

1 Corinthians 1 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 1 opens Paul's letter to a divided church struggling with pride, immorality, and misplaced loyalties. The apostle begins by affirming their secure position "in Christ Jesus," reminding them of God's grace, enrichment, and faithfulness. Paul then addresses divisions rooted in human allegiance rather than unity in Christ. The cross of Christ, not human wisdom or eloquence, is the foundation of the believer's identity and calling. The chapter contrasts the world's pursuit of status with the simplicity and power of the gospel.

1–3. "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God..."

Paul asserts divine authority, not self-appointment. "Called" (klētos, Gk.) underscores God's initiative in grace. He writes to "the church of God which is at Corinth... called to be saints" — sanctified by position, not performance. The greeting, "Grace be unto you, and peace," unites Gentile and Jewish salutations under the gospel of grace.

4–9. "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ."

Despite their failures, Paul begins with gratitude for grace. The Corinthian believers were "enriched in all utterance and all knowledge," gifted yet immature. Verse 8 affirms eternal security: "Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless." God's faithfulness, not human perseverance, ensures this. "God is faithful" (pistos ho Theos, Gk.) — a definitive statement of assurance.

10–13. "Now I beseech you, brethren... that there be no divisions among you."

Paul appeals for unity based on shared identity in Christ. Their problem was partisanship: "I am of Paul... I of Apollos... I of Cephas... I of Christ." Such sectarianism reduces the gospel to

human rivalry. “Is Christ divided?” exposes the absurdity of dividing the body of Christ. Spiritual maturity flows from gratitude for grace, not allegiance to men.

14–17. “I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius...”

Paul distinguishes between the gospel and baptism. Baptism identifies believers publicly but is not part of the saving message. Verse 17 clarifies: “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.” This verse refutes baptismal regeneration. The gospel’s power lies not in ceremony but in the message of the cross — simple faith in Christ’s finished work.

18–25. “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

The cross divides humanity into two groups: the perishing and the saved. Salvation is present possession, not future uncertainty. God’s wisdom confounds human reason. “It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” Faith is the single condition; works and intellectual pride have no place. Christ crucified is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” — divine strength revealed through apparent weakness.

26–31. “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty...”

God chooses the humble to nullify the proud. The verb *exelexato* (Gk.) — “has chosen” — emphasizes purpose in service, not selective salvation. The believer’s boasting must be “in the Lord.” Verse 30 encapsulates positional truth: “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” These are not rewards but realities granted at the moment of faith. “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (Jer. 9:24) sums up grace-centered living.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Klētos (Gk., v.1): “called,” divinely appointed or invited.

Pistos ho Theos (Gk., v.9): “God is faithful,” basis of eternal security.

Exelexato (Gk., v.27): “chose,” to select for purpose, not for exclusive salvation.

Stauros (Gk., v.18): “cross,” instrument symbolizing substitutionary atonement.

Sōzomenois (Gk., v.18): “to those being saved,” describing the ongoing effect of a completed salvation.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 1 establishes the believer’s identity and security in Christ before addressing conduct. Grace precedes correction. God’s faithfulness guarantees perseverance, and the gospel’s simplicity nullifies human boasting. Salvation is by faith alone in the crucified Christ, not by wisdom, works, or water. Unity flows from understanding that all believers share equal standing in grace.

Free Grace Summary

Believers are sanctified positionally, regardless of maturity.

Salvation rests on God’s faithfulness, not human perseverance.

Baptism and human eloquence cannot add to the gospel.

The cross reveals divine wisdom and power through grace.

God chooses the humble to magnify His mercy.

1 Corinthians 1 reminds us that assurance, identity, and unity come only through Christ crucified — the centerpiece of Free Grace and the power of God unto salvation for all who believe.

1 Corinthians 2 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 2 continues Paul's contrast between human wisdom and divine revelation. The Corinthian church, enamored with eloquence and philosophy, needed to be reminded that true power rests not in persuasive speech but in the Holy Spirit's illumination. Paul demonstrates that the gospel's wisdom is hidden from the world but revealed to believers through the Spirit. The chapter emphasizes the sufficiency of the Spirit for understanding Scripture, the exclusivity of revelation for spiritual knowledge, and the believer's privileged position in Christ — possessing the "mind of Christ."

1–2. "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom..."

Paul's ministry centered on the message, not the messenger. His focus was "Jesus Christ, and him crucified." The Greek phrase *lēsou Christon kai touton estaurōmenon* means "Christ — and this One crucified." The emphasis rests on substitutionary redemption. Paul rejected rhetorical performance so that faith would rest in divine power, not human intellect.

3–5. "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

Paul's humility contrasts with Corinthian pride. His apparent frailty magnified the Spirit's work. "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" defines the purpose of his simplicity. The gospel's strength lies in its truth, not its presentation. Faith's object — Christ crucified — secures salvation eternally.

6–8. "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect..."

"Perfect" (*teleiois*, Gk.) refers to mature believers, not sinless ones. God's wisdom, once hidden, now revealed, transcends human reasoning. The "princes of this world" (rulers, religious and political) did not recognize this wisdom; had they done so, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Divine wisdom centers on redemption, not worldly success.

9. “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard...”

Quoting Isaiah 64:4, Paul illustrates that God’s redemptive plan surpasses human perception. This verse is often misapplied to heaven, but in context, it refers to the truths now revealed by the Spirit to believers in this age. The “things which God hath prepared” are spiritual realities — the blessings of understanding grace through revelation.

10–12. “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit...”

The Spirit searches (erauna, Gk.) all things, even the deep things of God. Only the Spirit of God can disclose divine truth, just as only the human spirit knows a person’s inner thoughts. Verse 12 declares: “We have received... the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” This affirms assurance — the believer’s knowledge of grace is Spirit-taught, not humanly attained.

13. “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth...”

Divine revelation is communicated through divinely chosen words. “Comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (pneumatikōis pneumatika sygkrinontes, Gk.) refers to interpreting Scripture by the Spirit’s illumination, not by human philosophy. Inspiration ensures accuracy; illumination ensures understanding.

14. “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God...”

The psychikos anthrōpos (natural man) is the unsaved person — devoid of the Spirit and unable to grasp spiritual truth. Such truth is “foolishness” to him because it requires regeneration to discern. Intellectual knowledge alone cannot produce faith; illumination accompanies belief.

15–16. “But he that is spiritual judgeth all things...”

The spiritual person, indwelt and taught by the Spirit, discerns divine truth accurately. The world cannot evaluate him, for his life is governed by revelation unseen to human wisdom. Verse 16

closes the argument triumphantly: “But we have the mind of Christ.” This refers to the believer’s access to divine perspective through Scripture and the Spirit, not to mystical experience.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Teleiois (Gk., v.6): “mature,” complete in understanding through revelation.

Erauna (Gk., v.10): “searches,” to explore thoroughly or examine deeply.

Psychikos anthrōpos (Gk., v.14): “natural man,” one governed by human nature apart from the Spirit.

Pneumatikois pneumatika sygkrinontes (Gk., v.13): “interpreting spiritual things by spiritual means.”

Nous Christou (Gk., v.16): “mind of Christ,” divine insight given to believers.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 2 defines revelation as the foundation for faith and understanding. Human wisdom cannot attain spiritual truth; only the Holy Spirit reveals, interprets, and applies it. Assurance, discernment, and spiritual maturity depend on illumination, not intellect. The gospel’s “hidden wisdom” is now fully revealed in Christ — the eternal wisdom of God accessible to all who believe.

Free Grace Summary

Salvation rests on divine revelation, not human reasoning.

The Spirit reveals and secures the believer’s understanding of grace.

Faith stands in the power of God, not persuasion or eloquence.

The natural man cannot grasp truth apart from regeneration.

The believer possesses the “mind of Christ” through the Spirit and Scripture.

