26 suggests that some of the Corinthian Christians had wisdom or held positions of power, but that most of them did not. Comment that knowledge, wealth, and power are things the world considers important. State that these things do not keep a person from becoming a believer, but it is more difficult for those who are strong in the world to humble themselves before God.

7. Question the class members about the word boasting. Define it, if needed, as bragging, talking big, or showing too much pride in something you have done. Comment on verses 28-31, making these three points:

1. God loves all people regardless of who they are or what they have done.
2. People of the world think that the message of the cross is foolishness.
3. Christians can properly be proud, not boasting of what they have done in the world, but by showing pride in what Christ has done for them.

8. Advise the class to look at the last two verses of the Bible text. Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-2. Comment that, in these verses, Paul reminds the Corinthians that when he first came to the city he did not speak with big words or fancy style. Go on to say that, he further reminds them how he preached the simple story of the cross in a way that would not call attention to himself.

Encourage Application

9. Point to the cross on the chalkboard and ask, “*So, what is the meaning of the cross?*” Direct class members to look again at the memory verse, and lead them in reading it together in unison. Conclude by saying, “*Remember the cross.*”

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *The Introduction.* Recall last week’s lesson and the way the Corinthian Christians had argued and divided into at least four groups. Instruct the students to find the Introduction of the study guide.

Request a volunteer to read the section. Refer to the lesson title, “Remember the Cross.” Then refer to the Memory Verse. Identify the cross as “the way” that is mentioned in the memory verse. That is, Jesus Christ died on the cross, then was raised again on the third day. State that, by doing this, He completed God’s plan for believers to have new life-life that lasts forever.

Guide the Study

2. *The Cross.* Question class members about why the cross has become such an important symbol of Christianity. Allow several responses, then summarize the significance of the cross, as follows:

1. The cross was a way the Romans punished and killed slaves and foreigners. It was a slow, painful way to die.
2. The cross was not a religious symbol before Jesus’ death.
3. The death of Jesus on the cross was God’s plan to free people from the power of sin and give them new life that lasts forever.
4. By believing that Jesus died on the cross and was raised from the dead (resurrected), anyone can be made right with God.
5. Those who trust in Jesus as the Christ of God are forgiven of their sin and receive life that lasts forever.
6. The cross was simply a means of torture and death to most. God made it a symbol of His love, forgiveness, and power.

3. *Paul’s Way of Writing.* Comment that Paul’s writings are sometimes difficult to follow. Explain his style as follows. He probably did not do his own writing, but spoke the words for someone else to write down (see Romans 16:22). As he spoke, Paul often went from one thought to another, and maybe another, before coming back to complete his original thought or idea. He did not follow an outline as a writer might do today in order to keep his writing organized. Also, he did not have a Bible or books from which to quote, so he worked from memory. Thus, when he quoted a verse from the early Scriptures, it would be accurate, but not necessarily word for word. Another thing Paul

did not have was copies of his earlier letters. What he said in one letter might not always seem to agree with something written in a slightly different way from a previous letter. Finally, the thinking of great religious leaders had not yet been written down, so Paul had only his own knowledge and experience to speak from. It is therefore not surprising that the Scriptures Paul wrote seem to go around and around. But without his books and letters, there would be many gaps in the Scriptures and even more unanswered questions in our knowledge of the early church.

Teaching Guide

Unit 1 DEALING WITH DISHARMONY Lesson 3 *BECOMING SPIRITUALLY MATURE*

Lesson Focus

The class will evaluate how well the qualities of a spiritually mature Christian life characterize their lives.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 2:14-3:16

Background

1 Corinthians 2:14-3:23

Memory Verse

“Do you know that you are a house of God and that the Holy Spirit lives in you?”—1 Corinthians 3:16

Connect with Life

1. Provide pictures of a baby, a child, and an adult. Display the pictures, in order, and ask the class to identify each one. When this has been done, ask class members if they have photographs with them of any babies, children, or adults in their families. Discuss how every person is born as a baby and grows through stages from infancy to adulthood. Then explain that, in the lesson today, the class will look at how Christians must grow spiritually in the same way, from being new (baby) Christians until they become mature (adult) Christians.

Guide the Study

2. Direct someone who speaks a foreign language to say a few words in that language. Ask class members to tell what that person just said. Perhaps others will understand and translate. Possibly no one will be able to do so.

Either way, comment that we have a situation much like that in the lesson today, where some people (Christians) understand the words of God’s Holy Spirit, but others do not.

3. Call on a student to read 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 from the Bible text in the study guide. Point out that verse 14 says the person who is not a Christian does not understand the words of the Holy Spirit. Ask for a volunteer to explain why. Refer students to the section titled, “Only Those Who Are Spiritual Understand the Spiritual,” for help in making the explanation.

4. Appoint a student to read 1 Corinthians 3:1-5 from the Bible text. When the reader finishes reading, draw on the chalkboard a row of stick figures representing a person’s growth from infant to toddler to child to youth to adult. Identify these as the stages of life through which a normal person grows. State that a small number of people, however, never grow to be mature adults. Mention the example given by the writer of the study guide in the introduction to the lesson. Then request a class member to read the section, “Some of You Have Not Been Growing,” from the study guide.

5. To provide continuity from the previous passage, reread verse 5 and continue reading through verse 9a from the Bible text. Encourage class members to follow the reading in their copies of the study guide. Follow the narrative in the first paragraph under “Planting, Watering, Growing” in the study guide to comment on this portion of the focal text.

6. State that in the middle of verse 9, Paul changed from one way of describing Christian growth to another. Recall how he had talked about the church as a field where the seed of God’s Word had been planted and watered and cared for by himself and others while God was the One Who

kept the church growing. Remark that, in the second part of verse 9, Paul began to describe the church as a building.

7. Draw a rough sketch of a building on the chalkboard and identify the foundation. (Leave the stick figures from Step 4 on the chalkboard for further use in Step 9.) Define the foundation as the solid base of wood, stone, or concrete upon which the building rests. Explain that the foundation determines how strong the building will be if the building itself is built with good materials. With this introduction, call for someone to read 1 Corinthians 3:9b-15 from the Bible text. Identify Jesus Christ as the first stone Paul laid down for the foundation of the church. Indicate that he did this through his preaching of the gospel. Remark that others came along and built upon this firm foundation through preaching and teaching, but that they were responsible for choosing building materials that would stand the test of fire. State that fire in the Bible often stands for God's judgment. What Paul means is that every believer will be judged on the basis of the work he does. That is, how well he serves God.

Encourage Application

8. Select a class member to read the last verse of the Bible text, 1 Corinthians 3:16. Identify it as the "Memory Verse" for this lesson. Point out that the "you" Paul addressed in the verse was a plural, and that he was in this case speaking to the church, not individual believers. Express that the church, however, is made up of individual believers who work together to bring about the unity of the church Paul wanted in Corinth and wherever the house of God exists.

9. Point to the stick figures still on the chalkboard from Step 5. State that every believer fits into one of these stages, as a baby, toddler, child, youth, or mature adult. Ask students to think about their own place in the chart. Encourage them to continue to work toward the goal expressed in the lesson title.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *Baby Things.* If there is an infant in your circle of family and friends, borrow a baby bottle, rattle or toy, and perhaps a baby blanket or other item that would be used only by or for a baby. Display these items one by one and question the class members about (1) how each item is used and (2) if any of them ever use it for that purpose. When they indicate that they would not use the item for themselves, further question them as to why they would not. Lead them to agree that the items displayed are normally used only to feed, clothe, or entertain babies. State that when babies grow up, however, they no longer use these things. Then explain that new Christians must grow and mature spiritually in much the same way babies grow and mature into adults.

Guide the Study

2. *Demonstration.* (For use prior to Step 5.) Enlist the aid of an assistant for a demonstration of planting and watering. Take a seed or small plant and place it in a pot filled with soil. Then step aside while your assistant uses a small pitcher to water the plant. Raise the question, "When this grows to be a mature plant, who can we say caused the plant to grow?" Remind students that you planted the seed or seedling, and your assistant watered it. Question them about who had the most important role in the plant's life. Listen to any responses, then direct the teaching assistant to read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9a and proceed with Step 5.

3. *Servant and Lord.* Give special attention to two terms used in verse 5, "servants" and "owned by God." Express how important it is that the relationship of these two terms be recognized and honored. Impress upon the students that God has many servants, but that He alone is owner (Lord or Master). Indicate that Paul first asks, "Who is Apollos? Who is Paul?" He identifies them as "servants owned by God." Note Paul's answer, that he and Apollos are only servants of God who plant and water, but that God is the important one who makes it grow. Suggest that Paul planted the seed of the gospel

in Corinth and Apollos later watered it, but that it was God who gave the growth. Stress that human leaders are only servants of God and should never be given the honor and devotion that properly belongs to God.

