

NEW TESTAMENT LETTER: PAUL'S MESSAGE TO CORINTH

The apostle Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, addressing the Corinthians who had become followers of Jesus. Paul's collection of letters to the Corinthians show his love for them and his desire for them to live in righteousness. After receiving a report that the church in Corinth was facing great problems of immorality and false teaching, Paul responded with the message of Jesus. Paul desired for the Corinthians to integrate their newfound faith into all aspects of their lives.

Although Paul founded the church in Corinth and stayed with them for eighteen months, the Corinthians began to question his teaching after being visited by false apostles. Paul defended his ministry and stood firm in the calling God had given him. After a painful visit in Corinth, Paul wrote another letter to the Corinthians with grief and tears. Finally, Paul received the report that many Corinthians had repented. Throughout the letters, Paul's love and care for the Corinthians is shown through his desire for them to know and follow Jesus. These letters contain Paul's teaching about generosity, guarding your thoughts, enduring trials, and trusting God.

MAIN IDEAS: FAITH SHAPES THE LIVES OF BELIEVERS

- **Jesus personified God's righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.** (1 Corinthians 1:30)
- **Paul taught the Corinthians to do all things for the glory of God.** (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- **God provides comfort, order, and peace, not chaos or confusion.** (1 Corinthians 14:33)
- **Despite their rebellion, Paul deeply loved and encouraged the Corinthians.** (2 Corinthians 7:3-4)

EXAMPLE OF GOD'S CHARACTER: LOVING GENEROSITY

Throughout his letters to the Corinthians, Paul referenced God's many generous gifts. As the greatest of all gifts, God sent Jesus as the Savior. By accepting God's gift of Jesus, believers are given access to more of God's gifts. In addition to providing a future, eternal life, God offers believers valuable gifts for the present life. Paul gave a personal account of how God provided comfort, wisdom, endurance, and strength throughout his personal ministry. Paul faced great opposition during his time as an apostle, and despite his many trials, he found that his weakness was made perfect through God's sufficiency.



Paul emphasized God's gift of forgiveness and encouraged the Corinthians to repent of their sins and forgive others. God has given believers unique spiritual gifts, and Paul instructed believers to use those gifts for the good of the church and to build up one another in faith. In response to God's generous gifts, Paul stressed the importance of loving one another and being generous. God has modeled loving generosity towards His people, and Paul urged the Corinthians to respond by loving one another and being cheerful givers.

JESUS IN 1 + 2 CORINTHIANS: GOD'S PROMISES FULFILLED

The letters to the Corinthians focus on the importance of the resurrection as the foundation of faith. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then faith in Him is worthless. If Jesus was not who He claimed to be (the living Son of God who sacrificed Himself for the sin of believers), the Christian faith is false. Everything hinges on Jesus. Paul offered this challenge to believers and reminded them of the most important belief as followers of Jesus.

Jesus claims to be the way, the truth, and the life, stating that the only way to God is through Him (John 14:6). Without Jesus, Christians have made false claims of God and misunderstood the entire text. Throughout the Old Testament, God promised a future Savior and sent prophets to reveal His plans. Without Jesus, these promises and prophecies would remain unfulfilled. Paul reminded the Corinthians that the Christian faith is not simply about behavior; instead, it is a belief that Jesus is the promised Savior, the Messiah sent from God.