

A STUDY GUIDE FOR
TWELVE CHALLENGES CHURCHES FACE

BY MARK DEVER

STUDY GUIDE BY ERIC SCHUMACHER

PREFACE

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read through the book of 1 Corinthians.

Answer:

- What defines your view of a “church challenge?”

- In actual practice, where do you tend to turn first for solutions?

- What relationship do you think exists between theological/doctrinal truth and facing challenges in the church?

- What role should the Bible play in shaping the life of a church?

DURING READING

Page 9

- Does the Bible recognize that churches face challenges?

- What will 1 Corinthians teach us about the relationship between theology and church life?

Page 10

- Where did Paul reach for answers when facing “the most normal of problems?”

- How did Paul argue with the Corinthian church?

- What was Paul’s “governing presupposition” about the church?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- How might your natural response to challenges need to change in light of this study?

- Is your “governing presupposition” about the church the same as Paul’s was? Ought it be?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you’ve learned.

CHAPTER 1 - FORGETFULNESS

BEFORE READING

Answer:

- List the four greatest blessings in your life:
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
- Who has blessed you more than anyone else in your life?
- How (through what means) has God most blessed you?
- What do you tend to think of first, when you think of your church?
- In what ways are you presently, intentionally helping other believers in your local church to remember God's blessings each week?

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 three times.

DURING READING

Remember Your Blessings – pages 13-18

- What is the first thing that Paul focused on in his letter?
- Is that where you begin when you think about your local church?

- In verse 2, Paul lists Four Evidences of God's Work. List them. Then, explain where you see them in your local church.

1. Evidence 1 - _____

This applies to my local church in this way:

2. Evidence 2 - _____

This applies to my local church in this way:

3. Evidence 3 - _____

This applies to my local church in this way:

4. Evidence 4 - _____

This applies to my local church in this way:

- In verse 3, what does Paul do for the Corinthians?

- Do you do the same for your local church?

- In verse 4, for what does Paul thank God?

- How does this apply to your local church? Do you share Paul's attitude?

In verse 5, Paul lists another evidence of God's work in them. What is it?

How does this apply to your local church?

In verse 6, Paul lists another evidence of God's work in them. What is it?

How does this apply to your local church?

In verse 7, Paul lists two evidences of God's work in them. Explain them.

1. Evidence 1 - _____

This applies to my local church in this way:

2. Evidence 2 - _____

This applies to my local church in this way:

In verse 8, Paul reminds them of two truths. Explain them.

1. Truth 1 – Believers will be _____.

This applies to my local church in this way:

2. Truth 2 – They would be _____.

This applies to my local church in this way:

- In verse 9, Paul lists a final, summary blessing. What is it?
- How does this apply to your local church?

Who Has Blessed You? – Pages 18-20

- Who is the one who blesses the church?
 - How did this truth effect Paul’s prayers?
- How does God use people in blessing the church?
 - Give some examples.

How Has God Blessed You? – Pages 20-22

- Through whom specifically are believers supremely blessed by God?
- In verses 2-9, the author shows how Jesus Christ is related to God’s blessings. List out and meditate on these connections.

Jesus Christ is...

- ...called _____ (2-3; 7-9).
- ..._____ to (2).
- ...the means of _____ (4).
- ...the one in and through whom Christians are _____ in every way (5).
- ...the one whose _____ is eagerly awaited (7).
- ...the one who would keep the Corinthians _____ (8).

- ...the one into whose _____ we have been called (9).
- ...God's _____ (9).

How is all this a blessing and comfort to believers?

Have Others Forgotten Their Blessings? – Pages 22-24

- What does the author say was Paul's primary purpose in writing to these believers?
 - What might this say about the role that believers ought to play in each other's lives?
- Paul views himself as what kind of convert? Explain.
 - Are you a convert to Jesus Christ?
- What was the first thing that Paul did for these confused Christians (verse 4)?
 - How does Paul view their sin?
 - Where does Paul begin with these Christians in need of correction?
 - Why is this wise?
 - If you cannot see evidence of grace in one who needs correction, what might be true of you?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- Have you forgotten your blessings?**
 - How does your list of blessings (on page one) differ from that of Paul's in 1 Corinthians?
 - How do you need to change your thinking about what it means to be blessed?

- Have you forgotten who has blessed you?**
 - Does your answer to the question of *who* has blessed you (on page one) differ from Paul's answer, outlined in this chapter?
 - How do you need to change your thinking about who has blessed you?

