

THE INTERPRETATION BIBLE STUDIES LEADER HELPS

1 CORINTHIANS

The IBS Leader Helps are designed to facilitate group study by providing lesson plans for the ten units in each of the Interpretation Bible Studies. These lesson plans utilize a variety of interactive methods, which have been chosen for the express purpose of engaging participants in the learning process.

Each participant in the group should have a copy of IBS study book and should make a commitment to do the assigned preparation for each session.

The sessions are planned for one hour. If the time allotted is shorter than an hour, it will be necessary to be selective about the activities, choosing those that are most appropriate for your group.

Leader Preparation

Read 1 Corinthians in its entirety before beginning to teach. It is important to familiarize yourself with the book's overall content, so you can see how the individual passages fit into the larger scope of the book.

Skim through the whole study book to discern its flow. This is especially helpful if there are multiple teachers, in order to prevent leaping ahead into the next lesson.

Prepare the room ahead of time. For informal discussion and ease of sharing, a semi-circular arrangement of chairs works best. Position yourself as one of the group, instead of setting yourself apart as "the authority."

Secure necessary teaching aids. A newsprint easel is an invaluable asset. Be sure to have markers and masking tape if you wish to display the sheets for future reference. A map of Palestine in New Testament times is very helpful. Check the teaching suggestions for other necessary materials, such as hymnals, paper, pencils, art materials, and so on.

Prepare necessary handouts. A folder for each participant's handouts is helpful, but not essential.

Keep the key idea firmly in mind. Make sure all activities point participants towards this goal.

Pray for God's guidance. Prior to making preparations for the session, allow time to pray for each participant and for yourself.

Unit 1: No Divisions among You (1 Corinthians 1:10–25)

Key Idea: If the church is truly to be the body of Christ, its members must be united in one mind and one purpose.

Advance Preparation

Get a map of New Testament times, and prepare a brief presentation on Corinth and its church for step 3.

Write the following four open-ended sentences on a sheet of newsprint for step 4:

- The foolishness of the cross means . . . (v. 18)
- The foolishness of our proclamation means . . . (v. 20)
- The foolishness of Christ crucified means . . . (v. 23)
- The foolishness of God means . . . (v. 25)

Also gather commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and study Bibles for this step.

Cut crosses (approximately 4x5-inches) from paper, and gather pencils or pens for the group.

Make or procure a tape of the hymn “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.” Bring it and a tape player to the session for step 5, and post the words to the hymn on newsprint for step 6.

Opening (10 minutes)

1. Prayer

Use the following prayer or one of your own:

God,
 good beyond all that is good,
 fair beyond all that is fair,
 in you is calmness, peace, and concord.
 Heal the dissensions that divide us from one another
 and bring us back to a unity of love
 bearing some likeness to your divine nature.
 Through the embrace of love
 and the bonds of godly affection,
 make us one in the Spirit
 by your peace which makes all things peaceful.
 We ask this through the grace, mercy, and tenderness
 of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(From *Book of Common Worship*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, p. 812.)

2. Brainstorming “Divisions”

Ask participants to name some causes of division in the church. List these on newsprint.

Presentation (15 minutes)

3. Mini-lecture: *The City of Corinth and the Church*

Present a brief description of Corinth using information gained from the study book, Bible dictionaries, commentaries, and study Bibles. Use a map to show the location of Corinth, and the route Paul took on his second missionary journey. Be sure to include the following points: Corinth as a cosmopolitan center for art, philosophy and religion; its wealth and bustling commerce; its reputation for debauchery.

Then describe the church at Corinth and its problems, using information on pp. 5–6 of the study book. Ask: How are the divisions at Corinth similar to the divisions named in the opening exercise?

Exploration (15 minutes)

4. *Scripture Study and Discussion*

Post the newsprint that you prepared. Divide the participants into four groups. Assign each group one of the open-ended sentences on the newsprint and ask them to complete it. Suggest that the groups use the study book and other resources you have provided to help them answer their assigned question.

Response (15 minutes)

5. *Meditating on the Cross*

Give each participant a paper cross and a pencil or pen. While the hymn “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” plays softly, ask participants to write on the cross the answer to the question: What does the cross of Christ mean to you? Then invite participants to share what they have written in groups of four.

Closing (5 minutes)

6. *Praying a Hymn*

Sing the hymn “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” as a closing prayer.

