



LESSON 04: PAUL WRITES TO CHURCHES

Letters

Writing to "You"

I. You Sing/Plural (review)

→ [1 Cor 6:19-20](#)

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies (NIV).

→ [1 Peter 2:9](#)

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light (NIV).

- Almost 5,000 verses where you pl. is translated "you."

II. Paul's Letters to *Churches* vs. Letters to *People*

Churches

- Romans
- Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- Thessalonians

People

- Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon

III. Our Instincts

Favorite verses are often individualized. Inspiration for me.

→ [Philippians 4:13](#)

I can do all this [things] through him who gives me strength (NIV).

Knowledge, Love, and the Body of Christ

I. Idol Meat

→ [1 Cor 8:1-3](#)

¹Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. ²Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. ³But whoever loves God is known by God.

→ [1 Cor 8:4-6](#)

⁴So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” ⁵For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), ⁶yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

→ [1 Cor 8:7-8](#)

⁷But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. ⁸But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

→ [1 Cor 8:9-13](#)

⁹Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. ¹²When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.

→ [1 Cor 10:23-24](#)

²³“I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but not everything is constructive. ²⁴No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.

II. Giftedness and Importance

→ [1 Cor 12:21-26](#)

²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” ²²On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵so that there should be no

division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

III. Lord's Supper

→ 1 Cor 11:20-22

²⁰ So then, when you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, ²¹ for when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers. As a result, one person remains hungry and another gets drunk. ²² Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter!

→ 1 Cor 11:29

²⁹ For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.

- Body: dual meaning. But not *only* about stony silence and thinking the right thing about the physical body of Jesus.
- Eating and drinking judgment = being unaware of how my behavior is affecting the church (body) of Christ.

Conclusions

- A balance between the vertical relationship (God and me) and the horizontal relationship (others and me).
- One affects the other. They are not independent.