

November 26 Answers

- 1) Paul's **second** letter to the church at Corinth (called 1 Corinthians). Paul wrote this letter to deal with various **problems** in the church and answer some **questions** the Corinthians had asked him in a recent letter (1 Cor 7:1). It had been almost two years since Paul left Corinth, and in his absence, the church had been visited by **Apollos** and perhaps Cephas (**Peter**). The Corinthians were greatly influenced by these two men, and some began to identify themselves as belonging to Peter or Apollos (others remained loyal to Paul or Christ). Paul responded, not by disavowing Apollos or his ministry, but by calling the Corinthians back to the **simplicity** of the gospel. He began by reminding them that baptism was about **following** Christ, not about swearing allegiance to the one who had baptized them. This teaches us not to fixate on those who led us to Christ, but rather to **follow** Jesus with them as brothers in the faith. Paul then urged the Corinthians to anchor their identity in the **cross** of Christ. This teaches us that the most important part of the gospel is its ability to **transform** our hearts and minds. Passion and rhetoric are useful, but they are not a substitute for the **power** of the Spirit. Paul then gave the Corinthians a correct understanding of Christian service. He and Apollos and Peter were **servants**, fellow-workers together for the sake of the gospel. We must be careful not to think of ourselves or others more **highly** than we ought. Paul concluded by calling the Corinthians to **imitate** him, their father in the faith (1 Cor 4:16). He willingly endured the scorn of the world in order to show forth the beauty and glory of **Christ**.