

Dr. Gary Meadors, 1 Corinthians, Lecture 7, Introduction to 1 Corinthians, Part 2

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This is Dr. Gary Meadors in his teaching on the book of 1 Corinthians. This is lecture 7, Introduction to 1 Corinthians, Part 2.

Well, let's continue with lecture number 7. We're on page 22 of the notes. We're talking about the city of Corinth and the cultural aspects of Corinth.

We're just trying to create what we would call a consciousness. When you read the book of Corinthians, if you can, the best you can do is to go in there with a consciousness of the kind of world in which the Corinthians operated and Paul operated so that when you hear Corinth, you hear Corinthians speak, that you can sort of feel like you're there in a sense. And we talked as we were closing the highlights of the Roman heritage, that the social relations were bounded very much by individualism, a power which was produced by status, sexual abuse from a Christian point, particularly on the basis of status, rigged courts, and on and on we could go.

Now, I'm tying this introduction very much to Garland because I want you to have a published source for your information rather than just me. I think that this is a very readable commentary, and therefore, I want to get you tied to a published source because that has more authority, and then you can look at other sources as well. I'm just trying to highlight it.

Let's continue now at the bottom of 22 with the religious context. So, you got the social context. Here's the religious context. As with most Greco-Roman cities, Corinth was polytheistic to the core.

All the typical gods were there, including what became known as the imperial cult, which was an alliance of throne and altar where the Caesar spoke as God, as you please. Now, there's a lot of study, a lot of issues involved with how these Roman emperors viewed themselves, and the variety of that has to be unpacked in more detail. Nonetheless, the Roman emperors acted very much like deities, and some of them even considered themselves to be so.

A lot of writing has been done today along the lines of the imperial cult. It wouldn't be very hard for you to find information to follow up on that. I like the way Garland puts it: the religious context was like a cafeteria line of religious practices.

Do you ever go through a cafeteria? Maybe you've never experienced it, but in the U.S. and the South particularly, they used to be very popular cafeterias. You'd go in,

you'd get a tray, and you'd go through and select the items of food that you wanted. You had to give this a little bit of forethought because there was such a huge line of food available, and you had all these people back there to give you a scoop of this and a scoop of that.

I remember one time I took my mother-in-law to the K&W cafeteria in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She'd never been to a cafeteria. She was raised in the sticks of Eastern Carolina and didn't get out a whole lot.

Well, she went to the K&W, and we went through the line, and I wasn't paying too much attention because I was used to a cafeteria. Then I turned around and looked at her tray. It was overflowing.

She thought she was supposed to get something of everything. Well, that was even impossible to do, besides how much that was going to cost me, you know, when we got to the end of the line. Well, religion in the ancient Greco-Roman world was like a cafeteria line.

Just choose who you want and what you want. It was a bountiful supply of ancient gods and ancient ways of worship. The more gods that one appeased and had on one side, the better off you were.

You can see the unknown god outside of the Athenian context. They didn't want to offend some deity that they weren't even aware of. Albeit very different, Corinth and Athens were rival cities.

Because of the pluralistic culture, Rome did not police religious activity unless it was creating problems. That's interesting, isn't it? Rome did not police religious activities. It was a polytheistic culture.

They just let it go as long as that religious activity was not a problem for Roman rule. Ah, well, in some ways, Christianity became a thorn in the side of Roman rule. In fact, the Jews had been a thorn in the side of Roman rule a long time before Christ even appeared.

If we study the Gospels and the history of Palestine, one of the reasons that Pilate was there was because the Jews had been such a thorn in the side of Rome in Judea that they had to kick out one of Herod's ancestors, Herod, the Great's ancestor, and bring in Pilate so that he could manage that city because the Jews were sort of unmanageable in that regard. Well, Rome didn't police it unless it was a problem. Read Acts 17.

