



# Through the Bible in a Year

a chronological study of the Bible for women

Acts 18:19-19  
1 Corinthians  
2 Corinthians

**Week 47**

## Daily Reading Plan:

- \_\_ Acts 18:19-19
- \_\_ 1 Cor. 1-6
- \_\_ 1 Cor. 7-12
- \_\_ 1 Cor. 13-16
- \_\_ 2 Cor. 1-6
- \_\_ 2 Cor. 7-13
- \_\_ REST\*

\*Use this day to meditate on the week's Scripture reading. If needed, use it to catch up or read ahead.

**Next week:**  
Acts 20-28  
Romans

MEMORY VERSE:

**“Everything is  
PERMISSIBLE’ - but  
not everything is  
beneficial. ‘Everything  
is permissible’ - but not  
EVERYTHING is  
constructive.”  
1 Corinthians 10:23**

## COMING TOGETHER

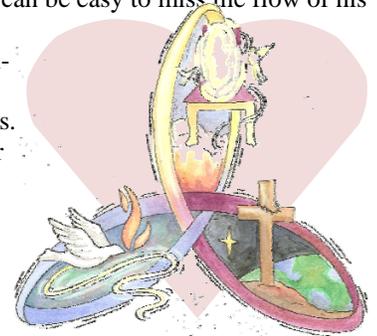
Was there any topic that Paul was reluctant to address? I am amazed at his boldness in jumping right into the messy issues that plagued the Corinthian church. As we study Paul's words, we are called and challenged to do the same.

It seems a bit ironic to me that one of the things that Paul addressed was the issue of unity in the church body, yet his words have been used to create a great deal of disunity in our interpretation of them. Women's roles, for example is a hot topic in many churches today, and one that is being carefully reexamined. I think it is good any time we reexamine the truths and misconceptions behind our practices, but it is important that the goal remain one of unity within the body of Christ. It is never to be **us** against **them**, but **all** of us coming together against the deceiver that would quench the working of the Holy Spirit and bring animosity among God's people.

When Paul says that God is the head of Christ, and that Christ is the head of man (1 Cor. 11:3), He is giving us an example of the relationship there is to be between men and women. He is telling us that we need to behave like the Trinity. God as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one being with three parts who are different expressions of one God. None are inferior or less important, or less spiritually inclined ... or less necessary to the completion of the whole. Each of those acts under the headship of God, and is a part of God. It's a difficult idea to grasp in the Trinity, and even more difficult within His body of believers. Paul tries to explain to the Corinthians, and to us, how we are all members of the same body and must love each other.

Perfect love casts out all fear, but fear is exactly what keeps us from really addressing the issues that Paul dives right into in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians. He knew that his first letter to them offended them, but he also knew that they needed to see their errors in order to make the changes that would make their church more pleasing to God. I often wonder what Paul would write to my church. What would he praise? What would he challenge?

Paul has so many things to say to the Corinthians, that his comments rattle off a bit like machine gun bursts. It can be easy to miss the flow of his thinking by isolating each issue. We can easily jump to conclusions that are inconsistent with the rest of scripture when we take only a cursory glance at Paul's words. We have to have the courage, the love for each other, and the interest in coming together, to take a deeper look. What is it that Paul was trying to say? How can we make sure we don't unwittingly fall into believing Satan's debilitating lies instead of God's empowering and unifying truths?



## WHO WERE THE CORINTHIANS?

Corinth was an ancient Greek city that had been destroyed by the Romans in 146 BC and then rebuilt by Julius Caesar 100 years later. Because of its strategic location as a center of trade, it grew rapidly and by New Testament times was one of Greece's most grand cities. One of its best known features is the agora, where there was a temple to Apollo, shops, and a public meeting place where legal matters were settled. This is probably where Paul appeared before Gallio in Acts 18:12-13 and also the location of the meat markets referred to in 1 Cor. 10:25. (Unger 255)

As a Greek city, Greek culture and ideas had a very strong influence, even in the early church. In addition, the flow of trade across the peninsula, through Corinth, made Corinth not only a commercial mecca, but also a well known hub of immorality. Separating themselves from the surrounding culture would have been a real challenge for the new believers in Corinth.

