

Corinthians (First) – versed

The church in Corinth looked like it had it all
But they were fighting inside, so they wrote a letter to Paul
(Who was the founder). He'll help with questions and doubts!
And when their new leaders were getting it wrong, he'll also sort that out.

And this letter is Paul's reply.

Chapter One.

You think you're so clever with new wisdoms that you devise;
But don't you remember that God calls the foolish, to shame the wise?
When you say you follow different people, you make Christ look divided.
It's only about Jesus that you should get excited.

Chapter Two.

But when I talked of Jesus you felt the holy shout;
And the Holy Spirit in you cleared away your doubts.
So don't you make the mistake of thinking I'm inferior -
Gospel wisdom ties in knots those who claim they are superior

Chapter Three.

Some preferred Apollos, and some liked to follow Cephas,
And some are quite excited about your latest batch of leaders.
But each one is just a builder, doing the best they can,
Building the church into a temple where God can walk with man.

Chapter Four.

You claim that God has favoured you, because you are so blessed in
The riches of this present world; you're not spiritually investing.
You boast about yourselves, and think you've gone beyond me, but
It's just hot air! Your lives don't show anything that's worth the time to see

Chapter Five.

There's sexual sin among you and you don't seem to care.
You're not ashamed about it; in fact, you're boasting there!
But Christ was killed on the cross for sin - don't make that count for nothing.
In fact you should be even more alert not to let that stuff in.

Chapter Six.

You are completely defeated when you argue and fight -
When you tear each other apart just to prove you're in the right.
If you were more like Jesus you'd sooner die than win!
In order to love your neighbour you'd sacrifice anything.

Chapter Seven.

Single people who stay pure have got the highest call;
Those who cannot make it should marry before they fall
Into bed. But don't rush to give up your freedom
Before you know for certain that that's where God is leading.

Chapter Eight.

Idols are nothing. And God is all. But there's more to say about that.
Because what you do with your freedom could lead someone else off track.
Eating a "forbidden" food, to you means not a thing
But a weaker person copying you - in their heart, they will sin.

Chapter Nine.

A soldier gets wages, an ox gets his grain
And one who works for the Church could count on the same.
Since I served and led and taught the Word, I have a claim on you;
But I gave that up for the Gospel's sake, to demonstrate it's true.

Chapter Ten.

The stories of Moses and all the Old Testament
Teach us today, in a way that is eloquent,
To flee from idolatry, try not to grumble,
Intrigue the outsiders, and always be humble

The first 10 verses were written by Nigel Marsh as a 'where are we now' catch-up in our year-long, three-part study on First Corinthians. We then opened a competition for Forefront members to supply the final six verses. Congratulations to prize-winners Jean Nash, Steve Capstick and Jane Marsh, whose entries are included on the next page.

Jean Nash

Chapter 11.

A woman's head is covered, because she is man's glory.
A man who worships in a hat, well that's another story!
Getting drunk, selfishness, abusing the Lord's table,
Examine yourselves and put things right, as soon as you are able.

Chapter 12.

Eyes and ears and hands and feet, you need to comprehend it's
Vital that each part is there, unless you're an appendix!
The body can't survive at all unless it has a head.
So Jesus must be all-in-all, or else you'll end up dead!

Chapter 13.

Prophecy, giving alms, doing nothing wrong
Is nothing without love, just a resounding gong.
Love is patient, love is kind, it always seeks the best.
The one who puts love first is well and truly blest.

Chapter 14.

Speaking in tongues is profitable but you should have a care,
You need to be more sensitive to those who might be there.
Concentrate on those gifts which build and edify.
Know when to keep your mouth shut, let others prophesy.

Chapter 15.

You say there's no resurrection, no raising from the dead,
But Christ is definitely alive, our great and glorious Head.
Because of this, our hope is sure that, one day, by and by,
We shall be raised, we shall be changed, in the twinkling of an eye!

Chapter 16.

The Lord's work needs our money, so we must set aside
A sum according to our means. How much, the Lord will guide.
A final word, be on your guard, stand firm, courageous, strong.
May grace and love be with you – and Christ's coming not be long.

Steve Capstick

Chapter 11.

To cover heads or not? We all need propriety
Indulging in the Lord's supper – we all need sobriety.
Before we take the bread and wine
Examine ourselves to check we're fine.

Chapter 12.

We are all one body, made of many parts
Our different gifts complement, to cheer our hearts.
Some are teachers, healers, helpers as God pleases
Some work miracles, do admin – some are even treasurers!

Chapter 13.

Love is patient, kind, not proud
Love trusts and hopes, it's not angry or loud
Our love is enabled from above
Faith, hope and love remain, the greatest is love.

Chapter 14.

Tongues need interpreting or else they sound like
nonsense.
Unbelievers won't understand, we don't want that on our
conscience.
Let's have order in our meetings; don't be uncouth,
Then we all will be built up and communicate the truth.

Chapter 15.

Christ died and was raised, "The Firstfruits".
We are sown perishable, to grow imperishable (new
shoots).
Adam, the first man, came from dust
Jesus, the second man, overcame death; in him we trust.

Chapter 16.

Give generously and thoughtfully to help with the work
Do this regularly, don't let it be a quirk.
Paul plans to visit other churches, sisters, brothers,
The message is: strength and love, encourage one another.

Jane Marsh

Chapter 11.

When you meet to worship Christ and give him all the praise
Both men and women should give honour and properly
behave.
Don't forget the Lord's Supper should be taken with much
care
Each person is equal and is entitled to their share.

Chapter 12.

You have many gifts and form a body with many parts;
Perhaps weak or strong, maybe an ear, an eye, a heart.
No-one should feel unloved, unwanted or dispensable,
God calls us and uses all and will make us fully presentable.

Chapter 13.

We can have many gifts, however, and miss the most excellent
way.
Love should cover everything and prevent us from going astray.
Faith and hope remain, but love is the greatest of these;
Love is patient, kind, it never fails. It always seeks to appease.

Chapter 14.

Always encourage one another. When you speak, make it
clear.
Don't confuse people, or use language making no sense
when they hear.
Desire all the gifts, but not to be proud or boast;
Excel in those that help the church and build it up the
most.

Chapter 15.

Jesus died and was raised to life – this truth we do believe;
Beware of those who dispute this fact and just seek to
deceive.
Mortal will become immortal, death will lose its sting,
So give thanks and stand firm, not moved by anything.

Chapter 16.

I'm name-dropping to finish with: Timothy, Apollos and
Stephanus,
Achaicas, Aquila, Priscilla and Fortunatus.
By the way – I wrote this myself, so give me some credit;
Hopefully I'll see you soon, so make sure that you've read
it!