Read Romans 1:18 to 32, in order to get a feel for this first-century context of the pluralistic nature of religion. Bruce Winter wrote a book called *Seek the Welfare of*

the City, and it's a book that unpacks Roman cities and that Rome's view of dealing with their world was to make the city the center of life, and all the citizens were to seek its welfare. Well, that's pretty good, actually, and it worked pretty well in the Roman Empire.

Part of the welfare of the city was not to make waves about religion. Be happy. All gods lead to the same place.

Worship your God. Don't criticize anybody else's God. Get along religiously.

That's the kind of world into which Christianity came, in which the Jewish nation had already lived. Now, Jewish and Christian religions are exclusivistic. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No man comes to the Father but by me. That's very exclusivistic. It's not inclusive, but exclusive.

That flew in the face of the social and religious norms of the Roman Empire. It flies in the face of many of the norms of the current culture in many of our countries as we see our world develop. Christianity's exclusivism did not float well in that culture because Christianity did not promote polytheism.

They were even viewed by the Romans as atheists. You don't believe in the gods. You must be an atheist.

Now, isn't that strange? But you got to put yourself back into their shoes, into their time and space, into their culture. How would you like to be a Christian and be called an atheist? In a polytheistic culture, that happened because of the city's emphasis. The city was framed in polytheistic festivals for the good of the city.

So, if you were a merchant, and there was going to be a festival for the good of the city, you would be expected to fund that festival. But what if you were a Christian merchant, and that festival was focused on the glorification of polytheism? How are you going to handle that? Christians were viewed as impious, as not being religious. They were haters of humankind for their non-participation in what was the good of the city from a polytheistic standpoint.

Now, that's not something that many of us have experienced. We may see that yet in the future in terms of some of our cultures. But most of us, at least myself, have grown up in a pretty free situation, even to the point of being able to proclaim Christ and not be held civilly accountable in a negative way.

But that's changing in America. To be exclusivistic has become something that is not acceptable—becoming more like the first century in some ways.

Paul's proclamation on page 23, the third bullet point there, Paul's proclamation that Jesus alone is Lord, directly challenged the imperial cult. So, in your study, look up some books. If you have the privilege of being in a situation where you can get to libraries or where you can have the means to order a book, look up some generic volumes on the imperial cult of Rome and learn some things about this.

So, the city. The city was very multicultural and multi-religious, and we've got to get in touch with that if we're going to be able to feel the book of 1 Corinthians. Furthermore, the images of ancient Corinth.

Now, on pages 23 to 28, you will find a rather lengthy printing out of details about ancient Corinth. You will also see these references in the slides. Now, when you listen to this, you're going to be in the context of the biblical e-learning website.

By that time, you will be able to maneuver these slides or have some sort of explanation about it. In a classroom, I have these slides, and I'll be conveying them to that site as long as we are permitted to do that by licensing and so forth. But you should be able to go there and view these items.

And then, I've given you the explanations that go with the slides. You'll notice on page 28 that there are slides and explanations. You can surface some of this stuff on your own, but that's where you are going to be.

I'm not going to go through these and reiterate them to you, but they're here for you. When you come to page 28 in your notes, please notice—literary text from primary sources.

So, I've got this segment on slides where you can look at pictures of Corinth. There is also a presentation at the beginning about Alexander the Great that I hope you'll be able to view as long as we get permission to do these kinds of things,

I could use it in a classroom where I had people gathered, but when it goes out onto the internet, it may be a different issue. But on page 28, you'll see literary text from primary sources. Here, I'm giving you some quotations, for example, from Strabo, who was an ancient tour guide. If you please, just use a modern analogy.

Late 1st century BCE up through the early 1st century, he wrote about many of the ancient cities. So, you're reading something that's kind of in between classical and Paul. Actually, because it's the late 1st century BCE, it should be the reconstructed city.

So, Strabo is going to give you insights. And I've quoted him here. I'm giving you quotations about a number of things that you'll be able to read and get in touch.

This runs from pages 28 up through page 38. I'm making good progress today, aren't I? In terms of the pages. I've done this at length to give these to you so that you'll have them.

