

**Supplemental Notes:**

*1 & 2*

*Corinthians*

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## Audio Listing

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### Introduction and 1 Corinthians 1

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### 1 Corinthians 15-B & 16

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## Audio Listing

### 2 Corinthians 1

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### 2 Corinthians 6 and 7

Paul the Evangelist. Paul the Example. "Be not unequally yoked."

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### 2 Corinthians 10 and 11

"Secrets" of the Ministry. How to wage Spiritual Warfare.

### 2 Corinthians 12 and 13

Paul's defense of his ministry. The Thorn in the Flesh. Final Greetings.

## 1 Corinthians "1 Californians"

The city of Corinth enjoyed a strategic geographical position. It was situated on an isthmus, a narrow neck of land between the Corinthian Gulf (Port of Lechaenum) and the Sardonian Gulf (Port of Cenchrea). This guaranteed its commercial prosperity.

Isthmus transit via Corinth avoided the long and risky voyage around the rocky, storm-tossed capes (Cape Malea, now Cape Matapan) at the south of the Peloponnese (250 miles). "A sailor never takes around Malea until he first writes his will."

Small vessels used a ship tramway with wooden rails. The isthmus was called *Diolkos*, the place of "dragging across." Larger vessels required reloading. Nero tried to cut a canal across it without success. The modern canal built by the French (1881-93) follows his route. North-South trade routes intersect East-West trade routes here. See map below:



Corinth was an ancient city. It appears in Homer's *Iliad* (9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.). Thucydides, the Greek historian, records it was here that the first battleships, *triremes*, were built. Also, Corinth is the setting for the legendary Argos, where Jason sailed the seas searching for the golden fleece.

L. Mummius Achaicus, a Roman, destroyed the city in 146 B.C. Julius Caesar refounded it as a Roman colony a century later and Corinth regained its former greatness.

This new city of Corinth was primarily a Roman colony. Note the Latin names associated with Corinth in NT: Lucius, Tertius, Gaius, Erastus, Quartus (Rom 16:21-23); Titus, Justus, Crispus (Acts 18:7-8); Fortunatus and Achaicus (1 Cor 16:17). Corinth was highly cosmopolitan: Greeks, Latins, Syrians, Asians, Egyptians, and Jews...

Over 1000 prostitutes were connected with the temple of Aphrodite on the Acrocorinth, an acropolis on a 2000-foot-high granite hill overlooking Old Corinth. (Aphrodite Kallipygos, "Aphrodite of the Beautiful Buttocks," Athenaeus, 12.554c; "Patroness of the Harlots.")

In addition: Asclepias, Apollo, Poseidon, Athena, Hera, Hermes, and the Egyptian gods Isis and Serapis were worshipped in Corinth.

Even in the pagan world, this city was known for its moral corruption. Paul lists some of these: fornication (*porneia*, thus, pornography), idolatry, adultery, effeminacy, homosexuality, stealing, covetousness, drunkenness, swindling, etc. (1 Cor 6:9-10).

"Corinth" came to imply licentiousness. *Korinthiazesthai*, "Corinthianize" = to live in debauchery; "Go to the devil."

The city of Corinth was Hollywood, Las Vegas, and New York all rolled into one. It was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia; it was the most populous and wealthy in Greece. The finest athletes were attracted to the Isthmian Games. (So dominant that they were celebrated even after the city was destroyed.) Corinth enjoyed fertile soil; grapes and other crops flourished. ("Currant" derives from Corinth.) Corinth was intellectually alert, materially prosperous, but morally corrupt. Its citizens were devoted to the reckless development of the individual. Merchants gained by all and every means;

men of pleasure, surrendering to every lust; men recognized no superior and no law but their own desires.

Horace: "It's not every man's lot to get to Corinth" (Epistles, I.17.36); referring to the great expense of the self-indulgent life at Corinth (i.e., "California").

## Paul at Corinth

Paul went to Philippi: He met opposition by fanatical Jews; then went to Thessalonica and Berea and on to Athens—with little success. (Paul's 18 months compressed into 17 verses: Acts 18:1-18.) Paul then went to Corinth "with much trembling" (1 Cor 2:3) ... alone because Silas and Timothy were occupied in Macedonia.

He lodged with Aquila and Priscilla. Jews expelled from Rome by a decree of Emperor Claudius (A.D. 49?). Like Paul, they were "tent-makers" (leatherworkers?) by trade.

Paul ultimately has to leave the synagogue. Cast out by organized religion. Sets up shop with Justus right next door(!). [Cf. John: Blind man, cast out of synagogue, then Jesus found him. He was rejected by men, then the Lord gave him special power.] To be rejected of men is often a sign of acceptance with the Lord. The Lord Himself encourages Paul (Acts 18:9-11).

