

## Shadow Rock UCC – Adult Spiritual Formation

May 24, 2020

### I Corinthians Study, “Listen Up” Chapters 14-16

#### I Corinthians Listen Up

by unlisted YouTube video (<https://youtu.be/AZpr4rP7Oa4>), summarized in bullets below

- Chapter 14 is a bit of a let-down after the Love Chapter. In this section, Paul talks about using spiritual gifts “in order.” In Chapter 15, he talks more about the physical glory of the resurrection, our participation in that miracle, and about the end of history that he expected in the near future.
- In the video, I’m reading from Chapter 16, Paul’s wrap up of encouragement and instruction.
- No stumbling blocks! The weekly lesson materials will include an excerpt from the chapters for that week. No need to find and dust off your Bible or try to remember where this particular book is located.
- In the first century, the congregation at Corinth would have gathered together and heard Paul’s message together. In a culture in which most people were not literate, they would have heard this correspondence read aloud, so I will read the passage for the week aloud on the video. Consider how the experience of hearing something is different from reading.

#### I Corinthians 16

Now concerning the collection for the saints: you should follow the directions I gave to the churches of Galatia. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken when I come. And when I arrive, I will send any whom you approve with letters to take your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me.

I will visit you after passing through Macedonia—for I intend to pass through Macedonia— and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way, wherever I go. I do not want to see you now just in passing, for I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

If Timothy comes, see that he has nothing to fear among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord just as I am; therefore let no one despise him. Send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me; for I am expecting him with the brothers.

Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but he was not at all willing to come now. He will come when he has the opportunity.

Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.

Now, brothers and sisters, you know that members of the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to put yourselves at the service of such people, and of everyone who works and toils with them. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. So give recognition to such persons.

The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, greet you warmly in the Lord. All the brothers and sisters send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Let anyone be accursed who has no love for the Lord. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.

#### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Paul's letters (Romans, I and II Corinthians, I Thessalonians, Galatians, Philippians, Philemon – and perhaps others which are disputed) all have this long and rambly sign off. I'm sure that scholarly sources would tell me that this is the style of correspondence from the time period. I prefer to think that Paul was just rambly. 😊 Do you miss handwritten letters? Are letters a practice ripe for renewal or something to let go of?
- The length and style of chapter 16 reminds me of my family's pandemic video chats... We often don't have much to say, so the connection is so precious that we keep talking. Can you hear the concern and longing for face to face connection in Paul's words?
- Paul's 'last word' in I Corinthians is one of love (verse 24). In what ways is this also your own 'last word'?