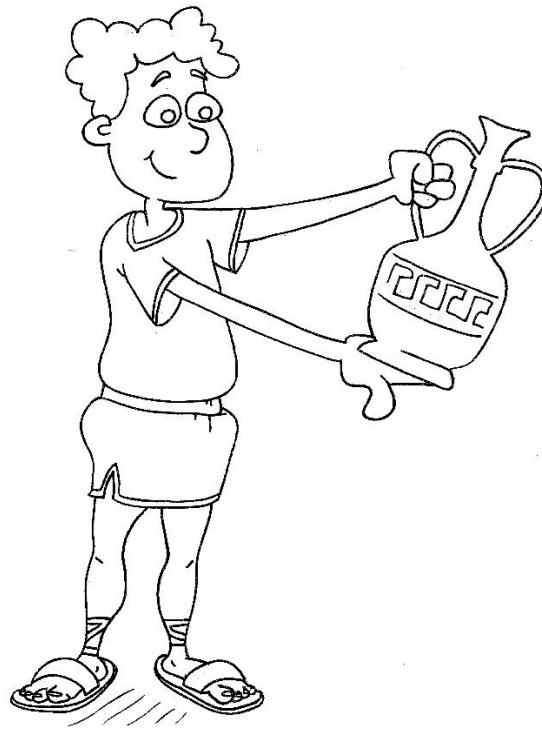


*Youth Ministry 2:2*  
*Bible discussion lessons for youth groups*  
*from the Old and New Testaments*

# **Bible 101 – year 2**

## **1 Corinthians**



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*All Scripture used in this Lesson Guide is from the New International Version Bible (NIV).*

# Destination: Corinth

1 Corinthians 1:10-13

## 1. Facts about Corinth in brief:

1. The second largest city in Ancient Greece
2. A diverse port city with residents, merchants, and sailors passing through from all over the Roman Empire.
3. Known for wealth, rowdiness, drunkenness, prostitution and many temples and religions.
4. Where Paul spent a year and a half – longer than any other city in his travels.
5. Where Paul's preaching reached all kinds of people.
6. Where the new group of Christians had trouble getting along with each other.



## 2. Their main problem was \_\_\_\_\_ based on who each person considered to be their spiritual teacher (vv. 10-13).

	Founder of the church; God performed miracles through him; the first believers were his followers; he was known for the simplicity of his preaching. He cannot be described as 'eloquent' (speaking in a beautiful, clear way).
	An intelligent and eloquent speaker; an educated Greek
	An apostle from Jerusalem (the holy city); he walked with Jesus; he observed Jewish traditions

## 3. What are things that divide Christians today?

Why is everyone equal when they come to the cross of Christ?

- Because of the Cross, anyone can know God as their Father.
- Everyone comes to the Cross to be forgiven of their sins.
- We all depend on the Cross for eternal life.
- Nobody is rejected at the Cross.
- The Cross makes us brothers and sisters in Christ.

*At the cross we are all equal.*

## Places that Received Letters from the Apostle Paul

C	O	H	E	L	I	R	I	C	R	C	A
P	R	T	G	P	P	A	H	P	O	E	E
E	H	N	C	A	I	A	O	O	M	P	N
A	C	I	N	O	L	A	S	S	E	H	T
S	G	R	L	A	T	A	R	S	C	E	O
S	A	O	L	I	A	S	T	U	S	S	L
O	E	C	M	E	P	P	S	I	S	U	O
L	T	H	E	S	S	P	H	E	A	S	L
O	L	E	H	A	G	E	I	S	S	A	O
C	A	E	P	E	T	T	C	R	E	T	E

- 1. COLOSSAE (Book of Colossians)**
- 2. CORINTH (1 & 2 Books of Corinthians)**
- 3. CRETE (Book of Titus)**
- 4. EPHESUS (Book of Ephesians)**
- 5. GALATIA (Book of Galatians)**
- 6. PHILIPPI (Book of Philippians)**
- 7. ROME (Book of Romans)**
- 8. THESSALONICA (Book of Thessalonians)**

**Destination: Corinth (Divisions in the Church –  
1 Corinthians 1:10-13)**

**Significance for teenagers:**

People tend to form into groups based on similar interests, dress styles, wealth, bad habits, etc. Being part of a group can assure us that we are okay—after all, the others in our group are a lot like us. And there is a natural resistance to people who are not like we are. Even Christians can fall into this trap.

As we'll see today, this problem isn't new. There were cliques in the Corinthian church too. But the apostle Paul urges us that in the body of Christ, we are meant to come together as one.

**1. Hook:**

Start with prayer. Then have kids do the word find, **Places that Received Letters from the Apostle Paul.**

Using the handout, ask the kids to take turns reading the facts about Corinth.

#1 – Corinth was the second largest city in Ancient Greece (if you like, use map to show Corinth and its location on a major land route and near the sea on two sides).

It was to this city that Paul came.

#2, #3, #4 – Corinth probably did not seem like a place where people would be eager to believe in Christ. Paul might have doubted that the Good News would be accepted in Corinth. But while he was there, Paul got an unusual message from God, a vision where God told him to stay awhile because 'many people' in Corinth would believe (Acts 18:9-10)!

#5 – It is interesting that God saw the hearts of people in Corinth, no matter how they appeared on the outside. The Good News was heard and believed by rich and poor, young and old, Greeks and Jews, free men and slaves—all kinds of people, and a young church grew up in Corinth.

#6 – When Paul left Corinth, many problems arose among the believers in the young church. When Paul heard about their difficulties, he wrote letters. Scholars agree that the books of First and Second Corinthians in our Bibles are actually Paul's second and fourth letters to the believers in Corinth (there are hints in the letters we have that make it sound like there were more).

One very big problem in Corinth was that the members of the church did not get along with each other.

**2. Book – *I Corinthians 1:10-13***

At the beginning of his letter, Paul briefly outlines the main problem—divisions.' Have the kids write down the word 'divisions' on their handouts. Read verses 10-13. The Corinthians were dividing into groups based on who they considered to be their spiritual teacher (or maybe who they thought was the most important teacher).

Which teachers are we talking about?

1. Paul; also known as Cephas).

Paul was the one who brought them the Good News first.