Crispus, ruler of the synagogue, became a believer (Acts 18:8). These three are the only Jews mentioned. Sosthenes may be the synagogue ruler in Acts 18:17, and he also became a believer! But most converts were Gentile pagans.

Gaius: He gave hospitality to Paul and the whole Church (Rom 16:23; written from Corinth).

Erastus was the city's director of public works (Rom 16:23); an inscription in Corinth speaks of an Erastus who laid down a pavement at his own expense. Gallio, proconsul, refuses to hear a purely religious matter (Acts 18:13).

Some time after Paul left Corinth, Apollos, a learned man from Alexandria, arrived. He had been in Ephesus teaching Christianity, but he knew only John's Baptism. Aquila and Priscilla "explained the

way of God more adequately” (Acts 18:26). Apollo then went to Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital.

Paul’s preaching, despite his educational background, had a studied simplicity (1 Cor 2:2-4); Apollos was probably highly rhetorical (Acts 18:24, 27-28).

Some time after this, Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthian church, a letter which apparently perished (1 Cor 5:9). (Some scholars believe it is preserved as 2 Cor 6:14-7:1.) This letter had been misunderstood (1 Cor 5:9-10) and Paul mentions it to clear up a misconception. [Remember: The chapters were not divided up until the 13<sup>th</sup> century; the verses not until the 16<sup>th</sup>.]

## Occasion of 1 Corinthians

The household of Chloe brought him news of cliques in the church (1 Cor 1:11) and the church wrote him a letter (re: 1 Cor 7:1), presumably brought to Ephesus by Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus (1 Cor 16:17) who probably added their own comments. The situation was serious. Paul responded with the letter we know as 1 Corinthians.

## The “Painful Visit”

The situation worsened. Paul felt it necessary to leave his work in Ephesus and pay a hurried visit in the attempt to set things right. (This visit is implied in passages in 2 Corinthians, which speak of Paul as being ready to pay a third visit to Corinth (2 Cor 12:14; 13:1; his second visit is past, 13:2).

His references to “coming again in sorrow” (2 Cor 2:1) indicate that this visit had been an unpleasant one. It failed to clear up the situation and Paul went away profoundly disturbed.

## The “Severe Letter”

Paul determined to write another letter, obviously very severe in tone, and it cost him much to write (2 Cor 2:4; 7:8). Had it not been successful it might conceivably have meant a final rupture between Paul and this church he had founded. This letter seems to have been lost. (Many scholars feel part of it is preserved in 2 Cor 10-13.) The letter was apparently taken by Titus, who was to return via Macedonia

and Troas. Paul was impatient to know how it had been received. When he eventually catches up to Titus, he learns that all is well (2 Cor 2:12-17; 7:5-7, 13).

Out of his great relief and joy, Paul wrote the letter we call 2 Corinthians. Almost certainly he visited the church soon afterwards.

Three Visits:

- 1) When church was founded;
- 2) The “painful” visit;
- 3) A visit after 2 Corinthians had been sent.

Four letters:

- 1) The “Previous Letter”;
- 2) 1 Corinthians;
- 3) The “Severe Letter”;
- 4) 2 Corinthians.

## Authorship

There is no doubt that Paul is the author. He is cited as the author in 1 Clement 47:1, a first century letter, and freely quoted by Ignatius and Polycarp; plus subsequent frequent references.

The church at Corinth is the “carnal church.” Spiritual babes, immature and undeveloped spiritually. Unseparated from the world. They have only a minimum of doctrine; what they have is mostly practical, conduct-related. Paul addresses the following:

- Discipline, Chapter 5;
- Going to Law, Chapter 6;
- Marriage and Divorce, Chapter 7;
- Christian Liberty, Chapters 8, 9, 10;
- Lord’s Table, Chapter 11;
- Tongues, Chapters 12-14;
- Resurrection, Chapter 15.

# 1 Corinthians 1

- 1] "...called": The divine origin of his apostolate authority (Rom 1:1; Gal 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1).
- "Sosthenes" may be the Jewish "synagogue ruler" of Acts 18:17; a believer.
- Ekklesia*, assembly: The Septuagint (LXX), this same term is used for the people of Israel.
- 2] "of God": Not one among many; unique, sanctified: set apart.
- Note: Church of God... sanctified... saints. Remember this is Corinth, the most carnal, worldly, sectarian church; *yet saved!*
- This is essential: Distinguish between one's position and practice; one's standing and his state. Otherwise, it's impossible to understand any other part of the New Testament.
- Paul does not threaten them with the loss of salvation, Why? It's God's faithfulness, not theirs (re: v.4). Remember the Prodigal son: his relationship did not change; he was still his son! (Lk 15:11-32).
- "With all...in every place...": This letter is addressed to each of us who seek to own the Lordship of Christ. [Parallels the OT: call upon the name of YHWH (Joel 2:32 et al); sets the highest possible place to Christ.]
- The first nine verses: Announces who they (we) are *before he addresses their problems...*
- 3] Grace, *charis*: Greek greeting, *chairin*, peace: In Hebrew it's *shalom*. Our Lord Jesus Christ. No one in the Scriptures ever addresses our blessed Savior merely as "Jesus." This epistle emphasizes His Lordship. If He is not Lord of all, then He is not Lord at all. Number one on a list of one!
- 4] "...given by Jesus Christ": God's grace is *given!* Not for their achievements; not earned, but given.