What are some of the things that Paul responds to in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians that are also challenges in our own culture? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## WORLDLY WISDOM vs. SPIRITUAL WISDOM 1 Corinthians

What did Paul have to say about the differences between **worldly wisdom** and **spiritual wisdom**?

- 1:18,19,31 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2:3-6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3:10-21 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4:6-8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4:20 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8:2-12 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10:12 \_\_\_\_\_
- 12:13,21, 25 \_\_\_\_\_
- 14:20 \_\_\_\_\_

### 1 Cor. 7:17-31

Paul admonishes the Corinthians to learn to **be** where they are. Christianity is no excuse to end a relationship, especially a marriage. While we look for a way out of our situation, God is looking for the way into it. The trick is to keep our eyes open for opportunities **within** our circumstances. Rather than address the need for social reform, Paul advised these early Christians on how to live as godly people within a difficult situation. The situation can accomplish spiritual growth in us, and in those who observe us. As Paul points out, our lives now are only a temporary situation anyway. Even as we live our lives and enjoy and mourn, we are to not take it all too seriously. We use the things of the world in our daily lives, but Paul admonishes us to not get engrossed in them. Jerry Taylor described this as rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic, there's not much point when it's all soon going down!

### 1 Cor. 8:9-13

How can our knowledge destroy a weaker brother or sister in Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

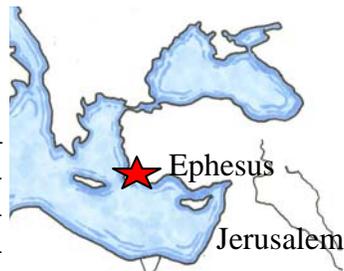
### 1 Cor. 9:5

Who apparently took wives along with them in their ministry travels? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## PAUL IN EPHESUS Acts 19

What problem did Paul encounter while he was in Ephesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Artemis was a Greek goddess, called Diana by the Romans, and Ephesus was the center of her worship. The temple to Artemis (built around 550 BC) was one of the seven wonders of the world and made the ancient city of Ephesus famous. (Unger 366,367)



When I visited the Vatican in Rome many years ago, the gift shop was swarming with tourists standing in line to buy rings that had been blessed by the Pope, little vials of holy water and various other sacred souvenirs. For Artemis worshipers, a visit to first century Ephesus must have held a similar appeal.

## THE LETTERS TO THE CORINTHIANS

1 Corinthians focused on the character of the Corinthian church and matters concerning their well-being. Who does 2 Corinthians focus more on? \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians dealt with problems and questions in marriage, freedom, spiritual gifts, and orderly worship. What does 2 Corinthians deal with? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some ways that we have similar issues with that today?  
\_\_\_\_\_

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”  
2 Cor. 10:5

### WANT TO READ WHAT I READ?

#### WHO WERE THE CORINTHIANS? p.2

Unger, Merrill F.. The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1988.

#### PAUL IN EPHESUS p. 3

Unger, Merrill F.. The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1988.

#### PARTS OF A BODY p. 5

Aristotle, 1885, *Politics*, Translation of Benjamin Jowett, web edition at <<http://www.mdx.ac.uk/www/study/xari.htm>> Bekker page numbers used: 1253.

#### ORDERLY WORSHIP p. 6

Cunningham, Loren, and David Joel Hamilton. Why Not Women?. Seattle: YWAM Publishing, 2000.

Koch, George Byron. "Shall a Woman Keep Silent?." Resurrection Anglican Church 11 DEC 1994 4. 12 NOV 2007 <[http://www.resurrection.org/shall\\_a\\_woman\\_\\_\\_part\\_1.htm](http://www.resurrection.org/shall_a_woman___part_1.htm)>.

