

## Introduction

One of the things that Karen and I pray about in our morning prayer time is our children and grandchildren. We love our children, and we want the very best for them. We pray for any health or other issues that they are dealing with. We also pray for them to walk in truth. The apostle John wrote that he had no greater joy than to see his children walking in truth. He also wrote that he wanted them to prosper and be in good health, just as their soul also prospers. We identify with John's desires and prayers for children and spiritual children to prosper and walk in truth.

(3 John 2–4) “Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers. {3} For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. {4} I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.”

The apostle Paul felt the same way about his spiritual children. In 1 Cor 4:15, Paul said, “For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.” Paul was the spiritual father of the believers in Corinth, and he was the apostle that had planted the Corinthian church. He had heard that there was strife and immorality in the church in Corinth, and he grieved over the church. Paul wanted to see the church walking in truth and prospering. So, Paul prayed regularly for them, and he communicated with them. He wrote three or four letters, and 1 Corinthians is his second letter to them. In his first letter, which is not included in the canon of Scripture, he wrote to them “not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler – not even to eat with such a one.” As a spiritual father, Paul wanted his children to walk in truth.

(1 Cor 4:15) “For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.”

(1 Cor 5:11) “But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.”

Last week, we covered Part 1 of the Introduction. We looked at Paul, the author of the letter, and Sosthenes, who penned the letter for Paul. We looked at the planting of the Corinthian church in Acts 18, and saw that Sosthenes was the leader of the synagogue in Corinth, and was beaten by the Jews to try and get Gallio, the proconsul, to judge Paul. We also looked at Paul's life and calling as an apostle. This morning, we will be covering Part 2 of the introduction to 1 Corinthians, which is about who the letter is addressed to, and Paul's greeting.

### Introduction to 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 1:1-3)

1. Author(s) of the letter (Part 1)
2. Recipients of the letter (Part 2)
3. Paul's Greeting (Part 2)

(1 Cor 1:1–3) “Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, {2} To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: {3} Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

## 2. Recipients of the letter (1 Cor 1:2)

### a. Corinth

In verse two, we find that the letter was written to the church of God which is at Corinth. I want to give some background on Corinth. Then, I want to look at church. Finally, I want to look at the word saints.

(1 Cor 1:2) “To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:”

Corinth was in the part of ancient Greece called Achaia. In 400 BC, it had a population of about 400,000 people and was the largest city. In 146 BC, the Romans fought and captured Corinth. Lucius Mummius, the Roman commander, killed all the men and sold the women and children into slavery, and then burned the city. In 44 BC, Julius Caesar, refounded the city as Colonia Laus Iulia Corinthiensis, which means the colony of Corinth in honor of Julius. Julius brought in people from everywhere, and it became populated with Greeks, Romans, and Jews. At the time Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthians, it had reached a population of about 90,000, which was five times larger than Athens.

Why was Corinth so important? One of the main reasons for its size and growth was its location. There is an isthmus that connects the mainland to Achaia. The isthmus is four miles wide and the Corinthian Gulf is on the northwest side and the Saronic Gulf is on the southeast side. The area is called the Peloponnese, and the travel route around the Peloponnese was very treacherous. There was an ancient saying among the sailors that if you made it around the Peloponnese twice, you should go home, meaning that your luck was probably used up. So, there were two ports on either side of this isthmus, Lechaion on the Gulf of Corinth, and Cenchrea on the Saronic Gulf side. Ships wanting to travel east to west would elect to go to one of these two ports, unload their cargo, and then transport the ship and cargo by land across the four miles, and then reconvene their travel. That paved road between the two ports was called a diolkos, and there was some sort of track that was used to pull the ships across the isthmus. In the 1800’s a canal was built and ships can now cross the isthmus on the canal. So, Corinth was a strategic place that controlled both of these ports. It became very wealthy from all the shipping that went through it.

There were six major temples in Corinth, all to various gods or idols. The temple of Aphrodite was the largest and it was in the heights above the city of Corinth. Aphrodite was the goddess of love. The temple of Poseidon, the ruler of the sea, was also very famous. The temple of Apollo, the god of archery, stood on a hill overlooking the main forum in the city. In addition to these, there were temples to Apollo, Venus-Fortuna, Isis, Pantheon, and Demeter. In addition to the temples, there were numerous shrines dedicated to various gods. It was a pagan and idolatrous city. In 1 Corinthians 8:5-6, Paul alludes to this, “For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.”