<p>2. <u>Apollos</u>: Apollos was a very intelligent, skillful speaker who came later.</p> <p>3. <u>Peter</u>: Peter was the head of the church in Jerusalem and had been with Jesus, in the ‘inner circle’ of disciples.</p> <p>Divisions are only the first of the church’s problems! Later we will see, Paul also wrote about many things: the relationship between the rich and the poor, slaves and free people; taking each other to court; sexual problems, the behavior of women in church and their clothing, eating food that had been sacrificed to idols, and participation in local temple festivals. There were many problems.</p> <p><b>3. Look</b></p> <p>Before we look at what Paul wrote to them, let’s take a look at our own world. What divides us into different groups today? (Write their answers on the board.)</p> <p>Possible answers: money; clothing styles; grades; nationality; bad habits; activities and interests; beliefs; etc.</p> <p>Ask, ‘Which of these things can also divide people who are Christians?’ Discuss their answers.</p> <p>Read verse 30-31. Paul says that the only thing we can ‘boast’ about is the Lord. It’s His wisdom that gave Christ to die on the cross; He redeems us from our sins, makes us ‘holy,’ one of His own.</p>	<p>Ask, ‘Why is everyone equal when they come to the Cross of Christ?’ Have the kids read the answers under #3 on the handout. The Cross is the most equalizing place on earth. No one who comes is rejected, whether they are smart, beautiful, talented, athletic, or whether they have struggled or rebelled or have some crazy or complicated back-story. God has made Himself equally available to all. He values every person He created.</p> <p>Because of this, the Cross requires us to welcome all kinds of people into our circle, too. Even though it might not be easy (it wasn’t easy for the people in Corinth), God wants us to live as brothers and sisters, to welcome, serve, and care for each other as His children.</p> <p><b>4. Took</b></p> <p>At the Cross, we are all equal. At the Cross, no one/and everyone receives special privileges. What matters is that we are humble, aware that we need Jesus as much as anyone.</p> <p>End with prayer, thanking God that His family is open to all.</p>
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# Christ Above All Else

1 Corinthians 1:18-25, 30

**1.** The ways of the world are \_\_\_\_\_.

The ways of God are \_\_\_\_\_.

**2.** Each group of people has its own idea about Christ. Let's read the text and write down what these people think about Christ and the Cross.



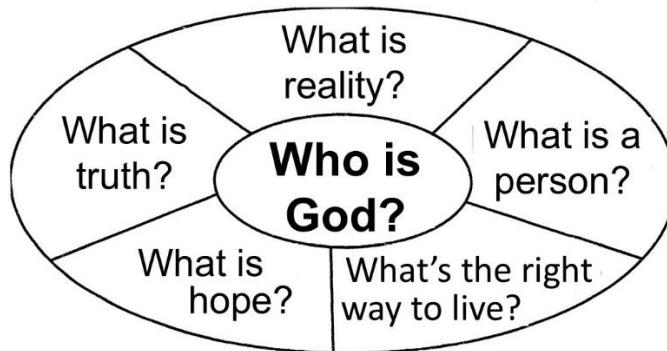
\_\_\_\_\_ (v. 18)

\_\_\_\_\_ (v.18)

\_\_\_\_\_ (v.23)

\_\_\_\_\_ (v.24)

**3.** The best philosophy of life answers six questions:



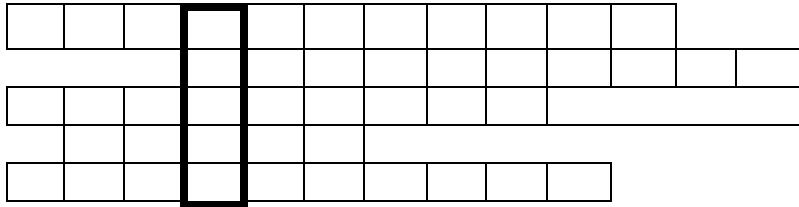
**4.** What are the benefits of accepting Christ and following Him?

## CROSSWORD

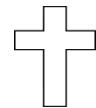
### In the World:



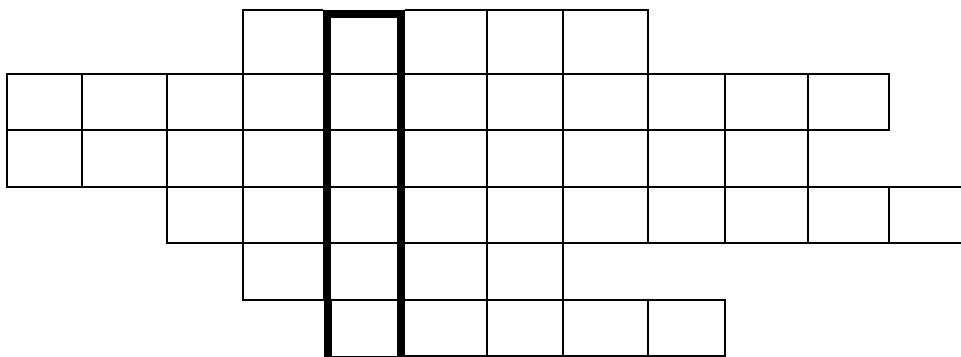
1. The belief that you are the center of the universe.
2. The belief that you can get help from spirits through magic.
3. The belief that humanity is slowly improving as the strongest survive.
4. The belief that Allah determines a person's fate, not personal choice.
5. The belief in many gods.



### In Christ:



1. God's strength
2. What we receive when we confess our sins to God.
3. The One who lives inside believers and helps them.
4. Christ's payment for sin by his death.
5. What God feels towards us.
6. God giving us a second chance when we don't deserve it.



WORD BANK OF ANSWERS: Forgiveness; Mercy; Islam; Power; Selfishness; Holy Spirit; Polytheism; Occultism; Love; Redemption; Evolution.

## Christ: How He Is Above All Else

(Christian Worldview - 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, 30)

### **Significance for teens:**

Psychologist James Fowler discovered that faith develops in stages. Children usually imitate the faith of adults: their parents, Sunday school teachers. For teens, the views of adults are still relevant, but they start to consider more seriously the opinions of their peers. By the time they transition into young adulthood, they usually decide on their own beliefs. It's at this stage we see whether their faith in Christ is merely an imitation of someone else's (in which case it may not withstand the challenges of life), or whether their faith is their own, resilient and growing stronger.

### **1. Hook**

Begin with prayer. Then start working on the '**Crossword Puzzle**' on the back of the handout. The puzzle can be solved as a team or individually, as you wish.

Answers to the first part of the game (in the world) 1. Selfishness; 2. Occultism; 3. Evolution; 4. Islam; 5. Polytheism.

Answers to the second part (in Christ) 1. Power; 2. Forgiveness; 3. Holy Spirit; 4. Redemption; 5. Love; 6. Mercy).

When all the answers are written down, they will be able to read the vertically circled words: 'FOLLY' and 'WISDOM'.

The Word of God says that the ways of the world are foolishness and the ways of God are wisdom, even if it doesn't seem like it. Today we will talk about these two ways.

### **2. Book – 1 Corinthians 8:18-25, 30**

People are trying to figure out their path in life. The handout shows two groups of people. On the right are people who are walking in God's ways. They believe in Christ and that He forgives their sins. On the left are people walking in the world's ways: they do not believe they need Christ's forgiveness.