4. *Study Groups.* Divide the class into two study groups. Refer Group 1 to 1 Corinthians 3:5-9a and the section, “Planting, Watering, Growing” in the study guide. Assign Group 2 to 1 Corinthians 3:9b-15 and the section, “Building a Strong Building” in the study guide. Give both groups the same set of questions. Ask: (1) *To what did Paul compare the church?* (2) *What is the role of church leaders such as Paul and Apollos?* (3) *Who has the most important role in growing or building a strong church?*

Teaching Guide

Unit 1 DEALING WITH DISHARMONY

Lesson 4 *SERVANT LEADERSHIP*

Lesson Focus

The class will identify biblical principles for the proper relationship of church leaders and members.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 4:1-14,21

Background

1 Corinthians 4:1-21

Memory Verse

“A servant must be faithful to his owner. This is expected of him.”—1 Corinthians 4:2

Connect with Life

1. Open the session by writing on the chalkboard: *Servant Leader*. Ask, “What is a servant leader?” Without waiting for an answer, underline the word servant and say, “Let’s look at the word *servant* first.” Question the class members as to what type of work a servant does, whether or not he gets paid for his work, if he is free to come and go as he pleases, and his relative place in society. Lead them to understand that a servant is under the control of his owner and holds a low place in relation to most other people.
2. Next, underline the word leader and conduct a similar discussion of leaders in governments and business as well as in the church. Note that some are elected, some are appointed, and some are hired. Bring out the fact that leaders have a certain amount of power and authority over small or large groups of people. Emphasize that,

in contrast to servants, leaders are generally looked up to and hold a higher place in society. Mention also that the words servant and leader have opposite meanings and do not normally go together. Explain that church leaders are servants of Christ but leaders of people, and thus may be called servant leaders.

Guide the Study

3. Encourage the class members to listen and follow in the study guide as you read 1 Corinthians 4:1-2. Explain that in Paul’s time, an owner would sometimes make one of his servants a steward. The steward was put in charge of the owner’s business over the other servant workers, so he was still a servant to the owner but also held a position of leadership over the other servants. Clarify what Paul said by paraphrasing verse 1 like this, “*Think of us as servants to Christ, but stewards over the secrets God has entrusted to us.*”
4. Mention that verse 2 is the “Memory Verse” for this lesson. Use “how Are We to Think of Christian Fellow Workers?” in the study guide to comment on these two verses. Emphasize that church leaders who have God’s interests at heart, as trustworthy stewards, will be careful not to allow their own interests to guide their thoughts and actions. Stress that whenever persons or groups try to satisfy their own interests rather than God’s, there will be problems in the church and God’s work will suffer. Provide the example of how the Corinthian church members argued and divided into groups to follow human leaders instead of keeping focused on Christ.
5. Instruct the students to read 1 Corinthians 4:3-6 silently. Direct them to look for three ways Paul said he would be judged. Help them identify *other people* (verse 3a), *himself* through his conscience (verse 3b), and *God* (verse 4c). Ask, “*Of these three ways leaders-and people-are judged, which*

is the important one?” Lead the class to recognize God as the only One whose judgment matters in the long run.

6. Divide the class into two groups. Direct both groups to read 1 Corinthians 4:7-12a and “Boasting Is Foolish” in the study guide. Give each group a list of these words and phrases:

wise Christians	fools because of Christ
proud	comfortable life
boastful	respected
live in danger	suffering
homeless	hard working
strong	weak
wear old clothes	not respected
Rich	hungry and thirsty
live like kings	well fed

Advise one group to circle the words or phrases that describe the Corinthians, and the other group to do the same for those that describe Paul and the other missionaries. After about five minutes, allow someone from each group to read the words and phrases circled by their group.

7. Before proceeding to the last part of the focal text, tell the class that you have a question for them. Ask, “*Why does a father correct or punish his children?*” Encourage the students to think about that question as you read from the Bible text. Read 1 Corinthians 4:12b-14. Point out that Paul did not want to shame the Corinthians but that he wrote because they were his much-loved children. Mention that verse 15 is part of the background Scripture (not printed in the study guide), and read that verse from a Bible. Suggest that this shows how Paul thought of himself as the father of the Corinthian church because he had started it. He loved its members as if they were his children. Repeat the question asked above about why a father disciplines his children and lead the class to identify *love* as the reason Paul spoke so strongly to the Corinthians, like a father who is concerned about his children.

8. Request a class member to read the final verse from the focal text, 1 Corinthian 4:21. Use the last paragraph from “Returning Good for Evil” in the study guide to comment on this verse.

Encourage Application

9. Comment that the purpose of this lesson was to identify some of the biblical principles for a proper relationship of church leaders and members. Suggest that we can do that by looking back at the four lessons of this unit. Give a brief review of the unit and lessons, as follows:

Unit 1. Paul wrote to the church he started in Corinth about the disharmony that had developed there. His message is summarized, as follows:

Lesson 1. Getting along with other Christians results in unity of the church.

Lesson 2. Christians should remember the cross as the way to have a right relationship with God and other believers.

Lesson 3. New believers in Christ are like babies and must continue to grow toward spiritual maturity.

Lesson 4. The church’s work is accomplished when leaders and members act as servants to God and one another.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *Church Relationships.* Involve the class in a discussion. Ask, “*How should church leaders and members relate to one another?*” Begin by asking the students to describe the church as it is now-how leaders relate to members and how members think of their leaders. Help them identify problems that cause disharmony in the church. Remind the students of previous lesson in this unit in which the Corinthian church members had divided into groups to follow different leaders rather than to focus on Christ and the cross. Explain that in today’s study, the class will examine what Paul wrote about “Servant Leadership.”

2. *Leadership.* Comment that in the church, there are leaders and there are followers. Ask, “*Why does anyone want to become a leader in the church?*” Encourage the class members to respond, and lead them to name reasons such as: called by God; desire for power, fame, or recognition; wanting to serve others, etc. Remark that today’s study of 1 Corinthians 4

will help us to identify some of the biblical teachings regarding a proper relationship of church leaders and members.

Guide the Study

3. *Leadership.* Write on the chalkboard the question, “*What makes a good leader?*” Rephrase the question to ask what qualities or characteristics we look for in government or business leaders. Encourage the class members to name such things as honesty, morality, truthfulness, responsibility, reputation, appearance, influence, authority, sincerity, knowledge, ability, education, experience, dedication, attitude, loyalty, and other attributes of a good leader. List these on the chalkboard, if you wish, as they are named. You may want to discuss briefly how leaders often fail to meet these standards. Then switch to religious leaders. Question the class about what makes a good leader in the church. Observe that most of the same traits mentioned for secular leaders would apply as well to church leaders, but that church leaders face even higher expectations. Comment that Paul details some of these characteristics in today’s Bible text. Instruct the students to read 1 Corinthians 4: 1-14 and 21 silently, and to circle or underline any of the requirements Paul mentioned or suggested for a good leader. Allow them also to scan the study guide for help, as needed. Lead the class to identify such traits as servant spirit (v. 1), faithfulness (v. 2), primary responsibility to God (v.4), clear conscience (v. 4), not judgmental (v. 5), honoring God rather than people (v. 6), humble/not proud (v. 7), willing to sacrifice comfortable life if necessary (vv. 8-11), able to overlook criticism (v. 13), willing to speak out in truth (v. 14), and a gentle but persuasive nature (v. 21).

Teaching Guide

Unit 2 LIFE IN THE WORLD Lesson 5 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Lesson Focus

The class will summarize Paul's teachings on disciplined, moral living in the church and identify practical ways to apply them.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 5:1-11, 6:9-20

Background

1 Corinthians 5:1-6:20

Memory Verse

"God bought you with a great price. So honor God with your body. You belong to Him."—
1 Corinthians 6:20

Connect with Life

1. Write on a sheet of newsprint or poster board, "*Christians must live in the world, but they must not live in the ways of the world.*" Invite class members to comment on that statement by asking if it is true, partly true, or false. Ask, "*What are the ways of the world?*" After a few responses, question the students about how the Christian life should be different.

2. Introduce the new unit of study for the next three sessions using the unit introduction of the study guide. Mention that, like the previous unit, all of these lessons come from the book of 1 Corinthians.

Guide the Study

3. Recall how in this letter Paul first wrote to the Corinthians about the problem of disharmony in the church. Indicate that church

members had divided to follow different human leaders rather than to keep focusing on Christ. State that in today's Bible text, Paul addressed a new problem, that of how some members were hurting the church because of their sinful practices.

4. Invite the class to follow in the study guide as you read 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 from the Bible text. For commentary on the passage, ask a class member to read the section, "A Member's Shameful Sin," from the study guide. Add these further thoughts:

1. The sex sin of this man was so awful that even the people of this sinful city would not do it.
2. The woman who was "his father's wife" was probably not a member of the church since Paul mentioned no punishment for her.
3. Paul expressed hope that if the man was truly a believer, his spirit might somehow be saved on the Day of Judgment despite his sin.

5. Describe the process of how yeast added to bread dough causes it to rise, that is, to expand or grow larger. It might be helpful to bring samples of cake yeast and dry yeast to class to display.

6. Allow a class member to read 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. Request another to read "The Danger of Allowing Evil in the Church" from the study guide as a commentary on the passage.

7. Instruct the class to read silently 1 Corinthians 5:9-11, then "Relating to People Who Are Not Christians" in the study guide. Allow time for them to complete the reading, then read these case studies:

Pierre is not a Christian. He does not have much money, but tries to make people think he does. He makes deals, gambles, and looks for ways to make quick, easy money. When he has money, he shows off by buying his friends drinks at the bar.

Angela is a church member, but she is no angel. Everyone in the church knows that she does sex sins. They talk about her, but do nothing.

Alfonso is a young man who had never been in a church. He got caught stealing some things in a department store. It was his first time to steal, but he lived on the poor side of the city where stealing was common. He was sorry for what he did, but just wanted to have the things other people had.