1 Corinthians 2 declares that grace removes all human boasting — revelation is God-given, freely received, and eternally secure in Christ.

1 Corinthians 3 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 3 addresses carnality within the Corinthian church — believers saved by grace but living immaturely in the flesh. Paul contrasts spiritual and carnal believers, explaining that while salvation is secure, spiritual growth requires dependence on God’s Spirit. He uses agricultural and architectural metaphors to show that ministry and reward are distinct from salvation. The foundation — Jesus Christ — is unchangeable; believers may build well or poorly upon it. Works will be tested at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but eternal life remains unshaken.

1–3. “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal...”

Paul addresses “brethren,” confirming their salvation despite immaturity. “Carnal” (sarkinos, Gk.) means fleshly-minded. The Corinthians were “babes in Christ,” unable to digest deeper truths. Envy, strife, and divisions evidenced fleshly thinking. Spiritual maturity comes from walking by the Spirit, not from position or status. The believer’s standing is secure, but fellowship can be hindered by carnality.

4–7. “For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?”

Their partisanship revealed misplaced allegiance. Paul and Apollos were merely servants — instruments, not sources of blessing. “I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” This agricultural analogy emphasizes divine sovereignty in spiritual growth. Laborers are necessary, but results belong to God alone. Salvation and sanctification are both works of grace.

8–9. “Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one...”

Though roles differ, every laborer will “receive his own reward according to his own labour.” This points to the Bēma (Judgment Seat of Christ), where rewards are granted for faithful service — not salvation, which is a free gift. “For we are labourers together with God” (theou synergoi, Gk.) — a remarkable expression of divine partnership in ministry.

10–11. “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder...”

Paul’s apostolic work laid the foundation of the gospel. “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” This foundation refers to the saving message of Christ crucified and risen. No other message secures eternal life. Works may build upon it, but the foundation itself cannot be altered.

12–15. “If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble...”

These materials represent the quality of one’s works — durable or perishable. The “fire” tests the work’s nature, not the believer’s salvation. Verse 15 is key to eternal security: “If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” Salvation remains intact even when rewards are lost. The Bēma judgment concerns service, not destiny.

16–17. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

The “temple” (naos, Gk.) refers collectively to the church as God’s dwelling. The Spirit’s indwelling affirms eternal security. To “defile the temple” by division or false teaching invites divine discipline, not loss of salvation. God’s temple is sacred because it represents His presence among redeemed people.

18–20. “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world...”

Worldly wisdom breeds pride. True wisdom begins with humility before God. The wisdom of this world is “foolishness with God.” Paul quotes Job 5:13 and Psalm 94:11 to show that human cleverness cannot substitute for divine revelation. Dependence on human reasoning produces division, not growth.

21–23. “Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours...”

Paul concludes that all ministers — Paul, Apollos, Cephas — belong to the church as servants. Believers are heirs of all spiritual blessings “in Christ.” “Ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.” This chain of belonging underscores security and unity: believers are eternally owned and kept by God through Christ.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Sarkinos (Gk., v.1): “fleshly, carnal,” governed by human impulses.

Theou synergoi (Gk., v.9): “fellow workers with God,” indicating partnership in service.

Naos (Gk., v.16): “temple, inner sanctuary,” symbolizing divine indwelling.

Bēma (implied v.14): “judgment seat,” tribunal for rewards, not condemnation.

Sōthēsetai (Gk., v.15): “he shall be saved,” emphasizing eternal security despite loss of reward.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 3 distinguishes between salvation and discipleship. Salvation is secured once for all by Christ’s finished work; discipleship and reward depend on faithfulness. The believer’s works are tested, but his salvation remains untouched. God disciplines His children for defiling His temple but never disowns them. Grace saves unconditionally and rewards faithfully.

Free Grace Summary

Believers can be carnal yet remain secure in Christ.

Ministry effectiveness depends on God's increase, not human effort.

The foundation of faith is Christ alone — unchangeable and eternal.

Rewards vary by faithfulness; salvation never varies.

The Spirit's indwelling guarantees security and divine ownership.

1 Corinthians 3 reinforces Free Grace truth: salvation is a gift; service is a stewardship; loss of reward is possible — loss of salvation is not.

1 Corinthians 4 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 4 continues Paul's correction of the Corinthian believers' pride and misplaced judgments regarding church leadership. Paul redefines ministers as servants and stewards — not celebrities or rulers — responsible only to God for faithfulness. The chapter emphasizes humility, accountability, and divine evaluation at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Paul exposes the contrast between worldly arrogance and apostolic suffering, reminding the Corinthians that true greatness in the kingdom is measured by faithfulness, not reputation.

1–2. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

Paul defines the minister's identity: a minister (*hypēretēs*, Gk.) — literally an "under-rower," one who rows under command — and a steward (*oikonomos*, Gk.), a household manager entrusted with responsibility. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." God values reliability, not popularity. Success in ministry is measured by faithfulness to the message, not by numbers or acclaim.

3–5. “But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you...”

Paul refuses to be enslaved to human opinion. “He that judgeth me is the Lord.” Evaluation of motives and faithfulness belongs to Christ alone. Verse 5 describes the Bēma (Judgment Seat of Christ), where “the Lord... will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.” Then “every man shall have praise of God.” Even correction is framed by grace — believers are rewarded, not condemned.

6–7. “That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written...”

Paul applies the principle of humility to himself and Apollos. Pride and comparison contradict grace. “Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?” Everything believers possess — gifts, opportunities, calling — is received by grace, not achieved by merit. Boasting is therefore excluded.

8–13. “Now ye are full, now ye are rich... we are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ.”

Paul uses sanctified irony to expose Corinthian arrogance. They prided themselves in wealth, knowledge, and social status, while the apostles endured hunger, persecution, and humiliation. “We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things.” Apostolic suffering highlighted dependence on grace, while Corinthian pride revealed spiritual immaturity.

14–17. “I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.”

Paul’s tone softens from rebuke to affection. As their spiritual father through the gospel, he calls them to imitation. “For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.” His fatherly exhortation is pastoral, not punitive. He sends Timothy as a trusted representative “who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ.” Discipleship is modeled by example grounded in truth.

18–21. “Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.”

Some members, inflated with pride, presumed Paul would not return. He reminds them that “the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.” God’s kingdom operates through spiritual authority, not human eloquence. Verse 21 closes with a choice: “Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?” Paul’s goal was restoration, not domination — correction wrapped in grace.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Hypēretēs (Gk., v.1): “minister, under-rower,” servant acting under authority.

Oikonomos (Gk., v.1): “steward, manager,” entrusted with responsibility in God’s household.

Bēma (Gk., v.5 implied): “judgment seat,” tribunal of reward, not condemnation.

Physioō (Gk., v.6): “puffed up,” inflated with pride or self-importance.

Mimētai (Gk., v.16 implied): “imitators,” patterning one’s life after faithful example.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 4 emphasizes divine evaluation over human approval. Ministers are accountable to God alone for faithfulness in stewardship. The Bēma judgment will reveal motives, not determine salvation. True ministry embraces humility, endurance, and servant leadership. Grace, not human applause, sustains all labor. Spiritual authority rests on fidelity to Christ’s message, not social influence or worldly success.

Free Grace Summary

Faithfulness, not fame, defines God’s servants.

Only Christ can rightly evaluate believers at the Bēma, ensuring reward, not punishment.

All gifts and abilities are received by grace, leaving no room for boasting.

Suffering for Christ demonstrates grace dependence, not failure.

Discipline aims at restoration, never loss of salvation.

1 Corinthians 4 reminds every believer that grace governs stewardship, judgment, and reward — we serve from acceptance, not for acceptance, because our standing in Christ is eternally secure.

