

# Cross Maturity

Long Beach Alliance Church • April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010 • Pastor Chris Lankford

*And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*

*~1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:1-2 (NASB)*

## 1) A Book For Those Of Us Who Screw Up (Like ME!)

- A) The book of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians is addressed to “those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...” (1:2).
- B) It is important to remember that the letter to the Corinthians is written to Christians! Despite their problems, their failures, their sins, etc., they were still “SAINTS BY CALLING!”

## 2) A Church With A Lot Of Issues Needs Jesus!

- A) The Corinthian church was filled with arguments and factions (1:10-4:21). They relied too much on human wisdom (2:1-5), instead of the Spirit of God. Despite this, Paul appeals to Christians as a tender father.

- B) The Corinthian church was located in a secular city with many potential pitfalls (incest, lawsuits, prostitutes) from which Paul warns the church to stay away (5:1-6:20).
- C) Further, the Corinthian church had many people who were confused about their marriages, divorce, and how they should behave in public situations where consuming certain types of food might be misunderstood (7:1-11:1).
- D) In all these issues, Paul’s consistent call to the Corinthians is to return to a SINGULAR FOCUS ON JESUS CHRIST (2:2), to GROW UP AND BE MATURE (4:14-21).

## 3) Serve God With All You’ve Got

- A) Since the Corinthians had gotten lost in many different situations and complex social issues, Paul goes to great lengths to teach them about “Spirit filled life” for their public and private worship of Jesus (11:2-14:40).
- B) Especially important in the letter is Paul’s direction to Christians to SERVE GOD by SERVING OTHERS through Spirit gifts and ministries. Rather than serve yourself, God is most honored when we serve Him by serving others!

## 4) Christ Is Victor

- A) Since “Jesus and Him crucified” (2:2) is the essence of the Gospel, Paul wanted to encourage Christians with a vision for the future provided by Christ’s victorious resurrection from the dead (15:1-58) -- Jesus is the ultimate VICTOR!
- B) From beginning to end, Paul calls on all Christians to grow in relationship with Jesus Christ as maturing believers who never lose sight of the power over sin and death through the cross and victorious resurrection of Jesus Christ!