- 6] "...confirmed": The verb used in *papyri* in the legal sense of guaranteeing. "He who began a good work... will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil 1:6). It will never be said of God that He saved a man and then couldn't keep him. The Shepherd keeps the sheep, not the sheep.

- 7] *Charisma*. Used in the following ways:
- 1) Salvation (Rom 5:15);
  - 2) God's good gifts in general (Rom 11:29);
  - 3) Special endowments of the Spirit (12:4ff).
- All of God; all of grace.
- No church was more richly endowed, and yet no church was more carnal. They became more occupied with the gift rather than the Giver.
- 9] *Koinonia*: Fellowship, communion, communication. "Lord Jesus Christ": Name of the Savior mentioned 10 times in 10 verses.

## Divisions (1:10-17)

- Quibbling, following personalities, wrangling over nonessentials.
- 10] "...brethren": Used 39X in this letter. (And in Romans & 1 Thess, 19 times each.)
- Schisma*: Tears, rips; thus produces dissensions and cliques. (Not denominations: these divisions are internal, not external). Does Christ love His Church? Then, don't we grieve Him when we attack (a member of) it?
- 11] Chloe: She is not otherwise known.
- 12] May not be actual names (cf. 1 Cor 4:6). May simply be using them figuratively. He doesn't put any one person on the spot. Corinth loved philosophers, and so followed the "teachings" of particular teachers.
- Baptism (v. 14-16). It is appropriate for a new believer to be baptized, but don't look to the person who baptizes you--look to the Lord!

14] Baptism: Christ delegated this to His followers. Paul did baptize, but as exceptions.

## The “Foolishness” of God: The Ultimate Oxymoron

[Oxymoron examples: Jumbo shrimp; military intelligence; engineering commitment; etc.]

18] Message = *logos*, the word (cf. John 1:1-3).

“Foolishness”: *Morita*, thus moronic. Everyone in the world is *presently* in one of two classes: saved or lost. How do you know? Is the message of Christ foolishness, bizarre, weird? The cross: It is, at the same time, both the declaration of man’s utter depravity and the manifestation of God’s infinite Love.

“Perish”? = lost (2 Cor 4:3).

19] Paul quotes from Isa 29:14, LXX (cf. Ps 33:10; Prov. 14:12; 16:25). One-third of Paul’s quotes come from Isaiah.

*Aion*, “this age”; *kosmos*, this “ordered universe.” [To bring order out of chaos; cf. “cosmetics.”]

Philosophy = “love of wisdom.” In Corinth, there were fifty different philosophical movements, each with their favorite philosopher. The Christian has no need for human philosophy: where it agrees with Scripture, it is unnecessary. Where it disagrees, it is wrong and therefore misleading. It has nothing reliable to offer (Col 2:8).

22] “For the Jews require a sign”: The Jews demanded a sign (Mt 12:38; 16:1,4; Mk 8:11-12; Jn 6:30).

23] They didn’t know their own Scriptures (Ps 22, Isa 53, Dan 9).

24] “Wisdom” would have opened the way to salvation only to the intellectually gifted.

26] “...are called”: Points to the divine initiative. [Lady Huntington, a friend of Whitfield and the Wesleys: She was “saved by an ‘m’:” It says “not many,” not “not any.”]

Eleven disciples were lowly Galileans: They were fishermen, tax collectors; peasants. Only one was a “gentleman,” a Judean—his name was Judas.

Saul of Tarsus was a contrast: He was educated in two cultures and was a leader, powerfully placed. He counted it all for naught. He had to give up his religion in order to go to heaven!

27] Again, *God* chose: This underlines the fact that He has His purposes.

30] “In” Christ Jesus: Whole books have been written about this enigmatic phrase. It’s the most intimate, the closest possible connection with our Lord.

Wisdom *includes*:

Righteousness (no “our” in the Greek). Christ is our righteousness (2 Cor 5:21);

Sanctification, Holiness (Rom 6:19; 1 Thess 4:3-7);

Redemption (Mk 10:45, et al.).

Three Tenses of Salvation:

*have been saved* from the penalty of sin, righteousness;

*are being saved* from the power of sin, sanctification;

*shall be saved* from the presence of sin, redemption.

