

Midweek Manna
Logan Presbyterian Church
May 27, 2026 Study #1
Called Into Unity Through Christ – 1 Corinthians Chapter 1

Icebreaker

Have you ever been part of a group or team that struggled with division or conflict? What helped bring people back together—or what made things worse?

Historical Context

1 Corinthians was written by the Apostle Paul around AD 53–55 while he was in Ephesus. The city of Corinth was wealthy, influential, and morally corrupt, known for its trade, cultural diversity, and widespread immorality. The church itself reflected many of the struggles of the surrounding culture. Believers were divided over leadership, influenced by worldly thinking, and struggling to live out their faith faithfully. Paul writes this letter to correct problems within the church while reminding believers of their identity in Christ. Chapter 1 immediately addresses division and pride among believers. Some claimed loyalty to Paul, others to Apollos or Peter, creating factions within the church. Paul redirects their attention away from human personalities and back to Christ crucified. The chapter establishes one of the central themes of the letter: God’s wisdom often appears foolish to the world, yet it is through the “foolishness” of the cross that God saves and transforms people.

Digging Deep Into It

1 Corinthians 1:1–9

Theological Insight

Paul opens by reminding the Corinthians who they are before addressing their problems. They are called, sanctified, and enriched in Christ despite their imperfections. This greeting emphasizes God’s faithfulness more than the church’s performance. Spiritual gifts and grace were already active among them, yet maturity still needed to grow. Paul grounds correction in identity—

believers must remember they belong to Christ before they can live rightly for Him. God's sustaining grace assures believers that He finishes what He begins.

Extra-Scriptural or Theological Reference

Augustine taught that the church is a community continually being transformed by grace, not a gathering of already perfected people.

Practical Steps

1. Begin each day remembering your identity in Christ before focusing on your failures.
 2. Thank God for the spiritual gifts and strengths He has given you.
 3. Encourage another believer by reminding them of God's faithfulness.
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1 Corinthians 1:10–17

Theological Insight

Paul confronts division directly, urging believers to be united in mind and purpose. The Corinthians had become overly attached to personalities and leaders, turning human servants into sources of pride and rivalry. Paul reminds them that Christ—not any leader—was crucified for them. The gospel calls believers into unity centered on Jesus rather than preferences, status, or personal loyalties. Christian leadership should point people to Christ, not to itself.

Extra-Scriptural or Theological Reference

John Calvin warned that division often begins when believers exalt human leaders above Christ Himself.

Practical Steps

1. Examine whether personal preferences are causing division in your relationships or church life.
 2. Speak positively about other believers and leaders rather than comparing them.
 3. Focus conversations on Christ rather than personalities or opinions.
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1 Corinthians 1:18–25

Theological Insight

Paul contrasts human wisdom with God’s wisdom revealed through the cross. To the world, the message of a crucified Savior appears weak and foolish. Yet God intentionally works through what the world rejects to reveal His power and grace. Salvation cannot be achieved through intellect, status, or human achievement; it comes through faith in Christ crucified. The cross humbles human pride while magnifying God’s wisdom and power.

Extra-Scriptural or Theological Reference

Martin Luther described the theology of the cross as God revealing His glory through suffering, humility, and sacrifice rather than worldly power.

Practical Steps

1. Reflect on areas where worldly thinking may shape your priorities more than the gospel.
 2. Spend time thanking Christ specifically for the sacrifice of the cross.
 3. Trust God’s wisdom even when His ways seem difficult or unexpected.
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1 Corinthians 1:26–31

Theological Insight

Paul reminds believers that God often chooses the weak, overlooked, and ordinary to display His glory. The Corinthians themselves were evidence of this truth. God’s grace removes boasting because salvation is entirely His work. Human status, intelligence, or power cannot earn standing before God. Instead, Christ becomes the believer’s wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption. This passage shifts confidence away from self and entirely onto Christ.

Extra-Scriptural or Theological Reference

Charles Spurgeon often emphasized that God delights in using ordinary people so that His power—not human ability—receives the glory.

Practical Steps

1. Surrender areas of pride or self-reliance to God.
2. Remember that God can use your weaknesses for His purposes.
3. Give God credit for every spiritual victory and blessing in your life.

Cross References

- **Jeremiah 9:23–24** — Let the one who boasts boast in knowing the Lord.
 - **Ephesians 2:8–9** — Salvation is by grace, not human works.
 - **Philippians 2:1–4** — Pursue humility and unity in Christ.
 - **Romans 1:16** — The gospel is the power of God for salvation.
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Reflecting on It

1. Where have you seen division or pride damage relationships or community?
 2. How does the message of the cross challenge worldly ideas of success and strength?
 3. In what areas are you tempted to rely on your own wisdom instead of God's?
 4. How can you contribute to unity within your church or relationships this week?
 5. What weaknesses in your life might God want to use for His glory?
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Challenge of the Week / Next Step Practice

This week, intentionally practice humility and unity. Choose one relationship where pride, comparison, or tension may exist and take a step toward encouragement, reconciliation, or peace. Each day, thank God for the cross and ask Him to shape your thinking according to His wisdom rather than the world's.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for calling us into fellowship through Jesus Christ. Forgive us for the pride and division that so easily distract us from the gospel. Teach us to find our identity and unity in Christ alone. Help us trust the wisdom of the cross even when it seems foolish to the world. May our lives bring glory to You and reflect the humility, love, and grace of Jesus. In His name we pray, Amen.

