



# perfectly united

studies in 1 Corinthians 1-4

SCPC term 1 2008

## sunday 23rd march 2008

### study 8 one temple 1 Corinthians 3:16-23

KEY VERSE FOR SERIES: I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. **1 Corinthians 1:10**

It's a bit of an unusual week from the Bible Talk point of view, with Easter falling mid-term rather than in the school holidays. So with the talk I'm trying on the one hand to press on with the 1 Corinthians series, but on the other hand also acknowledging that it's Easter Sunday! Thankfully, while the passage may not have an obvious Easter/resurrection link, the whole idea of the 'presence of the future' by God's Spirit is of course only because Jesus' resurrection. Christ rising from the dead ushered in the new age of the Spirit. No resurrection, no Pentecost, no new birth, no hope... So although the implications of Christ's resurrection are only treated in a full-blown way in 1 Corinthians when you hit it's great 15th chapter, it's really there on every page: as the way of the world is contrasted with the way of the Spirit. If the cross is all about dying to the world, the resurrection is about coming alive by God's Spirit to a new life. In this way Christ's death and resurrection are one great reality.

#### some notes on questions

Q1. In chapter 6 verse 19 Paul will apply the idea of our body as God's temple in an individual way. But here in chapter 3 (and many other references in the New Testament—e.g. 1 Peter 2:5) the idea is a 'corporate' one, similar to the idea of the church being the body of Christ. That's important, as we're inclined too often only to see 'my life' applications rather than 'our life' ones. Remember that the very problem in Corinth was individualism. And Paul is still talking about "God's building" (3:9) here—the church—the people.

Q2. When we see the corporate focus and context for these verses, we realize that this passage is nothing to do with treatment of our physical bodies (as sometimes taught), but our treatment of our church family (jealousy, quarrels etc—3:3). But our calling (1:10) is to perfect unity in Christ.

Q3-4. We keep coming back to another key verse—1:18 (see also 1:23-24). By the Spirit we see the world as God sees it—thru the lens of the cross—that's wisdom. But to live in the light of the cross is to choose a life that looks foolish to the world.

Q5. It is impossible, once you have a right focus on the cross of Jesus, to be arguing over human leaders! Get the cross in it's rightful place, and everything else falls into place too.

Q6-8. I cannot think of a MORE RELEVANT CHALLENGE to our church and our lives together in service of Jesus—given the society we live in—than to wrestle with what it means to repent of our individualism. Scan the Christian bookstore catalogues and notice how many books are about 'my walk' rather than 'our walk'...

**digging deeper:** a great passage to keep the 'corporate' focus going.

#### ministry needs

MOPS (mothers of pre-schoolers) is one of our key outreach ministries to young families (tuesdays 10am-12 @ park ave). There is an urgent need for more women as helpers on MOPS Program Days (only twice a term!). Please raise the need in your groups and speak to Katja McPherson or Bronwyn Mitchell for more info.

#### coming events

NORTH COAST  
CHRISTIAN CONVENTION  
Evans Head  
May 24-25