31] Boast only in Christ (Gal 6:14); Paul proves his point by quoting from the OT (Jer 9:23-24). [YHWH, re: Christ. No higher view possible.]

Foolishness of God:

Noah and his “barge” (Gen 6-8);

Samson and the jawbone of an ass (Judg 15);

Elisha and Naaman the leper (2 Kgs 5);

Moses and the Brazen Serpent (Num 21; Jn 3:14-16);

Jonah and the Big Fish (Jon 2).

The Ultimate Foolishness:

A wooden cross in Judea becomes the central point in the history of the universe.

## 1 Corinthians 2

Unfortunate division in the chapter breaks: Verses 1-5 of Chap. 2 completes the “Foolishness” discourse of Chapter 1.

- 1] “...came not with excellency of speech”: Paul is not making an exception of himself. He learned his lesson in Athens (Acts 17:22-34). He had conformed to what he had been saying about the “foolishness” of the gospel.

Preaching the gospel is not delivering edifying discourses beautifully put together. It is bearing witness to what God has done in Christ for our salvation.

- 2] “Jesus Christ and Him crucified”: Paul excluded everything but that great central truth.

- 3] “I was with you in weakness”: Paul had much to discourage him before he arrived in Corinth. Even the Lord Himself encouraged him. He was not impressive in appearance: “a man small of stature, with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, with eyebrows meeting and nose somewhat crooked.” (*Acts of Paul and Thecla*, cited from E. Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, vol 2, p. 354, Lutterworth, 1965.)

“I was feeling far from strong, I was nervous and rather shaky.” (Phillips translation)

Paul endured physical ailments, punishment and affliction (2 Cor 11:23-28; 12:7); he was ill in Galatia (Gal 4:13-14); of small stature (2 Cor 10:10), and perhaps with poor eyesight (Gal 4:15; 6:11).

- 4] *Apodexis*: Demonstration, the most rigorous proof. Paul’s very defects had afforded the most convincing demonstration of the power of the Spirit (2 Cor 12:9, linking power with the Spirit; cf. Rom 15:13; 1 Thess 1:5; and with the gospel, Rom 1:16).

“Spirit” appears in this epistle for the first time. Last word is “power,” almost always associated with the Spirit (Act 1:8; Lk 24:49). Expository preaching of the Word: 2 Tim 4:2, 5.

- 5] Paul’s intention had been to ground his converts in the divine power and to make them independent of human wisdom. Faith that depends upon clever reasoning can be demolished by a more acute argument. Faith produced by the power of God can never be overthrown.

The wisdom of Christ is in total opposition to the worldly wisdom so beloved in California (er, Corinth).

- 6] Paul distinguishes between Christians (who have accepted the wisdom of the cross) with outsiders (who have not).

Spiritual maturity is the moment-by-moment acceptance of God’s wise provision, even if the world sees it as folly.

The NT writers do not envisage “grades” of Christians. All believers should grow to maturity (Heb 6:1).

“Rulers of this age”: The unseen world found in Paul’s writings (Rom 8:38-39; Col 2:15; 2 Cor 4:4). However, this reference may not be demonic: the focus of this passage is on the failure of human wisdom, the crucifiers of Christ (Acts 3:17; 13:27; John 16:3). Ignorance is not ascribed to demons.

- 7] “God ordained before the ages”: The Gospel was not an afterthought. It was planned before time began (Eph 1:4; 3:2-12; Col 1:26).

*Proorizo*, “destined”: Foreordained by God, not man. And for our glory, a supernatural destiny (Rom 8:18).

- 8] Rulers of this age did not know what they were doing (Acts 3:17; 4:25-28; Jesus Himself says so in Lk 23:34).

Lord of Glory: The loftiest title ever applied—only here (Jas 2:1 is similar). The “Mysteries of God” are hidden from the unsaved world.

- 9] Isa 64:4 (+ Ps 31:20; Isa 52:15; 65:17; Jer. 3:16(?). The Spirit’s wisdom applies to the believer’s life today.

*Kardia*, “mind,” inner life. [See our briefing package, *Architecture of Man*, or our textbook, *The Way of Agape*.]

- 10] “Revealed” takes away all suggestion of superiority. There is no room for pride here. It is God’s initiative and completion.

Spirit mentioned once so far: In vv. 10-14, 6 more times = 7. Salvation involves all three Persons of the Godhead (1 Pet 1:2; Eph 1:3-14): The Father’s electing grace; the Son’s loving sacrifice; and the Spirit’s ministry of conviction & regeneration.

“Deep things”: Unfathomable. The only person who can tell us about God is the Spirit of God. [Hologram example.]



11] Full Deity given to the Spirit. Analogy from the nature of man. [Analogy: computer inner workings...] Cf. Isa 55:8.