The first person does not understand who Christ is (question mark); for the second person, Christianity is simply foolish (he is laughing); and the third person believes that he only needs to be a good person in life.

Each group has its own idea about Christ and the cross. Let's read the text and write down what it says.

Take turns reading the verses. After reading verse 18: 'To the Greeks, Christianity was foolishness.' The Greeks had many great philosophers who spent a lot of time discussing the meaning of life. Jesus, the son of God dying for the sins of the world and coming back to life did not seem logical. A god who would let himself be killed by men felt like weakness.

The first word under the defiled people is Foolishness (v. 18)

But for believers, Christ is God's Power (v. 18). Jesus' death has the power to give people eternal life. Write this under the people on the right.

<p>After reading verse 23, ask, "Why was Christ a stumbling block for the Jews?" Answer: Because they have to give up the LAW as the specific revelation from God that makes them special (holy), in Christ. They have to give up their SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP with God. They have to agree with God that at the cross, they are not more accepted, more special than the Gentiles and this was unacceptable. Jesus makes it impossible for them to continue on (stumbling block) in their deepest cultural and religious identity and way of life.</p> <p>For the Jews, Christ is a 'stumbling block' (v. 23). Write this word under the world's people. And on the right before verse 24, write: Christ is '<u>God's wisdom</u>' for believers.</p> <p><b>3. Look</b></p> <p>Are there other philosophies that are wiser than our belief in Christ? The best philosophy of life must answer six questions (See the circle on the handout):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Who is God?' or what is the most important idea at the heart of someone's worldview? For believers, it is God.' Write the word '<u>God</u>' in the center.</li> <li>2. 'What is reality?' For Christians, there is both the visible world, as well as the invisible world. We learn about the invisible world in the Bible: angels, demons, heaven, etc. and sometimes we experience it. Write '<u>visible and invisible worlds</u>' beside the number 2 part of the circle.</li> <li>3. 'What is truth?' For us, the Bible comes first. It gives us the clearest picture of <b>God's activity in the world</b> and shows us <b>Himself</b> in an understandable way.</li> </ol>	<p>Write the word '<u>Bible</u>' beside the circle. Romans 1 also says that and God reveals through <u>nature</u>.</p> <p>4. 'What is a human being?' He is created in the image of God, but has acquired a sinful nature that opposes God. Write '<u>sinner</u>' and '<u>image of God</u>' beside number 4.</p> <p>5. 'How should we live?' God's commands show the best way to live." Write '<u>commandments</u>' beside number 5.</p> <p>6. 'What is hope?' In Christ, we have a hope for this life as well as the next. Write, '<u>heaven</u>' beside number 6.</p> <p>If a person's worldview is weak, he cannot answer these six questions."</p> <p>If you have time and the kids are interested, you can answer these same questions from the perspective of a different worldview. For example, evolution. 1. The central idea is intraspecies change. 2. Reality is only what is visible. 3. Truth is only what can be observed—science; 4. Man is just an advanced animal. 5. If we are animals, why should we follow moral rules? Evolution does not answer this question. Let the strong eat the weak. 6. Hope is only death, and perhaps the next generation will be better. We can discuss religions such as Islam and Buddhism, or worldviews such as capitalism or living for pleasure, to see that the most complete worldview is what we find written in the Bible. If you don't have much time or your teenagers are still young, you can simply show them quickly that faith in Christ is the best worldview.</p> <p><b>4. Took</b></p> <p>We believe that God's way is right and good.</p>
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What are the benefits to those who accept Christ and follow Him? (You can refer back to the answers from the crossword puzzle about Christ). Be careful not to promise things that God's doesn't; like 'no problems. The Bible says we will have problems.

**Another option for ending the lesson:** You can briefly tell the story of "The Pilgrim's Progress." He was on the right path, while the others were on the wrong path. They had many ways to try to tempt him to fall or stray from his course, and he found many helps and reasons along the way to keep pressing on.

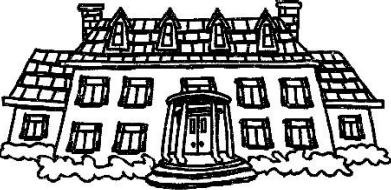
End with prayer.

*Leader's guide*

# Building on Christ - 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

**1.** If you were going to build a 'dream house,' what would you include?

**2.** Our Spiritual 'Home'

		
<b>Our Foundation</b>	Jesus Christ	Jesus Christ
<b>Building Material (in v. 12-15)</b>	High-Quality Material	Fragile Material
<b>The Result of Testing by fire (v. 12-15)</b>	Builder receives a _____.	The builder will be safe, but will suffer _____.
<b>Building Material (in our lives)</b>	High-quality material	Fragile material

\*Time with God is good building material!

**3.** What foundation and material are you using to build your life?

Name two things you will do in the coming days that will be part of building your life on Christ:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

## More about Building

1. Reread 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.
2. Matthew 7:24-29
3. 1 Peter 2:4,5
4. Ephesians 2:10, 19,22
5. Psalm 126:1
6. Genesis 11:1-9
7. 1 Corinthians 5

**ARE YOU BUILDING A MANSION OR A SHACK?**

## Building on Christ (Priorities – 1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

### **Significance for teens:**

All of us invest the minutes, money and talents of our lives into something. It makes more sense to invest in eternal things as opposed to things that have little or no lasting value.

### **1. Hook**

Hand out paper and markers. Have the students draw their dream house and show it to each other. Ask, 'If you were going to build a dream house, what would you definitely include?'

Possible answers: a swimming pool, a big screen TV or home theater, a basketball court, etc.

### **2. Book – 1 Corinthians 3:10-15**

The Bible compares building our lives to building a house. Our text from 1 Corinthians talks about this 'spiritual construction.' Read the text and fill in the table.

V. 10-12 The 'foundation' of a person's life is what they consider their life purpose or what gives them stability. According to our text Jesus Christ is the most solid and indestructible foundation. Ask: 'What does it mean to have Christ as our foundation?' Possible answers: We try to really know Him; we try be like Him, or to do what He wants; we build our time (or priorities) around Him.

V. 12-15 It is important that we have the right foundation, but the materials we use to build our house are also important. The Bible talks about what people use to build their spiritual house. In your opinion, what material is good for building a life, and what is not?

Write down the answers in the table.

Answers: high-quality materials: gold, silver, and precious stones. Low-quality materials: wood, hay, and straw.

Ask, 'What qualities do the good materials all have in common?'

Possible answers: expensive, can go through fire, endure with time, more beautiful, rarer, durable.

'And what are qualities of the bad materials?'

Possible answers: Burns, short term, cheap, easy to work with – fast

The Bible also says that everything will be tested by fire. What will be the outcome for each builder? Those who built with quality materials will receive a reward, and those who built with poor materials will be saved but will suffer loss.