After relating each case study, ask the class members who Paul said should judge that person, the church or God?

8. Briefly summarize Paul's comments in the background material (not included in the focal text) as follows:

1 Corinthians 5:12-13. Paul said more about how the church is not to judge people who are not Christians. God will do that. The church is to judge only church members who continue to sin.

1 Corinthians 6:1-8. It was wrong for believers to take disputes with other believers into the civil courts where the judges were not Christians. To do so only showed that Christians were cheating and doing wrong to one another, and that made the church look foolish before people who were not Christians.

9. The segment of focal text from Chapter 6 is somewhat long. Read it to the class yourself, or assign the task to an assistant. Before the reading, write on the chalkboard, "*The Body Is To Be Holy*," as a heading for the first section of the passage. Then read 1 Corinthians 6:9-14. Pause to write, "*The Body Belongs To The Lord*," as a heading for the second part of the passage, and read 1 Corinthians 6:15-20.

10. Enlist two class members to read comments on these passages from the study guide. Let the first read "The Body Is to Be Holy" and the second read "The Body Belongs to the Lord."

Encourage Application

11. Ask the students to summarize Paul's teachings on how believers are to live and act. Guide them through each of the main verse

groupings. Request that they try to identify the main thought from each grouping. Direct them to look at both the Bible text and related sections in the study guide. Lead them to recognize these basic teachings:

Verses 5:6-11. Sin is not to be allowed in the church.

Verses 6:9-14. A Christian's body and mind must be kept pure and holy.

Verses 6:15-20. We are to honor God with our bodies.

12. Guide the class in naming some practical ways they can apply Paul's teaching to their own lives. Help them to suggest such ways as regular Bible study, prayer, worship and fellowship with other Christians, placing limits on what TV and movies they watch, not being greedy or envious of other people's things, etc. To conclude, refer to and read the "Memory Verse."

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. *Leavening.* To demonstrate the difference between leavened and unleavened bread, bring samples of both types. Use loaf breads or rolls made with yeast as examples of leavened bread. Use crackers, pita bread, or tacos to represent unleavened bread. For an even greater impression, provide hot bread or donuts and/or an assortment of crackers, perhaps with cheese or dips, to illustrate leavened and unleavened bread types. Tie this in some way to the definition of unleavened in the word list and to 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 in the Bible text.

Guide the Study

2. *Recorded Bible reading.* Rather than read 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 (or any other passage) straight from the Bible or Bible text, for variety, play a tape recording of the Scripture passage made prior to the session by you or someone else.

3. *The Believer's Sin.* After reading 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 (Step 4 of the procedures), pose this question: "Why would a person guilty of such a terrible sex sin want to stay in the

church?” Broaden the question to include other types of unbelievable sin by a church member. For example, a man who beats his wife or children, someone who leads church members into an investment scheme that causes them to lose large amounts of money, or someone who gets angry often and uses very bad language. Lead the students in discussion of possible reasons such a person would not want to leave the church. Suggest, if no one else does, the possibility that the person may know deep down that he or she needs God’s salvation but is not able to break the habit of sin.

Encourage Application

4. *Patterns of Life.* Comment that people have a choice of how they live their lives. They can live in the ways of the world or in the ways of the Lord. Ask, “*What are some of the ways of the world?*” Encourage the class members to first name some ways of the world that lead people into sinful lives. Possible responses might include such factors as: television programs, movies, computer sites, video games, or magazines that include sex, hatred, or violence; gambling; desires for money and things; jealousy; wanting to have power or to be in control; feeling unimportant or unwanted by others; anger; or making friends with the wrong kinds of people. To encourage application, come back at the end of the study to the above list, and question the students about what a Christian can do to avoid these things that lead a person to sin. Bring out such factors as Bible study, prayer, choosing Christian friends, selecting clean and healthy activities, placing limits on the type of movies and television programs their families watch, etc.

Teaching Guide

Unit 2 LIFE IN THE WORLD

Lesson 6 MARRIAGE—GOOD? SINGLENES—GOOD?

Lesson Focus

The class will summarize the passage's teachings on marriage and singleness and identify ways to apply these teachings.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 7:1-17,25-35

Background

1 Corinthians 7:1-40

Memory Verse

"While you live in this world, live as if the world has no hold on you."—1 Corinthians 7:31a

Connect with Life

1. Take a poll of class members to determine how many are married and how many are single. Question the class about whether it is best to be married or single. Allow a few responses, but quickly move on to explain that the class will study in today's lesson what Paul had to say about the matter.

Guide the Study

2. Remind the class that this series of lessons is from the Book of 1 Corinthians. Mention the study theme and unit titles, and recall briefly the contents of the five previous lessons. Explain that Paul wrote this letter to the church in Corinth about things he had heard from some members of the Corinthian church who were in Ephesus (where he was living at that time) as well as in answer to some questions asked in a letter he received from the Corinthian church. Remark that in today's lesson, Paul answered the first of several questions the Corinthians had

asked in their letter.

3. Advise the class that there are two things we need to keep in mind as we study this lesson. Ask them to look at the introduction on the first page of the study guide and identify these two things. Let one class member identify the first factor (the early believers expected Jesus to return during their lifetime). Suggest that the Corinthians felt an urgency to tell others the Good News. Then request another class member to identify the second factor (most of what Paul said was his own opinion). Point out that Paul made it clear in the letter which words came from the Lord and which were his own thoughts.

4. Write on the chalkboard, "*It is good if a man does not get married.*" Ask, "*If this is the answer, what was the question?*" Encourage students to suggest a possible question, then turn back to the chalkboard. Directly under the answer previously written, write, "*Is it good if a man does not get married?*" Underline "It is" in the answer and "Is it" in the question to indicate how switching the place of the verb changes the sentence from a statement to a question. State that this is one possibility for the question asked by the Corinthians. Mention that the lesson writer offers another possible question under "Should We Marry or Not?" in the study guide. Note that in the first verse (1 Corinthians 7:1), Paul says, "You asked me some questions in your letter." Comment that we do not have a copy of the letter written by the Corinthians, so we can only guess what the questions were. Add that Chapter 7 of 1 Corinthians, however, is Paul's answer to those questions.

5. Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-9 as the class members follow the Bible text in the study guide. To involve the students in discussion, refer to the lesson title. First ask, "*Did Paul say it was good to*

be single?” Then ask, “*Did Paul say it was good to get married?*” Encourage them to look under the heading, “Should We Marry or Not?” in the study guide for help in answering these questions.

6. Read these questions to the class: (1) “*Should a man divorce his wife so that he can spend more time working for the Lord?*” (2) “*If a woman’s husband leaves her, should she marry another man?*” (3) “*If your spouse is not a Christian, should you get a divorce?*” Remark that, again, the Corinthians may have asked such questions as these in their letter to Paul. Comment that we will find Paul’s answers in the next part of the Bible text.

7. Ask a student or teaching assistant to read 1 Corinthians 7:10-17. Remind the class that, as noted earlier in the lesson (Step 3), only verses 10 and 11 came directly from the Lord. Reinforce the idea that the rest of Paul’s teachings in these verses were his own beliefs based on the knowledge and experience given to him by Christ. Mention also that, while Paul was very sure about some of his teachings, he often left room for the church and individual believers to prayerfully and carefully make their own decisions.

8. Remark that in verse 17, Paul makes the general rule that, whether single or married, every person should try to serve Christ in that same status. Mention that verses 18-24 (not printed in the study guide) just talk more about why people should stay as they are. Explain that in these verses perhaps Paul believed that Christ would return soon and that there was little time or reason for Christians to change their marital status.

9. Allow a class member to read 1 Corinthians 7:25-35. Question the class about what Paul is saying in these verses. Bring out that verses 31a (the “Memory Verse”) and 32a stress how Paul wanted Christians to not be tied down with problems and concerns of the world, but to be free to serve God’s purposes.

10. Use questions and discussion to guide the class to summarize Paul’s teachings in the lesson,

including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Both single life and marriage are good.
 - (2) Both single and married believers can serve the Lord.
 - (3) Marriage is a lifetime commitment between a man and a woman.
 - (4) Marriage is the only avenue for sexual relations.
 - (5) It is best to get married if you cannot control your sexual feelings.
 - (6) Marriage is a loving relationship in which both husband and wife are equal partners.
- Make a list of the teachings on the chalkboard or newsprint for use in Step 11 below.

Encourage Application

11. Involve the class in deciding how Paul’s teachings, as listed in Step 10, might be applied in the situations described below. Read:

- (1) *A young man is studying in a seminary (religious school) and wants to serve the Lord as a missionary. He is attracted to a girl who is a Christian but does not want to go to the mission field.*
- (2) *After an older man’s wife dies, he finds a woman his age who’s husband died two years earlier. They miss their former spouses, but are comfortable together and are thinking of getting married.*
- (3) *A Christian woman in her thirties is married to a man who is not a believer. The man is kind to her, and doesn’t object to her and their children going to church or church events, but he refuses to go with them.*
- (4) *A Christian businessman has a wife who does not work outside the home. He expects her to have sexual relations with him whenever he wants, even when she is tired or has a headache from her long day of cooking, cleaning house, and caring for the children.*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *E-mail.* Introduce the lesson in a modern context by relating this scenario: “Paul walked into his office one morning. He turned on his computer, sat down, and waited for it to warm

up. Then he clicked the mouse a couple of times and connected to the internet. He clicked the message board and heard the announcement, 'You have mail.' He saw that it was from his friends at the church in Corinth, and double-clicked to open the letter. He noted the subject, 'Questions about Marriage,' and began to read... Let your voice trail off, then pause for a moment. Explain that of course that is not the way it actually happened, but that the letter really came on a heavy scroll hand carried by someone from Corinth to Ephesus. State that the Corinthians did ask some questions about marriage, and that we will read about Paul's answers in the lesson today.

