**LifeGroup Study**

**2024-03-24**

**JESUS IS THE ANSWER**

**Death By Meeting**

**Leader Notes**

**OVERVIEW:**

Welcome back to our series, Jesus is the Answer. During this four-week series we’re looking at 4 major themes in 1 Corinthians that Paul addresses and how Jesus provides the new perspective or answer to them. Our chapters for week 2 are 1 Corinthians 11 – 14 and our theme is love. In these chapters, Paul cautions the Corinthians not to allow divisions in their church meetings due to jealousy over the different roles and gifts they had. For the Corinthians, and for us, Paul says - discover your gifts and use them to build up the church. As we do this, we are following “the most excellent way” of chapter 13 – the way of love. As followers of Jesus today, we are the people of love. In our study we’ll unpack how we can love one another well as we serve each other with the gifts God has given us.

**ICEBREAKER:** How I Receive Love

In his book, The 5 Love Languages, Gary Chapman writes that each of us has a primary love language, the way we feel most loved. The 5 he identifies are, words of affirmation, acts of service, gifts, quality time and physical touch. Which of these 5 is your primary love language? **Share with the group!**

**STUDY:**

WATCH: Each week of this series, start your study time with this summary of 1 Corinthians.

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/1-corinthians/>

WEEK 4:

The Issue: Unruly Meetings: The Corinthian church gatherings lacked Jesus’ love.

The Solution: Jesus’ Love Ethic: Expressed through serving in the body of Christ.

1. Love through SUBMISSION – Covering Your Head for Worship (1 Corinthians 11:3-16)

READ: 1 Corinthians 11:3

**3**But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+11+-+14&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28604a)] and the head of Christ is God.

* In 1 Corinthians 11:3-16, Paul encourages the women in the Corinthian church to wear a head covering. Paul argues that rather than cause divisions by not covering your head, use your head covering as an outward sign of your heart’s submission to God. Key to Paul’s teaching is verse three. **What is Paul telling the Corinthians in verse 3?**

LEADER NOTE: In this verse, Paul is telling the Corinthians that a woman should cover her head as an illustration of the order, headship, and authority of God. The implications of this verse are found in the rest of the passage. The order is: God the Father, God the Son, the man or husband, and the woman or wife. The veil or covering on the head of a believing Corinthian wife showed that she was under the authority of her husband, and therefore under submission to God. Source: Got Questions: Should Christian Women Wear Head Coverings?

READ: 1 Corinthians 11:4-6

**4**Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. **5**But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved. **6**For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off; but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head.

* In these verses Paul talks about an outward sign of submission – covering your head for worship. In the Corinthian culture, a woman’s long hair was seen as her outward sign of her submission to God’s authority. The man was not to have an outward sign (long hair), rather his hair was to be short as an outward sign of his place in God’s order. **Why do you think Paul was making a big deal out of hair length for women and men?**

LEADER NOTE: In Corinthian culture, hair length was a big deal. If a woman cut her hair short, it could send the message that she was rebelling against God’s authority and order. If a man let his hair grow long, it could send the same message. Paul didn’t want arguments over hair length to cause divisions in the church. Rather than just following their own preference, Paul encouraged the Corinthians to love one another and God by submitting to the outward sign of the length of their hair.

* **What application might we take from this passage for how to live as followers of Jesus today?**

LEADER NOTE: Even though the issue of hair length is not relevant to how we live out our faith today, the principle is. As followers of Jesus, we are called to submit to God and to one another out of love. This is a heart attitude we can have of obedience to God's authority and submission to His established order “as to the LORD” (see Ephesians 5:21).

Love Through SUBMISSON – The Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-34)

READ: 1 Corinthians 11:17-19

**17**In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. **18**In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. **19**No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God’s approval. **20**So then, when you come together, it is not the Lord’s Supper you eat, **21**for when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers. As a result, one person remains hungry and another gets drunk. **22**Don’t you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter! NIV

* **What do you notice from this section about the problem Paul is addressing?**

LEADER NOTE: The problem Paul is addressing here is disunity in the Corinthian church meetings. Particularly, when they gathered for the Lord’s Supper, those who had more material means were feasting and drinking, while others in the church were going without.

READ: 1 Corinthians 11:33-34.

**33**So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together. **34**Anyone who is hungry should eat something at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment.

* **How does Paul encourage the church to love one another in this case?**

LEADER NOTE: Paul encourages the Corinthian church to love one another through observing the Lord’s Supper together. The meal that those with more means had been enjoying on their own should be shared with everyone. Submitting to one another out of love means sharing what we have with others.

