

Lessons from 1 Corinthian 1 – 8

Chapter 1

1. The Call to Absolute Unity

- **The Error:** In verses 11–13, Paul laments that the Corinthian church was fractured into factions, with members declaring, *"I am of Paul; and I am of Apollos; and I am of Cephas; and I am of Christ"*.
- **Remnant Lesson:** The faithful must avoid partisan divisions or elevating human leaders above the truth. True unity is not built on denominational hierarchy or allegiance to a specific preacher, but on the shared bond in Christ.

2. Guarding Against Worldly Wisdom

- **The Error:** Verses 20–23 address how the "wisdom of this world" makes the message of the cross look like foolishness to Greek and Jewish cultures.
- **Remnant Lesson:** The church must not adopt worldly philosophies, modern cultural trends, or secular methods to build or grow the congregation. The remnant's message relies entirely on the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit, not eloquent human wisdom or intellect.

3. "Christ Crucified" is the Central Message

- **The Foundation:** In verse 23, Paul declares, *"But we preach Christ crucified"*.
- **Remnant Lesson:** For the Seventh-day Adventist remnant, the sanctuary message and the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross must be the centrepiece of all doctrines. All theology and prophecy (such as the Three Angels' Messages) draw their meaning and power from the cross.

4. Boasting Only in the Lord

- **The Principle:** Verses 29–31 state that *"no flesh should glory in his presence"*. The remnant is reminded that Christ is made unto them *"wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"*.
- **Remnant Lesson:** The faithful must practice total humility. They cannot boast in their knowledge of prophetic truth, their heritage, or their own works. Their only righteousness is the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

5. Sanctification and Preparing for the End

- **The Calling:** Verses 2 and 8 emphasize that the church is "sanctified in Christ Jesus" and will be sustained "blameless unto the end".
- **Remnant Lesson:** Sanctification is a core pillar of the Adventist faith. The remnant is expected to live a holy, set-apart life, constantly growing in grace as they actively await the Second Coming of Jesus.

Chapter 2

1. The Primacy of the Cross

- **The Core Message:** Paul declares, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2 KJV). For the remnant, this

is a call to keep the atonement, Christ's righteousness, and the sanctuary message as the central focus of belief and outreach.

- **Denouncing Human Philosophy:** Remnant believers are cautioned against relying on worldly intellect, secular trends, or human pride to defend the gospel. Faith must stand in the "power of God" rather than the "wisdom of men" (1 Cor. 2:5 KJV).

2. The Power of the Holy Spirit

- **Spiritual Discernment:** The "natural man" cannot receive the things of the Spirit because they are "spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14 KJV). The remnant must rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit to understand Bible truths, especially prophecies relevant to the end times.
- **Knowing the Deep Things of God:** Because "the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10 KJV), the remnant is expected to seek a deep, experiential knowledge of God, moving beyond basic doctrines into an intimate daily walk.

3. The Mind of Christ

- **Unity and Sanctification:** Paul concludes the chapter by stating, "But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16 KJV). Seventh-day Adventist theology stresses that possessing the "mind of Christ" requires the renunciation of self, allowing His Spirit to transform one's character, affections, and will in preparation for the Second Coming.

Chapter 3

1. The Danger of "Carnal" Christianity

- Paul rebukes the Corinthians as "carnal" and "babes in Christ" because envy, strife, and party divisions caused them to act "as men" (1 Corinthians 3:1-4 KJV).
- **Application:** The remnant church must put away factionalism and bickering. Clinging to human leadership or harboring jealousy is a barrier to spiritual maturity and receiving the "solid food" of Present Truth.

2. Unity of Purpose in God's Work

- "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:6 KJV).
- **Application:** No single pastor, evangelist, or movement leader is the ultimate source of saving power. All workers are "labourers together with God" (1 Corinthians 3:9 KJV), and the focus of the remnant must be lifting up Christ.

3. The Fire of the Judgment

- Paul warns that believers build on the foundation of Christ using varying materials. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire" (1 Corinthians 3:13 KJV).
- **Application:** This aligns directly with the investigative judgment and the final purification of the remnant. Characters built with "gold, silver, [and] precious stones" (1 Corinthians 3:12 KJV) will endure the refining fire, whereas superficial works built with "wood, hay, [and] stubble" (1 Corinthians 3:12 KJV) will be destroyed.

