

The God of Faithfulness

1 Corinthians 1:4-9

A New Church's Lessons for a Century-Old Congregation

- The Apostle Paul wrote to the newly formed church in Corinth to encourage and correct them in their new identity as God's people through Jesus Christ
 - The Corinthian church was founded c. 50 AD
 - The letter was written c. 53 AD
 - They were infants in faith
- The congregation was struggling with issues of theology, morality, and identity
 - And Paul spends much of his letter to them addressing and correcting these issues
- And yet, he begins his letter by encouraging them
 - Not based in their own strength, goodness, or faithfulness
 - But rather, in God's faithfulness

What a Church Needs

- Paul expresses the heart of what a healthy congregation is built on
- Grace: The unearned favor of God given through Jesus Christ (v. 4)
 - The Church exists because of the work of Jesus on the cross
- The Word: God's truth preached and known by all His people (v. 5)
 - Scripture tells us who we are and how to live as God's people
- Service: Spirit-empowered gifts to serve God, one another, and the community (v. 7)
- Fellowship: Living in communion with God and one another (v. 9)

Our Faithful God

- All these elements are not things the Church does on its own
 - They are the work of God in our midst
- Paul's encouragement to the Corinthians was centered on the simple truth: "God is faithful" (v. 9a)
- After 100 years of witnessing all these elements at work in our midst, we can declare this truth loudly and boldly: GOD IS FAITHFUL!
 - We have seen it in the hundreds of people called to eternal life in Jesus through His work here
 - We have seen in the Gospel going forth to the ends of the earth as a result of His work here
 - We have seen it in lives changed as Jesus is proclaimed here
 - And we have seen it when we have failed to be faithful, and yet He has not failed to be faithful to us (2 Tim 2:13)

So What?

- Our God has been so faithful for this last 100 years, working in and through His people here.
- Let us dedicate ourselves to be faithful to Him for the next 100 years and beyond, looking forward to what He will do

Meditation Verse: *1 Corinthians 1:9*