### **3. Look**

"But what does all this mean for us? What 'building materials' in our lives are of high quality? What parts of our lives will have eternal value? Write down their answers, while the kids enter their answers in the table on the handout.

Possible answers: helping at home; giving money to those in need; helping at church; giving advice; sharing Christ; loving others; worshiping God; spending time with Jesus.

'What materials will not last? What do you invest your time, energy, and money in that is not worthwhile? Write answers in the last box of the table.'

Answers: entertainment; computer games; social media; junk food, social image; expensive clothes; etc.

Many of the things listed in the last box are not bad in themselves and are OK to do. They only become bad when they crowd out the more important, lasting things, like our relationship with Christ. All our deeds will be tested: they will be judged after we pass from this life to the next. Only that which honors Jesus Christ will stand the test of eternity.

**4. Took:**

Ask yourself, 'What foundation and material will you use in building your life this week? Let's look at our answers again in the table. Which things are quality building materials and which are not?'

Write down reminders of what you can focus on this week. Remind them that time with God is good 'building material.' If they don't know what to read in the Bible, suggest that they read the verses listed on the handout: *More About Building*.

We are all building something every day. Are we building a mansion or a shack? End with a prayer for God's help and wisdom to build on the foundation of Christ, and to build with materials that will last.

**Leader's Guide**

# Marriage: for Better or for Worse

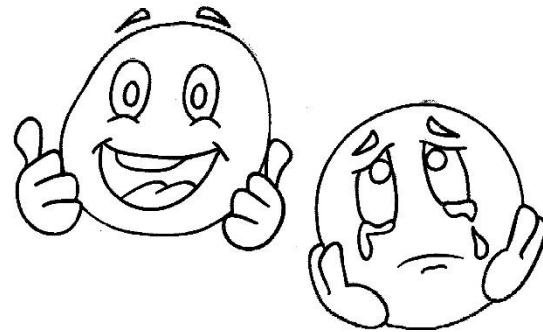
1 Corinthians 7:1-11, 32-40

## 1. Why do people get married?

(Write your answers in the table below.)

What are some reasons why it is better not to get married?

(Write your answers in the table below.)



## 2.

	Reasons TO marry	Reasons to NOT marry
Our Opinions		
Paul's Opinion	To keep from immorality – v.2, 9  To keep from sin – v.36	Freedom from worry - v. 32 Hindrance to serving God - v. 34 Dedication to the Lord - v. 34 Greater happiness - v. 40 <i>Note: Paul was not married :-)</i>

Is it better to be married or single?

Why is God against divorce?

## 3. Under what conditions is marriage good?

How can you prepare for marriage now?

## 4. When choosing a partner:

Do not violate God's \_\_\_\_\_.

Do not take marriage for granted.

(God may want you to remain \_\_\_\_\_).

Leave this decision in \_\_\_\_\_.

### The Word on Marriage:

1. Reread 1 Corinthians 7:1-11, 32-40
2. Hebrews 13:4
3. 1 Corinthians 13
4. Ephesians 5:21-33
5. Proverbs 31:10-31
6. 1 Timothy 3:1-13
7. 1 Corinthians 8:4-13

## Marriage: for Better or Worse (Marriage - 1 Corinthians 7:1-11, 32-40)

### **Significance for teens;**

Among teens, there are some who plan to be married and think about it often, some who worry about whether they'll get married, and some who don't think about it at all at this stage. But it's very important to talk to teenagers, especially older ones, about Christian marriage and how to prepare for it now.

### **1. Hook**

Begin with prayer. Play the game: "**Who will be my partner?**" Teenagers should write an advertisement for a spouse. What qualities they would like to see in a partner. (No more than 100 words. And it doesn't have to be super serious.) If they wish, some can read their advertisements aloud.

'We see that each of us has criteria for a suitable partner. Not just anyone will do.'

Ask, 'Why do people get married?' The reasons may be good or not so good. Write down the answers in the table. Possible answers: love; sex; pregnancy; security; loneliness; rebellion against parents; money; power; God; to have a soulmate.

'Which of these reasons for getting married are not good?' (cross them out)

Ask, 'What are some reasons it might be better not to get married?' Write the answers in the table.

Possible answers: be independent; travel more; make money; less stress; work long hours; more time for your own priorities.

### **2. Book – 1 Corinthians 7:1-11, 32-40**

There are advantages to both getting married and not getting married.

Let's consider what the Apostle Paul had to say on this matter. Read the verses and, as you read, note in the table **Paul's** reasons for getting married/not getting married.

Ask, 'Which is better: to marry or not to marry?' Discuss this question. Note: God can use a person's life in special ways whether they are married or single.

We know that to God, marriage is a very serious commitment. Ask, 'Why is God against divorce?' Be careful with this question if there are kids in the group whose parents have recently divorced. Possible answers: marriage is supposed to be a picture of the relationship between Christ and the Church; God knows it's very painful when those who were one flesh are torn apart—vv. 10, 11, 39, 40; God wants us to keep our promises; kids can be very confused and hurt and maybe blame themselves.

### **3. Look**

Ask: 'When is it good for two people to get married?'

Possible answers: when both are Christians - verse 39; when they love each other; when they have common interests and goals; when they are mature enough to make a life commitment.

Each person has their own criteria for choosing a spouse, as we wrote in our advertisements. (Examples: good cook, smart, handsome, strong, etc.)

Emphasize that the number one criterion for Christians, according to the Bible, is that the person must love the Lord.

Ask: "How can you prepare for marriage now?"

Possible answers: learn to love God now; learn how to be content in life and grateful in different circumstances; grow in unselfishness; learn how to be friends with the opposite sex; learn how to get along with your family members now; pray for your future spouse but leave this question to God; trust Him.

Be prepared for Christ Himself to want to become a partner in your life, to want to have a special relationship with you, and to not give you a spouse.

**4. Took:**

Finally, here are a few tips. 1) First and foremost, do not violate God's commandments. If you want to spend your life with someone who loves the Lord, do not settle for someone who does not. If you want your partner to be kind and gentle, do not think that they will change under your influence during the marriage. People usually don't like having other people try to change them. Ask God to give you the wisdom not to violate His established rules.

2) Do not take marriage for granted. God may want you to remain unmarried.

3) Leave this decision in God's hands. 'He knows the future. It is quite possible that your potential partner seems like the perfect match for you now, but after a while will become unbearable. Let God give you the person who is best for you in the long run'.

Tell the kids that the handout contains references to Bible verses about marriage, that they can read during the week if they want. End with a prayer that God will give them wisdom as they prepare for marriage or singleness.

