

Introduction to NT Books

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VII. I Corinthians

A. The Authorship of I Corinthians

1. External Evidence

- a. Early patristics such as Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus attested to the Pauline authorship.
- b. Clement of Rome wrote to the Corinthians (1st century) reminding them of Paul's letter.

2. Internal Evidence

- a. The author claimed to be Paul at beginning and ending (1:1; 16:21, respectively).
- b. The author was an apostle (4:9; 9:1; 15:9) and had seen resurrected Christ (9:1; 15:8).

B. The Date of I Corinthians

1. He started the Corinthian church in the early 50's (Acts 18:1-2).
2. He wrote to the church around AD 55.

C. The Origin and Destination

1. He wrote while staying in Ephesus (16:8).
2. He wrote to the church of God at Corinth (1:2)

D. The Purpose of I Corinthians

1. He wanted to correct the Christian hubris problem manifested in divisions around the ordinances (1:10 ff.).
2. He also wanted to address the questions that the Corinthians had about marriage (7:1 ff.).

E. The Characteristics of I Corinthians

1. He corrected fallacious doctrinal and practical problems in the assembly.
2. He answered six questions about the married state (7:1 ff.):
 - a. What is marriage? (1-7)
 - b. Is separation or divorce acceptable? (8-11)
 - c. What about mixed marriages? (12-17)
 - d. What about marriage in a time of persecution? (18-35)
 - e. What is the responsibility of the father in marriage of daughter? (36-38)
 - f. May widows marry? (39-40)
3. He stressed that women need to demonstrate submission to Lord through husband and hair (11:4-16).
4. He differentiated between gifts, administrations, and operations (12:4-6)
5. He urged unity in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper (12:13).¹
6. He predicted that tongues would cease when the canon was completed (13:8 ff.).
7. He ordered women to remain silent in the public assembly (14:34-35).
8. He detailed the most elaborate presentation of the doctrine of the resurrection in the NT. He dealt with its definition (15:1-4), defense (15:5-11), denial (15:12-19), delineation (15:20-28), demand (15:29-34), details (15:35-49), and deliverance (15:50-58).
9. He encouraged them to bring the offerings for the Jerusalem church on Sunday to the storehouse.

¹This verse does not teach that the Spirit baptizes believers into the so-called "mystical" body of Christ at salvation. The Holy Spirit Baptism that John predicted (Mt. 3:11 *et al*) occurred four times in Acts (2, 8, 10-11, and 19) to authenticate the Baptist assembly, and then ceased (Eph. 4:5). With its cessation went the cessation of tongues.