(1 Cor 8:5–6) “For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, {6} yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.”

Corinth was also a very immoral city. There was a Greek word formed out of the name of Corinth, *korinthiazomai*, which means fornication. To Corinthianize meant to become sexually immoral. The temple of Aphrodite was the largest and most well-known. The worship of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, included sexual encounters. To facilitate that, there were over 1,000 temple prostitutes, both male and female, with the majority of them being female sex slaves. The temple of Aphrodite drew people from all over the Roman Empire. Idolatrous worship and sacrifices to idols were a normal way of life in Corinth. With all the various temples and gods, people were free to worship whoever and however they pleased.

The Greeks and Romans had a number of different athletic competitions. The Olympics was just one of them. Corinth hosted the Isthmian Games, which was held every two years. The amphitheater in Corinth could seat between 18,000 and 20,000 people.

In Part 1 of the introduction, we looked at Sosthenes. He was the ruler of the synagogue in Corinth, and the Jews beat in front of Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, at the judgment seat, which was a place called the Bema. In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he said that we shall all stand in front of the judgment seat or bema seat of God, so that we may be recompensed for our deeds, whether good or bad. At the Bema in Corinth, the ruler would commend or punish people that were brought there. Paul used their understanding of the Bema to teach them a spiritual truth about the judgment of God.

(2 Cor 5:10) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

## **b. Church of God**

Paul addressed the letter to the church of God in Corinth. Scholars say that the church in Corinth was probably around one hundred people. For a city of 90,000 people, a church of one hundred people is pretty small. The Greek word that is translated as church is *ekklesia* (Strong's G1577), which means called out. It is used 116 times in the New Testament. Peter tells us that we have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light that we might proclaim the excellencies of God. The church is not an organization, and it is not a facility where people gather; it is the people who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light. We do not go to church; we are the church. We do not meet in a church; the church meets in a house or other building that can accommodate the assembling of the saints.

(1 Cor 1:2) "To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:"

(1 Pet 2:9) "But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;"

Right before we turn onto the road that takes us to our subdivision, there is a sign that says, "Church is behind house." They should say that the church meets behind the house. The meeting place or facility is not the church; those that are called out, are the church.

When Karen and I were taking a tour of ancient Rome, the tour guide kept calling the old building the church of this or the church of that. Finally, I went up to the tour guide and told him that the church is people, not a building. So, he went on his PA system and announced that to the whole group of people taking the tour.

There are basically three different views that people have of the church. There are those that only believe in the universal church. The second group believes only in the local church. They believe that every reference to church in the Bible is always referring to a local body. The third group believes in the universal church and the local church. I want to discuss these three different views of church.

### **The Universal Church**

Those who believe only in the universal church do not believe in the local church. They take all the references in the Scriptures and plug it into the universal church concept. They do not believe in local church membership. They are already part of the body of Christ. They are free to go here and there whenever they want. The problem with this view is that most of these people are not functioning members of any body. They have no responsibility. They have no accountability. No one is having to give account to God for them, and they are not submitted to the leadership of any church. I do not believe that this is good doctrine or practice. Usually, good life practices flow out of good doctrine.

### **The Local Church**

Then, there are those who take a view that every time the word church is used, it refers only to the local body. They do not accept the idea of the universal church. Many of these churches will not participate with other churches. They are only concerned with their church.

In this letter to the Corinthians, Paul addresses his letter to the church of God which is at Corinth. He is not talking about the believers in the church in Jerusalem or in Rome. He is speaking to the believers who are in the church in Corinth. The specific problems that Paul addresses with this church and the warnings he gives them were not for all the churches; they were addressed to that specific local church in Corinth. Some of the principles may apply to other churches, but this clearly speaks of the local church.

(1 Cor 1:2) "to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:"

Karen and I had just moved to Florida in the summer of 1980. I was playing some Spacecoast Tour events while preparing to go back on the PGA Tour. We were going to a Baptist Church there and Karen wanted to be baptized. They would not baptize her there unless she joined that local church. Their view was that you were baptized into a local body, not a universal church. I wonder what local body the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized into.