12] “We”: Christians. “Spirit of the world” = in opposition to God’s Spirit; Satan.

The Holy Spirit indwells us and makes us His Temple (1 Cor 6:19-20); baptized us into the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13); seals us (Eph 1:13-14) and will remain with us (Jn 14:16).

“...freely given to us”: Speaks of liberty (2 Cor 3:17); not of bondage (Rom 8:15; Rom 8:32).

13] Bold use of subjective genitive: We are to pass on, not by worldly words, but by those *words* taught by the Spirit; not based on human thinking, man’s wisdom, et al. Paul’s style, vocabulary, diction, and syntax were all vehicles of the truth that the Spirit taught him.

“Comparing spiritual with spiritual.” [Cf. Is it colder in Alaska or in November?...] The Spirit makes all the difference. [Therefore, the flame in our logo, cf. next verse.]

14] Before conversion (re: Scriptures): You can admire the grandeur, feel the charm of the history, wonder at the majesty of the language. But you will miss the intent.

[Secular scientists, humanism, et al. It is ungodly (Ps 1). Spiritual things are meaningless, irrelevant, foolish, and have no place in a life that is limited to the present world.]

Unbelievers are unable to judge spiritually because they themselves are dead in trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1). After the Spirit: Divine life quickens each page to illuminate the inner meaning shining forth...

## The Natural Man

The Soul? Heb 4:12. Psychology is doomed to frustration. The Heart? Jer 17:9. It can’t be “known.” These are software, not hardware problems.

No matter how much you know about computer *hardware*, you have no insight into its *behavior* (unless a physical problem is present): That’s a software issue. No matter how much you know about

neurophysiology, you also have no knowledge (in non-pathological cases) to predict behavior.

In an infinite state “machine,” you cannot predict the behavior (or infer the design architecture) from the exterior operation. [That’s why a software industry is feasible: you can use it, but not gain its design insights. You can go from high-level compilers to machine code, but not the other way around.]

This is one of the reasons why the field of psychology is doomed to frustration. They are trying to infer the internal system design while being restricted to external behavior. [See our briefing package, *The Architecture of Man*.]

There is a part of you that is not physical. The real “you” is “software,” not “hardware.”

## The Geometry of Eternity

Let’s rid ourselves of some misconceptions. Time is neither linear nor absolute: it is *created*, *physical* property. We now recognize, thanks to Dr. Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity, that we exist in a four dimensional continuum known as space-time (cf. Eph 3:18). Time *varies* with mass, acceleration, and gravity.

A time measurement device in a weaker gravitational field runs faster than one in a stronger field. Near the surface of the Earth, the frequency increases about one part in  $10^{16}$  per meter. A clock 100 meters higher than a second clock will have a frequency higher by one part in  $10^{14}$ . Also, clocks carried eastward around the world on an airplane will differ from a clock at rest on the Earth, or one carried westward, since they are in rotation at different speeds about the center of the Earth and there is a difference in gravitational potential.

In 1971, in experiments with atomic clocks by the U. S. Naval Observatory, an eastward flying clock *lost* 0.06 microsecond while a westward one *gained* 0.27 microsecond, confirming the predicted relativistic effects.

The “dilation” of time can also be dramatized by considering two hypothetical twin astronauts. One remains on the Earth; the other undertakes a space mission in which the vehicle attains a speed of half

the velocity of light, en route to Alpha Centari and back (about four light years away). When our traveler returns to the Earth, he will be a little more than *two years younger* than his twin brother.

These examples highlight the fact that time, itself, is a *physical* property of our material world.

## The Physics of Software

Software has no mass. Its *embodiment* does. A blank diskette weighs about 0.7 ounces. You can load it with over a million bytes of software, costing hundreds of dollars, and it will still weigh only 0.7 ounces. It can even travel weightless over airwaves.

There is part of *you* that is *not physical*. You can call it what you will: soul, spirit, etc. Since that part of you has no mass, it has no time dimension. It is eternal.

That's the problem. The eternal part of you is *forever*. Destined to be either in the presence of God, or forever separated from God.

It is the nature of God to banish all imperfection (sin) from His presence. Sin is the inescapable barrier to fellowship with Him. Unless that is dealt with, the banishment from His presence is the inexorable result.

Psychology doesn't deal with sin, only with one of its symptoms: guilt. The role of guilt in our person—in our subsequent behavior—is well (but not completely) understood. But psychology can only deal with the symptoms, not the root cause.

The root cause is a genetic imperfection. Fortunately, our genetic imperfections—inherited from Adam—have been dealt with...by a love story. A love story written in blood, on a wooden cross, almost 2,000 years ago. Taking our place, Jesus substituted His eligibility for our own and that eligibility is available for the asking.