Guide the Study

2. *Study Groups.* (Replaces Steps 5-9 of the teaching procedures.) Divide the class into small study groups of 3-5 members to explore Paul's advice on whether to marry or stay single. Instruct each group to search the Bible text and lesson writer's comments in the study guide. Provide writing materials and direct them to make a list of the things Paul told the Corinthian believers to do or not to do regarding whether to marry or stay single. Allow 10-15 minutes for the research, then ask each group to mention one point identified by their group. Bring out any significant points of Paul's advice not mentioned by the groups.

3. *Stay Single or Marry?* Describe to the class how Paul obviously preferred to stay single, but clearly left open the option of marriage for others. First, question the group about the advantages and disadvantages of staying single. Then ask the same question about the advantages and disadvantages of getting married. Lead class members to understand that whether to marry or stay single is a personal decision based on the gifts God gives them and circumstances of their lives.

Teaching Guide

Unit 2 LIFE IN THE WORLD

Lesson 7 WRESTLING WITH LIFE'S GRAY AREAS

Lesson Focus

The class will identify principles from this passage for dealing with areas of life where the Christian choice is not obvious.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 9:19-26, 10:14-33

Background

1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1

Memory Verse

“So if you eat or drink or whatever you do, do everything to honor God.”—1 Corinthians 10:31

Connect with Life

1. Enlist someone to read or retell in their own words the explanation of a “gray area” given in the introduction to the study guide.
2. Ask one or two class members if they have ever worried about buying meat in a grocery store because they thought it might have been used as a gift in worship to a false god. Use their responses to help them understand that people in America are not likely to face such worries, though it may still be a problem in some parts of the world. Assert that it was a very real problem, though, to the early Christians who lived in cities where pagans regularly used animals as gifts in worship of false gods. Comment that it was a gray area to the Christians because it wasn't clear whether or not it was wrong.

Guide the Study

3. Pick two class members to read the first

section of the Bible text. Let one read 1 Corinthians 8:1-6 and the other read verses 7-13. Test the students' understanding of Chapter 8 with these questions:

- (1) What did Paul say made a person feel important?
- (2) What did Paul say really made a person strong and important to God?
- (3) If, as Paul said, there is only one God and the false gods are not really gods at all, what did it matter if Christians ate the meat used to honor the false gods?
- (4) According to Paul, when should a Christian not eat meat that has been used as a gift to false gods? Answers: (1) Knowledge, verse 1; (2) Love, verses 1 and 3; (3) It did not matter—there was no reason Christians could not eat the meat, verses 4-8; (4) When it causes another Christian to sin, verses 7-13.

6. Remark that in the first part of the Bible text (Chapter 8), Paul had been telling the Corinthian believers they should not insist on their personal rights which might be harmful to weaker Christians. Explain how in Chapter 9, Paul began to talk about four examples of rights and freedoms he himself had given up. Mention that in the first two examples (not in the focal text), he (1) gave up his right to have a wife and (2) had not accepted money or help for his preaching but worked (as a tentmaker) to earn his own way. State that in the next part of the Bible text for this lesson, Paul gave the last two examples of how he had given up his personal freedoms for God's work. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-26 From the Bible text. Note that the last two examples Paul told about here were how he (3) became like a slave to honor the cultures of either the Jews or pagans so that he could tell them the Good News of Christ (v.19-23), and (4) followed a strict discipline as if he were running hard to win an important race (v. 24-26). Emphasize that Paul gave up his rights and

freedom in order to help people know about God.

7. Urge the class members to follow in the Bible text as you read 1 Corinthians 9:19-26. Then ask a class member to read aloud "Free People Are Slave People" from the study guide as a commentary on the passage. Encourage the students to ask questions or make comments.

8. Remind the class of what they learned from the first part of the Bible text—that it was alright to eat meat purchased from meat markets in the city. Recall that the only reason Paul said a Christian should not eat such meat was when it might cause a weak Christian to sin. State that in the last part of the Bible text (1 Corinthians 10:14-33), Paul returned to the subject of eating meat given in the worship of false gods. Explain that this time he tells what a Christian must do in situations where meat is served at a pagan feast and when meat is served by a non-Christian who has invited you for a meal.

9. Separate the class into two work groups with these assignments:

Group 1. Read 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 and "Pagan Feast or the Lord's Supper?" in the study guide. Be ready to explain the difference between the Lord's Supper and a pagan feast and what Paul said about taking part in a pagan feast.

Group 2. Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-33 and "Shall We Accept the Invitation of a Non-Christian to Dinner?" in the study guide. Be ready to explain what Paul said about eating a meal served by a non-Christian and what the goal should be for eating or drinking or whatever you do.

Allow ten minutes for study, and then request that each work group make a report on its assignment. The response for Group 1 should reflect that the Lord's Supper honors God while pagan feasts honor demons and while there is nothing wrong with the meat itself, to take part in a pagan feast which honors demons is a sin against God. The report for Group 2 should indicate that it is okay to eat the meat unless someone tells you that it has been given in worship to false gods and the goal is to let whatever you eat or drink or whatever you do honor God.

Encourage Application

10. Comment that we know meat used in worship of false gods is not so much an issue today as it was in Paul's time. Establish the fact, though, that Christians today still wrestle with gray areas where there is no biblical teaching that tells us for sure that they are wrong. Invite the class to identify some of the "gray areas" that we encounter today. Recall the example of alcoholic drinks mentioned in the introduction to the study guide. Lead the students to name such gray areas as watching the wrong kinds of television or movies; listening to evil music; smoking; shopping, eating out or working on Sunday; buying lottery tickets; dancing; playing games that may sometimes (but not always) involve gambling; betting on horse races; getting body tattoos; wearing earrings in the nose, mouth, or body, or a male wearing an earring in only one ear; wearing tight-fitting or revealing clothing; using cosmetic make-up; and, so on.

11. Remark that the one rule we need to remember in all of our Christian activity is given in the "Memory Verse," 1 Corinthians 10:31, "So if you eat or drink or whatever you do, do everything to honor God."

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. **Title Terms.** Write the lesson title on the chalkboard. Underline the words, "Wrestling" and "Gray Areas." Define wrestling as fighting with the arms and legs (as opposed to boxing with closed hands, or fists). Explain that wrestling also means struggling in one's mind over a difficult thought, idea or decision, as it does in the lesson title. To illustrate the term gray areas, tape one black, one gray, and one white sheet of construction paper side by side on a focal wall. Point to and identify these individually as a black area, a white area, and lastly a gray area. Comment that if you mix black and white paint together, you get gray paint. Correlate this to something that is not clearly wrong nor right, but like a mixture of black and white becomes a gray area.

2. *Wrestling*. Enlist two teenage boys to illustrate the word *wrestling*. Let them sit across a small table and demonstrate arm wrestling. Or, allow them to do a mock wrestling match, being very careful and not rough-housing, but simply going through the motions enough to convey the concept of wrestling.

Guide the Study

3. *The Problem*. Before you begin the Bible study, relate to the class the nature of the problem in today's lesson. In their temples in Corinth, the pagans gave the meat of animals as a gift in worship to false gods. Only part of the meat was used by the priests and worshippers for a special meal in honor of their gods. Any meat left over was sold to the meat markets in the city where anyone could buy it. The Christians did not agree whether it was right to eat meat that had been bought in these markets because it may have been used as a gift given to the false gods. Some more mature Christians knew that it was okay to eat this meat because the false gods were not really alive, but these mature Christians were so "puffed up" with pride because of this knowledge that they felt superior. Those who were new or weak Christians may have worshipped in the pagan temples before they became believers. Their families and friends may still have worshipped in the pagan temples. To these new Christians, therefore, to eat the meat was to honor the false gods and was a sin against the one true God. Thus, when the Corinthian church members wrote Paul, they wanted to know what was right in this gray area.

Teaching Guide

Unit 3 LIFE IN THE CHURCH Lesson 8 WHAT OUR WORSHIP SAYS

Lesson Focus

The class will summarize Paul's teachings in this passage on women's and men's participation in worship and explain how these teachings apply to the church today.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Background

1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Memory Verse

"Woman was made from man, but man is born of woman. God made all things."—1 Corinthians 11:12

Connect with Life

1. Refresh the students' memories about what the group studied last week. Mention the title and theme of that lesson as "Wrestling with Life's Gray Areas." Suggest that there are also some gray areas in this week's lesson. Describe them as not only gray areas, but as *controversial* ones as well. Clarify the meaning of controversial as defined under the word study in the study guide. Mention that the controversial matter in today's lesson has to do with the place of men and women in the church.

2. Report that this lesson begins a new unit of study on "Life in the Church," and that there are at least two more lessons involving controversial matters in the unit. Refer to the unit introduction. Explain that Lessons 10 and 12 cover the controversial matters which have to do with the importance and use of spiritual gifts. Indicate that next week's lesson is about the proper way to take the Lord's supper. Note that

Lesson 11 is from 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter, one of the most beautiful passages of the Bible. Finally, note that Lesson 13 teaches that there is no hope without the resurrection of Christ and the hope promised to those who believe in Him.

