

## A Work in Progress

The Corinthian Christians were *sanctified in Christ Jesus*. (1 Cor. 1:2) They had become a part of the church of Jesus Christ. In the first three verses of the chapter it seems that Paul stresses sanctity and holiness. Yet, the congregation at Corinth was caught up in immorality, carnality, division, and was full of lethargic Christians who had become satisfied with “living with sin.” Holiness, it seemed was the furthest thing from their minds.

Corinth was home to a congregation full of people with different backgrounds and social status. Many had spent their lives growing up in the midst of a Greek culture that stressed the gratification of the flesh and acquisition of material things. Intermingled in the congregation with the Gentiles were Jews who had come out of Judaism and would have been inclined to a strict moral and religious code. As a result, the Corinthian brethren were at various rungs on the moral ladder. Some in the church viewed Christianity to be nothing more than a philosophy of the day. Some had taken their brethren to court in civil suits. Jealousy prevailed between those who had spiritual gifts, and those who did not. Some had gone back to the prostitutes of the temple of Athena.

Not a pretty picture of a group of God’s people is it? Would you still call them “God’s people” at this point? Had you been Paul, would you be tempted to “write them off” and start over? In today’s time, would you have anything to do with a congregation—who calls itself a group of God’s people—that condones behavior similar to what Corinth did? Certainly there were some of them who had not “converted” themselves to Christ (Mt. 18:3). The Holy Spirit instructed them to break fellowship with those hardened in sin. (1 Cor. 5:4-5) But, the majority seemed to be in need of further instruction in the principles of Christ. The congregation at Corinth was truly a “work in progress.”

Those who have come to Christ are indeed a “work in progress.” Daily, we are learning to put off the old man of the flesh so that our spiritual person can grow stronger.

Aren’t we all a “work in progress?” Note what Paul wrote to the Philippian brethren: *...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;...* Those who have come to Christ are indeed a “work in progress.” Daily, we are learning to put off the old man of the flesh so that our spiritual person can grow stronger. (Rom. 6:1-23; Col. 3:1-5) Unfortunately, there are setbacks along the way—where we fall into the trap laid out by Satan. Sometimes, we intentionally wander into the devil’s grasp. But, those who are truly concerned about going home to heaven—will repent and confess their sin—so that they can be restored to the fold of the Lord. (1 Jhn. 1:8-10) The Christian is someone who keeps his heart looking toward Christ and does his best in serving the Lord & is

never content with sin in his life. When this person learns that there is error in his life, he immediately makes things right with Almighty God.

In 1 Cor. 1:8-9 Paul discusses the Christian's utter dependence on Jesus Christ for salvation. He says, *...who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.* In Christ is a place where we may be blameless—as long as we repent of our sin. Through Him, we can be “exempt from accusation.” Ultimately, we must realize that it is not through our own works of righteousness but through the precious blood of Christ that we have the hope of spending eternity with Him. When you go through life, and get discouraged, remember that you—like the Corinthians—are a “work in progress.” If you fall down, don't be content to stop—but get up, get going, and thank God for sending His son in YOUR place.

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