



my grandma time

...doing simple things together!

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Week 49, Day 1 --- 1 Corinthians 12-14

We know from the introduction to this letter that the Corinthians struggled with pride. Everyone wanted to be the most important. This pride expressed itself in many ways. They even developed a hierarchy of spiritual gifts with speaking in tongues at the top of the list. Speaking in tongues in this passage appears to be the ability to communicate human spirit to Holy Spirit in words that people cannot understand. It is a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a person's life. Unfortunately, Satan can mimic this ability.

The real sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a person's life is love. Most of the time when you read the word love in the New Testament this is the kind of love that is being mentioned. It is selfless love or God's love. When you read the word love always think of the cross.

When the Corinthian believers gathered together it was chaos. In a typical gathering of the church at this time everyone would participate. This is a good thing that we have lost and need to restore. The bad thing was that people were shouting over each other. It seems that everyone was saying, "Look at me." What should be happening when Christians gather is that everyone should be saying through their words and actions, "Look at Jesus."

Week 49, Day 2 --- 1 Corinthians 15-16

The gospel or good news is very simple. Jesus died, was buried, and rose again. This is probably over simplified, but any attempt to define the gospel without these elements is not the gospel. Jesus is God and He became a human being, so that He could die. He died on a cross and was buried. The burial is important because it confirms that Jesus died. Finally, Jesus rose from the dead. This is our hope that we will also rise from the dead and that we will have a new heavenly body just like the one that Jesus has now.

There is more to life than this life on earth. If there isn't then there is no reason to believe, but there is so we have hope and our lives on this earth are different because of the hope that we have.

Week 49, Day 3 --- 2 Corinthians 1-4

Paul writes again to the church in Corinth. Most scholars think that he actually wrote at least 3 letters to Corinth and that this is the third letter. One of the important things to note is that the goal of church discipline is always reconciliation. In his first letter Paul had instructed the church to put out of the church the man who was sleeping with his step-mother. In this letter it is clear that the man has

repented, but that the church is hesitant to bring him back. Paul gives them permission to forgive him and to bring him back. This is good news for all of us since everyone continues to sin even after believing in Jesus.

In Paul's day it was typical for some men to make their living as orators or speakers. They would go from town to town and charge people for giving speeches. Some men discovered that they could do this with the gospel message. They sounded good, but began leading the churches away from truth. Paul wrote to guide the church back to truth. He introduces his letter with his qualifications and one of those is that he never charged the church for the message he delivered to them.

Paul is dealing with a great deal of physical suffering in his life. His faithfulness through this suffering should be an encouragement to us. The most important thing to remember is that everything that you can see is temporary. The things that you can't see, God and heaven, are the things that are permanent.

Week 49, Day 4 --- 2 Corinthians 5-9

As I write this today I'm thinking about a co-worker who died yesterday. Her death was sudden and unexpected. Unfortunately, I don't think that she went home to be with Jesus. That makes me very sad. Paul's desire was to be with Jesus and for everyone else to be there as well. This entire letter is filled with intense emotion. One of the primary reasons we remain on earth after coming to know Jesus is so that we can play a part in reconciling others to God.

Paul talks about being unequally yoked. The yoke went around the neck of an ox or a horse so that they could pull a plow. Two oxen yoked together could pull together and get much work done. The same with two horses. However, an ox and a horse yoked together would not accomplish anything in spite of their individual strength. When believers form deep partnerships with unbelievers they are going to be pulling in different directions. This is true in marriage, but it can also be true in business. Remember what happened to Solomon. Paul wants these believers to continue pursuing God with all their hearts.

Giving is a vital part of the Christian life. You'll notice that there is no set amount that Paul instructs the Corinthians to give. We are to give because we trust God and recognize that all we have belongs to Him.

Week 49, Day 5 --- 2 Corinthians 10-13

Imposters entered the church almost as soon as it began. There were two basic categories of imposters. The first category was Jews who taught that the Gentiles must become Jews in order to be followers of Jesus. This was a lie and Paul wrote to the Galatians to counter this lie. The second category was the Gnostics. They taught that what you did in the body did not matter as long as your spirit had special knowledge. Of course, these super-apostles had the special knowledge. The fruit of their teaching was discord and immorality.

Imposters still exist today. Not everyone who comes into the jail to teach is teaching the truth. It is very important for you to study God's Word so that you can discern what is true and what is false.

Week 49, Day 6 --- Romans 1-3 - Acts 20:1-3

Paul has not yet been to Rome, but he has heard that there are believers there and he greatly desires to go there. He writes them a letter that is probably much like his teaching wherever he went. He wants

them to understand the basics of Christianity. This letter is organized much like a legal case. In these first three chapters Paul is working as a prosecutor to convict.

Who has a problem? What is the problem? What has proven to be insufficient to resolve the problem? What is sufficient to solve the problem?

Think through these questions. Write me with your answers. Keep reading. These first three chapters can be discouraging, but good news is coming soon.

Week 49, Day 7 --- Romans 4-8

There is a great battle going on. It is between our flesh and spirit. The NIV translates flesh as sinful nature. The idea is that it is our physical nature and desires that lead us to sin. We are focused on here and now, on survival and this motivates us to do evil. There are three pieces to the solution that Paul mentions in this section. He will get to the fourth and final piece in the next section. The first piece of the solution is faith. When we trust in Jesus' death and resurrection for eternal life rather than in our own ability to do good we are on the right path. The second piece of the solution is Jesus. His death and resurrection are essential for our salvation. The third piece of the solution is baptism. Through immersion into water we act out the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. That is what happens physically. What happens spiritually is that we are brought into contact with the blood of Jesus and the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us. We can recognize that our flesh or sinful nature is dead so that we can begin to live by the Spirit.

In chapter 7 Paul wants to make the point once again that living by the flesh will not work. As long as our trust is in the law and our focus is on life in the flesh we will do evil. We may not want to, but we will not be able to help it. The whole point of chapter 7 is that we cannot become good on our own.

Chapter 8 is one of the greatest chapters in the entire Bible. It is filled with hope and describes the fundamental principle necessary for the Christian life. We must be guided by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit clearly communicates to us through the written word, the Bible, which you are reading. The Spirit also communicates directly. What the Spirit communicates directly will never contradict what is communicated in the Bible. What promises do you find in this chapter? If you fully trusted in those promises what would you do differently today?