

Community Group Discussion Questions

“The Beauty of the Church”

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Sermon Series Title: “The Church of God”

Sermon Series Summary: The Church of God is the people of God throughout the ages, redeemed by Jesus Christ. We’re going to take a look at who we are and who we are called to be as the church of God. More specifically, we see that who we are is directly connected to whose we are in Christ.

Setting: Paul planted this church in Corinth, and he writes a letter to them to confront their sinful habits and idolatries. However, we see that though they are a broken church, Paul sees them with the eyes of faith.

Summary: The Corinthian church was a broken one. We see that they struggled with division, sexual immorality, idolatries, etc. And yet, Paul gives thanks for them. Why? Through the beginning of this letter, we see that it is rooted in who God is and what He has done in Christ. That is what defines us the most.

Central Truth: “We are not defined by our sins, but we are defined by Jesus’ finished work on our behalf.”

Sermon Points:

1. Our Broken Identity
2. Our Redeemed Identity
3. What It Means For Us

Opening Question

1. How do you feel when you think about different churches? Our church?

(Answers may vary.)

The Corinthian church was known for its sins and brokenness. This is the church that Paul planted, and we see how he sees them through the eyes of faith.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

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2. How do you view yourself? How does that affect the way you live?

(Answers may vary.)

We might view ourselves as people unworthy of love or good gifts. This may lead to depression and cynicism. It leads us to not love ourselves and not believe God's love for us. We might feel like we have failed God, and we cannot go to Him. We think we are too sinful for God's mercy, so we don't try to come to Him. Or we're overwhelmed by our guilt and shame that we try to ignore Him completely. We might feel proud and arrogant of our gifts and record. This might lead us into thinking that we're better than others. This causes the divisions we have in our churches.

Our view of ourselves affects every part of our lives. It affects our relationship with God, self, and others. It affects how we view the church and this world.)

3. What does God say about you? What is your identity in Christ?

(Children of God- We are not apostles, but we are called beloved children of God, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb

Sanctified- Sin's dominion has been broken. We are set apart and called holy. We are saints of God with the whole church.

Grace and Peace are given to us through Jesus Christ.

Gifts- we have gifts from God that can be used for His glory.

Sustained to the end- we fall forward; we will arrive at our destination

Fellowship with the Son)

4. What does it look like to live with such an identity? What does it look like to view others in this identity?

(This humbles us. We know we don't deserve the gifts we have received in our redeemed identity in Christ, but at the same time, it is true for us because God has declared it so. We are able to have hope, and see ourselves with the eyes of God: love, mercy, grace, compassion, worth, and life.

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This is all rooted in the finished work of Christ. Jesus was orphaned on the cross so that we may be children of God. We can be set apart as saints because He was set apart as the ultimate sinner. We can receive grace and peace, because He took on wrath and brokenness. We can receive the gift of God because Jesus received the curse of God. We can be sustained to the end, because He paid it all. We can have fellowship because He was the One exiled.

Once we see and experience the source of our new, redeemed identity in Christ, it leads us to see others with the same eyes. Our eyes become more charitable and gracious. We're able to thank God for others in the church and for the church itself.)

Final Thoughts: *The beginning to the letter of 1 Corinthians is an encouragement for me. There are times when I am overwhelmed by my own faults, sins, and failures, and it leaves me in depression and hopelessness. There are times when I'm discouraged by the failures and imperfections of the church. And yet, here we see God's declaration over us and our hope. Not only that, we see Paul's attitude toward the broken church: thankfulness and praise. May that be the way we see ourselves and the church, and may that truth leave us in humility, gratitude, and hope.*