15] "...all things": The source of wisdom is God (Jas 1:5) and His Word (Ps 119:105). They are *spiritually* discerned. Conduct an experiment in the Supernatural. How can we be taught by the Holy Spirit? Keep a private journal on your spiritual walk, making note of passages you don't understand, and stand back and watch the Holy Spirit of God

reveal His Truth! Much of this epistle is a criticism of *spiritual* men. We must, however, not become spiritual dictators in the lives of God's people (2 Cor 1:24).

16] Isa 40:13 ("the mind of YHWH"): The Mind of Christ is the Wisdom and Power of God [see our 8-tape study, *Be Ye Transformed*.] Later in this epistle: The secret key to our internal system architecture...

## 1 Corinthians 3

1] "Brothers": Equals. (OT prophets never addressed their readers, but admonished them from above...)

Gen 1 through Rev 22: Only two classes of people--believers and unbelievers (Gen 4:1-15; Ps 73:15-28; Hos 2:23; Mt 25:31; Eph 2:11-13; Rev 22:14-15). There is no third class.

There are only two categories in the Scripture:  
Those born once;  
Those born twice; on their way to heaven...

But within the category of believers, there are two natures: carnal & spiritual. Carnal: still controlled by the old nature; failure to make progress in spiritual growth; sensual and fleshy.

Remember, Paul is speaking to *Christians*: They are sanctified in Christ (1:2; 2:14); they received the Spirit (2:13); and Paul called them brothers (3:1). Maturity is an eschatological category, reached at the time of the resurrection of the dead (Phil 3:11-15). Be alive in Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, and seek to glorify God the Father.

2] "Babes in Christ": "Da da" is cute for one-year-olds; embarrassing for 18-year-olds. This language is reminiscent of Heb 5:12-14. Could Paul be the author of Hebrews? Three epistles form a *trilogy* on Hab 2:4, *The Just Shall Live by Faith*:

Rom 1:17	Who are "The Just"
Gal 3:11	How are they "to live"
Heb 10:38	by "Faith"

3] "...are ye not carnal?": Natural, unspiritual.

"worldly" (Nearly Inspired Version)  
"of the flesh" (New Revised Standard Version)  
"natural inclinations" (New Jerusalem Bible)  
"in a natural condition" (New American Bible)  
"not spiritually-minded" (NT translation, Cassirer)  
"on the merely natural plane" (New English Bible)  
"controlled by your fallen human nature" (The New Translation)

v.1: *sarkinos*, fleshly: essence, or substance of.  
v.3: *sarkikos*, fleshly: appearance of the characteristics.

There is no discernible *difference in conduct* between them and the unsaved. [Isn't that *us*?] The world can't tell that they (we) are Christians. Why?

1) They are filled with jealousy and strife (1:11; Rom 13:13; 2 Cor 12:20; Gal 5:20). Devoid of love for one another.

2) They have a "Holier-than-thou" attitude; spiritual pride, separatistic, contentious..

4] Comes full circle: These are the words heard from the household of Chloe (1:12). Paul rebukes their lack of maturity and encourages them to grow in grace, knowledge, faith, love, and holiness (1 Pet 2:2; 2 Pet 3:18).

5] A pastor is not a minister of a particular church but rather a minister of Christ's gospel. Pastors are servants, *diakonoi*: table waiters (Deacons).

Names mentioned 3X (vv. 4, 5, 22), but always in a different order to de-emphasize any particular one. Focus on the work, not the person. A Christian worker is never to be idolized. Only Christ should receive glory and honor.

6] The Greek verbs indicate that the work of Paul and Apollos was *completed* (aorist), but the work of God was *continuous* (imperfect).

7] *Theos* (God) stands last in the Greek structure of this sentence, receiving the emphasis.

Higher mathematics:  $0+0 = ?$  Paul, Apollos =  $0$ 's

8] Individuality is a factor that God does not overlook.

$0+0+1 = 1$  Christ, the only ONE. If you put the  $0$ 's first = .001; if you put the 1 first = 100 (a million times more!) And the more  $0$ 's, the greater He becomes...

Rewards are the result of faithfulness. They are not the reason for, or the goal of, the servant's labors.

9] "Without Him, we can't; without us, He won't." God has chosen to accomplish His work through us!

10] "Let every man take heed": A solemn warning. We are God's Building. We are subcontractors. [Find out what your gifts are, then go apply them!]

11] The foundation has been laid by Jesus Christ. No theologian or committee can change the gospel without incurring God's wrath.

12] "...gold, silver, precious stones...": Six commodities, in descending order of worth. All building on the same foundation, but with vastly differing results.

[Three are products of a *creative* act, not growth or development. Three are the result of *natural* growth and development. (Old nature?) The largest load of hay or wood may be worth less than the smallest diamond... Don't confuse size with preciousness.]

So you have been saved: what have you done *with* it? (2 Cor 5:10). We must all appear before the *bema* seat of Christ...