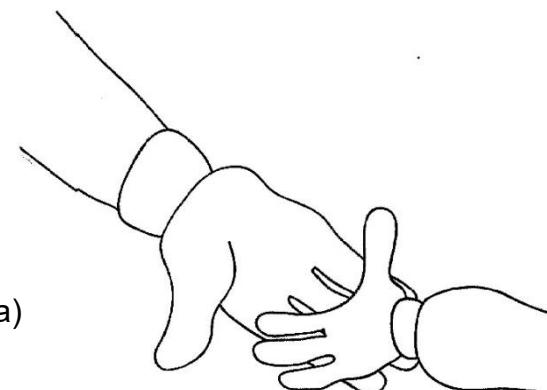
*Leader's guide*

# Lean on me!

1 Corinthians 8:4-13

**1.** What are some activities that Christians differ on?

- Clothing/modesty
- Horror movies (and other media)
- Light gambling
- Music (lyrics)
- Drinking alcohol
- Smoking/Vaping
- Going to parties where others are drinking.
- Tattoos
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



**2.** What disagreements were there in the church in Corinth? (vv. 4–8)

Disagreement	Reason
Eating meat that was sacrificed to idols is allowed.	
Eating meat that was sacrificed to idols is wrong.	

How should we treat people whose faith is 'weaker?' - verses 9-13

**3.** What does it mean to be a 'weaker' brother or sister?

Who in your life could be considered weak in faith?

## The Word on Encouragement:

1. 1 Corinthians 8
2. 1 Corinthians 9
3. 1 Corinthians 10
4. Hebrews 10:24, 25
5. Galatians 5:13-15
6. Ecclesiastes 4:9–12
7. 1 Corinthians 9:24–27  
– The Race

**4.** 'So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.'  
(1 Corinthians 10:31).

## Lean on Me (the 'weaker' brother – 1 Corinthians 8:4-13)

### **Significance for teens:**

Teens are old enough to be role models, sources of encouragement, or, conversely, stumbling blocks for others whose faith is fragile. In their families, at school, and at church, there are younger children and even peers who look up to them, imitate them, and follow their example. Teens can understand that their behavior influences others who are watching.

### **1. Hook.**

Begin with prayer and the game, '**Artists**.' Distribute paper and markers to the students and ask them to draw their portrait with their left hand (left-handed kids should use their right hand). Then collect the drawings and have the group guess which self-portrait belongs to whom. Say, 'Usually, one hand is weaker than the other. In the same way, in the body of Christ, or the church, there are also people who are stronger and others who are weaker in their faith.'

'Before we get to the scriptures that talk about this, let's discuss some activities that Christians may or may not think are wrong. There are behaviors that are definitely black (wrong) (e.g., murder, stealing, etc.) or definitely white (right and good). But there are also activities that we call *gray*. These are situations where Christians often disagree.'

Ask: 'What are some activities that are in this 'gray' area? (Have kids check their answers on the worksheet, add others and then discuss them. There is no point in arguing now – it is enough to note that there is disagreement about some of these activities).

### **2. Book – 1 Corinthians 8:4-13**

'There were disagreements in the church's earliest days, as we see in the church at Corinth. Corinth was a city where idol-worship flourished. Animals were sacrificed to various Greek and Roman gods as part of regular worship, feasts, and festivals.

The left-over meat was then sold at the market. Since Christians did not participate in the worship rituals, there was serious disagreement in the church about whether it was okay to buy and eat this meat.'

Note: this meat would have been cheaper or more available than meat that had not been sacrificed, making it practical to buy it. Or some people thought it gave special spiritual power to the one eating it because it had been offered to a god – in this case, Christians would not want to be tempted or tempt others to fall back into this belief.

Read v. 4-8 and write down the reasons why Paul thought it was okay to eat such meat, while weak believers thought it was wrong.

Answer: Some believed that idols were not really gods, so the meat was not really defiled. Others said that the meat was defiled and that eating it was equivalent to participating in idol worship.

Ask, 'How should we treat people whose faith is 'weaker'?

Read v. 9-13, find the answers to this question, and ask the kids to explain them.

Answers: do not be a stumbling block (v. 9); do not destroy them (v. 11); do not harm their weak conscience (v. 12); do not tempt your brother (v. 13).

### **3. Look**

Ask, 'What does it mean to be a weaker brother or sister?'

Possible answers: it's someone who has a more sensitive conscience; someone who is prone to temptation in a certain area; someone who has not been a believer very long

If a person has strong opinions about something being a sin, but no special weakness towards it, we do not consider them to be weak in faith. They have an opinion or conviction that others don't have, but it's not going to mess up their faith if someone else is doing it.

Ask: "Who in your life could be considered weak in faith?"

Answers: those who are younger than us; those who have recently come to Christ; those who have had addictions or habits in the past that make it hard for them to handle even a hint of their old ways.

Look again at the things that can cause division among believers (listed at the beginning of the lesson). Which of these things do you think are allowed, but could be a serious temptation to sin for a weak believer? One example: you may think that there is nothing wrong with being at a party with alcohol, but for a new Christian friend who is trying to get away from old friends and attitudes towards getting drunk, it would be too much for them to handle.

### **4. Took**

After the discussion, you can show your hands and say that we have one strong hand and one weak hand. The strong hand helps the weak hand. The same applies to human relationships: those who are older in their faith should notice how their choices affect others.

Paul then gives us some good advice. Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. Point out that there are references for further Bible reading on the handout.

Pray for wisdom from God so that we might understand how our actions impact other people, and not become stumbling blocks for someone else in our walk with Christ.

# Run the race

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**1.** What's something you have achieved through lots of hard work?

**2.** 'The Christian Race'

1 Corinthians 9:24:27

What reward will we receive? (vv. 24, 25).

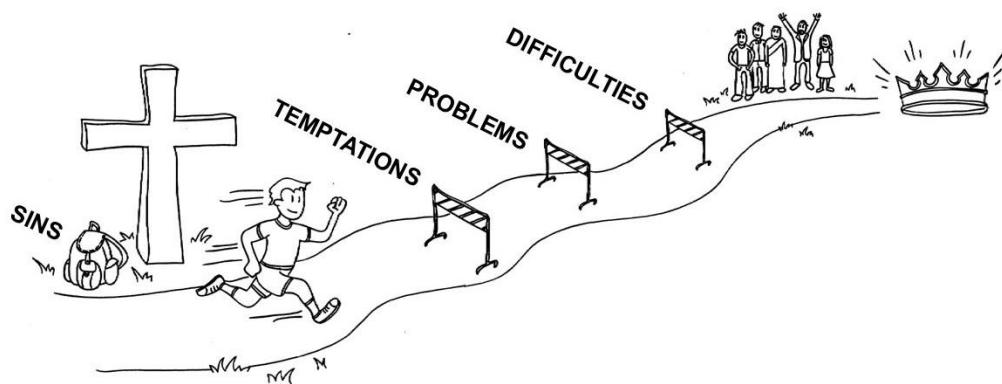
Why should we discipline our bodies and bring them under control? (v. 27).