7. Assignment

Ask participants to read Unit 2 and 1 Corinthians 3:5–17. Also ask them to write the answers to the following questions:

- What is the point of the metaphor in 1 Corinthians 3:5–9?
- What is the point of the metaphor in vs. 10–15?
- How is Jesus the foundation?
- How did Paul lay a foundation?
- What kind of building materials should the church be made of if it is to survive?
- Read 1 Peter 2:4–10. What similarities do you note with 1 Corinthians 3:10–15? Who is the cornerstone? What are the building materials?

Unit 2: God's Field and God's Temple (1 Corinthians 3:5–17)

Key Idea: If the church is truly to be the body of Christ, it must recognize its servant role and be built of the right materials.

Advance Preparation

Write the following open-ended sentence on a sheet of newsprint for step 4: “To be a servant in the church means”

Gather hymnals containing both “Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation” and “The Church’s One Foundation.” Participants will also need sheets of newsprint and markers.

Opening (5 minutes)

1. Prayer

Use a prayer of your own, or ask one of the participants to pray.

Presentation (15 minutes)

2. Hymn Study

Divide the class into two groups. Give each a sheet of newsprint, several hymnals, and a marker. Assign one group the hymn “Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation,” and assign the other “The Church’s One Foundation.” Ask the groups to study the words of their assigned hymn and to make a list of similarities between it and the images in 1 Corinthians 3:10–17. Allow time for the groups to come back together and share their findings with one another.

Exploration (20 minutes)

3. Discussion of Assignment from Previous Session

Discuss the questions given in the assignment. As a reminder, they are:

- What is the point of the metaphor in 1 Corinthians 3:5–9?
- What is the point of the metaphor in vs. 10–15?
- How is Jesus the foundation?
- How did Paul lay a foundation?
- What kind of building materials should the church be made of if it is to survive?
- Read 1 Peter 2:4–10. What similarities do you note with 1 Corinthians 3:10–15? Who is the cornerstone? What are the building materials?

Response (15 minutes)*4. Sentence Completion*

Post the newsprint you prepared with the open-ended sentence. Ask the participants to complete the sentence in their minds, not speaking anything aloud yet.

Closing (5 minutes)*5. Sharing*

Ask for several volunteers to share the sentence they completed about servanthood.

6. Blessing

Read 1 Corinthians 16:13–14 as a closing blessing: “Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.”

7. Assignment

Ask participants to read Unit 3 and 1 Corinthians 5:1–13. Also ask them to bring a definition of sin or a picture that represents sin to them.

Unit 3: Hand over to Satan (1 Corinthians 5:1–13)

Key Idea: If the church is truly to be the body of Christ, there is a need for discipline which leads to forgiveness and restoration.

Advance Preparation

On a sheet of newsprint, write the words, “Sin is” At the bottom of the sheet, write in bold letters the word “FORGIVEN.” Fold the bottom of the sheet away, so that that only the phrase “Sin is” can be seen on the paper for now.

Provide markers, masking tape, paper, and pens or pencils for group use.

Opening (10 minutes)

1. Prayer

Read Psalm 51:1–2, 10–12 as the opening prayer.

2. Defining “Sin”

Post the prepared and folded sheet of newsprint at the front of the class. As participants enter, ask them to use markers to write their definitions of sin on the sheet or attach any pictures of sin they have brought to the sheet with tape.

Presentation (10 minutes)

3. Reading Scripture

Ask four participants to read 1 Corinthians 5:1–13 aloud by paragraphs. Note any differences in translations.

4. Paraphrasing

Divide participants into groups of four. Ask each group to write a paraphrase of Paul’s instructions to the church in vs. 3–5. Reassemble in the larger group and share the paraphrases.

Exploration (20 minutes)

5. Question and Answer

Have the group discuss these questions:

- What is Paul’s reaction to the situation in the Corinthian congregation?
- Do you think his plan of action is appropriate?
- What is his goal?

- How do you reconcile vs. 4–5 with 1 Corinthians 4:3–5?
- How does scripture balance discipline with grace? (See question 1 on p. 32 of the study book.)
- Should the church today discipline its members? If so, how?

