

Outline of the Book of 1 Corinthians

The book of 1 Corinthians addresses various issues faced by the early Christian community in Corinth, including divisions, moral lapses, and doctrinal misunderstandings. Below is an exhaustive outline of 1 Corinthians, highlighting the dangers facing believers.

I. Introduction (1:1-9)

- A. Salutation (1:1-3)
 - 1. Paul's identity and mission (1:1)
 - 2. Greeting to the Corinthian believers (1:2-3)
- B. Thanksgiving (1:4-9)
 - 1. Gratitude for God's grace (1:4-5)
 - 2. Spiritual gifts and confirmation (1:6-7)
 - 3. Assurance of Christ's faithfulness (1:8-9)

II. Divisions in the Church (1:10-4:21)

- A. Appeal for Unity (1:10-17)
 - 1. Exhortation to agree and avoid divisions (1:10-12)
 - 2. Christ, not human leaders, is the foundation (1:13-17)
- B. The Message of the Cross (1:18-2:5)
 - 1. The foolishness of the cross (1:18-25)
 - 2. God's choice of the weak and foolish (1:26-31)
 - 3. Paul's humble approach to preaching (2:1-5)
- C. Wisdom from the Spirit (2:6-16)
 - 1. God's wisdom revealed by the Spirit (2:6-10)
 - 2. The Spirit's role in understanding God's wisdom (2:11-16)
- D. Immaturity and Divisions (3:1-23)
 - 1. Spiritual immaturity and jealousy (3:1-4)
 - 2. God's workers and the building of the church (3:5-15)
 - 3. The temple of God and the folly of human wisdom (3:16-23)
- E. Apostles of Christ (4:1-21)
 - 1. Stewards of God's mysteries (4:1-5)
 - 2. The example of the apostles' humility and suffering (4:6-13)
 - 3. Call to imitate Paul (4:14-21)

III. Moral and Ethical Issues in the Church (5:1-7:40)

- A. Addressing Sexual Immorality (5:1-13)
 - 1. Expelling the immoral brother (5:1-5)
 - 2. Avoiding association with immoral people (5:6-13)
- B. Lawsuits Among Believers (6:1-11)
 - 1. Disputes handled within the church (6:1-6)
 - 2. The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom (6:7-11)

- C. Sexual Immorality and the Body (6:12-20)
 1. The body is for the Lord, not for immorality (6:12-14)
 2. Bodies as members of Christ and temples of the Holy Spirit (6:15-20)
- D. Marriage and Singleness (7:1-40)
 1. Principles for marriage (7:1-7)
 2. Instructions for the married and unmarried (7:8-16)
 3. Living as called by God (7:17-24)
 4. Advice for virgins and widows (7:25-40)

IV. Issues of Conscience and Christian Liberty (8:1-11:1)

- A. Food Offered to Idols (8:1-13)
 1. Knowledge and love (8:1-3)
 2. The reality of idols and the one true God (8:4-6)
 3. Consideration for the weaker brother (8:7-13)
- B. Paul's Rights as an Apostle (9:1-27)
 1. Paul's defense of his apostleship (9:1-12)
 2. Paul's renunciation of rights for the sake of the gospel (9:13-18)
 3. Becoming all things to all people (9:19-23)
 4. The disciplined life of the Christian (9:24-27)
- C. Warnings from Israel's History (10:1-13)
 1. Examples of Israel's failures (10:1-5)
 2. Warnings against idolatry and immorality (10:6-10)
 3. God's faithfulness in providing a way out of temptation (10:11-13)
- D. Freedom and Responsibility (10:14-11:1)
 1. Flee from idolatry (10:14-22)
 2. Principles for exercising Christian freedom (10:23-30)
 3. Doing everything for God's glory (10:31-11:1)

V. Order in Worship and Spiritual Gifts (11:2-14:40)

- A. Head Coverings (11:2-16)
 1. Theological basis for head coverings (11:2-10)
 2. Cultural considerations and natural order (11:11-16)
- B. The Lord's Supper (11:17-34)
 1. Problems with the Corinthian practice (11:17-22)
 2. The institution of the Lord's Supper (11:23-26)
 3. Proper self-examination (11:27-34)
- C. Spiritual Gifts and the Body of Christ (12:1-31)
 1. Varieties of gifts, same Spirit (12:1-11)
 2. Unity and diversity in the body (12:12-26)
 3. Greater gifts and a more excellent way (12:27-31)
- D. The Way of Love (13:1-13)
 1. The necessity of love (13:1-3)
 2. The characteristics of love (13:4-7)
 3. The permanence of love (13:8-13)