You won't have to try to dig them out on your own, but give you a primary source from the time period. So that you can hear, read, and see things about Corinth. On page 38, we come to the end of this images section, both in terms of slides and in terms of historical sources that have been printed out for your reading.

So, please take note of those. And I hope you appreciate that we've tried to make this convenient for you. On page 38 of your notes, you'll come down to where it says end of images section.

And you'll come to point C, Corinth, in relation to Pauline history. All right. Here's some very important material that's primary Bible study content.

First of all, the founding of the Corinthian Church. Well, at this point in the lecture, you might want to stop and read Acts chapter 18. Acts chapter 18, which takes place about 49 to 51 A.D. or C.E. In that two to three-year window of time, we have the founding of the Corinthian Church.

Paul founded the Corinthian Church during his second missionary journey. Again, I'm going to give you some notes that will make it convenient for you to know Paul's first, second, and third missionary journeys. You can dig that out of sources, but sometimes that takes a little bit of time.

And I'll give that to you in the notes. You can look ahead and see that. So, that's when it was founded.

The chronological flow, however, of Paul's relationship to the city and people of Corinth is a good bit more complex than that. I've given you a reconstruction of it. I've taken that reconstruction from Ralph Martin's two volume set on New Testament foundations.

It's a very convenient kind of itemization of that reconstruction on page 39. And I'm just going to highlight some of this. You will have to think through it and read through it.

Being the talking head is not the best way for this, but you can stop and reflect. But what I'm doing is giving you context. I'm giving you some historical context about Paul's relationship to Corinth.

Let's look at this on page 39. You have the founding of the church in Acts chapter 18, point one. Point two, Paul leaves Corinth and goes to Ephesus in chapter 18 as well.

And he spent some time, by the way, in Ephesus teaching, calling to himself people to listen. He sends the Corinthians a letter during this period. And that letter is the actual 1 Corinthians.

We actually have some residual testimony in the biblical text of about four times that Paul wrote to them. Some of it we have in 1 and 2 Corinthians. Some of it we don't.

But scholars will argue, particularly in relation to 2 Corinthians, that residual pieces of Paul's writing communication to the Corinthians survive in the text of Second Corinthians and are incorporated into that text. So anyway, in point number three, he sends the Corinthians a letter, and we're going to call it the actual first Corinthians. He refers to this in 1 Corinthians 5:9. If you'll listen to 1 Corinthians 5:9, I'll bring that up here and read it to you.

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. But they took that the wrong way, and we'll talk about this later. So, while he's writing what we have as 1 Corinthians, he's referring to another document that he had already written and sent to them.

We don't have that unless we have pieces of it that have been incorporated into these books by Paul himself. So, this has been called the actual 1 Corinthians referred to in 5:9, as the lost letter. Some scholars think that 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 may have pieces of that lost letter.

Well, that's another subject altogether. Bullet point number four. Paul learns, after he had written that letter to them, he learns from members of Chloé's household.

Now Chloé is referred to in 1 Corinthians 1:11. You'll remember that the early church met in the homes of patrons. They didn't have buildings, they didn't have churches, as we think of it today. And in 1:11, verse 10, I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

By the way, I typically read from the 2011 NIV, just for convenience—verse 11. My brothers and sisters, and in the older versions, it would say brethren.

That always included sisters as well, by the way. My brothers and sisters, some from Chloé's household. Now Chloé is a feminine word.

So, this must have been a female patron, where people gathered and worshipped, heard letters written that Paul had sent, and talked about what it meant to be Christian. The church met in homes and in various places in these early centuries, and it was usually some individuals who may have had more means that supported the opportunity for those meetings. So, members of Chloé's household communicated to Paul that the church had been split into factions.

So, here's Paul at a distance getting information.

Number five. At about the same time, Paul received a letter from the Corinthians asking for his advice and guidance on certain issues.

Well, that's putting it nicely. They may have been writing a challenge letter to Paul. That letter is referred to in 7:1. I'll talk a little more about this later.