Response (15 minutes)

6. Application to Life

Divide participants into six groups. Assign one of the following situations to each group and ask them to decide how the church should respond:

- A church member is accused of child molestation.
- The pastor deliberately underpays taxes.
- An elder invests in a “Gentleman’s Entertainment Club.”
- A twelve-year-old is suspended from school for smoking pot on school grounds.
- A Sunday school teacher is charged with drunk driving.
- A choir member has an affair with the organist.

Ask each group to make a brief report to the larger group on their discussion.

Closing (5 minutes)

7. Prayer of Confession

Remind the participants of the sins they added to the sheet of newsprint at the start of the session. Now unfold the sheet to reveal the word “FORGIVEN.” Tell them that it is in the confidence that our sins are forgiven that we come to God with our confessions. Then close with this prayer or one of your own:

Merciful God,
 we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.
 We have failed to be an obedient church.
 We have not done your will,
 we have broken your law,
 we have rebelled against your love.
 We have not loved our neighbors,
 and we have refused to hear the cry of the needy.
 Forgive us, we pray.
 Free us for joyful obedience;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(From *Book of Common Worship*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, p. 89.)

8. *Assignment*

Ask participants to read Unit 4 and 1 Corinthians 7:1–40. Also ask them to write down one piece of advice they would give to someone entering marriage for the first time.

Unit 4: Marriage and Divorce (1 Corinthians 7:1–40)

Key Idea: If the church is truly to be the body of Christ, it must resist the imposition of a single standard on all members of the community.

Advance Preparation

Provide paper, pencils, and art supplies such as tempera paint, glue, stickers, yarn, markers, manila paper, or construction paper. Have newsprint and markers available for your own use.

Opening (10 minutes)

1. Prayer

Pray this prayer or one of your own:

Help us, O Lord,
to understand what it means
to live the life you have assigned us,
to which you have called us,
to your honor and glory. Amen.

2. Discussing the Assignment from the Previous Session

Ask members to discuss the answer to the assigned question: What advice would you want to give to someone entering marriage for the first time?

Presentation (15 minutes)

3. Listening to Scripture

Have a volunteer read aloud 1 Corinthians 7:1–40. Then ask participants to paraphrase briefly on paper “Paul’s Rules for Marriage, Divorce and Celibacy.” When all have finished, ask for volunteers to share what they wrote. List their responses on newsprint as they are given. Ask: Which rules are the most troublesome for you?

Exploration (15 minutes)

4. Question and Answer

Discuss these questions as a group:

- What principle does Paul give about sex in marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:3–5?
- What principle does he offer about mixed marriages in vs. 12–16?
- What attitude undergirds all of Paul’s teachings on marriage?
- What general rule does he offer in vs. 17, 20, and 24?

- Why does Paul think his rules promote good order and unhindered devotion to the Lord?
- Why does Paul urge a “stay put” mentality?
- Do you think Paul would counsel differently if he were writing today? Why or why not?

Response (15 minutes)

5. Creating Visual Reminders

Have participants break into pairs and discuss what it means to demonstrate “undivided devotion to the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:35). Have the pairs sum up their discussion with a motto or a brief saying. Then ask them to create a visual “reminder” of their motto for one another, using the art materials provided. Allow time for those who wish to share their creations briefly with the whole group.

Closing (5 minutes)

6. Prayer

Close with sentence prayers offered by the participants.

7. Assignment

Ask participants to read Unit 5 and 1 Corinthians 8:1–13. Also ask them to bring a news article about someone whose example might cause someone else to stumble.

Unit 5: Not Causing Others to Stumble (1 Corinthians 8:1–13)

Key Idea: If the Church is truly to be the body of Christ, then it must not be puffed up about its knowledge, but recognize that it is a community of needy sinners.

Advance Preparation

Prepare a brief report on *gnosis* and on eating meat dedicated to idols. (See step 4 for more details.)

Provide paper and pencils for steps 6–7. You will also need slips of paper for the closing litany.

Opening (5 minutes)

1. Prayer

Pray a prayer of your own, or ask one of the participants to pray.

2. Discussing the Assignment from the Previous Session

Share recent examples of persons in the news whose behavior may have caused others to stumble. Ask: What other activities or behaviors could become stumbling blocks for others?

Presentation (20 minutes)

3. Listening to Scripture

Read 1 Corinthians 8:1–13 aloud and ask participants to jot down a list of the nouns they hear. When you have finished, ask: What nouns surfaced most often in this passage? List these on newsprint, and then ask: What does this suggest to you?