- Have you forgotten how God has blessed you?**
 - Does your answer to the question of *how* God has blessed you (on page one) differ from Paul's teaching on how God blesses us?
 - How do you need to change your thinking about how God has blessed you?

- Have Christians around you forgotten their blessings?**
 - In what concrete and practical ways can you begin to help other Christians in your local church remember how God has blessed them in Jesus Christ?

- With whom in your local church should you form a relationship, aimed at helping them remember and apply God's blessings in Christ?

Apply:

- What specific applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

CHAPTER 2 - DIVISION

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-3:23 **once**.

Answer:

- Why is unity important in the church?
 - Why do you think most Christians want unity in the church?
- Is all unity necessarily good unity?
- Where might unity be wrong?

DURING READING

Introduction – pages 25-27

- Paul exposed that the heart of the problem of division in the Corinthian church stretched to where?
- How could a concern for unity become divisive and unproductive?
 - What lesson should be learned from that?

Reason #1 – pages 27-28

- Godly unity** _____.
- Explain the situation in Corinth.
 - How did their division create a lie about Christ?
 - How does godly unity display Christ?
 - Where are you in danger of repeating the Corinthian error?

Reason #2 – pages 28-29

- Godly unity** _____ .
- What does division on the basis of what is **pleasing to worldly appetites** in terms of preaching and teaching do? Explain.
 - Do we face temptation toward such division today? Do you, personally?
- How does preaching to please worldly appetites lie about the Gospel?
- What should you look for when looking for a new church?

Reason #3 – pages 29-30

- Godly unity** _____ .
- Why is it utterly foolish to divide the church over the “prestige” of preachers?
- Why does God choose the lowly?
- What makes pride, defensiveness and division difficult?
 - How can you promote humility in yourself?
- What is the goal of our gatherings?

Reason #4 – pages 31-32

- Godly unity** _____ .
- Whose* wisdom should we follow?

- How is *God's* wisdom different from the *world's* wisdom?
- What was the aim of the secular orators in Corinth?
 - How does that differ from Paul's aim?
 - Why did Paul deliberately let his weakness show?
 - Where did Paul receive his wisdom?
 - How many of the world understood it?
 - Whose wisdom typically guides you in your life and view of church life?

Reason #5 – pages 32-33

- Godly unity** _____
_____.
- If the above is true, then what do divisions reveal?
- Why were the Corinthians culpable for their spiritual immaturity?
 - What opportunities has God provided you to grow much in Christ?
 - Are you availing yourself of them?
- What does the author think of the concept of the “carnal Christian?”
 - Why might that teaching be dangerous?

- What does a true Christian want?
- Do you want that?
- What should that desire mean for our commitment to other Christians in the local church?

Reason #6 – pages 33-34

- Godly unity reflects a** _____ .
- Division in the church is essentially an attack on whom? Explain.
- On what basis will all work be judged?
- Who owns the church?
- What does this mean for the one who attacks the church?

Reason #7 – pages 34-35

- Godly unity comes from** _____ .
- How do God's promises in the Gospel make divisions totally unnecessary? Explain.
- What does the author suggest we do to grow to treasure God's promises to a greater degree?
- Do you do these things?
- How can you help others in your church do these things?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- How have you experienced or been involved in church division in the past?

- In light of this chapter, how would you approach that situation differently?

- Are you experiencing division with other Christians now?

- In light of this chapter, what will you do?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

CHAPTER 3 - IMPOSTERS

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 4 three times.

Answer:

- Who is the greatest minister of the Gospel that you have personally known?
 - List the attributes that made this person a great minister.

- List five things you think are required for a person to be a real minister of the Gospel?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

DURING READING

THREE MARKS OF A REAL MINISTER

Mark #1 – pages 38-39

- The first mark of a real minister is his**
_____.

- What is a steward? What does it mean that a minister is a steward?

- By what standard will ministers be judged?
- What is the main task that minister have been given?
- What is the one thing a steward is called to do above all else?
- What freedom can be found in knowing who your ultimate judge is?
- Why is it wrong to compare ministers on the basis of worldly standards?
- Record and answer Paul's three questions from verse 7?
 - 1 –
 - 2 –
 - 3 –

Mark #2 – pages 41-44

- The second mark of a real minister is his**
_____.
- What is the experience of a minister of the cross?
 - What words and phrases does Paul use to describe the experience of him and others? Explain.
- How would the wealthy Corinthians have perceived Paul?
- What is the only way for anyone to follow Jesus?
 - What does such a life show to the world?