7:1 says, now for the matters about which you wrote. And then he makes this quotation. You'll notice in a version like the NIV, which is a good thing. They put that into quotations.

This is something they said. Paul's quoting them, and then he's going to respond. And we'll bring this up later.

This is called a slogan. Now for the matters you wrote about. So, they wrote Paul.

That could have been a challenge letter. It could have, to be nice, could have been asking for clarification. But I am a little more of the opinion, perhaps, that they were challenging some of Paul's thinking.

At the same time, they asked for his interaction.

Number six. Paul responds to the factiousness and answers their request for advice by writing the letter that we know as 1 Corinthians.

So, we'll see that 7 through 16 is Paul's response to a number of questions that the Corinthians had sent to Paul. That's why 1 Corinthians is so easy to structure; it's one subject after another that Paul is dealing with. I'm glad they wrote him.

But you see, 1 Corinthians is the actual 2 Corinthians. This is the second time he writes to them and responds to their questions. So, our canonical 1 Corinthians is not the first time he wrote.

It's the second time he wrote that it's 1 Corinthians in the canon. This letter is taken by Titus, according to 2 Corinthians 12.18, who subsequently returns to Ephesus where Paul is. So you see, Paul had this entourage.

Timothy and Titus were part of the entourage. And there were others. Epaphras, for example, if you get into the book of Colossians.

And he had his disciples, if you please, his learners. That's what the word disciple means. They were his learners.

And they were being sent to various places. They were running around and bringing letters and taking letters. And it was a very fluid sort of situation that Paul was managing.

By the way, John the Apostle did the same thing. If you read 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, you'll see that happening there. Number seven, Timothy was sent to Corinth on a special mission.

This is referred to in 1 Corinthians 4 and 16. In the meantime, all this is going on. They didn't have email, Twitter, or anything else.

And everything had to be sent back and forth and by messengers. Seven, Timothy was sent to Corinth on this special mission. Number eight, in the meantime, a serious crisis breaks out in Corinth, fomented by the arrival of Jewish emissaries.

Paul's authority is challenged according to 2 Corinthians. Timothy's evidently at a loss to deal with it. He returns with this news to Ephesus, where Paul was.

See, Paul was in Ephesus for about two years. And these things are going back and forth. So here comes Timothy.

Oh man, we have a problem. Now, these Jewish emissaries in the King James Version would be called Judaizers. Now, I'm not going to digress because we could take a whole lesson on who the Judaizers were.

But let me just say it this way. The Judaizers were most likely Jewish Christians who were vying for a stronger presence of Judaism. I caution myself on using that word because Judaism eventually becomes the word for the developing teaching of the Pharisees.

But they wanted more Jewish influence in the spread of the Judeo-Christian teaching that Paul was doing as the Apostle to the Gentiles. So, in some ways, they were a thorn in Paul's side because they were trying to pull Paul back and pull Paul more central into Jewish thinking. Where Paul was Jewish thoroughly and certainly recognized the truth of Jewish teaching because it was the Old Testament.

Yet, things were developing in a Christological direction, which fulfilled the Old Testament and clarified what the Old Testament was about. It's a fluid age and it's a very difficult time in the first century. Just imagine, if you can for a moment, as a Christian.

This is totally imaginary. Say that God wanted to do a major morph in the history of how he deals with the world. So, he sends a representative and we'll say that this representative, just for our illustration, is an angel who's going to tell us that we've got to go in this new direction.

Well, how willing would you be to do that? I'd like to say that most of us would have a hard time with that. Well, think about it. Here's the Jews who have God's word.

Read Romans 2. They got God's word. Really. And here come these Johnny-come-lately people, messengers from this Christ event that took place in Palestine.

A blip on the radar, by the way, of world history at that time. Even as crucial as it is in the biblical narrative. And they're telling you, you've got to change to this.