### **The Universal and Local Church**

Finally, there are those that believe in both the universal church and local church. I believe that when the Lord says that He will build His church, He is referring to the universal church. I also believe that this can be used towards the local church as well.

When Paul wrote to the Philippians, he addressed the letter to the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons. A local church has its own government in place; it has elders managing the affairs of the church, which would include the money, property, and affairs of the church. In some denominations, that organization owns the assets of the local church, and that has and is creating lots of problems. A local church has its own government, and the leaders of that church are to manage the church and all its resources. Some do not consider the pastor as a member of the church. He pastors the church, but is not a member. I believe that the pastor is a functioning member of the local church. He is not above it; he is part of it. We are all members of the body, but have different gifts, callings, and functions. The church in Philippi was all the saints, including the overseers and deacons.

(Phil 1:1) "Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:"

Paul wrote to Titus and told him to ordain elders in every church in Crete and to set things in order. Establishing the government in a local church is a key part of setting it in order. There were five cities on Crete and I believe that they had one church in each city. At that point in time, they did not have denominations, so I believe that initially there was probably one church in each city. As the church grew, they probably planted other churches in the city. The fact that you have been placed as an elder in one church does not give you spiritual jurisdiction in other churches. You cannot make decisions for that church. The elders in that church have to give account for the people that God has given them charge of. The elders in that church have to give account of how they have managed the affairs of that church.

(Titus 1:5) "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,"

In Paul's letter to the church in Philippi, he named two women by name that were not getting along. He exhorted the church to help these two women get along. It is obvious that this letter was not written to the universal church, but to a local church. Paul he asks the elders, deacons, and all the saints in Philippi to help these two ladies in that congregation live in harmony. This is obviously not addressed to the universal church, but to that particular local church. The principles can be used by everyone, but the letter was to that local church.

(Phil 4:2–3) "I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. {3} Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life."

Paul has addressed this letter to the church of God, which is at Corinth, so he is speaking about that particular local church, not the universal church. But then, Paul said, "to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours." The saints in every place would include the saints in every church, so this is referring to the universal church. There is a universal church and there is a local church, and this is something important to get out of Paul's introduction.

Paul wrote this letter to the church of God in Corinth. Paul is not talking about the Church of God denomination, as they were not around. Paul is clearly teaching us that the church belongs to God. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus told Peter, "and upon this rock I will build My church; and the

gates of Hades will not overpower it.” It is Jesus’ church. The church does not belong to a pastor, or a denomination, or the people in the church.

(1 Cor 1:2) “To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:”

(Matt 16:18) “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”

The church belongs to God, and Jesus is the head of the church, which is His body. In Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 1:22, God makes it very clear that Jesus is the head of the body, the church.

(Col 1:18) “He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.”

(Eph 1:22) “And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,”

From a leadership perspective, pastors need to keep in mind that the church belongs to God. Pastors are stewards of the flock that God entrusts to them. They are shepherds, but He is the Chief Shepherd. In 1 Peter 5, pastors are exhorted not to lord over those allotted to their charge. God allots people to pastors so that they can take care of them for Him. Peter goes on to say that when the Chief Shepherd appears, the pastors will be rewarded. God is the Chief Shepherd, and the elders are the under-shepherds.

(1 Pet 5:3–4) “nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. {4} And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”

In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul said that he and Apollos were stewards. A steward is one who manages something that belongs to someone else. Pastors lead the church of God. When Paul gave the qualifications of a pastor, he said that they are not to be self-willed. The job of a pastor is to seek the will of the head of the church, the Chief Shepherd, because it is His church.

(1 Cor 4:1) “Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”

(Tit 1:7) “For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, **not self-willed**, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,”

From a congregational standpoint, the church belongs to God. There are some people who try to control the church. Like pastors, they need to recognize that the church belongs to God, not them. It is His will that we want to see done on earth.