Guide the Study

3. Identify Paul as the speaker, then read 1 Corinthians 11:2 to the class. Point out that Paul began very tactfully by saying something good about the Corinthian Christians. Confirm that they had indeed remembered Paul when they wrote him asking for his advice. Affirm too that they seem to have generally done well in following Paul's teachings.

4. Permit a class member to read 1 Corinthians 11:3 from the Bible text. Encourage student thought by asking, "What do you think Paul meant in this verse by his use of the word 'head?'"

5. Refer to the section, "God Is the Supreme Head," in the study guide. Call attention to the lesson writer's suggestion in the first paragraph of what verse 3 means. On the chalkboard, draw the two parallel lines on a horizontal plane. Define a horizontal line as one going across or side to side on the chalkboard or paper, as opposed to a vertical line which goes up and down. Explain that parallel lines always go the same direction and remain exactly the same distance apart. On the top line of the illustration, write "God" on the left side and "Christ" on the right side. On the bottom line, write "man/husband" on the left and "woman/wife" on the right. Point out that God and Christ are indeed on a higher plane than man and woman, but that man and woman are both on the same level.

6. Use the last two paragraphs of "God Is the Supreme Head" for further commentary on the

meaning of head. Emphasize that the word head was never used in the ancient world to mean boss or superior. That was not likely what Paul meant in verse 3. Emphasize that Paul was dealing with the proper way for women to lead in worship. Suggest that it does not appear he was saying men have authority over women.

7. Before reading 1 Corinthians 11:4-6, assign three listening teams to listen for answers to these questions:

Team 1. Paul's instructions in these verses are based on when a man or woman does what?

Team 2. Who did Paul say should have their heads covered when they pray or preach, and who should not?

Team 3. What does Paul say a woman should do if she is ashamed to have her hair cut off? Lead the students to these responses: Team 1. When a man or woman preaches or prays in public (v. 4-5); Team 2. Women's heads should be covered, but men's heads should not be covered when they pray or preach (v. 4-5); Team 3. He said that a woman who is ashamed to have her hair cut off (as the prostitutes did) should keep her head covered (v. 6).

8. Comment that in verses 4-6, Paul gave good advice to the Corinthian church members of that day. Explain that he told them basically to honor the customs of their country and people so that they did not give a bad impression to people who were not Christians. State that Christians believe that women no longer need to cover their heads in church, but that both women and men must avoid any form of dress or appearance that might reflect wrongly on the Christ they represent.

9. Appoint a member of the class to read aloud 1 Corinthians 11:7-12 from the Bible text. Then read from the study guide the first paragraph of "Man and Woman."

10. Let another class member read 1 Corinthians 11:13-16. Comment that Paul wanted the women of the Corinthian church to think of taking off their head coverings in church not as a sign of freedom and equality, but as taking away their worth and

value as women. Point out that Paul said in verse 15 that a woman's "hair is given to her as a covering." Remark that some theologians think this meant that women should wear a shawl, scarf, or veil to cover their heads during worship. Suggest the possibility, though, that verses 14 and 15, especially 15b, indicate he may have been talking all through this chapter about them wearing long hair as a covering for their heads—perhaps tied in a knot or bun on top of their heads.

Encourage Application

11. Ask one or two volunteers to summarize in a sentence or two the main point of Paul's teaching in the focal passage. Help them bring out the idea indicated in the "Lesson Focus" at the beginning of the lesson in this teaching guide.

12. Question the class about how Paul's teachings in this lesson apply to the church today. Try to draw out some positive ideas about how men and women can fulfill roles in worship without being controversial.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *Free Association Quiz*. Announce that you will call out several words, one at a time, and that you want members of the class to say the first word or idea that comes to mind. Choose several key words related to the lesson. For example, church, worship, man, woman, rib, head, husband, wife, equal, hair. Read out one word at a time and ask an assistant to write the word on the chalkboard or newsprint. Encourage at least two or three responses from the students for each word, but move along quickly. Direct the assistant to list the responses beside the key word. Explain that all of the words you called out relate in some way to the lesson today. As you proceed through the lesson, refer back from time to time to the key words and especially to any class responses that tie in to the lesson.

Guide the Study

2. *Memory Verse.* Write the “Memory Verse” on the chalkboard. Invite a volunteer to explain the meaning of the verse. Invite comments from class members and offer your own interpretation if needed. Refer to the section, “Man and Woman,” in the study guide for the lesson writer’s analysis of the interdependency of man and woman.

3. *Alternate Study Plan.* Read the entire focal text aloud. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 persons each. Instruct all groups to read through the study guide one section at a time and study the verses from the Bible text that go with it. After reading both Bible text and study guide for each verse or group of verses, direct the students to talk among themselves about the meaning of what Paul wrote to the Corinthian church members. After 15-20 minutes, reassemble the class and ask two questions: (1) *What was Paul trying to say to the Corinthians?* (2) *How does Paul’s advice apply to the church today?* Use information from the study guide, teaching procedures above, or Bible commentaries to further explain the passage.

Encourage Application

4. *Hair and Hair Coverings.* Involve class members in a discussion of how Paul’s advice to the Corinthian church members applies to your church today. Ask: (1) *How does Paul’s advice to the Corinthian church apply to churches today?* (2) *What hair styles or hair coverings would not be acceptable to Christians today, and why?* (3) *How would it affect you to see in the church a man with long, uncombed hair or a woman with short, bleached hair?*

Teaching Guide

Unit 3 LIFE IN THE CHURCH Lesson 9 IS THIS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Lesson Focus

The class will understand the meaning of the Lord's supper and the spirit in which it is to be taken.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 11:37-34

Background

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Memory Verse

"Every time you eat this bread and drink from this cup you are telling of the Lord's death until He comes again."—1 Corinthians 11:26

Connect with Life

1. Describe to the class this scene:

There is a big church meal where every family brings some food to be shared with everyone else "potluck" style. Three or four people hang around near the front of the serving line so that they can be first in line when the food is served. As they pass through the line, they load up their plates with the best food, grab their desserts, and sit down to eat. They gulp their food down in time to get back in line for seconds before some people have received their first servings. The last few people in line then have very little food left for them.

Question class members as to whether they have ever seen this happen and how it made them feel—especially if they happened to be one of those at the end of the line who didn't get enough to eat. State that, in the lesson today, we will study Paul's response to an even worse situation of in the church at Corinth.

Guide the Study

2. Enlist someone to represent Paul and do a dramatic reading (live or pre-recorded) of 1 Corinthians 11:17-22. Advise this person to read the passage with an obvious attitude of irritation and mild anger. Following the reading, question the class about why Paul was so angry with the Corinthians, was he justified in being upset, and what was happening to the fellowship of church members.
3. Cite the example of a proper response to differences of opinion in a church as described in the second paragraph under "More Problems at Corinth" in the study guide. Ask someone to read the paragraph aloud. Express approval of both the devoted Christian and the church membership for their positive attitudes in the matter. Then ask if this is a typical reaction when churches have differences and why or why not.
4. Request a member of the class to read the section, "A Meal Together and the Lord's Supper," from the study guide. Stress the fact that the Corinthian church members came together for two meals, a full meal followed by the Lord's supper. Describe how the rich members arrived early and ate until they were full, then the laborers and slaves, hungry after a hard day's work, came later and had little or no food to eat. Explain that Paul said this caused divisions--between the rich and the poor, no doubt. Comment that the Lord's supper is supposed to bring Christians together in a spirit of unity, but the way the Corinthians treated their fellow believers drove them apart instead. Point out that his solution was for them to eat their meals in their own homes first, then come together to celebrate the Lord's supper in unity.
5. Direct class members to follow the Bible text as you read 1 Corinthians 11:23-25. Then encourage all class members to read along with

you in unison as you read verse 26, which is the "Memory Verse" for this lesson. Use the study guide to comment briefly on the Lord's supper process, but be sensitive to the fact that some basic English students may be hearing this information for the first time. Encourage questions and discussion of this important sacrament.

6. Remark that Paul first described how the Corinthians had corrupted the Lord's supper, then he reminded them of its original meaning and purpose. Comment that in the next group of verses, Paul returned to the problem at Corinth. Ask a class member to read 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 from the Bible text to learn what Paul said. Use the section, "How the Lord's Supper Should Be Eaten," to explain the process of self-examination before taking the Lord's supper.

7. Note that Paul said in verse 28 to look into your own heart and life before you eat the bread and drink the cup. Ask, "What happens if you look and find something there that is not right?" Then say, "Paul tells us, beginning in verse 29..." Read verses 29-34 to the class. Explain that it is not clear what Paul means in verse 30—do people get sick and their bodies die, or is it their spirit that dies? Comment that it would be better to get right with the Lord and with our fellow Christians than to have to find out the hard way. State that in verses 33-34, Paul goes back to the matter of the divisions over eating their meals together. Point out that he repeated the advice he first gave in verse 32 to satisfy their hunger before they came together for the fellowship of the Lord's supper.