I'd like to say that your first response would be to bring the fur up on the back of your neck like a cat that's on a couch, and the dog jumps on the couch. Well, these Judaizing Christians did that. And they are to be faulted for their own misunderstandings.

But I think as we get into the culture and the time, we've got to realize that this was a real world. These people were discussing things that we now take for granted. We've got to be sensitive to that.

They were challenging Paul's authority. We think of him as Paul the Apostle. They thought of him, oh, that Jew who converted to Christianity.

We're glad for that. But he's trying to change our whole religion. Well, it was a very different situation, wasn't it? On receiving Timothy's report that Timothy couldn't deal with it, Paul pays a brief visit to Corinth to deal with the issues in person.

He calls this the painful visit in 2 Corinthians 2. He went there to ring the changes on the situation and get things straightened out. But Paul was humiliated before the church, and he had to return to Ephesus in great distress. It was not a good meeting.

So now he writes a powerful letter of remonstrance back to the Corinthians, referred to in 2 Corinthians 2 and 7. And this is known as the tearful or severe letter, which is the actual 3 Corinthians. So there comes another writing. This 3 Corinthians is either lost or maybe partially preserved in parts of 2 Corinthians because 2 Corinthians reflects on all this stuff.

When it's all over, Paul writes back to them, and perhaps he uses his own letters as resources within the letter that he writes back to them, quotes it, and says, okay, we got this straightened out now. Aren't we all glad? Verse 11, or number 11. According to the plan outlined in 1 Corinthians 16, but after some delay caused by the intermediate visit to Corinth mentioned in paragraph 9, Paul leaves Ephesus for Macedonia.

He comes to Troas. He can't find Titus, so he goes on to Macedonia to intercept Titus and moves all over the place. Number 12, he meets Titus, who tells him, hey Paul, the rebellion in Corinth is over.

Things are under control. We're moving forward. Wow, isn't that wonderful? Paul breathes a sigh of relief, and he writes 2 Corinthians, which for us is our actual 4 Corinthians.

And 2 Corinthians is a book we won't be looking at, but it is a magisterial volume. 2 Corinthians is Paul's most autobiographical writing. In fact, many pull out a section of 2 Corinthians and create a course on pastoral ministry out of it, because it is so pastoral.

Paul is so delighted that things have been taken care of. Issues have been addressed. We're back online.

And 2 Corinthians brings much of that to us. See, if you read 2 Corinthians in isolation from 1 Corinthians, and from this litany of issues and visits and letters that were being written and the give and take that's going on between Corinth and Paul, you're going to lose the power of 2 Corinthians. You've got to read the Bible in its original context.

So, he writes 2 Corinthians, our actual 4 Corinthians, either in its entirety or using certain things that he'd already written. He brings it together. Paul is responsible for it.

This letter he sends from Macedonia through Titus, accompanied by two other brethren, back to Corinth. Then, in Acts 20, verse 2. So, we're in Acts 18-20. How much time took place between 18-1 and 20-2? Quite a bit.

Years. There are years between those passages of give and take between Paul and Corinth. Paul himself reaches Corinth in Acts 20-2 and has a good visit with them.

So, man, Corinth is more than any other geographical location. It's not so much how much time Paul spent in Corinth. He may have spent more time in Ephesus.

However, the amount of time Paul spent is not the issue. It's how significant a time of interchange that he had with the city of Corinth, and we have a huge record of it in 1 and 2 Corinthians. Aren't we happy for these epistles? We need to dive into them with all of our energy.

So, there we have it. This history between Paul and the church at Corinth. Now, I've inserted Paul's missionary journeys into your notes on page 40.

I've pulled this off of other sites. I didn't try to concoct it originally myself. I've given you a website where I got this from.

It may or may not still be around in terms of time. This is generic, common denominator material. It's not open per se to a lot of interpretation.

This is to make it convenient for you to learn about Paul's journeys and his travels. Three missionary journeys and then his journey from Palestine back to Rome later on. I'll make it convenient for you.