### c. Saints

Paul has addressed this letter to the church of God, which is at Corinth, and then he gives a description of these people that are called the church. The church is made up of people who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus. Second, these people who have been sanctified are saints by

calling. Third, these saints are in every place and are calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(1 Cor 1:2) "to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:"

The Greek word that is translated as sanctified is *hagiazō* (Strong's G37), which comes from *hagios* (Strong's G40), which means to make holy, purify, or consecrate. Those who are sanctified have been made holy. Their sins have been washed away and they are now holy and pure. The Greek word that is translated as saints is *hagios* (Strong's G40). Sanctification is the event and process of making us holy, and the result of that sanctification is we are holy, or saints.

The **event** of sanctification is at salvation. Jesus paid the price for our sins, and we are now declared innocent and holy. He who knew no sin was made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ. That is instantaneous. That sanctification is often called **positional sanctification**. In Romans 10:9-10, God tells us that if we confess with our mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, we will be saved. Our righteousness is a result of believing and our salvation is a result of confessing Jesus as Lord. Going to church does not make you sanctified. Giving money does not sanctify you. We are made righteous by believing that Jesus was raised from the dead and confessing Jesus as the Lord of our lives. The church is comprised of people that have placed their faith in Christ and have confessed Him to be their Lord.

(2 Cor 5:21) "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

(Rom 10:9-10) "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; {10} for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

Sanctification is also a process. Even though we have been declared righteous, our lifestyle, attitudes, words, and habits are not always holy, and may not reflect Christ. When we come to Christ, we come with sinful habits, attitudes, and lifestyles. God tells us that we are not to be conformed to these world patterns, but are called to renew our minds and be transformed. That process of becoming more Christ-like in our attitude, thoughts, words, and actions is **progressive sanctification**. There is a positional sanctification and a progressive sanctification. God calls us saints, and then tells us to act like saints.

(Rom 12:1–2) "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. {2} And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Paul has addressed this letter to the church in Corinth, who are called saints. Even though the church in Corinth was carnal and immature, God calls them saints. Much of the church has been instructed to say that we are sinners. Paul did not address this letter to the sinners in the church at Corinth, but to the saints in Corinth. We were sinners before we came to Christ. Now that Christ has paid the penalty for sins and declared us to be righteous, or justified, we now have a new identity, saints. However, we still sin, so we are saints that occasionally sin, and when we do, we

repent and confess our sins to the Lord. In the New Testament, there are sixty-one times that believers are referred to as saints.

(1 Cor 1:2) “To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:”

### 3. Paul’s Greeting (1 Cor 1:3)

Paul gives a greeting of grace and peace. He says, “grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” That was his normal greeting. We see his greeting to the saints in Philippi is exactly the same. In the Hebrew culture, people did not say, “Hi, how are you.” They greeted one another with a blessing of peace, and this is still the standard greeting in the Middle East.

(1 Cor 1:3) “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

(Phil 1:2) “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace that Paul blesses them with is a peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. God gives a peace that surpasses all comprehension. It is a supernatural peace. It is not the absence of trouble, conflict, hardship, or difficulty, which are all external matters. God’s peace is an internal manifestation. He gives us peace in the midst of troubles.

Consider the following things about our peace from God. God is a God of peace. His name is Jehovah Shalom, or Lord of Peace. In Judges 6, Gideon built an altar and named it Jehovah Shalom. The Hebrew word for Lord is Jehovah, which means the self-existent, eternal God. He is the God of all peace. In 2 Thessalonians 3:16, Paul refers to God as the Lord of peace and also the God of peace. In Romans 15:33, Paul says that God is the God of peace. In Isaiah 9:6, the coming Messiah, Jesus, is called the Prince of Peace. Paul gave a greeting of peace from God, who is the Lord and God of peace.

(Judges 6:24a) “Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and named it The LORD is Peace.

(2 Thess 3:16) "Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!"

(Rom 15:33) "Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen."

(Is 9:6) "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

Even though God gives peace, we have a responsibility in obtaining peace. God tells us not to be anxious, but to pray about everything and to dwell on good things. He tells us to keep our mind stayed on Him, and to trust in Him. God gives supernatural peace, but He also tells us things that we are to do.

(Phil 4:6–8) “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. {7} And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. {8} Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.”

(Isa 26:3) “The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You.”