Meyers, Rick. e-sword. 12 Nov 2007 <http://www.e-sword.net>

# PUZZLE CLUES (taken from the NIV translation)

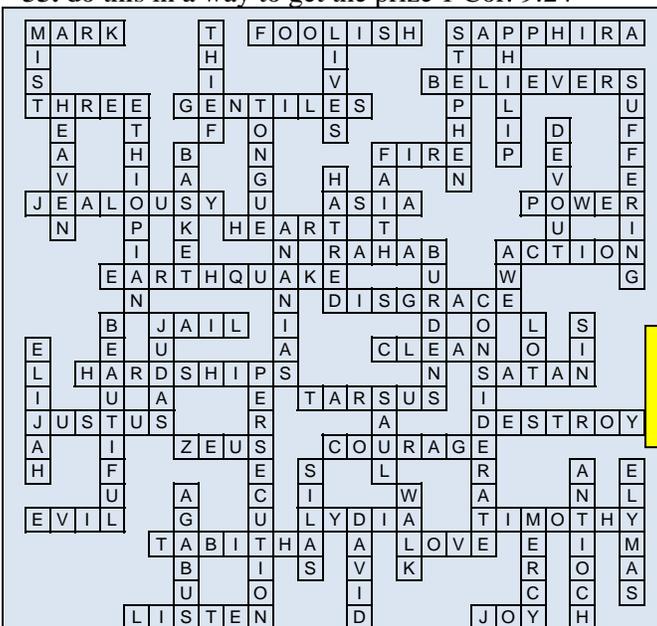
## Across

4. a helper to Paul Acts 19:22
5. the sting of death 1 Cor. 15:56
6. there should be no division in this 1 Cor. 12:25
8. will not inherit the kingdom of God 1 Cor. 6:9
10. will judge the world 1 Cor. 6:2
11. God makes \_\_\_\_\_ the wisdom of the world 1 Cor. 1:21
13. useless without resurrection 1 Cor. 15:12-17
15. Paul did not come with this 1 Cor. 2:1
16. we are to God the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ 2 Cor. 2:15
19. the disciples were made this 1 Cor. 4:9
22. Paul was entrusted with this kind of things 1 Cor. 4:1
24. God did these through Paul Acts 19:11
25. Moses put one over his face 2 Cor. 3:12
26. we are God's 1 Cor. 3:16
27. a clear one does not make us innocent 1 Cor. 4:4
28. god important to the city of Ephesus Acts 19:28
30. for Jesus' sake 2 Cor. 4:5
33. do this in a way to get the prize 1 Cor. 9:24

34. eager willingness to be matched by this 2 Cor. 8:11

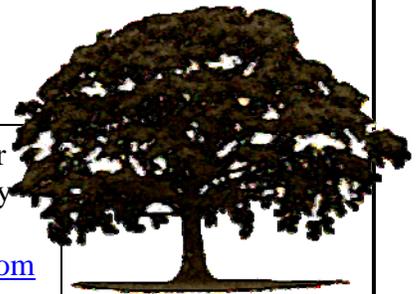
## Down

1. great each other with a holy one 1 Cor. 16:20
2. Macedonian church known for this 2 Cor. 8:1,2
3. gifts are to do this for the church 1 Cor. 14:12
6. do this in the Lord 2 Cor. 10:17
7. the same Spirit, but different \_\_\_\_\_ 1 Cor. 12:4
8. "why not rather be \_\_\_\_\_" 1 Cor. 6:7
9. where Paul left Priscilla and Aquilla Acts 18:19
12. no one can lay one other than Christ 1 Cor. 3:11
13. wherever the Spirit of the Lord is 2 Cor. 3:17
14. we are Christ's 2 Cor. 5:20
17. had a good knowledge of Scripture Acts 18:24
18. apostles, Lord's brothers and Peter took theirs along 1 Cor. 9:5
19. those who had practiced this burned their scrolls Acts 19:19
20. her household informed Paul of quarrels 1 Cor. 1:11
21. the greatest 1 Cor. 13:13
23. is permissible 1 Cor. 10:23
29. led to repentance 2 Cor. 7:9
30. Paul and Barnabas didn't get theirs from the Corinthians 1 Cor. 8:12
31. first man 1 Cor. 15:45
32. what the Corinthians were called to be 1 Cor. 1:2