Mark #3 – pages 44-47

- _____ **are the third mark a real minister.**
- What is a real minister called to lead others to do?
- How ought a congregation to respond to a real minister of the cross?
- How should the power of a minister's teaching be measured?
 - Why does this power matter?
- Is Christian love gentle, severe, or both? Explain your answer.
- Why is the desire for discipleship essential?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- How has your understanding of what a real minister is changed?

- How can you encourage the ministers in your church to be real ministers?

- Suppose a friend wrote to you, asking what they ought to look for in a minister. In your own words, write out a brief description that would help them.

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

CHAPTER 4 - SIN

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 5-6.

Answer:

- How does the world we live in tend to characterize judging?
- Should Christians judge other people?
- Define “excommunication.” Is it Christian?

DURING READING

THREE REASONS FOR EXCOMMUNICATION

Reason #1 – pages 51-52

The unrepentant sinner is to be excommunicated for _____.

- Why does Paul rebuke the Corinthians in chapter 5? Of what were they guilty?
- What is meant by “deliver this man over to Satan?” Why would Paul want them to do this?
- What should love for God and hatred for sin produce in our relationships?
- Whose responsibility is it to see that sin is not tolerated in the church?

Reason #2 – pages 53-54

The unrepentant sinner is to be excommunicated for the sake of the _____ of the church.

- How does continued, unrepentant sin endanger the whole church?

- What happens to sin that no one deals with?

- What should the lives and actions of church members portray to the world?

Reason #3 – pages 54-56

The unrepentant sinner is to be excommunicated is the church's _____ to do so.

- Should believers disengage from the world?

- With whom should Christians not associate?

- Is it the church's job to reform society? What is the church's job?
 - In terms of the above questions – do you think the contemporary church has had its priorities straight?

Implications for All Believers

- How does the need for accountability relate to the need for attendance and involvement in the lives of other church members?

- How does a failure to practice church discipline make us culpable in someone else's sin?

- How are we to relate to those who are excommunicated?

FOUR REASONS JUDGING THOSE WHO ARE INSIDE

We are to exercise godly judgment within the church...

1) ...for the sake of _____ . (pages 57-58)

- Explain.
- How should we get involved in conflict resolution with brothers and sisters?

2) ...for the sake of _____ . (pages 58-59)

- Explain.
- What should we desire to show the world more than anything else?

3) ...for the sake of _____ . (pages 59-60)

- Explain.
- Why should we be truthful about wickedness and its penalties?

4) ...for the sake of _____ . (pages 60-62)

- Explain.
- Why is it wrong to be casual about physical conduct and sin?

CONCLUSION

- What happens when a church neglects to discipline sinners?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- How has your understanding of excommunication (and church discipline) changed?

- Is there continuing sin of which you need to repent?

- Are there specific situations in the lives of fellow church members that you need to be involved?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

CHAPTER 5 - ASCETICISM

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 7.

Answer:

- Define “asceticism.”
- Do you think that asceticism is a problem in twenty-first century Christianity? If so, how?

DURING READING

GETTING SERIOUS – pages 66-68

- How would you respond to someone who asserted that Paul’s words in some of these verses are not inspired and authoritative?
- Are Paul’s words in this section *applicable* today? Why?
- What is the “present crisis” to which Paul refers?
- What does it mean that “the time is short?”

MARRY, AND STAY MARRIED – pages 68-71

- Does Paul believe that “it is good for a man not to touch a woman?”
- What is Paul’s primary concern behind his instructions on sex in marriage?
- Briefly explain Paul’s approach to sex in marriage and how it differs from asceticism.
- When is abstinence appropriate in marriage?

- Seven reasons are listed for why God gave the gift of marital sex. List and explain them.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

- Summarize the basic instruction given to...
 - ...a believer married to an unbeliever.
 - ...a married believer.
 - ...a divorced believer.

SOME SHOULD NOT MARRY – pages 71-74

- Summarize the mindset of Greek culture toward the body and soul.
 - In what erroneous approaches to the body did this result?
- Paul lays out four reasons for some not to marry. List *and explain* them.
 - Reason #1 - _____.
 - Reason #2 - _____.
 - Reason #3 - _____.

- Reason #4 - _____.
- Is Paul teaching asceticism? Why or why not?
- Who is gifted for singleness?
- What concern should mark the single person? If single, does this characterize you?

OUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES – pages 74-77

- How should our circumstances in the here and now be viewed?
 - How does that perspective help us live in the here and now?
- What is ultimate?
 - Do our present circumstances impact that?
- What diminishes the power of passing circumstances?
 - How is Jesus best displayed in the church?
 - How does that impact our approach to diversity?
 - What does that say to the principle of a “homogeneous congregation”?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- Where are you tempted to think asceticism is the solution to your problems?
- How might your approach to marriage, singleness or another circumstance need to change?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

CHAPTER 6 - DISOBEDIENCE

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 8:1—10:13.

Answer:

- What are your most valued freedoms and rights?
 - Would you give them up if it would benefit other believers?
- What are your favorite activities and hobbies?
 - Would you give them up for the sake of other Christians, if need be?

DURING READING

OBEDIENCE AND GOOD TEACHING – pages 82-87

- “The first way we learn obedience is by means of _____.”
- Briefly explain the cultural background of 1 Corinthians 8.
- To what “knowledge” does Paul refer in 1 Corinthians 8:1?
 - How should this knowledge be regulated?

- What does true knowledge of God always bring?

- What should guide the exercise of our freedom and rights?

- What defiled the food? Explain.

- How should we protect the believer with a weak conscience? Explain.

- What question should be asked pertaining to issues of behavior over which Christians disagree?

OBEDIENCE BY EXAMPLE – pages 87-92

- Another way we learn obedience is through a _____.

- How does Paul set a good example chapter 9?
 - What does it mean that Paul has a “right to support?”
 - How ought a church to provide for pastors and their families?

- Why didn't Paul use his right in Corinth, when he did elsewhere?

- Read carefully the paragraph of questions on page 91. Ask them of yourself.

- What rights are you giving up for the sake of others in your local church?

- What rights are you *refusing* to give up for the good of other believers?

OBEDIENCE BY BAD EXAMPLE – pages 92-95

- "...we learn obedience by observing the _____ of disobedience."

- List and explain the four specific warnings Paul issues from the example of the Israelites:
 - Avoid _____.
 - Avoid _____.
 - Do not _____.
 - Do not _____.

- By which of these are you particularly tempted?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- In what ways is the attitude set forth in this chapter an application of the Gospel?

- Where does your attitude about your “rights and freedoms” need to change in light for the sake of others?
- Are there “rights” you need to surrender for the sake of others?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you’ve learned.

CHAPTER 7 - LEGALISM

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1.

Answer:

- What tensions exist between the concerns for law, love, sacrifice and freedom in the Christian life?
- Give what has been covered in previous chapters, how should Christians use their liberties in light of others?

DURING READING

FLEE FALSE GODS – pages 99-101

- Why would Paul's exhortation to "flee from idolatry" have been difficult for the Corinthians?
 - How is it difficult for us to hear in our context?
 - How is this command connected to his teaching on the Lord's Supper?
 - How is this command illustrated by the Jewish sacrifices?
- In the previous section Paul taught that the Corinthian believers were free to eat meat sacrificed to idols. Is that teaching compatible with what he states here? If so, how?

SEEK THE GOOD OF OTHERS – pages 101-103

- Why does Paul write “All things are lawful?” Does he believe that?

- How should the behavior of a believer be governed?

- What questions must still be answered when we know that something is not wrong in and of itself?
 - How have you employed this principle recently?
Where should you?

REALIZE YOUR FREEDOM – pages 103-104

- Upon what theological truth does Paul base his teaching that Christians are free to eat anything?

- Should we forbid Christians to do what Scripture allows?

- What attitude should we encourage toward the use of what God created?

FORGO YOUR FREEDOMS – pages 104-106

- Why should we sometimes forgo our freedoms?

- Explain Paul’s teaching about when to eat or not eat “for the sake of conscience.”

- What is it that Paul wants to bring clarity to in all things?

LIVE FOR GOD'S GLORY – pages 106-109

- How do we glorify God?

- When is it right to “try to please everyone?” When is it wrong?

- Is there an area of your life where you are wrongly trying to please everyone?

- Is there an area of your life where you are valuing the exercise of your rights over reaching others with the Gospel?

- What changes need to be made?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- What convicted you the most in this chapter?

- What is one attitude that you will pray for the Lord's help in changing?

- What is one concrete action you will take this week in response to the Word of God?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

CHAPTER 8 - AUTONOMY

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-16.

Answer:

- Describe our culture's attitude toward authority. Give examples.
- What attitudes toward authority do you see in the church? in yourself?