1. Love Expressed in the BODY (1 Corinthians 12)

READ: 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

**4**There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. **5**There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. **6**There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

**7**Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.  NIV

In this chapter, Paul addresses how to love one another in the body of Christ through how we use our spiritual gifts. **What can we learn from these verses about spiritual gifts?**

LEADER NOTE: In this introduction to spiritual gifts and how to love each other through how we use them, Paul tells the Corinthians that we have one Source for our gifts. All of our various gifts and abilities in the body of Christ come from one Spirit, one Lord. This truth should prompt us to function together as one in the body of Christ.

READ: 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

**12**The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. **13**Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles,[[n](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+11+-+14&version=NLT#fen-NLT-28608n)] some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit. NLT

* **Based on these verses, how would you defend the importance of love in the body of Christ?**

LEADER NOTE: Love is important in the body of Christ because we are one in Him. In this chapter, Paul compares the parts of our human body to how we should see our role in the body of Christ. Just as each part of our body has a unique and vital role to play in our overall health, each member of the body of Christ is uniquely equipped by God to serve and love, contributing to the overall health of the church.

* **What part has God given you in the body of Christ? How can you use your role to serve and love others?**

LEADER NOTE: In our recent series, Open to the Spirit, we offered a LifeGroup study on spiritual gifts. For your group members who would like to explore more of how God may have gifted them, check out the spiritual gifts assessment and study here <https://www.lifegroupleaders.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/20240211-Leader-Notes-.pdf> (week 5)

1. The Way of LOVE (1 Corinthians 13)

READ: 1 Corinthians 13:3

“So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I’m bankrupt without love.” THE MESSAGE

* According to Paul, it doesn’t matter how great I am at speaking or serving, or even how sacrificial I am, “I’m bankrupt without love.” **Do you agree? Why or why not?**

LEADER NOTE: The Corinthians placed a high value on gifts and talents. Being smart and able to communicate well were highly prized in their culture. Paul is not against placing a high value on these things. What he is saying is love is the most important. He’s not talking about a wishy-washy, sentimental love. Rather, Paul is saying that to love God and one another as God has loved us is the greatest and highest thing.

READ: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

**4**Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5**It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6**Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7**It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. NIV

* See if you can re-phrase these verses in your own words. **How might you summarize this section in one sentence?**
* 1 Corinthians 13 has been read at countless wedding ceremonies. It is beautiful, and for many of us, even sentimental. Instead of just glossing over this chapter, **how can we refresh our understanding that love is the way we are to live as the body of Christ?**

LEADER NOTE: It is important to do a heart check in this area. Am I loving others as Jesus wants me to? Particularly, am I showing God’s love to others in the church, through the way I relate with them, listen, share, serve and spend time with them?

**12**We don’t yet see things clearly. We’re squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won’t be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We’ll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us! **13**But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love. 1 Corinthians 13:12-13 THE MESSAGE

1. Speak Words that BENEFIT the Church and Seekers (1 Corinthians 14)

READ: 1 Corinthians 14:1-5

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. **2**For anyone who speaks in a tongue[[j](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+11+-+14&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28681j)] does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. **3**But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. **4**Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. **5**I would like every one of you to speak in tongues,[[k](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+11+-+14&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28684k)] but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues,[[l](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+11+-+14&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28684l)] unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified. NIV

* **According to these verses, how is prophecy (proclaiming God’s truth) a benefit to the church?**

LEADER NOTE: In verse 3 we read that prophecy (proclaiming God’s truth) has the benefits of strengthening, edifying (instructing to improve morally or spiritually) and comforting the church. Paul is encouraging the Corinthian believers that when they meet, people in the meeting should speak words that benefit the church by proclaiming God’s truth.

READ: 1 Corinthians 14:22-25

**22**Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers. **23**So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? **24**But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, **25**as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, “God is really among you!” NIV

* **According to these verses, how is prophecy (proclaiming God’s truth) a benefit to seekers?**

LEADER NOTE: Unbelievers (seekers) need an opportunity to hear God’s truth in ways they can understand. Paul encourages that when the church meets, they should speak God’s truth with words that are clear and compelling. As they do this, seekers will know that God is in the meeting!

READ 1 Corinthians 14:26

**26**What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.  NIV

* **According to this verse, what is the result of speaking words that benefit everyone?**

LEADER NOTE: In this chapter, Paul has been encouraging the Corinthians that when they meet for church, they should speak words that benefit everyone. He compares the benefit of speaking in tongues to the benefit of speaking prophesy to show that, while speaking in tongues can benefit the individual, speaking words of prophesy can benefit everyone. The result of speaking these kinds of words, Paul says, is that the church will be built up. Church meetings should result in people being encouraged and strengthened (built up) in their faith.

* **What is a key takeaway for you from this week’s study?**

**PRAYER:**

Spend some time today thanking God for the body of Christ, the church. Ask Him to help your group members to serve others in the church well, in order to build up the body of Christ.