



The Excellent Way...

But earnestly desire the higher gifts.
And I will show you a still more
excellent way... **1Corinthians 12:31**

The Church in Corinth...

- Corinth was a major city in ancient Greece, known for its wealth, commerce, immorality and cultural exchange.
- The Church in Corinth was established by the Apostle Paul during his second missionary journey, around AD 50-52 with the help of Aquila and Priscilla, his fellow tentmakers and co-laborers in the Lord.

1. After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, 3. and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. 4. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks. **Acts 18:1-4**

Paul's letters to the Church in Corinth...

- The 1st letter was written around AD 55. It addresses issues on morality, divisions in the church and doctrinal issues and practices. Paul in this letter emphasizes the importance of unity (1Cor1:10) and the proper use of spiritual gifts through the love of Christ (1Cor13).
- The 2nd letter which was written shortly after the 1st is more personal as he emotionally defends his apostleship and ministry against false apostles and critics. He discusses the nature of Christian suffering, the collection for the Jerusalem church, the transformative power of the Gospel and the Spirituality of our walk in Christ. (2 Cor10:4).

Paul's 1st letter to the Church in Corinth...

- Divisions in the church as a result of preferred leaders... (chapters 1-4)
- Sexual immorality welcomed in the church... (Chapters 5-7)
- Food from idol sacrifice causing others to fall... (Chapters 8-10)
- Worship in the church not being done in order... (Chapters 11-14)
- The resurrection seen as not important and true... (Chapter 15)

9. Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, 10. nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. **1Cor6:9-11**

Paul's 2nd letter to the Church in Corinth...

- The rejection of Godly leadership... (Chapters 2-3)
- Disapproval of suffering... (Chapters 4-7)
- Poor understanding of generosity... (Chapters 8-9)
- Self-centered leadership... (Chapters 10-12)
- Poor understanding of the Love of Christ... (Chapter 13)

8. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9. persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10. always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bodies. 11. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

2Cor4:8-11

The Excellent Way...

1Cor12:31... But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

1Cor13... 1. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is God, love is Jesus Christ, love is the Holy Spirit. He who does not have Jesus has no love. He changes our heart, He transforms our mind, He guides our actions. In Him we move, live and have our being. He is the only right foundation.

The Excellent Way...

As believers we love not as the world loves. By the help and leading of the Holy Spirit we are able to love like Jesus loves. Jesus is our prime example. Jesus is our standard. Jesus is the perfect one who will return to judge the living and the dead.

1Cor13... 4. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5. or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6. it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10. but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

The words of Christ...

John 13:34-35... A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 15:4-6... Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

Conclusion...

The church in Corinth is a constant reminder that in our walk in Christ the greatest virtue is love. God is more interested with how much of Him is in us than anything we can ever do for Him.

God desires us to overflow with His love. This can only be possible if we abide in Christ through fellowship in His word, in prayer and in Godly fellowship with others. By this only shall we bear fruit and be ready for the masters return.

Let us pray...