DURING READING

THE CHRISTIAN AND RELATIONSHIPS

MORALITY – pages 112-115

- We want to communicate that Christians are committed to...
- Explain the cultural context relating to head coverings and women's hair.
- Did women pray publicly in the church? If so, was it appropriate?
 - How is a woman praying in public different than her "speaking?"
- What application does Paul's teaching on head-coverings have for how we dress today?

AUTHORITY – pages 115-116

- To whom do Christians want to communicate an appreciation for authority?

- To whom does the author suggest “angels” refers? Explain the situation.

- What did head-coverings indicate in terms of authority?

- In our church meetings, what could indicate evident disrespect for due authority?

GENDER DISTINCTION – pages 117-118

- How is God’s image displayed in appropriate gender distinctions?

- What did Paul mean by “Does not nature itself teach you...?”

- How can we faithfully display gender-distinctions in our congregation?
 - How could they be confused?

THE GOSPEL – pages 118-119

- How does this passage relate to a concern for the Gospel?

HUMILITY – pages 119-120

- How should our worship gatherings communicate humility?

- What type of humility does our world promote? discourage?
 - How does that differ from the Christian approach to humility?

- Where have you seen Chesterton's quote prove true?

HUSBAND AND WIFE – pages 121-122

HIERARCHY

- How is hierarchy experienced and expressed in marriage?

- If you are married, how are you living out this reality?

- If you are single, how should this reality affect your life now?

MUTUALITY

- How is mutuality experienced and expressed in marriage?

- If you are married, how are you living out this reality?

- If you are single, how should this reality affect your life now?

THE RELATIONSHIP OF GOD THE FATHER AND GOD THE SON – pages 123-124

- What relationship lies at the center of biblical thinking on gender? Explain.

- What does “headship” mean?
 - Why is “source” a wrong meaning for “head” in this context?

RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE CHURCH – pages 124-125

SUBMISSION TO APOSTOLIC TEACHING

- How is the reality that we are not autonomous reflected in our approach to apostolic teaching?
 - How can this be expressed in our local church?

RESPECT FOR OTHER CHURCHES

- How is the reality that we are not autonomous reflected in our approach to apostolic teaching?
 - How can this be expressed in our local church?

AFTER READING

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you’ve learned.
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CHAPTER 9 - THOUGHTLESSNESS

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

Answer:

- What concerns (practical or otherwise) are at the forefront of your thoughts...
 - ...as you prepare to gather with your congregation on Sunday morning?
 - ...as you participate in corporate worship?
 - ...as the service ends?
- Is your participation in church marked most by thoughts of yourself and your family or of others?

DURING READING

DIVISION IN THE CHURCH – pages 128-131

- What does division in the church undermine?
- Explain what division in the church evidences about...
 - ...a church's love for one another.
 - ...a church's love for God.
 - ...their observation of the Lord's Supper.
- How is divisive behavior opposed to the nature of the church?

- How can a church better reflect the character of Christ than the church in Corinth?

- Apply your answer to yourself and your local church.

TRUE UNITY IS IN CHRIST – pages 131-135

- Where is true unity anchored?

- Explain how participation in the Supper as a unified congregation...
 - ...is an act of remembering Christ.
 - ...is covenant renewal with Christ.
 - ...is a proclamation of Christ's death.
 - ...is a "feeding on Christ by faith."

SELFISH DIVISION BRINGS JUDGMENT – pages 135-138

- What does it mean to partake of the Supper in "an unworthy manner?"
 - Against whom is it sin?

- What does it mean to "recognize the body" when partaking of the Supper?

- In what sense did God respond to their "unworthy manner" with judgment?

- How are “judgment” (29) and “discipline” (32) different from “condemnation” (verse 32)?

CONCLUSION: ACT IN LOVE – pages 138-139

- What is the sum of Paul’s entire teaching in these verses?

- What does that look like in the Lord’s Supper? in your church?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- What wrong attitudes or actions has this chapter exposed in your approach to church life?

- How can meditating on the Gospel change these?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you’ve learned.

CHAPTER 10 - SELFISHNESS

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 12-14.

Answer:

- Why do you go to church?

- How often do you spend time thinking about how you can serve and edify fellow church members?

DURING READING

ORDER – pages 144-146

- How does order in the church guard against selfishness? (Give specific examples from this chapter.)

- How ought our church meetings reflect the character of God?

- What application does this have for our local church?

UNITY – pages 146-149

- How does a concern for unity guard against selfishness? (Give specific examples from this chapter.)

- In what specific ways does Paul say that Christians are united?

