
Entering In: (Ice breaker question)

What "spiritual inheritance" have you inherited from your parents or grandparents? Try to be specific in your answer.

The Context:

Every church has problems. That's because every church is composed of sinners like you and me. 1 Corinthians is about a church with problems that have resulted in divisions within the church, leading Paul to ask the question, "Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 1:13). Chapters 5&6 address immorality and law suits. Chapter 7 addresses divided views on marriage. Chapters 8-10 address divided views on idolatry. Chapter 11 addresses divided views on worship, the place of women and the Lord's table. Chapters 12-14 address divided views of the ministry of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. Chapter 15 addresses divided views on the resurrection and the kingdom of God.

Going Deeper

1. The historical context is a divided church.

You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? 1 Corinthians 3:3

Many issues are very complex, making it difficult to identify only one right solution. Describe a situation where you have disagreed with others but have been able to maintain unity. What are characteristics of a healthy "agreeing to disagree"? Does disagreement always have to result in division?

How does your "passion" concerning an issue (faith, opinion, politics, etc.) help or hinder your ability to "agree to disagree"?

2. Their former condition was one of spiritual deadness.

The conversations the Corinthians were having reflected their divisions, and all centered around an understanding of what was really “spiritual.” Paul wants to talk to them about the proper sense of being “spiritual.”

What goes through your mind when you hear people say they are “spiritual but not religious”?

What do you think they mean when they say this?

Why might some people think “spiritual” is a better thing to be than “religious”?

How do you think society’s understanding has influenced the view of “spirituality” held by Christians?

How do the following passages show us a biblical understanding of “spiritual”?

- **Romans 12:1-3**
- **Ephesians 1:2-4**
- **Colossians 1:8-10**
- **Galatians 5:15-17**

Paul compares the Corinthians to when they were “pagans” and “were influenced and led astray to mute idols.” Similarly, he writes to the Ephesians, “...remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.” (Ephesians 2:12),

What “mute idols” can you identify as having (or having had) influenced your life?

3. Their unifying confession comes only from the working of God's Spirit in them.

According to 1 Corinthians 12:1-3, who are the truly spiritual people?

“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Romans 10:9-10

More than just “saying” something, Paul is writing in verse 3 about “confessing” something from deep within. And if you confess “Jesus is Lord” from deep within, you do so because the Holy Spirit enables you to do so, and God is in you. You are his and he is yours. If you speak from your heart one of these two statements, they have eternal ramifications.

What does it mean to say “Jesus is Lord”?