4. Personal Accountability as the Temple of God

- "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16 KJV).
- **Application:** The remnant is called to maintain bodily, mental, and spiritual health. Defiling this temple through worldly habits or compromise brings serious spiritual loss.

Chapter 4

1. Faithfulness Over Results

Paul wrote, *"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"* (1 Corinthians 4:2, KJV). In SDA theology, the remnant is tasked with guarding the Three Angels' Messages and preparing the world for the Second Coming. Success is not measured by earthly popularity or numbers, but by unyielding loyalty to God's commandments and the testimony of Jesus.

2. Guarding Against Spiritual Arrogance

The Corinthians boasted, *"Now ye are full, now ye are rich... we are weak, but ye are strong"* (1 Corinthians 4:8, 10, KJV).

- **The Remnant Application:** This serves as a direct warning against the "Laodicean" condition described in Revelation 3:17. Believers must avoid becoming self-sufficient or spiritually proud regarding their understanding of present truth.

3. Leaving Judgment to God

Paul warned, *"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come"* (1 Corinthians 4:5, KJV).

- **The Remnant Application:** Adventists emphasize that while the church must maintain biblical truth, humans cannot judge the eternal motives or hearts of others. The investigative judgment is God's divine prerogative.

4. Holding to the Word

Paul instructed the Corinthians *"not to think of men above that which is written"* (1 Corinthians 4:6, KJV). For Adventists, this is foundational. No prophet, pastor, or church tradition—only the Bible alone (*Sola Scriptura*)—is the ultimate arbiter of truth.

5. Embracing the Cross

Paul outlined the cost of true discipleship, noting that apostles were made *"a spectacle unto the world"* and *"fools for Christ's sake"* (1 Corinthians 4:9, 10, KJV). The end-time remnant is called to model this same self-sacrificing lifestyle, prioritizing the Great Commission over worldly comforts.

Chapter 5

1. The Purity of the "Remnant"

Just as the ancient Israelites were commanded to purge all leaven from their homes before the Passover, the modern remnant church must "purge out the old leaven" of malice and wickedness. The SDA understanding of the remnant, rooted in Revelation

12:17, emphasizes a people who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus. This requires a commitment to a clean, truth-filled lifestyle.

2. The Danger of Tolerating Sin (The "Leaven")

Paul writes, "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Corinthians 5:6, KJV). In biblical symbolism, leaven represents sin and false teachings. The lesson for the church is that ignoring or coddling open, unrepentant sin in the congregation does not display "love." Instead, it normalizes rebellion against God's law and compromises the spiritual integrity of the entire body.

3. Church Discipline is Redemptive, Not Punitive

Paul instructs the church to "deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved" (1 Corinthians 5:5, KJV). SDA doctrine emphasizes that church discipline is never about ostracizing someone out of hatred or self-righteousness. The ultimate goal of removing an unrepentant member from fellowship is redemptive: to wake them up to their lost condition, leading them to genuine repentance and salvation.

4. Self-Examination and the Sanctuary

The chapter connects Christ's sacrifice ("For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" - 1 Corinthians 5:7, KJV) with the church's lifestyle. This points to the SDA focus on the heavenly sanctuary, where Christ is our High Priest. Believers are called to individually and collectively examine themselves, confessing known sins daily so that the church may be a spotless bride ready for the Second Coming.

5. Separation from False Brethren, Not the World

Paul clarifies that he is not telling believers to completely avoid "fornicators of this world," otherwise, Christians would have to leave the world entirely (1 Corinthians 5:10, KJV). The strict separation required is for those who claim to be Christians but willfully and continuously live in open rebellion against God's law.

Chapter 6

1. Internal Accountability Over Secular Lawsuits

Paul strongly rebukes believers for taking disputes to secular courts, calling it a "fault".

- **The Lesson for the Remnant:** The church should be a distinct community capable of resolving its own conflicts. Taking brethren to civil court undermines the church's witness and suggests a lack of brotherly love and reliance on secular systems.

2. Physical Stewardship and the Temple Concept

Verses 19 and 20 emphasize that the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and that believers were "bought with a price".