- What application does this have for our local church?

MUTUALITY – pages 149-151

- How does a focus on mutuality guard against selfishness? (Give specific examples from this chapter.)

- What should replace envy in the church?

- How does dissatisfaction with the part of the body we are (or envy of another part) usurp God?

- How have you been helped by another part of the body this week?

- How have you helped another in the body this week?

LOVE – pages 151-153

- How does love guard against selfishness? (Give specific examples from this chapter.)

- Do the characteristics of 1 Corinthians 13 describe you?
 - Which have you seen the Lord grow you in the most recently?
 - Which do you need growth in the most?
 - Where do you see this love reflected in your local church?

EDIFICATION – pages 153-155

- How does edification guard against selfishness? (Give specific examples from this chapter.)

- What should be the goal of everything that occurs in our meetings?
 - Give specific examples of what that might look like in your local church?
 - ...in your personal participation with the body.

- How should concern for edification affect our choices in church leadership?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- Where specifically do you see selfishness in how you relate to your local church?

- How can your fellow church members help you with this?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

CHAPTER 11 - DEATH

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 15.

Answer:

- What was your first experience with death?
 - Are you afraid to die?
- If the resurrection is not real, is it worth being a Christian?
- In five or fewer sentences, summarize the gospel.

DURING READING

THE RESURRECTION AND THE GOSPEL – pages 158-160

- What historical facts comprise the gospel?
 - Explain the significance of each.
 - Which, if any, can be omitted from the proclamation of the Gospel?
- Do you know the Gospel? Can you share it with others?

THE RESURRECTION AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE – pages 160-165

- Explain the consequences for each of the bullet points below if Christ is not raised from the dead:
 - Paul’s preaching.
 - The faith of the Corinthians.
 - The Apostles.
 - The Corinthians’ hopes for the forgiveness of sins.
 - Paul’s entire life.
 - Christians.
 - You.

- Summarize “Pascal’s Wager.”
 - Does Paul sympathize with Pascal’s theory?
 - Should we use Pascal’s Wager in apologetics and evangelism?

- What does it mean that Christ’s resurrection is the “firstfruits?”
 - How should Christ’s resurrection affect your view of life and the future?

THE RESURRECTION IS REAL – pages 165-168

- What attitude did the culture in Paul's day have toward the idea of a bodily resurrection?

- How did Paul answer those attitudes?

- What attitude does our culture have toward a bodily resurrection?

- How might you answer that attitude?

- Why is it important to know and believe that the resurrection is real?

CONCLUSION: STAND FIRM – pages 168-169

- How does standing firm in the doctrine of the resurrection effect how we live?

- ...how we minister?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- How has this chapter challenged or encouraged you?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

CHAPTER 12 - DECLINE

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 16.

Answer:

- Do you think the solution to declining interest in the local church is to personalize the church to individual preferences? Why or why not?

DURING READING

MONEY WISDOM – pages 172-174

- What was the purpose of the offering Paul encouraged in this chapter?

- What is significant about the nature of caring this offering reflected?

- How should a church's use of money reflect love?

A DIVERSITY OF TEACHERS – pages 174-175

- What attitudes should we have regarding different types of teachers in the church?

A CLEAR COMMITMENT – pages 175-177

- What does Christian love call us to do?

- How do we see an example of strong, Christian love in Paul, particularly through this letter?

GOOD EXAMPLES – pages 177-178

- How ought Christians to serve one another in the local church?
 - What would “devoted service” look like in your life?

- What does it mean that believers should “submit to such as these?”

- In your local church, who is doing a good job of serving the saints?
 - How have you recognized, honored and celebrated them? How could you this week?

A LARGER VISION – pages 178-179

- How are Aquila and Priscilla good examples to emulate?
 - How should you be imitating their example?

- Why do you think that giving sincerely affectionate greetings to one another is good counsel to the Corinthian church?
 - What would this look like in your local church?

- Do you think it was wise for Paul to encourage a vision of love and care for other congregations, especially when the Corinthian church was facing such significant internal challenges?
- How might developing a love for other churches help a local church with its own problems?
- How can your local church develop a healthy love and concern for other congregations?

GRACE AND LOVE – pages 179-181

- Is there room for middle ground in Christianity?
- What is the grace of the Lord Jesus?

CONCLUSION – pages 181-182

- Why is love necessary for ministry?

AFTER READING

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.

Prepared by Eric Schumacher, Northbrook Baptist Church, Cedar Rapids.
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