**WEEK 46  
PUZZLE  
ANSWERS**

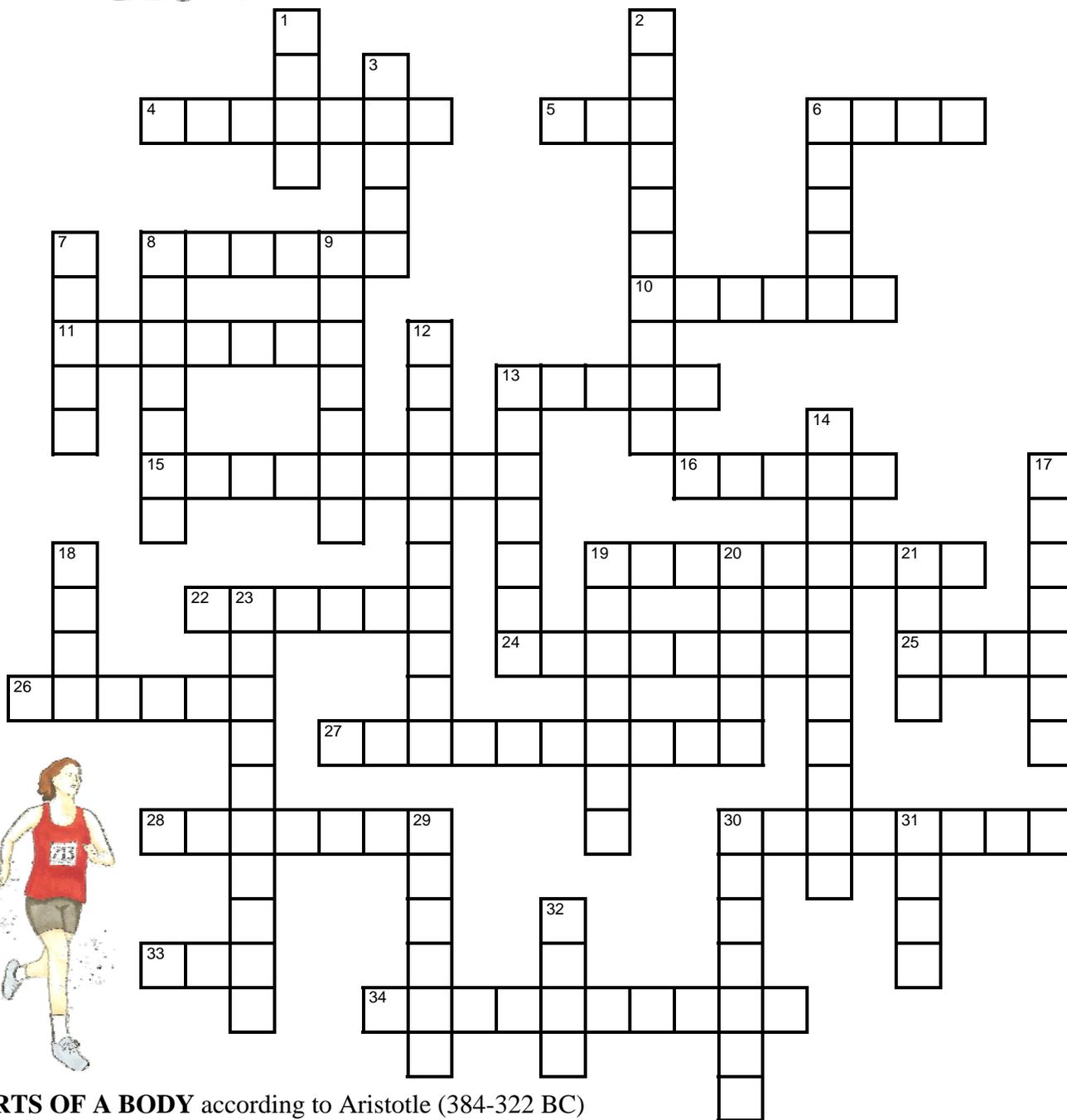
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# PUZZLE PAGE

WEEK 47



## **PARTS OF A BODY** according to Aristotle (384-322 BC)

*“Further, the state is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part; for example, if the whole body be destroyed, there will be no foot or hand, except in an equivocal sense, as we might speak of a stone hand; for when destroyed the hand will be no better than that. But things are defined by their working and power; and we ought not to say that they are the same when they no longer have their proper quality, but only that they have the same name. The proof that the state is a creation of nature and prior to the individual is that the individual, when isolated, is not self-sufficing; and therefore he is like a part in relation to the whole. But he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god: he is no part of a state.” (Aristotle 1885, p.1253)*

Why do you think Paul used words in 1 Cor. 12 that are so similar to Aristotle’s? \_\_\_\_\_