### **Bema Seat**

Tribunal seat, judicial bench, judgment seat, or throne.

Acts 12:21: Herod Agrippa I addressed the people of Tyre and Sidon;

John 19:13 (cf. Mt 27:19): Jesus brought before Pilate;

Acts 18:12,16,17: Paul accused before Proconsul Gallio;  
(Relic still among the ruins in Corinth.)

Acts 25:6,10,17: Paul brought before Festus at Caesarea.

This judgment of the believer, despite all failures, will have the praise of God (1 Cor 4:5; cf. Rom 14:10; Eph 6:8; 2 Tim 4:8; Rev 22:12).

Some build on sound doctrine and a love of God's Word. Others lead shallow lives with only a veneer of Christianity, satisfied with "wood, hay, and stubble." The first three are permanent. The second three will perish.

Talents (Mt 25:14-30; Lk 19:11-27): Ultimate turnaround strategies...opportunities! There will be a final report card written. The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven in blazing fire (2 Thess 1:7; Mal 4:1). [Tears in heaven? (Rev 21:4): Not for sickness, death, sorrow, or disease...but lost opportunity? The only man-made thing in heaven: scars and nail prints...]

Five Crowns:  
of righteousness, 2 Tim 4:8;  
of glory, 1 Pet 5:2-4;  
of life, Rev 2:10;  
incorruptible crown, 1 Cor 9:25-27;  
of rejoicing, 1 Thess 2:19,20.

What do we do with these crowns, should we earn them? We cast them on the glassy sea, before the Throne of God.

14] Permanency. Whatever you have done *for Christ* shall remain. Everything else will burn.

15] Lot (2 Pet 2:8): Abraham was not vexed; he had separated himself from the world. God destroyed Sodom but saved Lot, "yet as by fire." Everything he had lived for was burned up.

That which is done for sake of personal gain, popularity, influence, or its impression on the world, will be for nought (John 15:16). Our greatest joy: winning souls? or their *sustained* growth! (3 Jn 4). Thus, the *edification* ministry of Koionia House.

16] "Don't you know?": Rhetorical question used 10X in this letter as a mild rebuke. For a detailed study on the Temple of God, see the briefing package, *The Architecture of Man*, and the 8-tape studies and textbook, *The Way of Agape*.

*Naos*, the actual Temple, not *Hieron*, the temple precincts. Paul uses *naos* to indicate that which caused the divine nature to dwell there (1 Kgs 8:16-20). [This passage refers to the Church collectively; see 2 Cor 6:14-16 for *individual* application.]

Using God's house for anything but God's glory is a contradiction. Their behavior--strife, jealousy, immorality, permissiveness--*grieves* the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19). They are eternally saved: not cast away, but chastened (1 Cor 11:32). [1 Cor 5 will deal with a believer in the flesh.]

17] Factors that can destroy God's temple were present when Paul was writing this epistle...those who are devoid of God's Spirit.

Our sufficiency in Christ:  
forgiveness for past sins (righteousness);  
strength for present (sanctification);  
hope for the future (redemption).

18] Warnings against self-deception, by being enthralled by worldly wisdom ("Do not deceive yourselves": present imperative verb used 6 here, nowhere else.)

No thinking of building up *wrong* things, but the building up of *adequate* things. This creates a Christianity that is weak and watered down; improperly balanced and distorted.

The ultimate barrier to truth is the presumption that you already have it. No one can teach a man who thinks that he knows it all already. He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool; shun him.

He who knows not, and knows that he knows not, is a student; teach him.  
He who knows, and knows not that he knows, is asleep; wake him.  
He who knows, and knows that he knows, is wise; follow him.

*Persian Proverb*

19] "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness": Hebrew text of Job 5:13. Eliphaz, the Temanite, compares God to a hunter who catches Job in his craftiness. Man's ability to reason cannot stand up against God's sovereignty.

20] Psalm 94:11 (LXX): “Of the men” replaced by “of the wise” in Paul’s interpretation. Arrogant men boast that they are safe because the Lord neither sees nor pays attention (Ps 94:7). Such opinions are futile and useless (cf. Rom 1:21).

21] “Let no man glory in men...”: Let him who boasts boast in the Lord (Jer 9:24). Everything in the Earth belongs to God (Ps 24:1).

22] “All are yours”: Paul paraphrases a Stoic proverb (“The Wise man ... is lord over all that comes to him from without”) and relates it to Jesus Christ.

“World, life, death, the present, the future”: The five ultimate tyrannies of human existence to which people are in *lifelong bondage* as slaves (Rom 8:38).

World: Christ made the world, redeemed it, upholds it, and appoints his people to be His stewards in it.

“All things are yours”: Two words in the Greek. All things are yours in Christ (Phil 1:21). There is no limit (Rom 8:32,38-39).