4. Mini-lecture: “Gnosis” and Meat Eating

Summarize briefly the points made by Bruce Fisk on pp. 46–48 of the study book. If possible, supplement your research by reviewing the information on pp. 136–42 of Richard Hays’s volume on *First Corinthians* in the Interpretation commentary series.

Exploration (15 minutes)

5. Question and Answer on the Scripture

Have the participants discuss the following:

- What does Paul mean by contrasting knowledge with love?
- What is meant by “weak” in these verses?
- What principle is Paul applying here?

Response (15 minutes)*6. Writing a Letter*

Have the participants think of someone they may have caused to stumble by their own behavior (a child, someone at church, a fellow worker, a young person, a spouse) and write a letter to that person. Invite them, when done, to share their letter with one other person.

Closing (5 minutes)*7. Writing a Litany*

Ask participants to write one line of a prayer of confession on a slip of paper and turn the slips in to you. Read these in random order for your prayer, having the group respond after each, “Lord, have mercy.”

8. Assignment

Ask participants to read Unit 6 and 1 Corinthians 9:14–27. Also ask them to consider the question: How does Paul describe his role as a missionary?

Unit 6: All for the Sake of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 9:14–27)

Key Idea: If the church is truly to be the body of Christ, it must be constrained and compelled by the gospel of Jesus Christ to take the good news to the world.

Advance Preparation

Write the following open-ended sentence on a sheet of newsprint for step 6: “The Christian life is like a race because”

Prepare five index cards, each with the name of a particular group or person:

- Corporate executives
- Hearing impaired adults
- Olympic athletes
- Yuppies in an upscale subdivision
- Jail inmates

Provide hymnals, paper, and pens or pencils for the participants.

Opening (10 minutes)

1. Prayer

Use the following prayer or one of your own:

By your word, O God, your creation sprang forth,
and we were given the breath of life.
By your word, eternal God,
death is overcome,
Christ is raised from the tomb,
and we are given a new life in the power of your Spirit.
May we boldly proclaim this good news,
by the words of our mouths
and the deeds of our lives,
rejoicing always in your powerful presence;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

(From *Book of Common Worship*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, p. 803.)

Presentation (10 minutes)

2. Listening to Scripture

Ask participants to read 1 Corinthians 9:14–27 aloud, taking turns by verses.

3. Discussing the Assignment from the Previous Session

Ask participants to share their discoveries about how Paul describes himself.

4. Question and Answer

Ask the group these questions:

- What compels Paul to preach?
- Why does he refuse to accept payment?
- What is his reward?
- What is his goal in preaching?
- What does he mean by saying “I have become all things to all people?”

Exploration (20 minutes)

5. Role Play

Divide participants into five groups. Give each group one of the index cards on which you have identified a particular set of people.

Tell the group: “I am going to read a passage from scripture. Please listen as if you were one of the persons on your card.” Then read the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1–9). Ask: Responding as a member of your special group, how did you understand the message? Is it applicable to your life?

Then ask: What does it mean when we apply Paul’s principles in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23 to the story?

Response (15 minutes)

6. Open-ended Sentences

Post the newsprint you prepared with the open-ended sentence. Ask participants share their completions to the sentence.

Closing (5 minutes)

7. Reflection on a Hymn

Have participants read aloud the words to “Fight the Good Fight” or another hymn of your choosing. Invite them to reflect on the words as they relate to 1 Corinthians 9:14–27.

8. Prayer

Pray a prayer of dedication, or ask one of the participants to pray.

9. Assignment

Ask participants to read Unit 7 and 1 Corinthians 11:17–34. Also ask them to write their answer to the question: What does the Lord's Supper mean to you?

Unit 7: This Is My Body (1 Corinthians 11:17–34)

Key Idea: If the church is truly to be the body of Christ, then it must recognize that the Table calls its members to extend Christ’s love to others.

Advance Preparation

Prepare a table in the center of the room with a round loaf of bread and a chalice of grape juice.

Bring a cassette recorder and a tape of soft music.

Gather pictures of the Lord’s Supper from prints, art books, or the Internet. Display them on the walls or on a table.

Make copies of the questions to be used in step 4. Also provide paper and pens or pencils for the group.

Opening (5 minutes)

1. Silent Prayer and Meditation

Play soft taped music (such as the music from Taizé) as participants gather. On a table in the center of the room, place a round loaf of bread and a chalice with grape juice. Allow a few minutes for all to gather and have time to meditate on the bread and cup.

