The Church Of God At Corinth As Viewed By Paul

Intro: 1 Cor. 1:1-3 “PAUL, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” The Corinthian letter is one of the most interesting and informative letters in the New Testament. It contains many wonderful and pertinent lessons for us today. But at this time, we are primarily concerned with the lessons presented in verse 2 of our text.

I. AT CORINTH.
   A. Corinth was a metropolis of 600,000 souls in Paul’s day.
   B. It was a city devoted to gross immorality.
      1. It was here that the Temple of Aphrodite was located.
      2. The temple had 1,000 priestesses to serve the baser desires and wants of men.
      3. If a person was drunk, others would refer to him as a Corinthian.
   C. Yet, even here the Gospel could exert its power.
      1. Acts 18:8 “And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”
      2. Rom. 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”
      3. Jam. 1:21 “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”
      4. 1 Cor. 1:18 “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

II. THE CHURCH.
   A. We have many strange and divergent thoughts concerning the church.
      1. Many think the church is the building.
      2. Some think it is some mystical thing.
      3. Some do not know what it is.
   B. ekkleasia (ἐκκλησία)
      1. ek — out or out from within.
      2. kaleo — to call
   C. Many scriptures emphasize we have been called.
      1. Eph. 4:1 “I Therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,”
      2. Heb. 3:1 “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;”
3. 2 Pet. 1:10 “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:”

D. **From what have we been called?**
1. 1 Pet. 2:9 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;”
2. 1 John 1:5 “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

E. **How have we been called?**
1. 2 Thes. 2:14 “Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
2. When the Gospel is preached God’s call is being extended.
3. Those accepting that call become the called out, the church.

III. **OF GOD.**

A. **God is a family name.**
1. The Father
2. The Son (Jesus Christ)
3. The Holy Spirit

B. **Acts 20:28** “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

C. **As such, the church belongs to God, not man. He alone can dictate the terms.**
1. The terms of entrance.
2. The terms of life in it.
3. The terms of organization.
4. The terms of worship.
5. The terms of work.

IV. **THREE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE CHURCH.**

A. **“Sanctified in Christ Jesus”**
1. John 17:17 “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”
2. Eph. 5:26 “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,”
3. Through Christ
   a. Heb. 10:10 “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”
   b. Heb. 13:12 “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.”

B. **“Called to be saints”**
1. Literally this is “called saints.”
   a. Saints comes from the same word as is translated “holy.”
   b. 1 Pet. 1:15-16 “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
2. They are holy — dedicated to God.

C. **“Calls upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.”**
1. Joel 2:32 “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.”

2. Acts 2:21, 38 “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.... 38Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

3. Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

Conclusion: Even though Corinth was given over to immorality and wickedness, the power of the Gospel was proclaimed, so people were saved from their sins.