Encourage Application

8. Question the class as to what they now understand about the Lord's supper. Try to bring out answers to reflect the origin, the purpose, who should participate, the process, and the spirit of participation. It may be helpful if you can have a pastor or other knowledgeable person available at this time to help guide the discussion.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *Unequal Treatment.* Prearrange a demonstration of the type meals Paul described in 1 Corinthians 11:20-21. Set a somewhat lavish table off in a corner of the classroom. Provide an assortment of donuts, cookies, or other "goodies" for the three or four persons you have chosen to eat at the table—the teaching staff or possibly a small number of students. Keep the goodies hidden before the demonstration, and reserve enough for the entire class to share after the demonstration. Prepare also a small box, basket, or dish of dry, broken crackers, carrot sticks, or other less-desirable food—only a small quantity of it—for the rest of the class. Begin the demonstration by inviting the elite group to the table. Carelessly hand the less-desirable food to one of the non-elite group and ask that person to pass it around for everyone to share. Then serve the "goodies" to the elite group. Encourage them to eat and enjoy the food. Let the duration of the demonstration be short, and quickly explain that you wanted class members to experience the feelings of some members of the Corinthian church that the class will learn about in the lesson today. At this point, share the goodies with the rest of the class.

2. *Guest Speaker.* Invite your pastor to give a brief talk to the class about the origin, purpose, and methods of serving the Lord's Supper. Let the talk include information on who should participate, that non-Christians are welcome to observe and worship (but should not take part in the sacrament) along with church members, etc. This will not only help teach the lesson, but will provide an opportunity for the pastor to become acquainted with the class and students. If the pastor is not available, check on the availability of a retired pastor or other qualified minister to do this.

Guide the Study

3. *Dinner Parties.* Describe to the class the typical setting for the Lord's supper in ancient Corinth as follows. Because churches did not yet have buildings in which they could meet for worship and fellowship, the Lord's supper took place in the private home of a member. A full

meal was served, followed by the Lord's supper. The host for the gathering was likely one of the rich members of the church. A rich person's home in ancient Corinth would have had a dining room large enough for only nine or ten persons who would recline around the table. Another thirty or forty guests could sit or stand in a space outside the dining room to eat. The host's wealthy friends would no doubt be invited to eat in the dining room, where the best and most food would be served. These special guests had the freedom to arrive early and eat their fill. The poorer workers, delayed by their work, would be placed outside and receive less food-perhaps the table scraps from inside.

Encourage Application

4. *Looking at the Lord's Supper.* Read this summary of how one should look at the Lord's supper:

Look back-to how Christ died for your sins.

Look in-to be sure your spirit is right with the Lord.

Look up-in fellowship with God.

Look around-in fellowship with other believers.

Look forward-to the return of Christ.

Look outward-to tell others the Good News.

Teaching Guide

Unit 3 LIFE IN THE CHURCH

Lesson 10 YOU ARE GIFTED

Lesson Focus

The class members will understand how the Holy Spirit gives different spiritual gifts to each Christian and how these gifts are to be used for their common good in building up the church.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 12:4-31

Background

1 Corinthians 12:1-31

Memory Verse

“You are all a part of the body of Christ.”—1 Corinthians 11:26

Connect with Life

1. Call on a student by name and say, “*Tell me what things you can do with your hand.*” Let the student name such actions as write, hold, point, scratch, wave, clap, pull, push, pat, wash, place, put, pick, wiggle, shake, slap, hit, pet, rub, etc. When the student seems to be at a loss to name another use of the hand, ask if that is a complete list of things that a person can do with the hand. Whether the student answers “yes” or “no,” comment that it’s no easy task to identify all the things you can do with the hand. Point out that the student has named some, but not all uses of the hand. To verify this, name two or three other uses not mentioned by the student.
2. With a quizzical look, ask if one hand can do all the things mentioned without the other; for example, can you clap with only one hand? Next, ask if the hand can do things without the arm. Finally, inquire if the hand can see, hear, kick, or think. Explain that the parts of the body

must work together as one in order to do all these things. State that in the Bible text we will study today, Paul describes how all of the members of the church must use gifts received from the Holy Spirit and work together as a body to get things done for the Lord.

Guide the Study

3. Enlist the aid of a class member or teaching assistant to aid you in doing a responsive reading of 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. Provide a copy of the Bible text for this person on which you have underlined or highlighted the six sentences (in verses 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and all of verse 11) which make statements to the effect that an action is by the same Holy Spirit, God, or Lord. Then as you read all other portions of the text, direct the other person to read the underlined or highlighted sentences responsively, including all of verse 11, stressing the word same in each of these verses.
4. Call attention to mention of the same God (v. 6), same Lord (v. 5), and same Holy Spirit (v. 4, 7, etc.), and identify this as the Trinity defined in the word list in the study guide. Point out also that the same Holy Spirit gave all spiritual gifts, so that no one gift is better than any of the other gifts.
5. Raise these questions: “*What are spiritual gifts?*” “*When do we get them?*” and “*How many such gifts are there?*” State that answers to these questions can be found under the section, “There Are Many Spiritual Gifts,” in the study guide. Allow a minute or two for the class members to read through this section silently. Follow up with questions and discussion as needed. Compare Paul’s list of spiritual gifts to the list of uses for the hand given at the beginning of the session (Step 1 above). State that neither list was complete, and that Paul simply mentioned the first few spiritual gifts that came into his mind.

6. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 to the class, or allow a student who is a good reader to do it. Recall the activity at the beginning of the class (Step 2 above), and express the truth that all parts of the body are needed—some for one purpose and others for different purposes—and that all parts work together as one body. Note how verses 12 and 13 compare the human body to a church body which also has many members working together, each using his or her own spiritual gifts, and all of whom work together as one church body.

7. Request a class member to read 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 from the Bible text. Read or put into your own words the section in the study guide entitled, “The Body of Christ.”

Encourage Application

8. Encourage two or three volunteers to tell you and the class something about spiritual gifts—especially something new they learned during this study. Comment briefly on responses, as needed.

9. Summarize Paul’s teachings on spiritual gifts, as follows:

1. Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit at the time we become Christians.
2. Every believer receives one or more spiritual gifts.
3. No one gift is more important than another.
4. All believers are part of the body of Christ, the church.
5. We are all to use our gifts to serve and build up one another.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *The Holy Spirit.* Enlist someone to read the introduction at the beginning of the study guide to explain the nature and work of the Holy Spirit (the giver of spiritual gifts) and the concept of the Trinity as defined in the word study.

2. *His Gift.* Tell this story: *A simple man in a small country church who came to the church every Saturday. He swept the floors, dusted the furniture, cleaned the restrooms, and carried out*

the trash so that the church would be spotless when the members came for the Sunday services. He never received pay for this work. One day, someone asked him why he did this so faithfully every week, year after year. “Well,” answered the man, “I can’t preach, and I can’t teach, and I can’t work miracles, but I can do a pretty good job of cleaning the Lord’s house every week and so that’s what I do.”

Comment that “the gift of cleaning” is not mentioned in any of the lists of spiritual gifts in the Bible. Question the class about whether they think this man had a spiritual gift, how 1 Corinthians 12:5 applies to this situation, and how important the man’s spiritual gift is to the Lord when compared to the gifts of the church’s pastor.

Guide the Study

3. *True or False Quiz.* Use this True or False Quiz as a method for individual or group study of 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and the study guide section, “There Are Many Spiritual Gifts.”

Make copies of the quiz for each class member or a copy for each small group of 3-5 persons to answer as a team. Or, simply read the statements one by one to the entire class and allow volunteers to answer True or False.

True or False Quiz

- (1) Some believers do not receive a spiritual gift.
- (2) All gifts are given by the same Holy Spirit.
- (3) The nine gifts Paul mentioned in these verses is a complete list of spiritual gifts.
- (4) A believer who has the gift of preaching is no more important than one who has some other gift.
- (5) The Holy Spirit works in each person in one way or another for the good of all.

Answers: (1) False—verses 6b and 7, (2) True—verses 4b and 7, (3) False—other gifts are listed in Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Peter 4:10-11 and there is no indication in the Bible that all of these passages together are a complete list, (5) True—verse 7.

Encourage Application

3. *Showing the Pain, Showing the Joy.* Let a

class member read 1 Corinthians 12:26 from the Bible text. Question the class as to how they see the effects of this verse in their church or in your Bible study group. Encourage them to think first of how, when one part of the human body hurts, other parts of the body feel the pain. Then, explain how when someone in your church or group has sadness or pain, other members of the church or group feel that sadness or pain, too. Explain that the same is true when there is joy. That is, when one person feels joy, others in the church or group feel it, too.

4. *Memory Verse.* Write the “Memory Verse,” 1 Corinthians 12:27, on the chalkboard. Lead the class to read the verse together in unison. Ask a volunteer to explain from the study today what this verse means. Help this person bring out that all Christians have spiritual gifts and all believers are to use their gifts for the common good in building up the church.

