

The New Inductive Study Series

GOD'S ANSWERS FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND PASSIONS

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HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS

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Published by Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon 97402
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ISBN 0-7369-0801-3

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FIRST CORINTHIANS

RELATIONSHIPS AND PASSIONS TRANSFORMED

When you take an honest, unprejudiced, realistic look around you, you see that man doesn't have a lasting, working solution to his personal relationships and passions. Relationships are broken—shattered into a thousand jagged edges. Passions are uncontrolled and destructive.

Are there answers? Is there a solution? Or have we gone too far? Is our course so set that there is no turning away?

If it depended on man, the answer would be yes—no turning around, no turning back.

But there is God! And because He is God there are answers. They may not be answers you like or want, but if you are looking for a solution that works—one that will last and carry you through the most difficult of situations—then God's answers are what you need. And you will find many of them in the books of 1 and 2 Corinthians.

You are going to be awed at what an incredibly practical study this is going to be...awed and, hopefully, transformed. The transformation will depend on what you do with what you learn. Go for it, my friend, and you'll find God's answers to personal relationships and passions.

Week 1

God Chooses “Nobodys” and Makes Them “Somebodys”

DAY ONE

Read 1 Corinthians 1 today. As you read, mark every reference to the recipients of this letter in a specific color so you can see what the author says about them. Be certain to mark all synonyms and pronouns referring to the recipients.

Then, in your notebook, make a chart with two headings: DESCRIPTION OF THE RECIPIENTS and PAUL’S CONCERNS FOR THE CORINTHIANS. List first how the recipients are described, then note Paul’s concerns in regard to them. Note, too, what form the quarrels take and whom they center around. Keep this in mind as you continue this study.

On your 1 CORINTHIANS AT A GLANCE chart (page 68) fill in any other information you observe from chapter 1.

DAY TWO

Whenever you study a book of the Bible, it is always good to read the book through several times in order to discern the author’s purpose for writing the book. This also enables you to see the way he lays out his material in order to achieve his purpose.

By the way, if you did not read the instructions at the beginning of this book, now is the time to stop and do so. They provide clear instructions on how to mark key words.

After reading the introduction section you know how to make a bookmark for your key words. On your book-mark for 1 Corinthians write the following key words and color code each word as you will color code it in your Bible. Remember, I gave you examples of how I mark some of my key words!

Divisions gospel power
wisdom (wise, wiser) boast (boasts, boasting)

These are the words you will want to mark throughout the entire book. They are not all of the key words you will mark in 1 Corinthians. As you work through this study I will give you others which are specific to certain chapters or passages.

Since this is a survey course and there isn’t time for repeated readings of the book, look at 1 Corinthians 1:10,11 to see the first of Paul’s purposes in writing this first epistle to the church at Corinth. Record this purpose on your 1 CORINTHIANS AT A GLANCE chart.

There is a key repeated phrase used in 1 Corinthians 7:1,25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1 which will reveal Paul’s second reason for writing to the Corinthian church. Look at these Scriptures and mark each use of the phrase now concerning. Include in your marking whatever topic the author is about to address, if he states it. For example, you would mark the following phrases the same

way you marked the phrase now concerning: “Now concerning the things about which you wrote” and “Now concerning things sacrificed to idols,” etc.

You will discover that these people had questions about certain topics and Paul was writing to answer those questions after he dealt with the problem stated in 1 Corinthians 1:10,11. Thus, you have the book of 1 Corinthians falling into two major segment divisions. Look at the chart, 1 CORINTHIANS AT A GLANCE, on page 68 and notice the section called Segment Divisions. This indicates the major break of the book into two topics. Fill in the division sections, in light of what you see.

DAY THREE

Read 1 Corinthians 1 again. This time mark key words from your bookmark.

When you finish, look at the word wisdom and its synonyms. What two kinds of wisdom are referred to in this chapter? Write them in your notebook as separate headings. Then, under each heading, list what you learn about these two kinds of wisdom. You will add more to this list later, so leave adequate space for more information.

DAY FOUR

Read 1 Corinthians 2 today. Mark the same key words along with the references to the recipients that you marked in 1 Corinthians 1. Add Spirit

DAY FIVE

Read through the first two chapters of 1 Corinthians again. This time, in a different color, mark references to the author. While you may not want to color every “our” or every single pronoun, you should color every major reference to the author that gives you insight into who he is, what he does or has done, and what his relationship to the Christians in Corinth is.

Then set aside several pages in your notebook for a list of what you learn about the author. You will add to this throughout your study. You may want to add what you will learn in 2 Corinthians to this list too, so consider that in leaving space. Record on your list all you learn in these first two chapters of 1 Corinthians. Compiling this list may seem tedious, but you will be pleasantly surprised and enlightened by all that you learn from Paul’s example.

When you finish your list, stop and think through all you have recorded. What you learn will help you follow his injunction in 1 Corinthians 4:16 and 11:1 where he says you are to be an imitator or follower of him, even as he is of Christ.

DAY SIX

Today, read through 1 Corinthians 1 and 2 again, paying careful attention to the flow of thought. What is the main theme of each of these chapters? If you had to tell someone what these two chapters are about, what would you say? Write down your thoughts on a piece of paper, then

reduce the theme to as few words as possible (try to use words from the chapter itself). Record these themes on the appropriate line of the 1 CORINTHIANS AT A GLANCE chart on page 68.

List in your notebook anything new you learn about the Corinthians from 1 Corinthians 2. Then add to your list on wisdom what you learn from 1 Corinthians 2.

Finally, look at every reference to power in chapters 1 and 2. Examine these references in the light of the 5 W's and an H: who, what, when, where, why, and how. You may not find an answer to each W and H, but asking these questions will help you see what these chapters tell you about power.

DAY SEVEN

Store in your heart: 1 Corinthians 1:30,31 or, if you are up to it, memorize 1 Corinthians 1:21-24.

Read and discuss: 1 Corinthians 1:17–2:16.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY

- Who wrote the book of 1 Corinthians and to whom?
- Why was 1 Corinthians written? Support your answer with Scripture.
- What did you learn about the author in the first two chapters? About the recipients? Discuss what you recorded in your notebook.
- What did you learn about wisdom and the wise from your study this week? How does what you learned compare with what we are to boast about? Or, to put it another way, Where is our boasting to be and why? What does this tell you about our capabilities?
- What do you learn about the Spirit of God from 1 Corinthians 2?
- How does a Christian have the mind of Christ?
- Where is power found and how does one tap into this power?
- What was the most significant insight you received this week? How will it impact your daily life?

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

O my friend, was it clear to you that God is looking for “nobodys” so that He can make “somebodys” out of them?

Did you see that truth with your own eyes? Did you fully comprehend what God said in 1 Corinthians 1:26-31? Or have you looked at yourself and always thought that you could never be very much for God or for His kingdom because of where you've been, what you've done, or simply because of what you are—or what you've been told you are?

It is time, Beloved, to believe God—to understand that what you are is not what God needs. God is YHWH: Yahweh, Jehovah, the all-sufficient God who is “I AM.” “I AM” everything and anything you will ever need. God needs nothing. He has it all. He is all and all.

If you are in Christ Jesus, you have everything you need because you have God. Jesus became to you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. You've been redeemed—you are His and He is yours! And this, my friend, is your only place of boasting.

So boast in Him and go forward in faith's confidence and God's power. Remember, you are a "somebody" chosen by God.

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