

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October  
We have Jesus  
1 Corinthians 1: 1 – 2: 5

## Welcome

What do you think is the most important part of our building? (For those online – what's the most important part you can see?)

## Word

*Before we look at 1 Corinthians let's look at how it all began – Paul's visit to Corinth:*

Read Acts 18: 1-17

1. Who did Paul meet when he arrived in Corinth and what did he have in common with them?
2. Who became abusive to Paul and what did this cause Paul to do?
3. Whose house did he base himself in? (verse 7)
4. How long did Paul stay in Corinth? (verse 11)
5. Who did the crowd attack when they couldn't punish Paul? (verse 17)

*At this time, the city of Corinth was a busy, thriving place that was a centre for trade so many people passed through. This made it a diverse place – all kinds of people called it home. It was also predominantly Pagan, and it had a reputation for immorality.*

Take a quick look at 1 Corinthians 1: 1-3

6. Besides Paul, who else is mentioned in verse 1?

*It's interesting that the person who was attacked in Corinth instead of Paul in the Acts reading is now with Paul – even though he was beaten up and could have blamed Paul he has now become a follower of Jesus!*

Read 1 Corinthians 1: 4-9

7. What impression of the church in Corinth do we get from these verses alone?

*The positive nature of these verses is surprising when we know that the rest of the letter talks about the many failures of the Corinthian church.*

8. Why do you think Paul has this positive start to his letter?

9. If you take a look at these verses again – where do all the positive things come from?

10. Do you think it helps to be thankful regardless of the circumstances? Is it easy to do this?

11. Do you find it easy to be positive in a bad situation? What helps you to be more positive? Share some practical tips.

Despite their faults, they had something that rose above it – the grace of Jesus (verse 4).

Read 1 Corinthians 1: 18-25

12. Imagine you met someone who didn't know much about Jesus. How would you explain the 'message of the cross' to them in a simple way?

13. Can you remember when you first really understood and accepted what the cross meant? How did it happen? What helped you to understand and accept it?

14. Can you think of examples of how God's wisdom is different to human wisdom?

Read 1 Corinthians 1: 26-31

15. Are you sometimes impressed or even intimidated by 'clever' people?  
Why do you think this is?
16. What do you think this means: "God chose the foolish things of this world to shame the wise, he chose the weak things of this world to shame the strong"? (verse 27 – if you look at the next few verses it gives you some idea!)
17. Does all this talk about 'the weak being strong' and 'the foolish being wise' encourage you? Does it give you more confidence to live your Christian life?
18. Do you think a 'clever' person finds it easier or harder to have faith in God?
19. Is it easy to 'boast in the Lord' rather than in ourselves?

Read 1 Corinthians 2: 1-5

20. What does this tell us about the role of the Holy Spirit in sharing our faith with others? (verse 4-5)
21. How do you feel about sharing the message with people you meet?
22. Are we tempted to rely on our knowledge, personality and clever arguments rather than on the message itself and the Holy Spirit?
23. If we have the opportunity to share our faith – what do you think is the most important thing to remember?

## Worship & Witness

- Even when we're going through difficult times, we can still be thankful to God – make a list of things you are thankful for and say thank you to God
- Pray for those people you know who haven't accepted the 'message of the cross' in their lives – those people who haven't accepted what Jesus has done for them.
- Pray that God will use your weaknesses – Pray that God will help you to see that these are your strengths