Teaching Guide

Unit 3 LIFE IN THE CHURCH Lesson 11 *THE GREATEST WAY TO LIVE*

Lesson Focus

The class will describe the differences that the consistent practice of God's kind of love could make in their church, family, and lives.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Background

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Memory Verse

"And now we have these three: faith and hope and love, but the greatest of these is love."—1 Corinthians 13:13

Connect with Life

1. Look briefly straight at two or three class members, and then finally settle your eyes on one. Ask that person what would happen if he or she got up one morning and all through that day, to everyone she or he met, showed nothing but love. Explain that the love you are talking about is not the boy-girl kind of love, nor the kind of love between members of a family, nor even the kind of love you have for a close friend. State that you have in mind the kind of love God has for us—the kind of love He showed when He allowed His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us. This is the kind of love that shows kindness, understanding, forgiveness, and concern for everyone whether friend or enemy. Go a step further and express that this kind of love does not get jealous, has no pride, shows no anger, doesn't have hard feelings against anyone, and is not happy with any kind of sin. Repeat your original question to the class member and ask what would happen if a person showed that

kind of love to people at home, at school, at work, and everywhere he or she went all through the day. Allow the chosen person to answer, and then let others suggest what might happen in response to such a demonstration of love.

2. Comment that the kind of love we have been talking about is called agape, which is defined in the word study for this lesson. Refer also to the introduction to the lesson in the study guide. Point out how the first paragraph of this introduction connects this lesson in Chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians to last week's lesson in Chapter 12 on spiritual gifts. State that the last paragraph of the introduction talks about agape love first, then of how Jesus summarized the Ten Commandments and all of the Jewish Law into two short sentences—the Law of Love.

Guide the Study

3. Describe how the Corinthian church members thought it was important to have certain spiritual gifts—especially to be able to speak in special sounds, to have great knowledge and understanding, or to be able to speak with great authority. Then say, "*Listen to what Paul told them.*" Read from the Bible text 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. Offer these comments:
Verse 1. Paul was talking about the gift of special sounds, the subject of next week's lesson. The languages of humans or angels spoken without love sounded like the loud noises made by gongs or cymbals in pagan temples.
Verse 2. Next, Paul spoke about preaching with such power and authority that people would want to listen and do as you say. Notice how he said that to understand all secrets and *know all things* and even have the faith to move mountains—even if one person could have all that—without love it would be worthless.
Verse 3. Finally, Paul said that even to give everything you own to the poor or even to give

your life for the good of others, if you did not do so because of love, would be nothing.

4. Involve the entire class in reading 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 from the Bible text. Explain that you will read each sentence first, and then the entire class will read the same sentence again in unison. (The passage is a series of short, simple sentences, and should have an echo effect when read in this manner.)

5. Comment that Paul wrote about as many things love was not as he did about what love was. Remind the class that he wrote this letter to members of the church in the sinful city of Corinth. Point out that the things Paul said love was not—jealousy, pride, boasting, thinking only of themselves, acting rudely toward others, allowing sin to go on in the church, and having bad feelings against other members of the church—were the very things the Corinthian church was guilty of doing. Explain that he was simply reminding them that this was not God’s way of love.

6. To involve the students in a discussion of verses 4-7, question them about how they think we as a class or as a church measure up to Paul’s standard of agape love. Comment that agape love is not just a feeling, but that is something that we learn slowly and must constantly work on so that it becomes a habit or a way of life. Suggest to the class that they read through verses 4-7 again silently to see what things they personally need to improve on to better reflect God’s agape love in their lives. Allow a few moments for them to do this before proceeding to the next segment of the focal passage.

7. Select a class member to read 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 from the Bible text. After the reading, recall some of the things you did as a child—games you played, places you went, or experiences you had. Describe how these were real to you then, but that they now seem more like a dream, or as Paul said, looking in a broken mirror. Remark that when everything is perfect, we will look back at these times as if they were a dream or an image in a cracked mirror that doesn’t allow you to see

clearly. Suggest that when that perfect time comes, we will look back at these times in the same way we now look back to our childhood days. Say, “*But for now, we must live for the present.*” State that 1 Corinthians 13:13, the “Memory Verse.” Say, “*And now, we have these three: faith and hope and love, and the greatest of these is love.*”

Encourage Application

8. Recite the main focus of this lesson, “*The greatest way to live is to practice God’s kind of love.*” Ask, “*What is God’s kind of love?*” Then reread 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 to give a verbal picture of His love.

9. Say, “*Love starts with you and me.*” Then question the class about what differences the consistent practice of God’s kind of love would make in their church, their families, and their lives.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *The Language of Love.* Question the students about the languages they speak. Determine how many different languages are spoken in the class. Ask if any of these languages can be understood around the world. Use English as an example, and note that while a few people may speak English in any part of the world, it is not generally understood outside of English-speaking countries. State that in many remote villages, most of the people speak only their local or tribal languages which often do not even have a written alphabet. When it has been established that there is indeed no spoken language that is universally understood, ask, “*What about the language of love?*” Lead the class to understand that love, while not a spoken language, is an action that can be seen, felt, and understood by all the people of the world. Comment that today’s lesson is about a special kind of love. Use the word study definition of agape to introduce God’s kind of love.

Guide the Study

2. *Four Kinds of Love.* State that our word love has several different meanings. Indicate that the Greek language of Paul's lifetime had a least four words to express the different kinds of love, as follows:

agape. The highest form of love; the perfect love of God that keeps on giving of itself.

storge. Family love and affection; the feeling between a parent and a child or brothers and sisters.

philia. Friendship; an especially close relationship between people.

eros. Physical attraction; sexual love.

Point out that only agape love is unconditional and keeps on going. Explain that the other three kinds of love require love in return, and that if this return love is not received, bad feelings often replace the good feelings of love.

Encourage Application

3. *Real-life Examples.* After reading 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, encourage the class to identify real-life examples of people who show agape love in their lives. Explain that these can be persons who are well-known or that they know personally or have read about, but discourage mention of anyone in the class to avoid embarrassment. Encourage participants to describe what characteristics from the Bible text they see in the real-life persons named.

Teaching Guide

Unit 3 LIFE IN THE CHURCH

Lesson 12 PROCLAIMING JESUS

Lesson Focus

The class will contrast the relative importance of speaking God's Word and speaking in special sounds.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 14:1-25

Background

1 Corinthians 14:1-25

Memory Verse

"Since you want gifts from the Holy Spirit, ask for those that will build up the whole church."—1 Corinthians 14:12

Connect with Life

1. Open a discussion about competitive sports by asking if anyone has ever been to or watched on television the Olympic Games or any other kind of sports. Question them about what the teams or individuals all want to do and why they play. Lead them to the conclusion that all the players and teams try to win—that they all want to be in first place when the game, contest, or season is over.

2. Call attention to the lesson title, "Proclaiming Jesus." State that in the lesson today we will learn from Paul that, if any spiritual gift deserves first place, the honor should go to the gift of proclaiming, or telling others, about Jesus.

Guide the Study

3. Name five students to each read aloud, in order, one verse of 1 Corinthians 14:1-5 in the study guide. After each verse, make brief

comments, as follows:

Verse 1. The first part of this verse reminded the Corinthians to choose the way of love as we studied in last week's lesson. The second part told them to eagerly desire the spiritual gifts, especially the one of speaking God's Word, or proclaiming Jesus.

Verse 2. The Corinthian church members who had the gift of speaking in special sounds (speaking in tongues) thought that this ability of speak in heavenly languages was a sign of their greater spiritual power and maturity. Paul pointed out that speaking in special sounds did not help the church, but only the individual.

Verse 3. Paul explained why it is better to have the gift of speaking God's Word. It was because men, or people, could understand it. They could learn from it, receive encouragement and strength from it, and be comforted by it.

Verse 4. The one who speaks in special sounds is himself built up, but not the church. Whereas, the one who speaks God's Word, or proclaims Jesus, builds up not only himself but the whole church.

Verse 5. Paul confirmed that speaking in special sounds (or tongues) was a true spiritual gift and, in fact, he wished everyone had it. But unless the one speaking in special sounds could also put it into intelligible words, the church would not be helped at all. So Paul thought the better gift was the gift of speaking God's Word, or proclaiming Jesus.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 14:6-12 to the class. After reading the passage, identify three things Paul compared with speaking in secret sounds:
(1) A musical instrument (v. 7). A person playing music can't just play any sound he wants, but must play a tune that follows a pattern of notes and has a certain order to it. Though Paul did not say so, a group of people playing music on different instruments must all play the same tune or they will make noise rather than music. Likewise, Christians must be "in tune" to build up the church.

(2) A call to battle (v. 8). If a soldier blows a horn to call an army into battle, it must clearly be the right sound. If the horn makes the wrong sounds, the soldiers will not know what to do. They will be confused. In the same way, Christians may be called to serve the Lord by the clear message of someone proclaiming Jesus, but will only be confused by someone speaking in strange sounds.

(3) Different languages (v. 10-11). There are many languages in the world, but we cannot talk with someone whose language we do not understand, so we are strangers to one another. Not being able to understand someone in the church who speaks in strange sounds will also make them strangers to us.

5. Ask, *“If you have the gift of speaking in special sounds, how can it help other church members? How can it help people who are not Christians?”* Without waiting for answers, read 1 Corinthians 14:13-17. Summarize by explaining that the special sounds must be put into a language that everyone can understand in order for them to worship along with you.

6. Question the class as to whether they can speak 10,000 words...in any language. Listen to responses, then conclude that whether or not you can speak that many. 10,000 is a lot of words. Direct the class members to follow along in the Bible text as you read 1 Corinthians 14:18-22 aloud. Remark that Paul admitted he spoke in special sounds himself and thanked God for that gift, but then he said that to speak the special sounds in a worship service with others who do not understand them is childish and immature.

