

# The Way of Christ in a Fallen Culture

## 1 Corinthians

Pastor Guy Gray

### **The Power of Christ in Portland**

This week, as we begin our study series in the book of 1 Corinthians, I ask you to pray that God's power will be at work in our lives and in our church. I ask this because I am convinced that God intends to do amazing things in and through our lives—because so much is at stake.

The Christian faith is all about power. Jesus was raised from the dead on Easter Sunday by the power of God. He triumphed over sin, conquered death and defeated Satan. That's power!

The Church began through an act of power. After His resurrection, Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would come upon His disciples with power and they would be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8.) The book of Acts is the record of the power of God being unleashed in and through the early church—literally transforming our world. That's power! And we should pray in faith and expect that God will work powerfully in and through our church and our lives. I want you to remember how much is at stake in all this. God's power through the risen Christ was released in the early church for a reason! God is on a mission to bring men and women to salvation through the gospel. God is on a mission to create His Church in the midst of our fallen culture. He did this in Corinth and is doing this in Portland, Oregon.

### **The Miracle of the Church at Corinth**

The story of the birth of the Church at Corinth is found in Acts chapter 18. What you'll find there is a miracle. The Apostle Paul came to Corinth with the message of Christ, and in the face of great opposition a new church was planted there. Paul stayed for a year and a half preaching and teaching the Word. Many hearts were converted to faith in Christ, people's lives were touched, sins were forgiven and new beginnings could be seen throughout the community. This is the miracle of God's power through the gospel. It works this way everywhere it goes. It is amazing!

### **The "Mess" of the Church at Corinth**

The church at Corinth quickly developed problems. This new church, which was designed to be a community of Christ's love in action, a witness to the world, soon became a huge mess. Corinth was an extremely difficult city in which to be a follower of Christ. The values of the city of Corinth were especially "worldly". The church was intended to be a tool of God to bring transformation to the world, instead it found itself being conformed to the sinful ways of the fallen culture all around it. The book of 1 Corinthians was written to straighten out this mess. Because our contemporary situation is so very much like living in Corinth, 1 Corinthians will give us some of the most powerful, timely and relevant truths ever for our own walk with Christ.

### **The Way of Christ in a Fallen Culture**

There is a better way. The powerful message of 1 Corinthians is the way of Christ. This way is radically different than the way of fallen culture—the way of Corinth. The way of Christ is the way of love and it is the way of the Cross. 1 Corinthians 1:18 tells us that "the message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those who are being saved it is the very power of God." The goal of our study is to hear, to learn, to embrace and to follow the way of the Cross. If that sounds radical...it is! It is the very power of God for your life and for our church.

### **The Power of God in Your Life**

I believe that your life is about to change! I believe that because I know God's intention is to transform all our lives to be more like Jesus. God is on a mission. God wants to work in you so that He might work through you. All of this is by the power of God. Each of us must ask ourselves if we are being transformed by the power of God to become more like Jesus, or if we are conforming to the values of fallen culture. Pray. Pray for God's power. Pray to learn the way of Christ—the way of Love—the way of the Cross. Pray that our lives and our community will be the witness of the path to life—the way of Christ!

### **Ideas for Reflection and Discussion**

As an introduction into our study of 1 Corinthians, read Acts 18: 1-17, which gives a closer look into journey to Corinth.

### **The Power of the Gospel**

What are the different kinds of people who responded to Paul's message? Which people opposed Paul and what was the reason for their opposition, according to the text? As we understand the reality of God's power at work in the world, how do we live for Christ in a culture of opposition?

### **The Cross—The Very Power of God**

In Corinth, the message of the Cross had a powerful effect. It became the line in the sand—foolishness to some, the very power of God to others. How do you see this truth in the world today? How do you see it in your work place, your family and your relationships? How does the message of the Cross exhibit power in your personal life?

## **This Week @ River West**

### **WEDNESDAY 9/12**

High School Youth Group  
Kick-off...Luau Night!  
Come hungry! High Schoolers only. 7pm-9pm  
@ RWLG, Contact Pastor  
Josh for details 699.2226  
or [josh@riverwest.org](mailto:josh@riverwest.org)

### **SUNDAY 9/16**

Jr. High School Youth Group  
Kick-off...Sports Night!  
Come hungry! 5:30pm-8pm  
@ RWLG, Contact Pastor  
Josh for details 699.2226  
or [josh@riverwest.org](mailto:josh@riverwest.org)

### **STARTING IN SEPTEMBER:**

Fall is here & there are many opportunities to get connected! Sign-ups start today!

#### **Womens Bible Studies**

Contact Marty Layton at 624.8787

#### **Mens Bible Studies**

Contact Pastor Adam McMurray at 699.2226 or [adam@riverwest.org](mailto:adam@riverwest.org)

#### **Community Groups**

Contact Pastor Adam McMurray at 699.2226 or [adam@riverwest.org](mailto:adam@riverwest.org)

#### **FitBody Conditioning Class**

Contact Gina Kulper @ 636.8294 or [gina6855@hotmail.com](mailto:gina6855@hotmail.com)

#### **Financial Peace University**

Due to such great response this class is full.  
Contact Julie Messinger at 699.2226 or [julie@riverwest.org](mailto:julie@riverwest.org)