Paul not only greets them with peace, but also grace. There are two definitions of grace that I want to quickly mention. Grace can mean the unmerited favor of God. It is by this unmerited favor or grace that we are saved. Our salvation is not as a result of works that no man should boast. This is an unmerited, undeserved favor that we are given by God. We cannot earn this grace. This grace should create in us a gratefulness and should be reflected in our worship and praise to Him. We find this grace in Ephesians 2.

(Eph 2:8-9) "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; {9} not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

There is another type of grace that we have. The Lord told Paul in the midst of his afflictions that His grace was sufficient for him. This grace is not just the unmerited favor, but it is the desire and ability to carry out God’s will. Grace can also mean the measure of God’s provision in strength, ability, power, gifts, and resources to carry out His will.

(2 Cor 12:9) "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me."

In Romans 12, Paul speaks about this grace a couple of times. He speaks into their lives by the grace that was given to him. Paul was doing an apostolic work and was given the grace to do this work. Paul did not have any more favor with God than you or I. Paul had a desire and ability to do a certain work that God had called him to. He alludes to this grace again at the close of his letter. He wrote them very boldly on some points and he could do that because of the grace that was given to him by God.

(Rom 15:15) "But I have written very boldly to you on some points, so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God,"

We need to give our grace and peace to one another. When we greet one another, we should learn to extend grace and peace. Our words should encourage and motivate one another to have more desire and ability to accomplish God’s will. Our words should not bring trouble and unrest but peace. Our words should bring about a calmness and rest. Our words should bring about a trust in God and His word. Our speech needs to be seasoned with grace. This grace opens people up; it opens doors of communication. This grace endears us to people. It makes people want to be around us. It is this grace and peace that will make a difference in our communities.

(1 Cor 1:3) “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

## Conclusion and Applications

The apostle Paul wrote to the saints in the church at Corinth. As we dive into 1 Corinthians we will discover that they were not acting like saints, but carnal Christians. God calls those of us who have been sanctified and who call upon Him, saints. We are not just to be called saints, but we are to act like saints. We are to be holy, just as He is holy.

We are planting the Connection Church of Rome. There are lots of other churches in Rome. We are fellow members with them in the body of Christ, the universal church. But we are a local church with local elders, deacons, and saints.

As I prayed about this passage, I asked the Lord what was the main things that He wanted to communicate to us this week. His answer to me was that He wants His church to be holy. He wants us to live holy lives. Paul's letter was written to encourage the saints in Corinth to stop living carnal, fleshly lives, and to live holy, consecrated lives. Our culture today is becoming more like the Corinthian community, but God does not want us to be conforming with the culture. He wants us to be transformed, and to be His representatives here on earth. God wants us to be lights set on a hill, pointing people to Christ. We are the Connection Church, connecting people with God and with one another.

### **Prayer**

Father God, thank You for this letter to the Corinthians. It is rich with applications for our lives. As we study this book, I ask You to help us to grow and become mature. Help us to be transformed and live transformed lives. Give us Your grace and peace in this journey. I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **Q & A**

- Why is it important for us to know that we are saints, not sinners?
- When we sin, why are we not referred to as sinners?
- Why is it important to understand the universal church and the local church?
- If there was only a universal church, which pastors and leaders would be held accountable by God for your life? See Hebrews 13:17.
- What are the things in your life that have helped you to grow the most?

**Introduction** (3 John 2–4, 1 Cor 4:15, 5:11, 1:1-3)

2. **Recipients of the letter** (1 Cor 1:2)

a. **Corinth** (1 Cor 1:2, 8:5–6, 2 Cor 5:10)

b. **Church of God** (1 Cor 1:2, 1 Pet 2:9, Phil 1:1, Tit 1:5, Matt 16:18, Col 1:18, Eph 1:22, 1 Pet 5:3-4, 1 Cor 4:1, Tit 1:7)

c. **Saints** (1 Cor 1:2, 2 Cor 5:21, Rom 10:9-10, Rom 12:1–2)

3. **Greeting** (1 Cor 1:3, Phil 1:2, Judges 6:24, 2 Thess 3:16, Rom 15:33, Is 9:6, Eph 2:8-9, 2 Cor 12:9, Rom 15:15)

**Conclusion and Applications**