

1 Corinthians 1:1-17

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Personal Introduction

- Self
- HMCC-AA, Oikos, COVID, rediscovering what it means to be the church

Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

¹ Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,

² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge— ⁶ even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

I. Remember God's grace that calls us to Christ (vv. 1-9)

In his address, in his thankfulness, there's all this choice of language, choice of wordings, that he's purposefully using to remind and remember.

1. God's gracious call, not Paul's work and ability (vv. 1-2)
 - a. God calls Paul as an apostle, and calls people as the church
 - b. Connection: it's not just about one local church but about connection to larger church
2. The peace of belonging with God (v. 3, 9)
 - a. When we think about Christian peace, it's not just peace as a feeling but peace as reconciled relationship
 - b. This itself is a gracious gift
 - c. Romans 5:10 (ESV) "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life."
3. God enriches us with gifts of grace (vv. 4-6)

- a. On one level, we can be thankful for the gifts of speaking and knowledge, which are given for our enrichment.
 - b. We benefit as believers now because we have a number of Paul's letters. By comparing them, we can notice some interesting things
 - c. Colossians 1:3-6a (ESV), "We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you..."
 - d. Faith, hope, and love are missing in our 1 Corinthians passage and are replaced with an emphasis on knowledge and the word, because the Corinthians were treating these gifts with pride, arrogance, and even hurting other believers.
 - e. Paul addresses an issue with some believers eating food to idols because of their "knowledge" that there is only one true God, but it is a stumbling block to other believers, who had a history with those idols, possibly converting from the religions those idols belonged to.
 - f. We should be thankful, not arrogant, that God has graciously gifted us with any knowledge or understanding, with people who can speak the Word of God to us, but always remember that it is a gift that God has given us — that we should be thankful, not boastful.
4. God's grace for our present and our future (vv. 7-9)
 - a. In the present, we wait for Jesus's return. This life may not be easy, but we are gifted by God who will gift and sustain us by His grace until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b. A significant gift is fellowship with Christ. David Garland translates the word "fellowship" as "common-union."
 - c. "Common-union with Christ creates common-union with other Christians and precludes common-union with idols."

What should we take away from this?

1. Grace, grace, grace, grace — it is a work that God is doing
 - God gives us grace. God enriches us with gifts. God sustaining us. God is faithful to us.
2. Jesus/Jesus Christ/Christ — 9 times so far
3. Not remembering grace can cause serious issues

Life Application

1. Find your ultimate sense of belonging in Christ
 - Word to non-believers
2. Remember God's grace daily

Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 1:10-17

¹⁰ I appeal to you, brothers,^[a] by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. ¹¹ For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. ¹² What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." ¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

II. We are called to Christ together (vv. 10-17)

1. A call to a unity of mind, not uniformity (v. 10)
 - a. Agree = say the same thing (Greek)
 - b. Not a robotic uniformity but that all of us are so obsessed with Jesus that he is the greatest thing that we talk about
 - c. What has he done for us? What does he call us to? How is he speaking to us? How is he blessing us even now?
 - d. Saying the same things about Jesus and salvation
 - e. Christianity should be the most exclusive but most inclusive
2. The issue: divisions from the heart (vv. 11-12)
 - a. As far as we can tell, Peter, Apollos, Paul are not divided in purpose. They're not competing against each other. Paul will talk later about this in chapter 3, they're doing different but complementary things. In chapter 16, Paul says that he talks with Apollos, encouraging him to visit Corinth.
 - b. So where do these divisions come from? From the people's hearts
 - i. Speculation: I like this person's teaching. After that person got baptized by so and so, they had so much more life change than other people.
 - ii. Even the Christ one, it's said with a tone of rebuke: "I'm not like all these lesser folk, I follow Christ" as if the others were in opposition to Christ instead of submitting to him, and possibly ignoring the teachings that they gave
 - c. We don't belong with them. We belong with this chunk.
3. What "schisms" do we have? Where do they come from?
 - a. HMCC of AA: we have "schisms" or separations that come from practical realities. Life stages, energy, context.
 - b. Personal preference schisms (HMCC-AA LGs)
 - i. I prefer this leader or that leader
 - ii. Day of week, or that friend group
 - c. Fear of others schisms
 - d. Practice schisms
 - i. Leadership (Antioch pastor)

- ii. Joint campus LG
4. The foundation of our unity: one cross, one baptism, one Christ (vv. 13-17)
 - a. Jesus is not divided
 - b. Make every effort
 - c. Ephesians 4:1, 3 (ESV), "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called...eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
 - d. Sabbatical, visiting, no one greeted
 - e. Pray for unity

Life Application

1. Be bold in your love for others
 - Romans 15:7 (ESV), "Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."
 - Insiders and outsiders
2. Pray for the unity of the church