Presentation (15 minutes)

2. Listening to Scripture

When all have gathered, read quietly the text from 1 Corinthians 11:17–34.

3. Picture Study

Invite participants to study the portrayals of the Lord’s Supper and select one on which to focus. Ask:

- What is the artist trying to convey?
- Is the picture similar or dissimilar to the celebration in the upper room? Why?
- Is the picture similar or dissimilar to the celebration in the Corinthian church? Why?

Exploration (20 minutes)

4. Group Research

Divide the participants into three groups and give each group the following set of questions to answer. Encourage them to use both the study book and the Bible for information.

For Group 1:

- What is the tone of Paul’s voice in this passage?
- How did the Corinthians observe the Lord’s Supper?
- What is the main problem?
- What are Paul’s final instructions to them?

For Group 2:

- Compare 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 to Luke 22:19–20. What differences do you notice?
- What did Jesus mean when he said, “This is my body that is for you”?
- How is the cup “the new covenant” in his blood?
- How does eating and drinking together “proclaim the Lord’s death”?

For Group 3:

- What does Paul mean by eating and drinking “in an unworthy manner”?
- What does he mean by “examine yourselves”?
- What does he mean by “discerning the body”?
- What does it mean to be the one body of Christ?
- What problem was Paul trying to address?
- What comparable issues exist in our churches today?
- How can we better prepare for communion?

If time allows, have everyone come back together and share their findings.

Response (15 minutes)*5. Sharing*

Invite participants to share what Holy Communion (the Lord’s Supper, the Eucharist) means to them.

Closing (5 minutes)*6. Singing a Hymn*

Sing the doxology.

7. Assignment

Ask participants to read Unit 8 and 1 Corinthians 12:1–31. Also ask them to name three gifts they have been given by God.

Unit 8: Concerning Spiritual Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1–31)

Key Idea: If the church is to be truly the body of Christ, its members must accept and celebrate one another’s gifts.

Advance Preparation

Participants will need hymnals, slips of paper, and pens or pencils.

Provide Bible dictionaries and theological word books for step 4. These can likely be found in your church’s or pastor’s library.

Label a sheet of newsprint, “Spiritual Gifts Today.” Print the following terms on newsprint:

- Wisdom
- Knowledge
- Faith
- Healing
- Miracle working
- Prophecy
- Discernment of spirits
- Tongues
- Interpretation of tongues
- Apostleship
- Teaching
- Deeds of power
- Assistance
- Leadership

Opening (10 minutes)

1. Prayer

Use the following prayer or one of your own:

Eternal God,
 you have called us to be members of one body.
 Join us with those
 who in all times and places have praised your name,
 that with one heart and mind,
 we may offer our gifts to the building up of your church,
 and to the honor of our Lord and Savior,
 Jesus Christ. Amen.

(Adapted from *Book of Common Worship*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, p. 17.)

2. *Naming Gifts*

Give each participant a sheet of paper and ask them to write their names at the top. Collect the sheets and redistribute them. Ask participants to list the spiritual gifts of the person whose name they have received. Collect the lists and then read aloud. After each reading, ask participants to add to the list of the gifts that have been identified. Return each list to the person named on it.

Presentation (15 minutes)

3. *Listening to Scripture*

Ask participants to read 1 Corinthians 12:1–31 aloud, taking turns by paragraphs.

Exploration (20 minutes)

4. *Gifts and the Church*

Post the newsprint that you labeled “Spiritual Gifts Today.” Divide the participants into pairs or small groups. Split the fourteen spiritual gifts listed on the newsprint among the pairs or groups. Ask participants to use the Bible, Bible dictionaries, theological wordbooks, and the study book to define their assigned gift(s), determine in which area(s) of church ministry the gift(s) would be most useful, and comment on where they have observed the gift(s) being used.

Response (10 minutes)

5. *Writing a Litany*

Ask each of small group or pair to write one line on a slip of paper, describing the value of the gift(s) they have been defining. When all have finished, collect the slips and read them aloud, asking members to respond to each gift with the phrase, “We give you thanks, O Lord.”

Closing (5 minutes)

6. *Singing a Hymn*

Sing or read aloud “Take My Life and Let it Be” or another hymn of personal dedication.