- **The Lesson for the Remnant:** For Seventh-day Adventists, this underpins the health message. The remnant is called to honor God by treating the body as sacred, practicing temperance, and abstaining from harmful substances and practices that degrade physical and mental capacities.

3. Fleeing Sexual Immorality

Paul commands Christians to "Flee fornication", noting that sexual sin is distinct because it is a sin against one's own body.

- **The Lesson for the Remnant:** As society's moral standards decline, the remnant is called to maintain strict purity. Modesty, faithfulness in marriage, and absolute chastity are hallmarks of God's end-time people, recognizing that our bodies are meant to be vessels for the Holy Spirit.

4. Transformation and Holiness

Paul reminds the Corinthians of their past sinful lifestyles, but declares, "ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified".

- **The Lesson for the Remnant:** The remnant must exhibit a transformed life. The gospel does not just forgive past sins; it provides the sanctifying power of the Spirit to live victoriously over sinful habits.

Chapter 7

1. Undivided Devotion to God (vv. 32-35)

Paul emphasizes that singleness allows for "undivided attention" to the Lord's work.

- **The Remnant Application:** Seventh-day Adventists are tasked with the Three Angels' Messages, a vital end-time mission. Paul's teaching reminds the church that both singleness and marriage are gifts from God, but time and energy should be utilized primarily to advance the Gospel rather than worldly pursuits.

2. The Sanctity of Marriage and the Home (vv. 10-16)

Paul strictly upholds the permanence of marriage, echoing the teachings of Jesus. However, he addresses "mixed marriages" (believer and unbeliever), noting that the believing spouse sanctifies the home, which influences the children.

- **The Remnant Application:** The Seventh-day Adventist Church strongly emphasizes the Adventist Home as a powerful evangelistic tool. The faithful behavior of a believer can draw their unbelieving family members to Christ.

3. Mutual Purity and Self-Control (vv. 2-5, 8-9)

Paul prescribes marriage as a God-given remedy for sexual immorality, urging couples to fulfill their marital duties to protect themselves against Satan's temptations.

- **The Remnant Application:** Adventists view the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. This chapter underscores the importance of **Christian temperance** and self-control, highlighting that mutual respect and purity within a marriage reflect Christ's pure relationship with His church.

4. Living Faithfully in Present Circumstances (v. 17, 24)

Paul gives the overarching command to "let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called."

- **The Remnant Application:** Adventists are called to a lifestyle that prepares them for Christ's return. Rather than waiting for perfect circumstances, remnant believers

are to faithfully glorify God right where they are—whether single, married, or in challenging family dynamics.

Chapter 8

1. Knowledge vs. Love

- **Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies** (1 Corinthians 8:1): Paul warns that having correct doctrine or advanced biblical knowledge can lead to arrogance. The remnant is called to ensure their knowledge is always tempered by the unifying, building-up power of agape love.
- **No true knowledge without love** (1 Corinthians 8:2-3): True wisdom recognizes our limitations before God. It is not enough to be "right"; a believer must also manifest Christlike character.

2. The Danger of Being a Stumbling Block

- **The weaker brother** (1 Corinthians 8:7-10): Some in Corinth had newly abandoned paganism and retained a conscience that viewed food offered to idols as genuinely tainted. The "stronger" brothers knew idols were nothing, but exercising this freedom in front of the weak could tempt them to violate their own conscience.
- **Corporate responsibility:** The remnant church is a worldwide family. One's actions, speech, or lifestyle choices (e.g., diet, entertainment, dress) should never lead another member into sin or doubt.

3. Liberty and the Law of Love

- **Sinning against Christ** (1 Corinthians 8:11-12): Paul states that causing a weaker brother to perish is ultimately a sin against Christ Himself, as He died for every member.
- **Self-sacrifice** (1 Corinthians 8:13): Paul's ultimate resolution, *"If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth"*, sets a supreme standard of self-denial. The remnant is encouraged to willingly restrict their personal liberties out of love and care for the spiritual safety of others.

4. Application in the Remnant Church

Seventh-day Adventists often apply these verses directly to modern debates over questionable practices or lifestyle guidelines (such as abstinence from alcohol, or standards of modesty). While the church promotes healthful living and biblical standards, individual believers must avoid using their personal dietary or lifestyle freedoms to judge, alienate, or cause others to violate their own conscience.