

Body by God

Discovering Principles from 1 & 2 Corinthians about Building Up Christ's Body

Just One Thing

Introduction to 1 Corinthians 13-14

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- **Worship**—You were planned for God's pleasure
- **Fellowship**—You were formed for God's family
- **Discipleship**—You were created to become like Christ
- **Ministry**—You were shaped for serving God
- **Evangelism**—You were made for a mission

In the 1991 movie, "City Slickers", Curly repeatedly told Mitch that the secret to life was to focus on "just one thing", instead of allowing the multitude of meaningless distractions in life to divert our attention from what really matters. Similarly, in this week's study, Paul directed the Corinthians to make just one thing—love—their central focus. Paul proceeded to not only describe love in 1 Corinthians 13, the famous "love" chapter, but also to specifically outline how true love would look in the church as they worshipped together. He encouraged them to utilize the surpassing excellence of love to serve God, rather than just relying on spiritual gifts. While tongues, prophecy, knowledge and faith are all

good things, without love, they are worthless. When one serves others through the many aspects of love, he or she is able to truly build them up. Also, although spiritual gifts will eventually be unnecessary, love will endure forever—and it is even greater than faith and hope. Having said this, Paul then pointed to the practical expressions of love that he desired for the Corinthians to practice in their public worship. One of these expressions was that prophecy would take pre-eminence over tongues, because prophecy edified everyone, while tongues only built up the one exercising that gift. Additionally, the gift of tongues would be unintelligible to an unbeliever who entered their



Following God's principles will develop a church body that can glorify Him fully

assembly, while prophetic utterance of God's truth would lead to conviction of their need for God. Finally, Paul encouraged them to do all things in an orderly way so that everyone could be built up—another practical expression of love. If the church at Corinth would focus on just one thing—love—their service for God would be blessed.

Study/Discussion Questions for 1 Corinthians 13-14

(For answers to questions attend an ABF or go to www.celebrationnet.com/resources/leader resources)

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| 1. Read 13:1-3. To what gifts or acts of service does Paul compare love (v1, 2, 3), and what is the result of these gifts or acts without love (v1, 2, 3)? What do you think his point is? | |
| 2. Using 13:4-8 describe love. What would the opposite of each of these characteristics be, and how do each of these characteristics build others up? | |
| 3. In 13:8-13 what does Paul point out about our present knowledge (v8, 9, 12), and how does this compare with love (v8, 13)? In light of this, what is the most mature thing we can do (v11)? | |

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I Corinthians 13-14 Study Questions (cont)

4. According to 14:1-5 who does the gift of tongues affect (v2, 4), and who does the gift of prophecy affect (v3)? Which gift does Paul encourage (v1, 5) and why (v3, 5)?

5. From 14:6-12 what are some problems with relying primarily on the gifts tongues (v6-9, 10-11)? What should be the goal in discovering one's spiritual gift (v12—"edify" = "build up")?

6. Based on 14:13-19 what guidelines should be followed if one speaks in tongues (v13, 14-15), and why (v16-17)? What must be promoted when the church gathers (v19)?

7. Using 14:20-25 the expression of tongues was given primarily for what purpose (v21-22)? Which benefits the unbeliever most, tongues or prophecy (v23-25)? How can we apply this?

8. In 14:26-33 what guiding principle for worship services is underscored (v26)? How does this affect the gift of tongues (v27-28), and prophecy (v29-31)? What atmosphere should prevail in our worship services and why (v33)?

9. Looking at 14:34-36 what does Paul advocate (v34)? In light of chapter 14, and the feminist movement in the society of that day, why would he say that? What is the overriding principle that must be followed?

10. From 14:37-40 what objection does Paul anticipate (v37), and how does he counter it (v37-38)? How does Paul summarize the whole discussion about conduct in worship services (v39-40)?

11. Review 13-14. What problems do you think the church at Corinth was having (13:1-3, 8-12; 14:1-3, 26-33, 34-36), and how would genuine love take care of these problems?

"...Let all things be done for edification."

1 Corinthians 14:26

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Life Group Questions

(Using questions based on today's message, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship)

1. Discuss why you think adultery is so rampant in America today. Why is adultery basically "the act of violating a promise". How does this compare with what most people think it is?
2. What are the most damaging aspects of lust and sexual immorality in your opinion?
3. Why is committing your life to Christ and living by His truth the best way to protect your marriage? How does this relate to living together outside marriage?
4. Talk about ways to apply some practical disciplines in thought life, environment and relationships to help you stay away from sexual temptation.
5. Creatively think about some various ways to develop your marriage. How does this deal with the whole issue of adultery, and why do people avoid this?
6. Discuss anything else that impressed you from the message if you have time.