1 Corinthians 5 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 5 exposes a case of unrepentant immorality in the Corinthian church and Paul's instruction for church discipline. The issue was not the man's sin alone, but the congregation's prideful tolerance of it. Paul commands separation from such open rebellion — not to question salvation, but to preserve fellowship, testimony, and purity within the assembly. The chapter distinguishes between the believer's eternal security and temporal discipline, affirming that even the erring Christian remains saved, though subject to chastisement.

1–2. "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you..."

The sin was public and scandalous: a man had his father's wife (his stepmother). Rather than mourning, the Corinthians were "puffed up," boasting of tolerance under the guise of liberty. Paul rebukes them for failing to act in grief and correction. Grace never condones sin; it compels discipline born of love.

3–5. "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already..."

Paul exercises apostolic authority to remove the offender from fellowship. The phrase "deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved" refers to temporal discipline — possibly physical sickness or death (cf. 1 Cor. 11:30) — but not loss of salvation. The goal is restoration, not retribution. The phrase "that the spirit may be saved" proves the man's eternal life remains secure even under severe chastisement.

6–8. “Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?”

Leaven symbolizes sin’s corrupting influence. Tolerated sin spreads, defiling the entire body. The solution: “Purge out the old leaven.” The believer’s standing is based on Christ, “our passover... sacrificed for us.” Therefore, we celebrate the new life not with “old leaven” of malice and wickedness but with “unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” Grace calls believers to purity because the penalty for sin has already been borne by Christ.

9–11. “I wrote unto you... not to company with fornicators.”

Paul clarifies a previous letter: he does not forbid association with unbelievers, but with believers living in open rebellion. The list — “fornicators, covetous, idolaters, railers, drunkards, extortioners” — represents unrepentant patterns, not isolated failures. The instruction concerns fellowship, not salvation. Discipline protects testimony and encourages repentance.

12–13. “For what have I to do to judge them also that are without?”

The church’s responsibility is internal accountability, not moral reform of the world. “Them that are without God judgeth.” Paul concludes, “Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” The removal from fellowship is an act of corporate discipline, not divine rejection.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Porneia (Gk., v.1): “fornication,” general term for sexual immorality.

Pneuma sōthē (Gk., v.5): “the spirit may be saved,” referring to eternal security despite physical chastening.

Zymē (Gk., v.6): “leaven,” symbol of moral corruption and doctrinal compromise.

Eilikrineia (Gk., v.8): “sincerity,” purity without hypocrisy.

Exarate (Gk., v.13): “put away,” command for disciplinary removal from fellowship.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 5 distinguishes between position and fellowship. The sinning believer remains eternally secure but faces divine discipline and loss of fellowship until repentance. Church discipline aims at restoration and protection, not condemnation. God’s chastening may reach physical death but never touches eternal life (cf. Heb. 12:6; 1 Cor. 11:30). Grace never ignores sin, but addresses it through love, truth, and accountability.

Free Grace Summary

The believer’s salvation remains secure, even in serious sin.

Church discipline corrects behavior, not belief in salvation.

Delivering one to Satan means temporal discipline, not eternal damnation.

Purity within the church preserves testimony, not salvation status.

God judges unbelievers; the church disciplines believers in love.

1 Corinthians 5 affirms that grace restores, not rejects — sin may break fellowship and invite discipline, but never cancels the believer’s eternal standing in Christ.

1 Corinthians 6 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 6 continues Paul’s correction of moral and ethical confusion within the Corinthian church. Two major issues are addressed: believers suing one another before secular courts and tolerating immorality within the body of Christ. Paul reminds them of their identity as saints,

redeemed and indwelt by the Spirit. While salvation is secure, sinful behavior brings shame, loss of testimony, and divine discipline. The chapter concludes with one of Scripture's clearest affirmations that the believer's body belongs to the Lord — purchased and sealed by grace.

1–3. “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?”

Paul rebukes believers for taking internal disputes to pagan courts. The church should resolve such matters among spiritually mature members. “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world... and angels?” This prophetic reference points to believers' future role in Christ's kingdom administration. Eternal destiny is secure, but current conduct must reflect that future calling.

4–6. “If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life...”

The Corinthians should appoint wise, Spirit-led believers to settle disputes rather than relying on unbelievers. Taking a fellow believer to court before the unsaved damages the church's witness. Grace calls believers to reconciliation, not litigation.

7–8. “Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another.”

Paul challenges them to suffer wrong rather than discredit Christ. “Why do ye not rather take wrong?” Love and humility are superior to vindication. The issue is not legal loss but spiritual defeat — prioritizing self-interest over testimony.

9–10. “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?”

These verses list sins characteristic of the unrighteous: fornication, idolatry, adultery, effeminacy, homosexuality, theft, greed, drunkenness, reviling, extortion. This passage is not about losing salvation but distinguishing lifestyles of unbelievers from those who will inherit kingdom reward. Eternal life is a gift; inheritance refers to reward and privilege in Christ's future reign.

11. “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified...”

A powerful reminder of transformation by grace. Three perfect passive verbs — *apelousasthe* (“washed”), *hēgiasthēte* (“sanctified”), *edikaiōthēte* (“justified”) — show completed, permanent actions performed by God. The believer’s position is eternally secure. The Spirit has made the believer clean, holy, and righteous before God.

12. “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient...”

Freedom in Christ is not license for self-indulgence. Paul clarifies that liberty must not lead to bondage: “I will not be brought under the power of any.” The believer’s freedom is for service, not sin.

13–14. “Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats...”

The Corinthians used slogans to justify immorality. Paul answers: “Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord.” The resurrection guarantees the body’s eternal value — “God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us.” Our bodies are destined for glorification; thus, purity matters.

15–17. “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?”

Believers are united with Christ spiritually. Joining one’s body to a harlot contradicts this sacred union. “He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” Spiritual union demands bodily sanctity — not to earn salvation, but to honor the One who secured it.

18–20. “Flee fornication... ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Sexual immorality uniquely violates the believer's own body, the "temple of the Holy Ghost." The indwelling Spirit marks ownership and eternal security. "Bought with a price" refers to redemption through Christ's blood — a completed transaction. Because believers belong to God, they are called to glorify Him with both body and spirit.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Adikoi (Gk., v.9): "unrighteous," those outside the faith; contrast to justified believers.

Kleronomēsousin (Gk., v.9): "inherit," refers to reward and participation, not salvation itself.

Apelousasthe (Gk., v.11): "ye are washed," completed cleansing by God's action.

Hēgiasthēte (Gk., v.11): "ye are sanctified," set apart permanently unto God.

Edikaiōthēte (Gk., v.11): "ye are justified," declared righteous — once for all.

Naos (Gk., v.19): "temple," inner sanctuary of the Spirit's indwelling.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 6 contrasts positional security with practical holiness. The believer's salvation cannot be lost, but fellowship and testimony can be damaged by sin. Discipline, not damnation, is the consequence of rebellion. The Spirit's indwelling guarantees eternal ownership; therefore, the body must reflect spiritual reality. Grace grants both freedom and responsibility — liberty to serve, not sin.

Free Grace Summary

Salvation is permanent, even when believers act carnally.

Lawsuits and immorality destroy fellowship but not eternal life.

Inheritance in the kingdom concerns reward, not entry.

Believers are already washed, sanctified, and justified — complete in Christ.

The indwelling Spirit assures eternal security and divine ownership.

1 Corinthians 6 teaches that while grace cannot be revoked, it calls believers to purity and accountability — not for salvation, but in gratitude for redemption already secured.

1 Corinthians 7 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 7 addresses questions about marriage, singleness, and personal calling within the Christian life. The Corinthian believers were struggling to balance their new spiritual identity with social and marital responsibilities. Paul provides practical instruction rooted in grace — affirming that one's marital status does not affect spiritual standing. The emphasis is on contentment, fidelity, and devotion to the Lord. The chapter also reveals Paul's pastoral concern for believers living amid persecution and moral confusion. Eternal security underlies every command; service and peace, not fear or guilt, are the goal.

1–2. “Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.”