7. *Assignment*

Ask participants to read Unit 9 and 1 Corinthians 13. Also ask them to write a paraphrase of vs. 4–11.

Unit 9: Love Never Ends (1 Corinthians 13:1–13)

Key Idea: If the church is truly to be the body of Christ, it must be a loving community.

Advance Preparation

Obtain a copy of a modern translation or paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13, such as can be found in Eugene Peterson's "The Message."

Cut a large red heart from construction paper for each participant. Also provide markers and hymnals for the group.

Opening (5 minutes)

1. Prayer

Use the following prayer of St. Francis of Assisi or one of your own:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
 Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 where there is injury, pardon;
 where there is doubt, faith;
 where there is despair, hope;
 where there is darkness, light;
 where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not seek so much
 to be consoled as to console,
 to be understood as to understand,
 to be loved as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

(From *Book of Common Worship*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, p. 25.)

Presentation (15 minutes)

2. Listening to Scripture

Read 1 Corinthians 13 aloud from the modern translation or paraphrase that you found. Ask for several volunteers to read their own paraphrases of vs. 4–11 (the assignment from the end of the previous session).

Exploration (20 minutes)

3. Group Reflection

Divide participants into four groups. Ask the groups to interpret 1 Corinthians 13 in the following contexts, describing what particular implications it might have for these relationships:

Group 1: Relationships in the church

Group 2: Relationships in the family

Group 3: Relationships in the community

Group 4: Relationships with “enemies” (those who are alienated or hostile)

4. Sharing

Bring everyone back together. Ask representatives from each group to share their findings with the class as a whole.

Response (15 minutes)

5. Heart to Heart

Give each participant a large red heart. Ask them to write on the heart examples of things in their relationships with family and friends that fall short of the loving actions described in the text. Then ask them to write beside each example a specific act that might correct that failure.

Closing (5 minutes)

6. Prayer

As a closing prayer, have the group read in unison the first verse of “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” or another hymn about God’s unending love.

7. Assignment

Ask participants to read Unit 10 and 1 Corinthians 14:26–40. Also ask them to check with a commentary or a study Bible to see why Paul says it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. Have them bring a church bulletin to the next session. (Note: Bring extra bulletins yourself!)

Unit 10: All Things Done Decently and in Order (1 Corinthians 14:26–40)

Key Idea: If the church is to truly be the body of Christ, it must provide orderly worship that reflects the character of God.

Advance Preparation

Prepare a sheet of newsprint with the heading, “Paul’s Rules for Worship.”

Participants will need paper and pens or pencils. You will also want to supply some extra church bulletins for those who did not bring one.

Make copies of the following prayer of Dag Hammarskjöld:

A Prayer of Dag Hammarskjöld

Great and good God,
 give us pure hearts that we may see you,
 humble hearts that we may hear you,
 hearts of love that we may serve you,
 hearts of faith that we may live in you,
 reverent hearts that we may worship you,
 here and in the world out there,
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(From *Book of Common Worship*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, p. 22. Permission is granted to reproduce this prayer for use in the educational setting described in this session.)

Opening (5 minutes)

1. Prayer

Pray in unison the prayer of Dag Hammarskjöld you copied, or pray a prayer of your own.

Presentation (15 minutes)

2. Listening to Scripture

Ask one of the participants to read 1 Corinthians 14:26–40 aloud.

3. Review of the Assignment from the Previous Session

Ask participants to list Paul’s rules for worship. As they name the rules, write them on newsprint you have prepared. Ask: What problems is Paul trying to rectify?

Exploration (20 minutes)*4. Triad Discussion*

Ask participants to gather in groups of three and discuss the church bulletins they have brought. If some do not have bulletins, provide them with ones you have supplied. Ask the triads to discuss these questions:

- What is the church's worship style?
- Does it follow a tight script or is it spontaneous?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?
- What would Paul say about the order of service?

Response (15 minutes)*5. Planning a Worship Service*

Invite participants to remain in groups of three and plan a worship service that would follow Paul's rules.

6. Sharing

Ask the triads to report to other participants on their worship service. After all are done, ask:

- What are the common elements in each service?
- What, if anything, is unique or different?

Closing (10 minutes)*7. Reflection*

Ask participants to reflect on the study of 1 Corinthians as a whole and to share one new learning they have gained from this study.

8. Prayer

Offer a prayer for the participants and for the church, that it might truly be the body of Christ.