



# Blueprint for the Church:

## *Live the Gospel!*

Small Group Study Guide



1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-9

## Thanks Be To God!

Paul begins this letter by focusing on thankfulness to God for what He has done in and through the believers in Corinth. Much of this letter will be corrective, addressing specific issues to help the believers in Corinth understand God's **Blueprint for the Church**. All this can be summarized as a call to Live the Gospel. Before they can fully understand how to **Live the Gospel**, they have to understand who they are positionally in Christ, because of the Gospel. This is the intent of Paul in these opening verses.

1. Paul begins by stating that this church is the “church of God which is at Corinth.” (v. 2). This addresses a problem that exists in the church - which is that they tend to think too highly of themselves.
  - What is the difference in emphasis between saying “the church of God which is at Corinth” verses saying “the Corinthian church.” In what way does this address the problem of being too self-focused as a church?
  - What tendencies toward self-focus and thinking too highly of ourselves would be eliminated if we saw ourselves as “the church of God, which is *in Hilltown*”? How might this effect our attitude toward other churches in the area?
2. Paul describes the believers that make up this church as those “who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus; saints by calling” (v:2). These are wonderful words of encouragement. “Believers are set apart for God, just as were the utensils in the Temple. But precisely because they are set apart for God, they must also bear the character of God who has thus set them apart.”<sup>1</sup>
  - This is phenomenal! Understand that you have been set apart as an instrument in the hands of God to proclaim His glory. Paul saw that God had set him apart as an instrument of His glory, in the apostolic calling (v. 1). How can you live out His calling of being an instrument set apart to proclaim God’s glory?
  - In your own words, how does the truth that you are already sanctified motivate you to “bear the character of God who has set you apart”?

<sup>1</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1987), 32.

Don't Forget:

*Discuss the Sermon Notes from this week*

3. Paul's greeting of, "grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 3) is filled with words of hope.

- Grace refers to the unmerited and undeserved kindness that God has bestowed upon all who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It summarizes all that God has done for mankind. In your own words, what are the acts of favor and kindness God has shown you?
- Peace refers to a state of well-being and wholeness. It summarizes all the blessings that are received by those whom God has shown His grace toward. In your own words, what are the blessings of well-being that God gives to those who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?

4. 1 Corinthians 1:4-8 give a summary of the benefits associated with God's grace given to undeserving sinners - all in the context of praise and thanks to God. John MacArthur states that these spiritual benefits are described from a past, present and future perspective.<sup>2</sup>

- What is the "past" spiritual benefit that Paul talks about when he refers to the "grace of God which was given to You in Christ Jesus"? (cf. Col. 1:21-23).
- What are the God-in-Christ "present" speech gifts which are enriched in you, flowing from God's grace to bring glory to His name?
- What are the God-in-Christ "present" knowledge gifts which are enriched in you, flowing from God's grace to bring glory to His name?
- What are the God-in-Christ other "present" gifts of God's grace, which are enriched in you, so that you are not lacking to bring glory to His name?
- What "future" blessing flows from God's grace to all who call upon the name of the Lord? How does this give hope and assurance in the present?

5. Paul identifies our Savior five times as "Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 2, 3, 7, 8, 9). These are not just titles; they communicate much about the nature and person of the Son of God - the cornerstone of the Church (1 Peter 2:4-7).

- What does the title "Lord" say about the Son of God? How is this doctrine foundational in the ***Blueprint of the Church to Live the Gospel?***
- What does the name "Jesus" say about the Son of God? How is this doctrine foundational in the ***Blueprint of the Church to Live the Gospel?*** (cf. Hebrews 10:19-25)?
- What does the title "Christ" (Anointed One) say about the Son of God? How is this doctrine foundational in the ***Blueprint of the Church to Live the Gospel?***

<sup>1</sup>John MacArthur,  
*The MacArthur New  
Testament Commentary:  
1 Corinthians* (Chicago:  
Moody Press, 1984),  
11-22.