Paul answers specific questions from the Corinthians. In a context of rampant immorality, he advises that marriage is honorable and protective: “Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife.” The phrase “not to touch a woman” is a euphemism for sexual relations. Celibacy is permissible, but not holier — marriage remains God's design for purity.

3–5. “Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence...”

Paul instructs mutual love and sexual responsibility within marriage. Neither partner has authority over their own body — a principle of equality, not dominance. Temporary abstinence for prayer is acceptable but should end “that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.” Grace governs the marital relationship through mutual care, not legalistic duty.

6–9. “But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.”

Paul distinguishes divine principle from personal advice under inspiration. Singleness is advantageous for undistracted service but not a command. “If they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.” Marriage is a legitimate provision for passion, not a spiritual failure.

10–11. “Let not the wife depart from her husband...”

Here Paul restates Jesus’ teaching (cf. Matt. 19:6). Divorce among believers is forbidden, though separation may occur temporarily. “Let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled.” Restoration is the desired outcome.

12–16. “If any brother hath a wife that believeth not...”

Mixed marriages were common in Corinth. If the unbelieving spouse consents to live with the believer, they should remain together. The believing partner sanctifies the household — not in the sense of salvation, but of influence and blessing. If the unbeliever departs, “a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases.” God has called believers to peace, not forced bondage. Salvation is personal; peace governs relationships.

17–24. “As God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk.”

Paul teaches contentment in one’s calling — whether circumcised, uncircumcised, slave, or free. Salvation does not erase social conditions but transforms perspective. “Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.” Grace liberates the heart from worldly enslavement while maintaining faithfulness in life’s circumstances.

25–31. “Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord...”

Paul advises that in light of “the present distress” (likely persecution or famine), remaining single could spare additional burdens. Yet this is counsel, not command. “The time is short” emphasizes living with eternal priorities, not ascetic withdrawal. Believers are to hold earthly things lightly, focusing on the imperishable.

32–35. “He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord...”

Singleness provides freedom for undivided devotion. Marriage, while honorable, brings worldly concerns and divided attention. Paul’s motive is not restriction but “that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.” Both states are gifts from God, suited to one’s calling.

36–40. “If any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin...”

Paul allows for marriage if desired; “he sinneth not.” Remaining single is also acceptable. The key principle: follow conviction guided by peace. “The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will — only in the Lord.” The widow’s remarriage must be to a believer, ensuring unity in faith.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Haptomai (Gk., v.1): “to touch,” a euphemism for sexual union.

Suneidēsis (Gk., implied v.25): “conscience,” inner moral awareness guiding decisions.

Douloō (Gk., v.15): “to enslave,” showing believers are not bound in mixed marriages if deserted.

Klesis (Gk., v.17): “calling,” vocation or condition in life.

Eirēnē (Gk., v.15): “peace,” God’s principle for relational harmony.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 7 teaches grace-oriented living in all relational states. Neither marriage nor singleness enhances or diminishes spiritual standing. Salvation is secure regardless of status. God calls believers to faithfulness, contentment, and peace. The believer's identity in Christ supersedes all temporal conditions. The gospel sanctifies ordinary life, reminding us that holiness arises from grace, not circumstance.

Free Grace Summary

Salvation is unaffected by marital or social status.

Church discipline and marriage counsel rest on peace and grace, not law.

Separation may occur, but salvation remains intact.

The believer's calling is to contentment and devotion within any condition.

Marriage and singleness are both gifts from God, neither earning nor forfeiting favor.

1 Corinthians 7 underscores that eternal life is secure in Christ, while sanctification shapes how believers live out their earthly callings in gratitude, not obligation.

1 Corinthians 8 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 8 addresses the issue of eating food offered to idols — a pressing question in Corinth's pagan culture. Paul distinguishes between knowledge and love: knowledge alone can produce pride, but love builds up. While believers know idols have no real power, they must consider the consciences of weaker brethren. The central theme is liberty governed by love — exercising freedom responsibly for the sake of others. Eternal salvation remains unthreatened; the warning concerns fellowship and testimony, not justification.

1–3. “Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge...”

Paul acknowledges their theological understanding: idols are nothing. Yet knowledge without love leads to arrogance. “Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.” The verb *oikodomei* (Gk.) means “builds up.” True maturity balances truth with compassion. “If any man love God, the same is known of him” — love, not mere intellect, evidences fellowship with God.

4–6. “We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.”

The believer’s knowledge of monotheism is correct — “to us there is but one God, the Father... and one Lord Jesus Christ.” Idols represent false systems, not real deities. However, not all believers grasp this equally. Some still feel internal conflict when eating food linked to idol worship, due to their past. Grace accommodates weakness through patience, not superiority.

7. “Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge...”

Some believers, though saved, retain sensitive consciences shaped by former idolatry. Eating such food “defiled” their conscience — not because the food had power, but because they believed it did. Paul warns that wounding another’s conscience violates the law of love.

8. “But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.”

Food is morally neutral. Eating or abstaining has no bearing on salvation or standing before God. The believer’s relationship to God rests entirely on Christ’s finished work, not external observances. This verse reinforces Free Grace truth: spiritual position never fluctuates with behavior, though fellowship and testimony can.

9–11. “But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock...”

Liberty must be governed by love. A strong believer who exercises freedom publicly might embolden a weaker believer to act against conscience, thereby sinning. “Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?” “Perish” (apollytai, Gk.) here refers to ruin or loss of spiritual growth — not eternal destruction. Christ’s death secured the believer’s soul eternally; sin damages fellowship, not salvation.

12. “But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.”

To harm another believer spiritually is to grieve Christ Himself. This highlights the unity of the body and the seriousness of influencing others toward sin. Accountability within grace means using liberty to serve others, not self.

13. “Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth...”

Paul models sacrificial love. Voluntary restraint becomes a ministry of grace. True freedom allows one to forego rights for another’s good. Spiritual maturity expresses itself not in what one may do, but in what one willingly surrenders out of love.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Eidōlothuton (Gk., v.1): “things offered to idols,” food associated with pagan sacrifice.

Oikodomei (Gk., v.1): “builds up,” edifies through love.

Suneidēsis (Gk., v.7): “conscience,” inner awareness of right and wrong.

Apollytai (Gk., v.11): “perish,” meaning to suffer loss or ruin, not eternal damnation.

Skandalon (Gk., implied v.9): “stumblingblock,” something that causes another to fall spiritually.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 8 illustrates the law of liberty under grace. Knowledge must be guided by love to avoid damaging weaker believers. Christian maturity is measured by self-restraint, not self-assertion. Salvation remains unaffected by actions, but relationships and rewards can suffer. The believer's secure standing provides the freedom to serve sacrificially, ensuring that liberty never becomes a tool of harm.

Free Grace Summary

Salvation is never jeopardized by external acts like eating or abstaining.

Knowledge without love breeds pride; love preserves unity.

"Perish" in verse 11 refers to fellowship loss, not eternal death.

Liberty under grace includes responsibility toward weaker believers.

The mature believer limits freedom out of love, not fear.

1 Corinthians 8 teaches that true strength in grace is expressed through restraint for others' good — secure salvation serving humble love.

1 Corinthians 9 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 9 defends Paul's apostolic authority and his voluntary surrender of rights for the sake of the gospel. He uses himself as a living example of freedom exercised under grace — choosing self-denial, not compulsion. Paul's primary concern is to advance the gospel without hindrance and to gain eternal reward, not salvation, which is already secure. The chapter climaxes with an athletic metaphor emphasizing discipline in service, not conditions for salvation.

1–2. "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?"

Paul establishes his credentials. His encounter with the risen Christ (Acts 9:3–6) validated his apostleship. The Corinthians themselves were “the seal” of his ministry — living proof of his divine calling. Apostolic legitimacy rests on divine commissioning, not human recognition.