Encourage Application

7. Request a volunteer from the class to read the last part of the Bible text, 1 Corinthians 14:23-25. Then ask, *“According to Paul, which gets first place, speaking in special sounds or proclaiming Jesus?”* Lead the class to identify proclaiming Jesus, or speaking God’s Word, as winner of the first place prize.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *Music.* Enlist someone who plays a musical instrument to make an appearance at the beginning of the class for a demonstration of 1 Corinthians 14:7. Introduce the musician and invite this person to play something for the class. At that point, by prearrangement, the musician will make random, unorganized sounds, more like noise than music. Play the clown as in a comedy skit and say something like, *“No. No. That’s not right! I want you to play music—a beautiful melody—something that has order to it.”* The musician, with a look of sudden understanding will then play a soft, pleasant piece of music for the class. Afterward, explain to the class that this demonstration will help them understand what Paul means when we get to verse 7 of the Bible text for today’s lesson. (Alternately, you could reserve the last part of the demonstration, the real music, for use as an “Encourage Application” activity, explaining that the music shows the order Paul wanted for the church in its worship rather than just noises with no order.)

2. *Languages.* Prearrange for two or three people who have Bibles printed in different foreign languages (or even different versions of English-language Bibles) to bring them to class. Instruct them to all begin at the same time, on cue, reading 1 Corinthians 14. Advise them to begin in normal voices, gradually raising their voices as if they were competing for attention. Allow the reading to proceed just far enough to show the futility of such reading, then call a stop to it. Question the students about what they learned from this Bible reading. Then explain that Paul wrote to the Corinthians about speaking in special sounds, or languages that other church members could not understand. Remark that we will learn what Paul told them in our lesson today.

Guide the Study

3. *Two Gifts.* Give this explanation of the two

spiritual gifts which are the subjects of today's lesson:

Speaking God's Word is also called prophecy. It is spoken in intelligible words in any of the languages of the world. It uses words that have meaning and are put together in a way that people understand. Speaking God's Word is how Christians who have this gift, with God's help, tell the Good News of Jesus Christ to others. It is a way for God's message to be told to both Christians and people who are not Christians. Christians who are not preachers or teachers may also receive this gift from the Holy Spirit.

Speaking in special sounds is also called speaking in tongues. It is a form of speech that is given to some Christians by the Holy Spirit. The special sounds are *not* spoken with intelligible words. They are spoken to God, not to people. They are a way of giving praise and thanksgiving to God. Speaking in special sounds is not the same as speaking a foreign language. Not even people who speak in special sounds can understand what they have said unless they pray for and receive the gift of understanding so that they can tell others what the special sounds mean. While speaking special sounds, the person's speech is not guided by the mind as it is in normal speech, but by the Holy Spirit. The one who speaks in special sounds, however, can control the use of this gift so that it does not suddenly burst forth in the middle of a worship service when others are speaking.

Teaching Guide

Unit 3 LIFE IN THE CHURCH

Lesson 13 RESURRECTION HOPE

Lesson Focus

The class will understand Paul's teachings on Jesus' resurrection and their own need to be ready for the Lord's return.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 15:3-20, 35-44, 50-57

Background

1 Corinthians 15:1-58

Memory Verse

"Our human bodies that can die must be changed into bodies that will never die."—1 Corinthians 15:53b

Connect with Life

1. Write on the chalkboard, "*What is your greatest fear?*" Read the question aloud and encourage responses. Mention that some persons have special fears of things like heights, flying in an airplane, or of being closed in. Comment that people fear many things, such as losing their job, having a serious illness or accident, losing their home, being hungry, or being robbed. Identify death as the one thing people seem to fear most.

2. Erase the word fear from the chalk board and write the word hope in its place. Read the new question, "*What is your greatest hope?*" Encourage the students to express some of their hopes. Affirm that we hope for many things in life, and that it is okay to wish for health and good fortune. Then state that your greatest hope as a Christian is to have life after death, or life that lasts forever. Assert that we have no such hope, though, without believing that Jesus lived,

that He died on the cross, and that He was resurrected. Although the words resurrected and resurrection may have been introduced in previous studies, be sure your students understand the meanings of these words.

Guide the Study

3. Announce that this is the last of the lessons for this unit on "Life in the Church" and the last of this series of lessons from the Book of 1 Corinthians. Remark that the question we will try to answer today, with help from Paul's letter to the Corinthians, is, "What hope do we have of being resurrected from the dead?"

4. Indicate that Paul began where he almost always did, with the Good News he preached at every opportunity. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-2, which is not included in the focal text, but is quoted below:

"Christian brothers, I want to tell the Good News to you again. It is the same as I preached to you before. You received it and your faith has been made strong by it. ²This is what I preached to you. You are saved from the punishment of sin by the Good News if you keep hold of it, unless your faith was worth nothing." (NLV)

5. Restate from verse 2 these words, "*You are saved...by the Good News.*" Ask, "*What is the Good News?*" Advise students to look at 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 in the Bible text for the answer. Encourage them to identify the three elements of the Good News. If help is needed, refer to the first sentence under "Jesus Was Raised from the Dead" in the study guide.

6. Remark, "*If you have any doubts that Christ was raised from the dead, listen to this...*" Then read 1 Corinthians 15:5-11. Comment that many people saw Jesus when He died on the cross and again after the resurrection. Note also that Paul

was very sorry that he made it so hard for God's church (v. 9), but remind the class that Paul was raised as a Jew and that most Jews of that day did not accept that Jesus was the Christ or Messiah. Add that God chose Paul to be a missionary, and that His loving-kindness was not wasted because Paul worked harder than all the other missionaries (v. 10).

7. Let a class member read 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 from the Bible text. Comment that Paul made it clear that the resurrection of Christ was real, that everyone who believes the Good News will be resurrected too, and that otherwise there is no hope in Christ and we will all die in sin.

8. Question the class members briefly about what they think our bodies will be like after we are resurrected to the new life with Christ. Advise them that Paul gave the Corinthians-and us-some help on that question. Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-44 aloud as the class members follow the Bible text in the study guide. Then let someone read the first five paragraphs of the study guide section, "How Can This Happen and What Kind of Body Will It Be?"

9. Assign three of your better readers to take part in a choral reading of 1 Corinthians 15:50-57. Mark copies of the Bible text to indicate the parts to be read, as follows:

Leader: Verses 50, 54a (through "... happen. They said..."), and 57.

Reader One: Verses 51 and 54b (after "They said...").

Reader Two: Verses 52 and 55).

Reader Three: Verses 53a and 56.

All (the leader and all three readers in unison, or the entire class in unison): Verse 53b, the "Memory Verse").

Be sure that the three readers understand their participation in the choral reading. As leader, begin reading verse 50, and the others should read their parts in verse sequence through verse 57.

Encourage Application

10. Request a volunteer to read the section, "What Happens If Christ Returns Before We Die?" from

the study guide.

11. Recall the activity (Step 1) at the beginning of the session in which death was mentioned as the thing people seem to fear most. Question class members as to whether this lesson has made them any less fearful of death since, for Christians, there is hope for new life after our human bodies die. Ask, "*Is there anything you need to do now to be ready for the Lord's return?*"

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

1. *Life After Death.* Say to the class, "*Suppose that you woke up one day and found that you were in a different place. Everything looked bright and beautiful. The streets were paved with gold, and all that you saw was glittering and shiny. You could sense that peace and love were everywhere. Off in the distance, you could see a peaceful green meadow with lions and lambs lying side by side. Imagine that your body felt different-there were no aches or pains, and you felt lighter and so happy inside. Filled with wonder and joy, you felt like singing praises to God.*" Pause for a moment, then ask, "*What would you think? Where would you think you were? How would you think you got there? Or, would you think you were still asleep and just dreaming?*" Encourage the students to suggest answers to the questions, and use their responses to state that this is what many people see as the way life that lasts forever (eternal life) will be like. Emphasize that we don't really know much about what heaven will be like, but that this description may not be far from right. Explain that we are going to learn in the Bible study today what Paul said we need to believe in the hope of reaching such a happy place some day.

Guide the Study

2. *Bodies.* Write the following statement and choices on the chalkboard:

When Christians die and are later raised to new life (resurrected)...

...they will still have the same bodies as they did

before they died.

...they will have different bodies.

...only their souls will be raised to new life and they will have no bodies.

Question the students about which ending to the sentence they believe is the correct one. After the responses, ask a class member to read the “Memory Verse.” Then ask if anyone wishes to change his or her choice of endings. Suggest that Paul indicates that we will have a new body that is different from our old, earthly bodies. Compare the old and new bodies, as follows:

1. The old body will die, but the new one will never die. (v. 42, 53)
2. The old body has no greatness, but the new one will be raised with shining-greatness. (v. 43)
3. The old body is weak, but the new one will be raised with power. (v. 43)
4. The old body is made of flesh and blood, but the new one will be God-like. (v. 44, 50)
5. The old body is sinful, but in the new one Christ will give us power over sin. (v. 57)

Remind the class that the only way to be saved to the new life is by putting your trust in Jesus.

3. *Summary Statement.* Write on the chalkboard, “Christianity lives or dies with the truth of Christ’s resurrection.” Involve the class in a discussion of whether this statement is true or not, why it is true, and how it should affect our lives.

Encourage Application

4. *Self-examination.* Encourage the class members to listen as you read the “Things to Think About” section from the study guide. Pause for a moment after each item to allow time for personal reflection by the students.