

Paul's First Letter to the Church in Corinth

Jan. 9, 2011

Synopsis:

This epistle was written by Paul (who founded the congregation (Acts 18.1f) at the conclusion of his nearly three year residence in Ephesus, as we observe from 1 Cor. 16.8, apparently ending at Pentecost, 57 or 58 AD. The ones delivering it were apparently Stephanus, Fortunatus and Achaicus, who had been just sent to the apostle and who, at the end of the epistle (ch. 16.17), are most heartily and fully commended to be received back more honorable at their return to the congregation in Corinth. This letter, highly bearing the character of Paul, is not addressed to any individual, but rather to the whole congregation of the large church in Corinth composed of both Jews and Gentiles, and appears to be called for because of the report which the apostle had received from their fellow members of Chloe's household (Ch. 1.11) concerning the conflict taking place among them that was of such a serious nature that the apostle had already had sought to send Timothy to visit Corinth (ch. 4.17) after he had completed his trip to Macedonia. 2. Through the report which he had received about an ongoing case of incest, as well as about the deficient condition of the converted Corinthians, not only with respect to their general habits (ch. 6.1) and church discipline (ch. 11.20), but rather also has at also apparently concerned their doctrine (ch. 15). 3. in response to very specific questions that had been directed to Paul by the congregation at Corinth because of various situations in regards to Christian customs.¹



¹Translated from materials in a 19th century German Bible whose date and origins are veiled in the mist of history.

OUTLINE of 1 Corinthians²

- I. Disorders reported to Paul (1-6)
 - A. Factions in the Church (1-4)
 - B. Moral lapses (5-6)
 - 1. Incest (5)
 - 2. Lawsuits (6.1-11)
 - 3. Immorality (6.12-20)
- II. Questions raised by the Corinthian Christians by letter or delegation (7-15)
 - A. Marriage and celibacy (7)
 - B. Food sacrificed to idols (8-10)
 - C. Disorders in Public Worship (11)
 - 1. Women's dress (11.1-16)
 - 2. Abuse of the Lord's Supper (11.17-34)
 - D. Spiritual gifts (12-14)
 - E. Resurrection (15)
- III. Conclusion (16)

An Introduction to 1 Corinthians...

ch. 1.1-13.... Division causes strife everywhere! What division is here rebuked? Why do we follow Luther? In doing so are we guilty of the same offense being addressed by Paul to the Corinthians? Why or why not?

²Modified from Robert Hoerber's Outline in *Reading the New Testament for Understanding*, CPH, St. Louis. 1986. P. 108