3–6. “Have we not power to eat and to drink? ... to lead about a sister, a wife?”

Paul asserts his right to sustenance and companionship, rights shared by other apostles and the Lord’s brothers. Yet he renounced these privileges for gospel effectiveness. Grace gives liberty but empowers restraint for love’s sake.

7–12. “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?”

Paul argues from common sense — soldiers, farmers, and shepherds are sustained by their work. The same principle applies to ministers of the gospel. Quoting Deuteronomy 25:4 (“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox...”), he teaches that laborers deserve support. Still, Paul declined Corinthian compensation “lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.” His priority was influence, not income.

13–14. “Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple?”

Old Testament priests lived from the offerings they handled. Likewise, “the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” Paul acknowledges this right yet chooses to waive it voluntarily. His reward lies not in receiving but in serving freely.

15–18. “I have used none of these things...”

Paul’s joy came from preaching “without charge.” He would “rather die” than lose the satisfaction of serving the Lord unencumbered. “Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” Preaching is not a meritorious act for salvation but a stewardship of gratitude and love.

19–23. “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all...”

Paul adapts culturally, not doctrinally. “To the Jews I became as a Jew... to them that are without law, as without law.” His flexibility served evangelism, not compromise. His aim: “that I might by all means save some.” The phrase “save” here refers to bringing others into experiential salvation — deliverance from sin’s power and darkness — not earning his own salvation.

24–27. “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize?”

Paul shifts to athletic imagery familiar in Corinth, home of the Isthmian Games. Believers are exhorted to “run that ye may obtain” — not eternal life (a gift), but reward (brabeion, Gk.), given for faithful service. “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.” Discipline yields reward; negligence forfeits it. Verse 27 clarifies: “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest... I myself should be a castaway.” Adokimos (Gk.) means “disapproved,” not damned. Paul feared losing reward and usefulness, not salvation.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Exousia (Gk., v.4): “right, authority,” referring to legitimate apostolic privileges.

Kērussō (Gk., v.16): “to proclaim, herald publicly,” describing Paul’s gospel mission.

Doulos (Gk., v.19): “servant,” one who willingly subjects himself for others’ good.

Brabeion (Gk., v.24): “prize,” reward for victorious completion, not eternal life.

Adokimos (Gk., v.27): “disapproved,” unfit for reward or service, not loss of salvation.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 9 demonstrates how grace motivates service. Paul's renunciation of rights shows maturity, not legalism. Rewards are earned through faithful labor; salvation remains a gift. The "race" and "prize" imagery points to accountability at the Bēma — the believer's judgment for reward, not condemnation. The disciplined life stems from gratitude for grace, not fear of losing it.

Free Grace Summary

Paul's apostleship and freedom were gifts of grace, not merit.

Rights may be surrendered voluntarily for the sake of ministry.

"Save some" refers to delivering others, not self-justification.

Eternal life is a gift; rewards are earned by faithfulness.

"Castaway" means disapproved for service, not damned eternally.

1 Corinthians 9 affirms that true Christian discipline flows from assurance, not anxiety — from a secure position, believers strive for eternal reward, not salvation itself.

1 Corinthians 10 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 10 continues Paul's warning against presumption and idolatry, using Israel's wilderness experience as a moral example for believers. Though all Israelites shared in God's blessings, many suffered judgment due to unbelief and disobedience. Paul applies these lessons not as threats to salvation, but as warnings against temporal discipline and loss of reward. The chapter closes with exhortations to flee idolatry, exercise liberty with sensitivity, and glorify God in all things. Eternal security under grace remains intact throughout — the danger is not damnation, but divine correction.

1–5. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant..."

Paul recounts Israel's privileges: under the cloud (divine guidance), through the sea (deliverance), "baptized unto Moses" (identification with leadership), and fed with spiritual food and drink (divine provision). Yet "with many of them God was not well pleased." Their failure brought temporal judgment, not loss of covenantal relationship. The imagery warns believers that privilege does not equal faithfulness.

6–10. "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things..."

The Greek *tupoi* ("examples") means types or patterns. Israel's rebellion against God's goodness illustrates the danger of idolatry, immorality, and complaint. The incidents cited (golden calf, fornication, serpent plague, murmuring) show that sin brings divine chastisement. Paul's audience — saved believers — faced similar risk of temporal discipline, not eternal condemnation.

11–13. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples... upon whom the ends of the world are come."

These lessons apply to the church age. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Overconfidence leads to failure, but verse 13 offers assurance: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." The Greek *peirasmos* means trial or testing. God always provides "a way to escape," ensuring believers can endure without falling into permanent ruin. This confirms divine preservation amid human weakness.

14–17. "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry."

Paul appeals to reason and love. Believers share "the cup of blessing" and "the bread which we break" — symbols of fellowship with Christ. The Lord's Supper signifies unity in His body and participation in His sacrifice, not re-sacrifice. Therefore, mixing Christian fellowship with pagan rituals is inconsistent with grace.

18–22. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils..."

Paul reminds believers that idol feasts involve demonic influence. To partake symbolically aligns one with false worship. God is “a jealous God” — a term reflecting covenantal loyalty. The warning concerns divine discipline and forfeited fellowship, not loss of salvation. Grace excludes idolatrous compromise while preserving relationship.

23–24. “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient...”

Paul repeats the liberty principle: though believers are free, not all actions are beneficial. Christian maturity seeks others’ welfare over personal preference. Liberty must yield to love.

25–30. “Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat...”

Believers need not question market food origins. “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.” However, if someone identifies the food as idol-offered, abstain for conscience’s sake — not one’s own, but the other’s. Grace adapts to edify others, not to please self.

31–33. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

This governing principle summarizes Christian ethics under grace. Actions should honor God and avoid offense to Jews, Gentiles, or the church. Paul himself sought “not mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.” His aim was gospel influence, not self-interest.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Tupoi (Gk., v.6): “examples, patterns,” moral illustrations for believers.

Peirasmos (Gk., v.13): “testing or temptation,” contextually referring to trials believers can endure.

Ekbasis (Gk., v.13): “way of escape,” the means God provides to endure temptation.

Koinōnia (Gk., v.16): “fellowship,” participation or sharing in Christ’s benefits.

Zēloō (Gk., v.22): “to provoke to jealousy,” used metaphorically of God’s covenantal zeal.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 10 demonstrates that God’s faithfulness secures the believer, even amid failure. Discipline, not damnation, awaits disobedience. Israel’s experience typifies temporal loss for covenantal infidelity, not eternal ruin. Grace establishes both privilege and responsibility. Believers are called to glorify God in every action — not to secure salvation, but because salvation is already secured.

Free Grace Summary

Israel’s failures illustrate divine discipline, not loss of relationship.

God’s faithfulness guarantees the believer’s preservation through temptation.

Liberty must be guided by love and conscience toward others.

Participation with idolatry disrupts fellowship, not salvation.

The believer’s purpose is to glorify God in all things, resting in eternal security.

1 Corinthians 10 affirms that grace both sustains and sanctifies — salvation remains secure, but service and reward depend on faithful obedience.

1 Corinthians 11 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 11 addresses two key issues within the Corinthian church: headship and order in worship, and the proper observance of the Lord’s Supper. Paul corrects confusion about gender distinction, authority, and reverence in communal gatherings. He emphasizes that outward order

reflects inward respect for God's design, and that participation in the Lord's Table must be marked by self-examination and unity. Eternal salvation remains secure; however, irreverence may lead to temporal discipline. This chapter teaches spiritual accountability within the framework of grace.

1–3. “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

Paul begins with a call to imitation rooted in Christ-centered humility. “The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” The structure reflects divine order, not inequality. Christ's submission to the Father models voluntary cooperation, not inferiority.

4–6. “Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head...”

In Corinthian culture, head coverings symbolized authority and modesty. Men uncovered their heads to honor Christ directly, while women covered theirs to reflect submission and propriety. The principle transcends culture — it upholds order, respect, and clear distinction in worship.