- E. Prophecy and Tongues (14:1-40)
 - 1. The superiority of prophecy over tongues (14:1-5)
 - 2. The importance of intelligibility in worship (14:6-25)
 - 3. Orderly worship (14:26-33)
 - 4. Instructions for women in the church (14:34-35)
 - 5. Conclusion and final exhortations (14:36-40)

VI. The Resurrection (15:1-58)

- A. The Gospel and the Resurrection (15:1-11)
 - 1. The centrality of the resurrection in the gospel (15:1-4)
 - 2. Witnesses of the resurrection (15:5-11)
- B. The Resurrection of the Dead (15:12-34)
 - 1. The necessity of the resurrection for faith (15:12-19)
 - 2. Christ as the firstfruits (15:20-28)
 - 3. Practical implications of the resurrection (15:29-34)
- C. The Resurrection Body (15:35-49)
 - 1. The nature of the resurrection body (15:35-41)
 - 2. The transformation from natural to spiritual body (15:42-49)
- D. The Victory Over Death (15:50-58)
 - 1. The mystery of transformation (15:50-53)
 - 2. The triumph over death through Christ (15:54-57)
 - 3. Exhortation to steadfastness (15:58)

VII. Final Instructions and Greetings (16:1-24)

- A. The Collection for the Saints (16:1-4)
 - 1. Instructions for the collection (16:1-2)
 - 2. Paul's plans for delivery (16:3-4)
- B. Paul's Travel Plans (16:5-12)
 - 1. Intentions to visit Corinth (16:5-9)
 - 2. Instructions regarding Timothy and Apollos (16:10-12)
- C. Final Exhortations (16:13-18)
 - 1. Exhortations to watchfulness, strength, and love (16:13-14)
 - 2. Commendation of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (16:15-18)
- D. Final Greetings and Benediction (16:19-24)
 - 1. Greetings from the churches of Asia (16:19-20)
 - 2. Paul's own greeting and final warning (16:21-24)

Dangers Facing the Believer Highlighted in 1 Corinthians

1. Divisions and Factions (1:10-17; 3:1-23):

- **Danger:** Dividing the church by aligning with different leaders.
- **Application:** Seek unity in Christ and avoid creating factions.

2. Worldly Wisdom and Pride (1:18-2:5):

- **Danger:** Relying on worldly wisdom and pride.
- **Application:** Embrace the wisdom of the cross and remain humble.

3. Immaturity and Jealousy (3:1-4):

- **Danger:** Spiritual immaturity leading to jealousy and strife.
- **Application:** Grow in spiritual maturity and seek harmony.

4. Sexual Immorality (5:1-13; 6:12-20):

- **Danger:** Tolerating sexual immorality within the church.
- **Application:** Maintain purity and discipline within the church body.

5. Legal Disputes Among Believers (6:1-11):

- **Danger:** Bringing lawsuits against fellow believers.
- **Application:** Resolve disputes within the church community.

6. Misunderstanding Christian Liberty (8:1-13; 10:23-30):

- **Danger:** Using freedom in Christ to harm weaker believers.
- **Application:** Exercise freedom with love and consideration for others.

7. Idolatry (10:1-22):

- **Danger:** Engaging in idolatrous practices.
- **Application:** Flee from idolatry and worship God alone.

8. Improper Conduct in Worship (11:2-34):

- **Danger:** Disrespecting practices like head coverings and the Lord's Supper.
- **Application:** Conduct worship in a manner that honors God and edifies the church.

9. Misusing Spiritual Gifts (12:1-14:40):

- **Danger:** Misusing or prioritizing certain spiritual gifts over others.
- **Application:** Use spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ and operate in love.

10. Denial of the Resurrection (15:12-34):

- **Danger:** Denying the resurrection of the dead.
- **Application:** Affirm the centrality of the resurrection to Christian faith and hope.

11. Neglecting Practical Love and Service (13:1-13; 16:1-18):

- **Danger:** Lacking love in action and neglecting support for others.
- **Application:** Prioritize love in all actions and support the church's needs.

Well-known Passages from 1 Corinthians

[1 Corinthians 1:18-25 ESV] For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,

and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

[1 Corinthians 6:18-20 ESV] Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 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.

[1 Corinthians 12:12-14 ESV] For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many.

[1 Corinthians 13:1-8 ESV] If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.

[1 Corinthians 15:1-5 ESV] Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Conclusion For 1 Corinthians

By understanding these dangers and applying Paul's corrective teachings, believers can safeguard their faith, foster unity and love within the church, and live lives that reflect the transforming power of the gospel.