

ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

Study to show "The Way of True life,"

Bible Study Outline

TOPIC: Bringing Unity in The Midst of Division

TEXT: *1 Corinthians 1:10-17*

Instructions: - *Let the above passages be read each time you come together to study this topic so that everyone could participate fully. The teacher should provide additional background information on the topic and come up with follow-up questions. Participants should be brief in their responses and use relevant Bible references to illustrate their points. They should be careful not to dominate the discussion to allow everyone to have an equal opportunity to participate.*

Introduction: Passionate believers are a great asset to the Christian church, but they have one frequent flaw. They tend to polarize—and draw others into their various magnetic fields. If that happens often and about matters of import, the frequent flaw becomes fatal. A church can die—and its ministry then becomes lost to those who might have been led to Christ. Paul wrote his letter to "the church of God" in Corinth" (v. 2). Yet this single church was probably made up of a number of small house churches—and they were at war with one another.

Discussion Questions

1. What sort of things have you seen Christians divided over? Or When has what someone have said or done created unnecessary discord in the church? Discuss.
2. Imagine and then describe several scenes that may have taken place in the church at Corinth. (*Draw on what you know of human nature, the first-century church and Paul's words thus far 'in his letter.'*)
3. Focus more intently on verse 10. What do you find here that could begin to heal Corinthian divisions?

4. Why do you think Paul emphasizes a unity of "mind and thought"?
5. Consider a current conflict between Christians (at home; workplace; church; community and elsewhere). What changes do you think would take place if each person involved in the conflict would say with thoughtful commitment to who Jesus is and how he lived, "I follow Christ"?
6. Read verses 12-13 again. Why do you think the Corinthians were divided over who to follow? To what extent is this relevant in today's church? Give examples. What do you think Paul was trying to communicate through his three rhetorical questions?
7. Look more carefully at verses 14-17. Baptism is important to Christians. It is part of Jesus' Great Commission to his disciples, and Paul gives it strong emphasis in Romans 6:1-4. Why then do you think he speaks so casually about baptism to the Corinthians?
8. Paul elsewhere uses strong images to portray Christian unity within the church. The church is "God's field" (1 Corinthians 3:8-9), "God's temple" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17), "the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12). The church is "one family" because there is only "one Father," "one Spirit," "one Lord." We share one faith, hope and baptism (Ephesians 4:1-6). How might conflict between Christians over which leader to follow cause "the cross of Christ to be emptied of its power" (v. 17)? Discuss.