7–10. “For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God...”

Man represents God's authority; woman represents man's glory in partnership. This hierarchy expresses divine design, not dominance. “For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.” Angels observe worship and learn of God's wisdom through the church (Eph. 3:10). Proper conduct thus honors heavenly witnesses.

11–12. “Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.”

Paul balances authority with equality. Both genders depend on each other in creation and redemption. “In the Lord” levels all hierarchy in spiritual value, while maintaining divine roles in order and function.

13–16. “Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?”

Paul appeals to reason and social propriety. Natural distinctions (such as hair length) reflect God’s design for gender differentiation. “If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom.” The church’s practice must be governed by peace, not dispute.

17–22. “Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not...”

Paul turns to rebuke their divisions during the Lord’s Supper. Wealthier members feasted while the poor were neglected, corrupting the sacred meal into social elitism. “Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?” Their selfishness profaned communion’s spiritual meaning. Grace demands unity, not partiality.

23–26. “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you...”

Paul recounts the institution of the Lord’s Supper directly from Christ’s revelation. The bread represents His body “which is broken for you”; the cup represents “the new testament in my blood.” “As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.” Communion looks backward to the cross and forward to His return. It is a memorial, not a re-sacrifice.

27–29. “Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup unworthily...”

“Unworthily” (anaxiōs, Gk.) refers to the manner, not the person. Believers are always unworthy in themselves but must partake with reverence and self-examination. Failure to discern the body — meaning disregard for Christ’s sacrifice and the unity of the church — invites divine discipline.

30–32. “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”

God's temporal judgment had already fallen on the Corinthian believers through illness and even death. "Sleep" signifies physical death, not eternal loss. Verse 32 clarifies: "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." Divine discipline protects believers from condemnation — clear evidence of eternal security.

33–34. "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another."

Paul concludes by urging mutual consideration and reverence. The Lord's Supper should reflect unity, gratitude, and humility — a fellowship of grace, not a feast of division.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Kephalē (Gk., v.3): "head," denoting authority or source.

Anaxiōs (Gk., v.27): "unworthily," improperly or irreverently.

Diakrinōn (Gk., v.29): "discerning," distinguishing rightly between sacred and common.

Koimōntai (Gk., v.30): "sleep," a euphemism for physical death.

Paideuometha (Gk., v.32): "chastened," disciplined as sons, not condemned as sinners.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 11 teaches divine order in worship and reverent participation in the Lord's Table. The believer's eternal salvation is not in question; rather, conduct within the assembly reflects gratitude for grace. God disciplines His children to correct, not to condemn. The Lord's Supper reminds believers of substitutionary atonement and the unity of the body — an act of worship rooted in remembrance, not ritualism.

Free Grace Summary

Headship reflects divine order, not inequality.

The Lord's Supper commemorates Christ's finished work — it does not reapply it.

"Unworthy" participation brings temporal discipline, not loss of salvation.

God chastens His children to preserve fellowship, not to condemn eternally.

Salvation is secure even under discipline; grace governs restoration.

1 Corinthians 11 reveals that reverence, unity, and gratitude are the proper responses of those who are already secure in Christ's saving grace.

1 Corinthians 12 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 12 introduces Paul's extended teaching on spiritual gifts, diversity, and unity within the body of Christ. The Corinthian believers, once steeped in paganism, misunderstood the Spirit's work and equated emotional experiences with spirituality. Paul clarifies that true spiritual life originates from the confession "Jesus is Lord" and manifests through gifts distributed by the Holy Spirit for the common good. This chapter underscores that all believers, though different in function, are united by one Spirit into one body — eternally secure members of Christ Himself.

1–3. "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant."

Before conversion, the Corinthians were "carried away unto dumb idols." Now, genuine spirituality is identified by confession, not experience: "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." The phrase refers to sincere acknowledgment of Christ's deity, not a formulaic utterance. The Spirit glorifies Christ, never self.

4–6. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."

Gifts differ, but all originate from the triune God — the Spirit gives gifts, the Lord (Christ) assigns service, and God the Father empowers their operation. Unity in source guarantees equality of value. Spiritual gifts are not marks of rank but tools for edification.

7. “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.”

Every believer possesses a spiritual gift for the benefit of the entire body. Grace equips all, excluding pride and partiality. The gifts serve others, not self-promotion.

8–10. “For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge...”

Paul lists nine representative gifts — including wisdom, knowledge, faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. These operated uniquely in the apostolic era to authenticate the gospel’s foundation. Their diversity demonstrates the Spirit’s sovereign distribution.

11. “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

The Spirit alone determines the distribution of gifts — not human merit or desire. His sovereignty ensures both harmony and variety. The phrase “as he will” affirms divine control and refutes any notion of earned spiritual status.

12–13. “For as the body is one, and hath many members... so also is Christ.”

Paul likens the church to a human body. Each believer, regardless of background, is essential. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.” Ebaptisthēmen (Gk.) refers to Spirit baptism at conversion — a once-for-all act placing believers permanently into union with Christ. “And have been all made to drink into one Spirit” signifies ongoing participation in that unity.

14–20. “For the body is not one member, but many...”

No believer is insignificant. The foot cannot despise the hand, nor the ear the eye. Diversity of function enhances unity of purpose. God “set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.” Divine design governs placement and purpose.

21–26. “And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee...”

Mutual dependence sustains the church. The “weaker” members are indispensable; those less visible deserve special honor. When one member suffers, all suffer; when one is honored, all rejoice. Spiritual maturity values the unseen acts of service that sustain the whole.

27–31. “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

Paul identifies believers corporately as Christ’s body — not metaphorically, but spiritually united. God appointed various roles: apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, healers, helpers, and administrators. The rhetorical questions (“Are all apostles? are all prophets?”) imply “no.” Verse 31 exhorts, “Covet earnestly the best gifts,” meaning those most useful for edification, soon defined as love in the next chapter.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Pneumatikōn (Gk., v.1): “spirituals” or “spiritual gifts,” emphasizing their supernatural source.

Charismata (Gk., v.4): “gifts of grace,” freely bestowed spiritual endowments.

Ebaptisthēmen (Gk., v.13): “we were baptized,” aorist passive — one-time act by the Spirit at salvation.

Sympaschō (Gk., v.26): “to suffer with,” expressing shared participation in others’ trials.

Kalos (Gk., v.31): “best” or “greater,” referring to the most beneficial gifts for building others up.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 12 reveals that unity in the body of Christ is spiritual, not organizational. Believers are permanently joined to Christ through Spirit baptism at conversion. No member can lose this position; discipline may occur, but not disconnection. Grace establishes both diversity and equality, making every believer vital. The Spirit's sovereign gifting upholds both individuality and harmony.

Free Grace Summary

Spirit baptism at conversion permanently places believers in Christ's body.

Every believer receives at least one gift of grace for service.

Spiritual gifts differ, but all share the same divine source.

Unity does not eliminate diversity — both are by design.

Inferiority and pride are excluded by grace's equalizing power.

1 Corinthians 12 confirms that salvation and Spirit-indwelling are universal among believers — eternal security in Christ is the foundation for all service within His body.

1 Corinthians 13 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 13 is the great “love chapter” — the heart of Paul's discussion on spiritual gifts. After addressing diversity and service in chapter 12, and before discussing order in chapter 14, Paul reveals the supreme motive and measure of all Christian conduct: love (agapē, Gk.). Love is not a gift but the divine attitude empowering all gifts. Without it, even the greatest service amounts to nothing. This chapter teaches that love transcends temporal gifts, reflects the character of Christ, and endures eternally. It affirms that salvation is secure; love is not a condition of justification but a fruit of fellowship with God.

1–3. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass...”