Hopefully, you'll appreciate that on pages 40, 41, and 42, bringing this over to page 43. Aren't you proud of how many pages we're covering? Alright, so we've talked about the founding of the church at Corinth. We've looked at the chronology of Paul's relationship with Corinth and all the massive and interesting things that are going on between them.

And we come back and ask the question, what about the complexion of the Corinthian church? Once again, Garland has a great section on the complexion and the nature of this church from the Roman perspective particularly. I've given you a grocery list here that I just pulled out. It's just a sample.

First Corinthians passages here tell us that there was a lot of class struggle. There was a lot of intellectual pride, falsely based. There were influential converts in the church of Corinth.

There were people of means, and then there were average folks. We can see that in a number of places. There were problems: the party spirit, moral laxity, and following worldly wisdom rather than God's wisdom.

There was formal immorality addressed in chapter 6. There were sexual issues of all kinds of different categories. 1 Corinthians 7 looks at a number of subgroups within the church at Corinth that were having problems with sexuality. This ought to be expected.

If you come out of a Greco-Roman world where, as it is said in the Roman world, if a woman only knew two men on a regular basis, she was exceptionally good. It was a

wide-open world in terms of sexuality. Now, it had its boundaries and very stern boundaries in terms of formal marriage and so forth.

But there were those corollary aspects in addition to the legal wife where there were all kinds of sexual things happening. So, they were just up to their eyebrows, as it were, in sexual problems when you confront the teaching of Judeo-Christian sexuality. First Corinthians 12-14, the lack of unity and the lack of love.

That's the section where you talk about gifts, but what's really going on is the lack of unity and love. 12-2, Jewish presence. First Corinthians 8 and 10, misunderstandings of the concepts of freedom that related a good deal to issues of sexuality.

But being free doesn't absolutely mean being free; it means being free to be obedient to a new set of moral standards. So, it was a complex church. What about the dates, places, and composition of the canonical Corinthian epistles? Well, as we've mentioned, First Corinthians was written by Paul while he was at Ephesus.

This took place most likely in 54-55 AD. Furthermore, and I've given you some other evidence of that, you can surface that easily in the introductions to commentaries. Second Corinthians was written a few months later.

After 1 Corinthians, probably somewhere, maybe Philippi in Macedonia. In 55-56, only months later, Second Corinthians comes, maybe up to a year. The authenticity and the issues of the composition of 2 Corinthians are more debated.

1 Corinthians is not debated, but you'll have to read introductions and get into formal studies on Second Corinthians to deal with that. Now, some essential characteristics of the two epistles. These are very different epistles, 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians.

First Corinthians looks at the unity of issues and the need for unity. You find all kinds of occasions within First Corinthians where there's party spirit. I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos.

The Lord's Supper is a mess. You've got people who practice the meal along with the bread and the cup. And you've got all kinds of problems in 1 Corinthians 11.

Spiritual gifts are off the map in terms of problems—individualism, which was a part of that culture. Individual freedom was messing with the community issues of the church.

And then this phrase that I've given you here on page 44. Page 44 under First Corinthians. Unity is not uniformity.

Uniformity: I want to really emphasize this. Unity is not uniformity. Unity is the appreciation of diversity.

I can't say this strongly enough. Paul says it in First Corinthians so many ways and so many times. Unity is not uniformity.

Unity is reveling and appreciating diversity. If you are a ministry leader, you better learn that. Ministry leadership doesn't mean getting all your little ducks in a row behind you.

In fact, if you try that, you're not going to do very well in ministry. Unity doesn't mean to force people into a mold. That's why I am of Paul and Apollo's mindset.

Unity is being able to take that great diversity of the people that you minister to. And you work with. And mold them into a machine, if you please, that's effective.

With the diversity. Not in spite of it. He is not squelching it.

But putting that diversity to work in ways that are effective for the gospel. That's not easy to do. We all have personalities.

Pastors and ministry leaders of various kinds are not exempt from liking this person more than they like that person from identifying with this individual more than they identify with that individual. That's human nature.

