

I. 1 Corinthians and the Common Condition

A. 1 Corinthians and Relationships

1. New series on 1 Corinthians focuses on how Christians relate
 - a. To God and His Word
 - b. To fellow believers and the Church
 - c. To the world and the people around us
2. As those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, our lives are to reflect love and devotion to God and His glory at all times in every circumstance, but what does that commitment look like in any given situation?
3. **1 Corinthians 1:10 (ESV) ¹⁰ I appeal to you, brothers, 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.**

B. 1 Corinthians as Normative/Formative Instruction

1. Paul addresses the practical question of how Christians relate in life by providing instruction on specific issues this early church faced while learning to live by faith in a challenging world
2. 1 Corinthians intends to be normative instruction
 - a. Not merely general suggestions of possible options
 - b. But clear instruction that molds life choices, matures the likeness of Christ in us, and advances the knowledge of the glory of the Lord in the world through us

C. 1 Corinthians and the Common Christian Condition: Calling

1. Question:
 - a. But how can Paul offer one set of instructions to so many different people, with so many different personalities, life stories, and daily situations?
 - b. What do they have in common that allows Him to offer a single instruction for them all and call them to a singleness, a unity of mind and judgment, given their personal and cultural diversity?
2. **The call to Christian unity of mind and judgment hinges upon the divine call of God to faith in Jesus Christ common to all genuine Christians**

II. The Common Condition of the Divine Call

A. Call

1. **1 Corinthians 1:1-2 (ESV) 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:**
2. Paul cites "calling" as the condition common to himself and His readers upon which his call to their unity of mind and judgment is based.

B. What is the divine calling?

1. Invitation and command of God to enter an amazing relationship with our Creator through faith in Jesus Christ that results in
 - a. forgiveness of sin,
 - b. a change of heart,
 - c. renewed thinking,

- d. heavenly values,
 - e. a life that intentionally enjoys and reflects the worthiness of God and His glory,
 - f. Fearless expectation of heaven and eternal life
2. What is this divine calling, this call of God all Christians have in common that forms the basis for their unity in mind and judgment regarding the issues of life?

C. Three Aspects of the Divine Call

1. God's call offers a new designation

- a. Specifically
 - (1) Paul - apostle
 - (2) Corinthians - God's holy people
- b. Generally
 - (1) **1 Peter 2:9-10 (ESV)** ⁹ *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.* ¹⁰ *Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*
 - (2) **Ephesians 2:11-13 (ESV)** ¹¹ *Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—* ¹² *remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.* ¹³ *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

2. God's call activates a vital transformation

- a. Paul's conversion on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:1-22 [19-22])
- b. **2 Corinthians 5:17** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*
 - (1) Old sins give way to new holiness
 - (2) Old anger gives way to new peace
 - (3) Old fear gives way to new love
 - (4) Old thinking gives way to new grace
- c. Born again
 - (1) Jesus said that in order to gain heaven and eternal life we must be born again
 - (2) Born again means a new nature, a new spirit, a new hope, a new life
- d. God's call to faith in Jesus Christ is both an invitation and a command to a vital transformation from what we have been to what we will become through His grace, His Spirit, and His word
- e. God's call upon the life of a believer is a calling to newness through a vital life transformation.

3. God's call begins an enduring expectation

- a. Begins a lifelong expectation that in all situations a Christian will live and respond by faith.
 - (1) Without faith it is impossible to please God.

- (a) Faith sees what cannot be seen.
- (b) Faith knows God and embraces His will and His work; His love and mercy; His grace and His glory; His promise and His plan in all of life's many challenges
- (2) The just shall live by faith
- b. Begins a lifelong expectation that believers will surrender their will and their lives to the will and life of God
 - (1) Bought with a price
 - (a) **1 Cor 6:19b-20** *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*
 - (b) **1 Corinthians 7:23 (ESV)** ²³ *You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men.*
 - (2) **Romans 12:1-2 (ESV)** ¹ *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.* ² *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*
- c. Begins a lifelong expectation that believers will trust God's teaching and obey God's word
 - (1) The church at Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6, [3])
 - (a) **Remember then what you received and heard. Keep it and repent.**
 - (b) Keep God's word
 - (2) Faithfulness = Faith + Obedience
 - (3) God's call to life in Jesus Christ and all the blessing and glory that call offers includes a call to consistent, intentional, even sacrificial obedience
 - (a) **Philippians 2:8 (ESV)** ⁸ *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*
 - (b) **Philippians 2:12-13 (ESV)** ¹² *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,* ¹³ *for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*

III. God's calling calls for commitment