Paul uses hyperbole to illustrate that eloquence, prophecy, knowledge, and sacrifice are meaningless apart from love. The word *agapē* (Gk.) denotes self-giving, unconditional love — divine in source and motive. “Though I give my body to be burned” shows that even martyrdom without love is empty. Grace empowers love; works without grace are hollow.

4–7. “Charity suffereth long, and is kind...”

Here Paul defines love through fifteen verbs of action, not emotion. Love is patient (*makrothumei*), kind (*chrēsteuetai*), humble, forgiving, and enduring. It “seeketh not her own” — meaning it renounces self-interest. “Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things” expresses trust in God’s goodness toward others. This love is not humanly produced; it flows from the Spirit’s control (Gal. 5:22).

8–10. “Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail...”

Love is eternal; spiritual gifts are temporary. Prophecy, tongues, and knowledge served foundational purposes in the early church but would cease when “that which is perfect is come.” The “perfect” (*teleion*, Gk.) refers to mature completion — likely the full revelation of God’s Word and the maturity of the church age. When spiritual infancy ended, miraculous sign gifts waned, but love endured.

11–12. “When I was a child, I spake as a child...”

Paul likens the church’s growth to personal maturation. Temporary gifts belonged to infancy; full understanding will come in glorification. “Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face” anticipates perfect clarity in eternity — not new revelation now, but full knowledge when believers are with Christ. Salvation secures this destiny; nothing can separate the believer from God’s love (Rom. 8:38–39).

13. “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

Faith trusts God’s promises; hope anticipates fulfillment; love expresses God’s nature. Love is “the greatest” because it will never cease — it is eternal, like God Himself. In eternity, faith becomes sight and hope fulfilled, but love remains forever.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Agapē (Gk., v.1): “charity, divine love,” selfless, volitional, enduring concern for others.

Makrothumei (Gk., v.4): “suffers long,” patient endurance toward others’ faults.

Chrēsteuetai (Gk., v.4): “is kind,” active goodness expressed through grace.

Teleion (Gk., v.10): “perfect, complete, mature,” referring to fullness of God’s revelation and purpose.

Katargēthēsontai (Gk., v.8): “shall cease, be rendered inoperative,” describing temporary sign gifts.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 13 teaches that love surpasses all spiritual gifts in value and permanence. Love fulfills the spirit of the law and embodies Christ’s life in believers. While gifts function for service, love defines character. Eternal security ensures that believers can love freely without fear of rejection. The enduring nature of agapē mirrors God’s own unchanging faithfulness — grace expressed through action.

Free Grace Summary

Love is the divine motive behind all service, not a means to salvation.

Without love, gifts and sacrifice lose eternal value.

Love outlasts all spiritual manifestations; it is eternal.

“That which is perfect” refers to maturity and completion, not new salvation conditions.

Faith and hope serve for time; love endures for eternity.

1 Corinthians 13 reveals that grace expresses itself through agapē — the eternal bond uniting all believers to Christ and to one another, grounded in unchanging security.

1 Corinthians 14 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 14 completes Paul’s three-chapter discourse on spiritual gifts by emphasizing their proper use within public worship. He contrasts prophecy, which edifies the church, with tongues, which edifies only the speaker unless interpreted. The overarching principle is edification, order, and intelligibility in the assembly. Love governs all exercise of gifts. Paul insists that confusion dishonors God and that worship must reflect both truth and clarity. This chapter safeguards grace-based worship from self-centered display, showing that spirituality is measured by edification, not emotion.

1–5. “Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.”

Paul urges believers to pursue agapē (divine love) as the motive for using gifts. Prophecy — speaking truth in understandable language — surpasses uninterpreted tongues because it builds up others. Tongues without interpretation benefit only the speaker. True spirituality seeks others’ growth, not self-exaltation.

6–9. “Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you...?”

Paul reasons that communication without clarity has no value. He uses illustrations from music and speech: instruments and languages must be intelligible to edify. Spiritual experiences void

of understanding contribute nothing to the congregation. The aim is comprehension — faith built through the Word.

10–12. “There are... so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.”

Every language carries meaning, but meaning must be understood to edify. Believers should “seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.” Spiritual maturity measures service by usefulness, not excitement.

13–19. “Let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.”

Prayer and worship require the mind’s engagement. Paul prefers five words of clear instruction over ten thousand in an unknown tongue. Emotional enthusiasm without understanding misrepresents the Spirit’s purpose. Grace values clarity over spectacle.

20–25. “Brethren, be not children in understanding...”

Paul appeals for maturity. Tongues served as a sign to unbelieving Israel (Isa. 28:11–12), confirming judgment for their unbelief. Prophecy, by contrast, instructs believers and convicts unbelievers who hear God’s Word. Conviction through truth, not confusion, leads to worship.

26–33. “Let all things be done unto edifying.”

Worship gatherings must promote learning and encouragement. Multiple speakers were to take turns, with interpretation for tongues. “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.” Disorder contradicts His character. The Spirit never leads believers to act chaotically.

34–35. “Let your women keep silence in the churches...”

This instruction concerns public order, not inferiority. In Corinth's culture, disruptive questioning and conversation during service reflected disorder. Paul reinforces peace and propriety, not restriction of godly participation elsewhere (cf. 1 Cor. 11:5). The principle: worship should remain reverent and free of confusion.

36–40. “What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?”

Paul rebukes spiritual pride. Prophetic authority rests on divine revelation, not local innovation. “Let all things be done decently and in order.” *Euschemonōs* (Gk.) means gracefully or fittingly. Spirit-led worship is orderly, intelligible, and edifying — reflecting God's nature, not human excitement.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Agapē (Gk., v.1): “divine love,” the supreme motive for service.

Oikodomē (Gk., v.3): “edification,” the building up of others in faith.

Glōssa (Gk., v.2): “tongue or language,” a known human language in context.

Sēmeion (Gk., v.22): “sign,” confirming divine truth to unbelievers.

Euschemonōs (Gk., v.40): “decently, fittingly,” denoting dignified orderliness.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 14 demonstrates that genuine spirituality prioritizes clarity, order, and edification. The Spirit never bypasses understanding. Spiritual gifts exist to serve the body, not to elevate individuals. Emotional or chaotic practices distort grace's purpose. Prophecy — clear proclamation of truth — remains central, while tongues, as a temporary sign gift, faded with the apostolic foundation. God's peace defines Spirit-filled worship.

Free Grace Summary

Love governs all exercise of spiritual gifts.

Edification, not emotion, defines true spirituality.

Tongues were a temporary sign to unbelieving Israel.

God's Spirit produces order, not confusion.

Public worship must reflect clarity and grace.

1 Corinthians 14 affirms that salvation is secure, and service under grace operates in peace, understanding, and self-control — evidencing maturity, not merit.

1 Corinthians 15 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 15 is the resurrection chapter — the theological climax of Paul's letter. Here he defends the bodily resurrection of Christ as the cornerstone of the gospel and the guarantee of believers' future resurrection. The chapter divides into three themes: (1) the resurrection as essential to the gospel, (2) Christ's resurrection as the pattern and proof of ours, and (3) the transformation of the mortal into the immortal. This doctrine secures eternal assurance: if Christ rose, believers are forever united with Him, death defeated, and eternal life guaranteed.

1–4. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel..."

Paul summarizes the saving message he preached: "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day." These historical facts constitute the gospel of grace — the means by which believers are "saved" (sōzesthe, Gk.) through faith alone. Resurrection is central, for a dead savior could not provide eternal life.

5–8. “He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve...”

Paul lists post-resurrection witnesses: Peter, the apostles, over five hundred brethren, James, and finally Paul himself — the “least of the apostles.” These appearances confirm the reality of the resurrection. Christianity rests on eyewitness evidence, not mysticism. Paul’s own transformation from persecutor to preacher illustrates grace’s power.

9–11. “By the grace of God I am what I am...”