## ORDERLY WORSHIP 1 Cor. 14:26-30

Few words in Scripture have brought about as much controversy as these. To be honest, how we handle this topic disappoints me. Women (the ones who are to be silent) can't really speak with any credibility here, so only the more militant and abrasive usually dare to. Their approach of demanding women's "rights" is exactly what makes our men fearful and run for cover. So, why not just keep the peace and continue to keep a lid on it? Because when we do, it hurts the whole body of Christ, men and women alike. Isn't that exactly what Satan wants to happen? When we see it as a male/female power struggle, Satan wins. When men see themselves as superior and women as inferior and unworthy, Satan wins. When women become indignant and resentful, and manipulative, Satan wins. When men become passive and avoiding or appeasing, Satan wins. The issue is there whether it gets openly acknowledged or not. Let's just be real about it in a loving way. Satan wants to shrink us in any way he can, but he really doesn't have the power to. God has used women mightily for thousands of years, regardless of what the cultural limitations of the day were. We are called to live respectfully within the decisions of those in authority over us...and in a way that does not give them cause to fear us! All of that said, here is **my** take on what this passage really means.

The Greek believers in Corinth had received so many new gifts that they literally did not know what to do with them. With the Holy Spirit came spiritual gifts that they had to learn appropriate ways to use. Thus, Paul has to give specific instruction about the appropriate use of the gift of tongues. Another new thing that they had received with their new faith was a new way of seeing women. In Greek culture women were worse than nothing, they were actually seen as a curse sent by the god Zeus as a punishment on mankind, so severe that any future punishment in the afterlife would be unnecessary, except for in a very extreme case in which the evildoer could fear the horror of being brought back to life as a woman! (Cunningham, Hamilton 71-77) The popular philosopher Plato promoted these kinds of ideas, and was followed by his student Aristotle who suggested that it was better for males to remain separate from the inferior females. Aristotle in turn was the teacher of Alexander the Great who spread Greek views across much of the known world, including Israel. Greek women were to remain silent, were not allowed in the marketplace or to attend public events. They were kept shut away and obedient to their husbands. Even the Jews had been strongly influenced by this culture long before the coming of Christ. Women were not allowed to speak to men that were not their husband. The "holiest" of Pharisees were said to have closed their eyes if they saw a woman on the street. (Koch 5) We've seen how Jesus turned these ideas upside down in His relationships with and treatment of women, but what about Paul?

When we read the book of Corinthians, we need to remember that we are hearing only one side of a conversation. We can only guess at the things that had been reported to Paul by the nature of his response to them. We see in 1 Cor. 14 that the Corinthians were misusing this new gift of tongues. They did not understand how it was to be used, not as a show to edify themselves, but only when there was someone that could understand and bring some benefit to the body of believers. Another issue was the newfound freedom that these Greek women had in Christ. No longer did they have to put up and shut up. They had been freed from an oppressive animal like status. But neither they nor their Christian brothers knew entirely what that meant. I can imagine a group of ladies that have been shut up for too long. Suddenly they are allowed out of the house, allowed to mingle, allowed a voice. Even in our own relatively free society, women can hardly wait to get together and start gabbing...sometimes even through Bible class, even through the sermon. They lean over and whisper questions and comments to each other in voices just low enough to make everyone around them strain to listen. These Greek women were eager to use their newly acquired gift of gab just as surely as those endowed by the Spirit were apparently eager to speak in tongues. Apparently they were disrupting service by asking their husband questions that could wait until later. They were misusing their freedoms in ways that were not beneficial to them or to the body of Christ. Things had gotten out of hand and needed to be nipped in the bud, just like when my children get too rowdy and inattentive in a church service and start disrupting other people. Whether sons or daughters they get a SHHH! and stern look directed their way. Isn't it possible that this is simply what Paul is doing with his Corinthian children? Paul uses the same word for silence – sigao, in verse 34 when talking about the disruptive women as he uses in verses 28 and 30 when addressing those speaking in tongues without an interpreter. (Meyers) Since they are told in verse 39 to not forbid these gifts, I think we can view the caution to women in the same light. In 11:5 the issue is women praying and prophesying with her head uncovered. If it was not done in public, no one would know or care what was on her head!