Hebrews 12:1-2

Who are the witnesses?

What obstacles do we encounter in the race?

How should we run?



**3.** What are some things that hinder teens as they run their race of faith?

How can we strengthen our bodies and bring them under control to do good?

**4.** What do you need to do this week to run well?

---

*'No one ever drifted into spiritual maturity.'*

## Answers for the game “Outburst” (Sports categories)

Make your own lists, if your kids would find these lists too hard.  
It's good, if some answers are easy and others hard.

<p><b>1. Top athletes of the 21 century</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Michael Phelps – (swimming)</li><li>2. Serena Williams – (tennis)</li><li>3. Lionel Messi – (soccer)</li><li>4. LeBron James – (basketball)</li><li>5. Tom Brady – (football)</li><li>6. Roger Federer – (tennis)</li><li>7. Simone Biles – (gymnastics)</li><li>8. Tiger Woods – (golf)</li><li>9. Usain Bolt – (track)</li><li>10. Kobe Bryant – (basketball)</li></ol> <p>From <a href="https://www.givemesport.com/top-athletes-21st-century/">https://www.givemesport.com/top-athletes-21st-century/</a></p>	<p><b>3. Healthy food for athletes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Milk</li><li>2. Cottage cheese</li><li>3. Eggs</li><li>4. Meat</li><li>5. Oatmeal</li><li>6. Juice</li><li>7. Fruit</li><li>8. Vegetables</li><li>9. Bread</li><li>10. Pasta</li></ol>
<p><b>2. What athletes do to improve</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Sleep</li><li>2. Eat healthy</li><li>3. Train</li><li>4. Learn about their sport</li><li>5. Obey the coach</li><li>6. Watch other athletes</li><li>7. Avoid unhealthy habits</li><li>8. Self-discipline</li><li>9. Persevere/don't give up</li><li>10. Stay motivated to win</li></ol>	<p><b>4. Olympic Sports</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Gymnastics</li><li>2. Baseball</li><li>3. Boxing</li><li>4. Ping pong</li><li>5. Ice skating</li><li>6. Soccer</li><li>7. Equestrian/Horseback Riding</li><li>8. Swimming</li><li>9. Judo</li><li>10. Basketball</li></ol>

## Run the race (Spiritual Discipline - 1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

### **Significance for teens:**

Teens can show remarkable discipline when it comes to things that are important to them. Just look at how seriously kids work for their sports teams, music competitions, etc. The Bible says that there is an even more important goal—our spiritual life—for which we must be willing to make similar sacrifices.

### **1. Hook**

Begin the lesson with a prayer. Then play the game '**Sports Outburst**'. Rules of the game: divide the group into two teams.

The host has four lists of ten words each. The lists are grouped by topic (see lists above).

The first team chooses one of the four lists by number. The host then reads out the theme and the first team has 30 seconds to guess the words on that list. For example, if the theme is 'Olympic Sports,' they name all of the sports they can remember. Only answers that match the words on the list are counted.

After 30 seconds, time is called and as the leader reads all the words from the list, the team counts the number of words guessed correctly. *If a team insists that a word from the list was named but the leader did not hear it, the leader can accept it.*

Then it is the second team's turn to choose a number for the three remaining lists and guess the words in that category. Now, the first team times the second team for 30 seconds and so on.

Then each team plays one more time, and the team that gave the most correct answers in total – matching the words from the list – wins. (If needed, you can prepare your own lists for this game, appropriate for your group).

Transition to lesson and handout.

Say, 'Most often in life, getting something good requires money, effort, and time. Perhaps you have made sacrifices in order to achieve something important to you.'

Ask, 'What's something you have achieved through lots of hard work?' (Possible answers: a prize; good grades; success in a performance; a sports victory; learning to play an instrument; learning a new language, etc).

For the sake of success in the things we really care about, we sacrifice time, money, maybe even sleep, and we work really hard.

### **2. Book: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27**

The Bible says that spiritual growth also requires discipline and time. (It's very important to understand that we are talking about spiritual growth and spiritual rewards, not salvation and eternal life. Salvation and eternal life are found in Christ; they are His free gift to those who believe in Him).

But becoming spiritually mature and strong is a process that requires discipline and time. The process of spiritual growth has been compared to competing in sports, and in our passage today, running a race.

<p>Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. According to these verses: 'What reward will we receive?' (Answer: an unfading crown – vv. 24-25).</p> <p>Ask: 'Why should we discipline our bodies and bring them under control?' (Answer: to qualify for the race – v. 27).</p> <p>It is interesting that our life now is like a race with a finish line. There is another verse in the Bible where we see the same idea.</p> <p>Read Hebrews 12:1-2 together and answer the following questions:</p> <p>'Who are the witnesses?' (Answer: believers around us in heaven).</p> <p>'What obstacles do we encounter in the race?' (Answer: sin).</p> <p>'How should we run?' (Answer: patiently; looking to Jesus).</p> <p>Show them the picture on the handout: 'Here is a man running with hurdles in the way. He is on his way to fulfilling the purposes God has for his life, all the way to the end. Along the way, he comes up to 'hurdles' that can get in his way. A person can press on, or he can stumble and fall. If he falls, he can still get up, ask God for forgiveness, and continue running. And at the end of life, he will finish his race and receive his rewards.'</p> <p><b>3. Look:</b></p> <p>Ask: 'What sins can mess up a person's race?' Possible answers: lying, drunkenness, premarital sex, stealing.</p>	<p>Ask: 'What other things hinder teens as they run their race of faith?' Possible answers: laziness, TV programs, too much time commitment, friends.</p> <p>Perhaps something that is good in itself, such as homework or other activities, can also get in the way.</p> <p>Ask: 'How can we strengthen our bodies and bring them under control to do good?' (Like Paul in 1 Cor 9:27). Write the kid's answers on the board.</p> <p>Possible answers: filling our minds with God's thoughts; spending time with other believers; attending youth group and church (even when Sunday may be the only day when we can sleep in); reading the Bible; talking to God; looking for good Christian friends; serving others; reading Christian books; meetings with a spiritual 'coach.'</p>
	<p><b>4. Took</b></p> <p>Ask, 'What do you need to do this week to run well?' The students can look at the answers to the previous question written on the board and find what applies to them, or they might have their own ideas. Or maybe some need encouragement to simply keep on doing what they are already doing! No doubt some kids in your group are running well.</p> <p>Discuss the quote on the handout: 'No one ever drifted into spiritual maturity'. It takes intentionality and effort. End with prayer, asking for God's help in overcoming temptations and problems in order to keep running with our eyes fixed on Christ.</p>