And we need to embrace that, admit it, and deal with it rather than deny it. Denial is so deep in our human relationships. There are a lot of people that I don't like to spend a lot of time with.

That's not that they're bad people. They may be better than me. But they just don't click with me and I don't click with them. And it's not establishing a click to put on the term.

But it's being able to recognize the fact that every human being sort of gravitates to... Maybe we could say people who are like us, but I think sometimes it's people who are dislike us. So that we can enjoy that give and take. But we have to be conscious of it.

We have to know how we operate in our world. We have to have a good level of self-consciousness. So that we are saying, you know, this person doesn't appeal to me very much, but I want to spend more time with him.

In fact, some of the even the secular principles of leadership... Is that you bring close to you the people that who could be a problem rather than pushing them away. And

maybe ministry sometimes is very much that way. In fact, I think we should have such open and honest communication in our ministry and in our Christian communities.

That everybody kind of knows each other. It's kind of like being in a family. We often use that imagery of the church, but it's seldom is true.

If you're in a family, you know what uncle so-and-so is like. And you know who cousin so-and-so is like. Some of them are fun, and some of them are embarrassing to the family.

But at the end of the day, they're still family. And we can revel in who they are as they us. That's the kind of environment we've got to try and create.

An environment of the acceptance of diversity, not the rejection of it. Corinthians was diverse. And that diversity had created problems because human nature pushed against it.

Rather than finding what's true and powerful in diversity. Now, that's a diversity under a certain moral umbrella. It's not a wild diversity.

It's not a diversity that ignores moral truth, for example. A temptation that we're facing in our own worlds these days. But it's a diversity of personality, particularly.

That we need to learn to embrace and deal with. Appreciate. And yet, maybe that's not us.

Be honest about it. Don't be manipulated to somebody else and don't let them manipulate you to them. Put it on the table.

Talk about it. Deal with it. Things will be much better if you do that.

Key terms in 1 Corinthians. Know, judge, discern, spirit, spiritual, knowledge, wisdom, church, world, power or authority, holy, sanctified. There's a personal emphasis in 1 Corinthians.

146 occurrences of the personal pronoun you. Because Paul was... There was not a dichotomy between us and them. But there was a Paul and his community.

And you in certain subgroups within Corinth that had to be dealt with. There were good yous and bad yous, if you please. But it's huge.

Very personal. If you contrast that to 2 Corinthians, for example. We just worked through the key terms.

Look at the key terms at the bottom of 44 for 2 Corinthians. Weakness, tribulation, comfort, boasting, ministry, glory. They're emotive terms.

The terms in 1 Corinthians are not emotive but are more rational. They're very different. 2 Corinthians reveals Paul's heart.

That's why it is so pastoral. It's a book that's so neglected but a book that we need so much to dive into. So, the essential characteristics of the Corinthian epistles.

You can think through those. You'll read in introductions a number of essential characteristics in other places. And you can surface them yourself.

Maybe you'll want to make your own list. As you work through the book of Corinthians you can continually fill out. As you go along.

Be alert. Enjoy the journey. Well, thankfully, I'm getting these lectures a little briefer.

You won't have to sit there and listen to me quite so long. I'm going to stop here on page 44. As we enter into the actual text of 1 Corinthians,

I want to deal with the structural issues of how the book of 1 Corinthians is structured. I kept it very much as we moved into the text of the book itself. So, I'm going to stop here.

And ask you to be sure to do your homework. And educate yourself about the social, cultural, religious issues that were alive in the 1st century for Paul and for his audience. And when you do that, you'll be able to read this book better.

You'll feel the nuances. You'll not just be hearing words. But it'll be like you're sitting there in the center of Paul and his audience.

And hearing and feeling the things that are going on. God bless you.

This is Dr. Gary Meadors in his teaching on the book of 1 Corinthians. This is lecture 7, Introduction to 1 Corinthians, Part 2.