Paul attributes his apostleship entirely to grace. “His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain.” Salvation and service alike arise from divine enablement, not merit. Eternal security flows from God’s faithfulness, not human worthiness.

12–19. “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection...?”

Paul confronts those denying bodily resurrection. If there is no resurrection, “then is Christ not risen,” and faith is futile. Believers would remain in sin, and the dead in Christ would have perished. The logic is devastating — without resurrection, the gospel collapses. But since Christ is risen, eternal life is assured.

20–23. “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.”

“Firstfruits” (aparchē, Gk.) indicates the first of a harvest, guaranteeing the rest. Christ’s resurrection ensures that all believers will follow. “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Union with Christ secures bodily resurrection — not conditional on performance but on position in Him.

24–28. “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God...”

Christ's mediatorial reign will culminate in the final subjection of all things to the Father. Death, "the last enemy," will be destroyed. The Son's submission in verse 28 signifies functional order, not inferiority. The triune plan reaches completion when creation is fully restored.

29–34. "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead...?"

The phrase "baptized for the dead" (hyper tōn nekrōn, Gk.) refers to believers publicly identifying with Christ's death and resurrection despite persecution. Their willingness to risk death for faith proves their assurance of resurrection. Paul's hardships make no sense if the dead do not rise. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." Doctrine influences conduct; resurrection truth produces steadfastness.

35–41. "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up?"

Paul uses nature's analogy: a seed must die before life springs forth. God gives each body its own form. Just as celestial and terrestrial bodies differ in glory, so resurrected bodies will differ from earthly ones. Transformation, not mere resuscitation, is in view.

42–44. "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption..."

Four contrasts describe resurrection: corruption/incorruption, dishonor/glory, weakness/power, natural/spiritual. "Spiritual body" means a body transformed and perfected by the Spirit — tangible, immortal, and glorified.

45–49. "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."

Adam's nature brought death; Christ's brings life. The "heavenly image" replaces the earthly. Believers bear Adam's likeness now, but will bear Christ's likeness in resurrection — the full realization of salvation.

50–53. “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God...”

Corruption cannot inherit incorruption. The “mystery” revealed: not all believers will die, but all will be changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” This transformation occurs at the rapture (1 Thess. 4:16–17). Mortal bodies will become immortal — the completion of redemption.

54–57. “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

Paul triumphantly declares, “O death, where is thy sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law — both conquered through Christ. “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The verb *didousin* (Gk.) is present — continually giving. Eternal victory is ongoing, secured by grace.

58. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord...”

Assurance of resurrection motivates steadfast service. Labor for Christ “is not in vain in the Lord.” The believer’s work will be rewarded, not for salvation but because of it.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Sōzesthe (Gk., v.2): “ye are saved,” present passive — continuous effect of a completed faith.

Aparchē (Gk., v.20): “firstfruits,” guarantee of later resurrection.

Hyper tōn nekrōn (Gk., v.29): “for the dead,” signifying identification with resurrection hope.

Allagēsometha (Gk., v.51): “we shall be changed,” divine transformation, not human effort.

Didousin (Gk., v.57): “giveth,” ongoing provision of victory.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 15 is the cornerstone of Christian assurance. The resurrection confirms that salvation is eternal, the body will be redeemed, and death itself defeated. Grace secures both justification and glorification. The believer's confidence rests not in endurance but in the risen Christ. Because He lives, every believer's destiny is sealed in victory.

Free Grace Summary

The gospel centers on Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

Resurrection guarantees eternal security — sin and death are conquered.

Spirit baptism unites believers permanently with Christ's risen life.

Service flows from assurance, not fear of loss.

Death holds no threat to the believer; immortality is certain.

1 Corinthians 15 proclaims the unbreakable link between Christ's resurrection and the believer's — eternal life guaranteed by grace, crowned in victory.

1 Corinthians 16 – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

1 Corinthians 16 concludes Paul's letter with practical instructions for giving, travel plans, commendations, and final exhortations. After expounding theology and addressing discipline, Paul ends with grace-centered fellowship and generosity. The chapter balances doctrine with daily duty — demonstrating that spiritual maturity expresses itself through stewardship, faithfulness, and love. Paul's closing words affirm unity, encouragement, and steadfastness in Christ, all grounded in the believer's secure salvation.

1–2. “Now concerning the collection for the saints...”

Paul refers to a special offering for impoverished believers in Jerusalem. “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store.” This instruction sets a pattern for systematic, cheerful giving — not compulsion. Grace, not law, governs Christian generosity. The collection reflects gratitude for salvation already received.

3–4. “And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.”

Paul emphasizes transparency and integrity in financial stewardship. Delegated representatives would carry the funds, ensuring accountability. Giving is an act of worship that transcends culture and time — an expression of grace from believer to believer.

5–9. “Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia...”

Paul shares his travel plans, showing flexibility under divine guidance. “I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.” Ministry opportunity and opposition coexist — evidence that spiritual labor is worthwhile. Grace sustains the servant amid trials.

10–12. “Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear...”

Timothy, a young coworker, required patient reception. “For he worketh the work of the Lord.” Paul models mentorship in grace — protecting younger leaders from undue criticism. Apollos, too, is mentioned with brotherly affection, illustrating unity among diverse ministers.

13–14. “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity.”

These imperatives summarize mature Christian conduct. “Watch” (grēgoreite, Gk.) calls for spiritual alertness; “stand fast” (stēkete, Gk.) urges perseverance in doctrine; “quit you like men” (andrizeste, Gk.) exhorts courageous maturity. Verse 14 perfects the balance — “let all your things be done with love.” Grace produces both firmness and tenderness.

15–18. “Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia...”

Stephanas and his household exemplified service through devotion to ministry. Paul urges respect for such laborers. Recognition of faithful service honors God’s work in them. “Refresh my spirit and yours” — fellowship replenishes believers spiritually. Grace thrives in gratitude and mutual encouragement.

19–21. “The churches of Asia salute you...”

Paul sends greetings from Aquila and Priscilla, hosts of a house church. Their steadfast service demonstrates the power of lay ministry. The “holy kiss” symbolizes pure, familial affection among believers. Early Christian unity transcended social and cultural divides through shared grace.

22. “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.”

This solemn phrase combines judgment and hope. Anathema (Gk.) means “set apart for discipline,” not eternal damnation. It likely refers to severe temporal judgment on believers lacking devotion. Maranatha (Aram.) means “Our Lord comes.” The statement warns careless believers of Christ’s imminent return while reaffirming His faithfulness. Eternal life is never revoked; discipline prepares believers for His coming.

23–24. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.”

Paul closes with grace and affection. Every correction throughout the epistle has flowed from love. The final benediction centers on Christ's grace — the beginning, sustainer, and end of the Christian life.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Grēgoreite (Gk., v.13): "watch," stay spiritually alert.

Stēkete (Gk., v.13): "stand fast," remain grounded in truth.

Andrizesthe (Gk., v.13): "act courageously," behave with mature strength.

Anathema (Gk., v.22): "set apart for judgment," temporal discipline, not loss of salvation.

Maranatha (Aram., v.22): "Our Lord comes," an expression of imminent expectation.

Doctrinal Insight

1 Corinthians 16 demonstrates that grace governs practical life — from giving and planning to relationships and endurance. Stewardship, service, and love are fruits of gratitude, not means of acceptance. God's discipline and Christ's return motivate holy living, not out of fear, but devotion. The believer's security enables faithful labor, knowing that grace surrounds every command.

Free Grace Summary

Giving is an act of gratitude, not obligation.

Ministry should be transparent, accountable, and grace-driven.

Strength and love must operate together in service.

Anathema Maranatha warns of discipline, not loss of salvation.

Grace undergirds all fellowship and perseverance.

1 Corinthians 16 closes the epistle where it began — anchored in the unchanging grace of Christ, urging believers to stand firm, love deeply, and serve faithfully until He comes.