# What is Love?

1 Corinthians 13:4-8



**1.** How can you tell that a person is in love?

**2.** Based on 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, match the qualities of true love in the table below with the qualities of infatuation:

True Love	Infatuation
<input type="checkbox"/> v.4 - Patient	A. Gets mad easily
<input type="checkbox"/> v.4 - Kind	B. Caves in under pressure
<input type="checkbox"/> v.4 - Does not want what belongs to others	C. Unkind
<input type="checkbox"/> v.4 - Does not brag	D. Brags
<input type="checkbox"/> v.4 - Is not proud	E. Doesn't last
<input type="checkbox"/> v.5 - Does not dishonor other people	F. Doesn't respect the other's privacy.
<input type="checkbox"/> v.5 - Does not look out for its own interests	G. Jealous
<input type="checkbox"/> v.5 - Does not easily become angry.	H. Focused on its own feelings
<input type="checkbox"/> v.5 - Does not keep track of other people's wrongs	I. Impatient
<input type="checkbox"/> v.6 - Is full of joy when the truth is spoken.	J. Rude to others
<input type="checkbox"/> v.7 - Always protects	K. Thinks the worst when there's a misunderstanding.
<input type="checkbox"/> v.7 - Always trusts	L. Wants wrong things
<input type="checkbox"/> v.7 - Never gives up	M. Proud
<input type="checkbox"/> v.8 - Never fails	N. Holds on to grudges

**3.** How can we tell if we have true love or infatuation? *Four observations:*

1. Love is not only feelings, but also _____.	1. Infatuation is fueled by emotions.
2. A person gradually '_____' into true love.	2. Infatuation can happen very quickly.
3. Love is selfless, interested in satisfying the other person. Wants _____.	3. The goal of infatuation is self-gratification; the person is 'in love' with the way the other person makes <i>them</i> feel.

4. Over time, love grows \_\_\_\_\_, and separation doesn't change it.

4. Over time or due to separation, feelings of infatuation cool down.

#### **4. 'Pursue love' (1 Corinthians 14:1)**

### **What Love Is Not**

What, then, is this elusive thing called love that everyone so desperately needs? Hollywood and our society lead us to believe that real love is something like the following little story:

I am a very attractive lovable person, fascinating and desirable in every way. But I managed to go unnoticed for a long time. The reason for that was that my one and only soulmate in this universe had not come my way. There was one made just for me and for no other, and at the right moment he would come into my life. Then suddenly he appeared! In that moment our eyes met and I knew that he was for me. He was my dream, my inspiration! He had everything! He was tall, tan, and terrific! We kissed and I knew that I could not live without him. This was love, because I was tingling with excitement all over. How could anything else be as important as this? We would live only for each other in perfect bliss. If there had been any doubt, all doubt vanished when we held each other close. This is what I had longed for all my life. He made me feel so good. Love had brought me my ideal. There could be no reason to wait a moment longer. With his great sense of humor, I knew we would never disagree about anything. Our love for each other would hurdle all obstacles as though they were nothing. Brought together by the hand of fate, we had to follow and get married, before it was too late. You dare not put off love; it might die if not acted on right now!

And so **we** lived happily ever after in the delightful ecstasy of marital bliss!

But this 'Cinderella Syndrome,' when a girl is waiting on her Prince Charming, is not real love. It is better named, 'infatuation,' and there's a vast difference between it and real love.

From the book Dwight H Small, *Design for Christian Marriage* (Old Tappan, N.J. Revell, 1971), p.131. quoted in *Dating: Guidelines from the Bible* by Scott Kirby p. 32-33.

<b>Adam</b>	<b>Eve</b>
<b>John Smith</b>	<b>Pocahontas</b>
<b>Prince Charming</b>	<b>Cinderella</b>
<b>The Beast</b>	<b>Belle</b>
<b>Simba</b>	<b>Nala</b>
<b>Joseph</b>	<b>Mary</b>
<b>Han Solo</b>	<b>Princess Leia</b>

<b>Boaz</b>	<b>Ruth</b>
<b>Mickey Mouse</b>	<b>Minnie Mouse</b>
<b>Shrek</b>	<b>Fiona</b>
<b>Peter Pan</b>	<b>Wendy</b>
<b>Abraham</b>	<b>Sarah</b>
<p>Be sure to also make some cards with couples from your church that the kids would know.</p>	

## What is Love? (True Love – 1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

### **Significance for teens:**

Teens are very emotional beings with their feelings changing every day and maybe even by the hour. They also have a new interest in romantic relationships, following the innocence of childhood. It's important that they understand what true love is, as opposed to infatuation.

### **1. Hook**

Begin with prayer, then play the game, 'Matchmaker' (similar to 'Memory'). Put the names of well-known couples from movies, history, the Bible, literature, *your church*, etc. on cards (one name per card - see the cards included in this lesson for ideas). Mix them, then place all the cards face down. Each person takes turns turning over two cards at a time. If the two names form a couple (e.g., Romeo and Juliet), they take both cards and get to keep going.

When a pair of cards turned over do not match, the cards are returned to their place face down and the next person takes a turn. As each kid takes a turn, they are trying to remember the names on the ones that have already been revealed. The winner is the one who has collected the most matching pairs at the end. If your group is large you may want to make multiple decks of cards and play in small groups.

After the game, ask, 'Can you remember your first love/ crush?' Let the kids talk briefly about it.

Pass out the handouts and ask, 'How

can you tell that a person is in love?' Write down their answers.

Possible answers: your heart beats faster when they are around; you care about what they do and who they hang out with; you think about them constantly, you try to 'accidentally' run into them, etc.

### **2. Book: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8**

In the Bible, there is a famous chapter that describes what true love looks like: Its 1 Corinthians 13.

After reading 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 have the kids match up the qualities of true love found in their verses with the quality of infatuation which is exactly the opposite. They can write the letter of the quality of infatuation in front of its opposite quality of true love.

Answers: v.4 - Patient (I.)  
 v.4 - Kind (C.)  
 v.4 - Does not want what belongs to others (G)  
 v.4 - Does not brag (D)  
 v.4 - Is not proud (M)  
 v.5 - Does not dishonor other people (J)  
 v.5 - Does not look out for its own interests (H)  
 v.5 - Does not easily become angry. (A)  
 v.5 - Does not keep track of other people's wrongs (N)  
 v.6 - Is full of joy when the truth is spoken. (L)  
 v.7 - Always protects (F)  
 v.7 - Always trusts (K)  
 v.7 - Never gives up (B)  
 v.8 - Never fails (E)

Afterward, take a look at the right-hand side of the chart. These are the opposites of the words describing LOVE in I Corinthians 13. If they describe your relationship, it's not love. It's infatuation, or lust.

