

## THE CORINTHIAN PARADOX

Introduction – A paradox consists of true statements that lead to an apparent or real contradiction in logic or intuition. In Corinth we see the contrast between God’s promise and the human reality of the congregation.

A. God envisions a radical new life for believers in the context of their congregation.

1 Corinthians 1:2, 4-9

B. The practical reality of the Corinthian congregation is very disappointing.

1. They were riddled with division over human personalities.
2. They tolerated an incestuous relationship.
3. They were suing each other in secular court.
4. Some were engaged with prostitutes.
5. They were confused with married life and single life.
6. They were at odds with one another over eating meat from pagan temples.
7. They disrespected Paul’s apostolic authority.
8. Their Christian assemblies were chaotic rather than edifying.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

C. The ultimate promise of God to Christians in community lies in the future.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Conclusion – The local congregation is filled with fallible human beings. Yet, they can unite to help the poor, encourage the struggling, birth new believers, and continue to grow spiritually.