### **3. Look**

Ask: 'How is love portrayed in movies and songs?'

Read the excerpt from the article, 'What Love Is Not.' Return to their answers to the first question: "How can you tell when someone is in love?"

Do these signs indicate true love? How can we know if our love is really love? (Hint: look again at the table/chart on the handout for ideas).

Here are 4 observations about the difference between love and infatuation.

1. Love is not only feelings, but also commitment;
2. A person gradually 'grows' into true love;

3. Love is selfless, interested in satisfying the other person. Wants to give. (John 3:16 can be used as a good example of true love);

4. Over time, love grows stronger, and separation doesn't change it.

### **4. Took**

If you have a boyfriend or girlfriend, this is a good chance to evaluate whether your relationship is strong and growing in real love, or if it's selfish infatuation.

If you don't have a romantic relationship, you can be learning to love all kinds of people with this kind of love. Read: 'Pursue love' in your relationships with others (1 Cor. 14:1). If you are learning to love in this way now, it won't be so hard to love a romantic interest in this way later.

End with prayer, asking God to help us love each other as He loves us.

## ***Leader's Guide***

# Christ is risen! 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 13-20

**1.** Name five of the most important events in human history.

**2.** What evidence does Paul give to support the claim that Christ rose from the dead?

Evidence #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures (vv. 3,4)



Evidence #2: the testimony of \_\_\_\_\_

Most scholars date the writing of 1 Corinthians to around \_\_\_\_ A.D. and Christ's resurrection to around \_\_\_\_ A.D. (\_\_\_\_ years between).

Many eyewitnesses of the risen Christ were still \_\_\_\_\_.

Christ appeared to Peter and the other apostles (v. 5), to 500 people at once (v. 6), to James and the other apostles (v. 7), and also to Paul (in a vision)

If Christ is NOT risen from the dead...	If Christ IS risen from the dead, as you also will be (v. 20)...
1. Our preaching and your faith are useless (v. 14)	1. Our faith is _____ and has great _____.
2. We are false witnesses (liars) (v. 15)	2. What we say is true, not a _____.
3. You are still in your sins (v. 15)	3. Our sins are _____.
4. The dead are not raised (v. 18)	4. We have _____ for resurrection.

### **3. What other evidence is there of Christ's resurrection?**

1. The empty tomb.
2. Sunday became the day of worship (replaced the Jewish Saturday Sabbath)
3. Authors of the New Testament wrote about the resurrection.
4. Many of Jesus' followers refused to believe that He had risen, but changed their minds when they saw Him alive again with their own eyes.
5. Jewish leaders did all they could to keep anyone from stealing the body from the tomb then saying that Jesus had risen: guards were posted and the cave was sealed by the Roman authorities.
6. There is no evidence that Christ did not rise from the dead.
7. Christ himself claimed that He always spoke the truth.
8. The apostles each suffered and/or died painful deaths for their faith, but not one of them went back on their belief that Christ rose from the dead.
9. Jesus predicted His resurrection before it happened; even the unbelieving Jewish leaders knew what he'd said.
10. The lives of millions of people have been changed by the power of Christ.

### **4. Christ is risen from the dead, therefore you will be raised too! (v. 20).**

**He is Risen indeed!**

## Christ is Risen! (The Resurrection of Christ – 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 13-20)

### ***Significance for Teens:***

The most important event in Christianity is the death and resurrection of Christ. If it had not happened, there would be no Christianity. Researchers (such as Josh McDowell and Frank Morrison) have sought evidence to disprove the resurrection, but ultimately, they've had to admit that the facts point to a bodily resurrection of Christ. As Paul says, if Christ rose from the dead, this is our hope for our own resurrection.

### ***1. Hook***

Begin with prayer. Before distributing the handouts, divide into groups of two or three and ask them to name five of the most significant events in human history and explain why these events are important. Pay attention to answers that are common to more than one group. Possible answers: the Creation, the crucifixion of Christ, the fall of Rome, the pilgrims coming to America, World Wars, etc.

Discuss what makes these events significant.

Say, 'Today we will look at one of the most significant events of all time; the resurrection of Christ. Why can the resurrection of Christ be called the most important event of all time?'

Possible answers: it was a miracle; there are people all over the world who believe that this is what happened; it means He really was the Son of God; its how we know we will also be raised from the dead; Christ divided our calendar into B.C./A.D., etc.

### ***2. Book***

In this lesson, we conclude our study of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (people in Corinth). At the end of the letter, Paul writes about the importance of Christ's resurrection. Ask, 'What evidence does Paul give to prove that Christ rose from the dead?' (He gives two pieces of evidence).

Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. The first piece of evidence is the Bible; Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day, *according to the Scriptures* (vv. 3, 4).

Jesus Himself predicted that, like Jonah, who was vomited out of the belly of a great fish after three days, He would also return to life on the third day. David also wrote prophetically, 'You will not let Your Holy One see decay' (Ps. 15:10; Acts 2:29-32).

The second piece of evidence Paul gives is the testimony of eyewitnesses. Most scholars date the writing of 1 Corinthians to around 56 AD, and Christ's resurrection took place around 33 A.D. (meaning there is a gap of about 23 years between). Many eyewitnesses of the risen Christ were still alive. They would know if it weren't true.

Who are these eyewitnesses, according to the text? Peter and the other apostles saw the risen Christ (v. 5); 500 people at the same time (v. 6); James and the other apostles (v. 7), as well as Paul (v.8).

***Leader's Guide***

So why is Christ's resurrection important for us? Read 1 Corinthians 15:13-20 and look at the left side of the table (consequences if Christ had not risen from the dead).

However, since Christ did rise, the opposite is true. Fill in the right side of the table. 1. Our faith is real and has great value. 2. What we say is true, not a myth. 3. Our sins are forgiven. 4. We have hope for resurrection.

### **3. Look**

What other evidence is there of Christ's resurrection? Read and discuss the evidence presented in the handout. The certainty of the resurrection gives us hope. If God raised Christ from the dead, we can be confident that He accepted Jesus' sacrifice—his death—for us. Death is not the end, and we too will rise again. Hallelujah!

### **4. Took:**

Read 1 Corinthians 15:20. A traditional greeting in the Early Church at Easter time was for one person to say, 'Christ is risen!' and the other person to answer, 'He is risen indeed!' Maybe your church practices this tradition, reflecting the awe and joy of the first Christians who had seen Jesus alive, with their own eyes, after His terrible death.

If you think your teens would respond well, you can say 'Christ is risen!' and they can answer, 'He is risen indeed!' Conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving for Christ's resurrection and for the hope we have for eternal life in Christ.

### **Leader's Guide**