23] 16th century theologian Zacharias Ursinus: “What is your only comfort in life and death? That I am not my own, but belong, body and soul, in life and death, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.” (Heidelberg Catechism, Q & A 1.) Cf. Rom 14:8; Gal 3:29. Also, The Christian’s “Bar of Soap” (1 Jn 1:9).

## How Are YOU Progressing?

When you strive for excellence, you measure your performance daily: Are you making progress or standing still? Do you love the Lord as much now as those early few weeks after meeting Him? Is your Bible as precious to you now as then?

## 1 Corinthians 4

As a servant of Christ, we are responsible to the Sender not the receiver of the message.

1] “So then”: Roots the argument in the previous chapter. We are Christ’s servants, therefore we are not in competition with one another.

“Us”: Plural; apostles, helpers. Christ *loves* His Church: *all* of them!

“Servants,” *hypervetai* (not *diakonos*): Used only here. Refers to servants under their master; originally slaves who rowed below a ship’s deck; later, a broader meaning. Also used of the attendant who took the scroll of Isaiah from Jesus when He preached in Nazareth (Lk 4:20).

“Stewards”: *Oikonomoi* (Accountable: 1 Cor 4:2; cf. Mt 25:14; Lk 16:2; 19:11-27) = *underlings* for Christ; *overscers* for God.

“...of God’s mysteries”: Used 21X in Paul’s epistles; 4X in Rev: 1:20; 10:7; 17:5; 7. The reason for parables (Mt 13:11; Mk 4:11; Lk 8:10). There are 28 occurrences in Greek; 6 “mysteries of God” or “mysteries of Christ” (1 Cor 2:1; 4:1; Eph 3:4; Col 2:2; 4:3; Rev 10:7).

2] Primary requirement for a steward: faithfulness. (Singular emphasizes the individual.) Every believer must demonstrate fidelity and dedication. Our problem today is the absence of the sanctity of a commitment. Examples include Wall Street; business; marriages; the Church.

3] “...small”: Superlative form; “judge,” examine, interrogate. They were servants of the Corinthians; but the Corinthians were not their masters. God is their only master.

Paul frequently endured harsh judgment: laboring in Corinth; imprisoned in Caesarea; when in Rome (1 Cor 9:3; Acts 24:8; 28:18).

“I cannot even judge myself”: Not conceit, but objectivity. He leaves this to God, the only impartial judge (speaking of his apostleship, not human deeds).

4] If Paul had been justified on the basis of his apostolic faithfulness, he would be teaching a righteousness that could be earned (Titus 3:5). Christ’s mediatorial work would have been insufficient or incomplete.

“...justify”: Perfect tense; already declared righteous... “justified”; *Deiknamai*, a legal word: acquitted. We are even better off! (cf. Certificate of Debt: Col 2:14). He that judges me is the Lord: The Lord has fulfilled the law (Mt 5:17) and is the end of the law (Rom 10:4).

5] “Judge nothing before the time...”: God is not finished with any of us yet. The tares get pulled up *at the end*.

“...until”: Jesus’ Coming is certain; the timing is unknown.

“Darkness”: Can have a sinister meaning (Acts 13:11; Eph 5:11) but here it is neutral: simply referring to matters unknown (Ps 139:12). All secrets will ultimately be exposed (Rom 2:16; Rev 20:11-13).

“...every man have praise of God”: Who receives praise? The regenerate who listens to the Word (Rom 2:29; Rev 22:12). Cf. Isa 35:4; 40:10; 62:11; Rev 2:23.

## Pride (4:6-8)

6] “Brothers”: included sisters (1 Cor 12:10,11,26; 2:1; 3:1). Both Paul and Apollos had served the church of Corinth for extended periods of time.

*Gegraptai*: “it is written,” frequently introduces quotes from Scriptures. [17 OT quotes in 1 Corinthians; 10 in 2 Corinthians. Special warnings in 1 Cor 10.]

“...puffed up”: Leaven is a type of sin. It corrupts by “puffing up.” Warnings against arrogance (Job 40:12; Prov 8:13; Gal 6:3).

7] Three questions: Who makes you different... (*you*, singular.)

Rhetorical: of course, no one. What do you have that you did not receive (as a gift)? God has supplied all (Jn 3:27; Jas 1:17). True in a far deeper sense than is usually understood. No one consulted you about your birth. Geography; culture; parents; skills; aptitudes, etc. Why do you boast? It is the height of ingratitude not to acknowledge the source. Corinthians prided themselves on the gifts of the Spirit. They were puffed up. They sat in judgment of other believers because they did not possess the same manifestations.

“Babes in Christ” = cry babies! If God grants grace, then His people receive His blessings, but cannot take any credit for their acquisition. Faultfinding, gossip, judging, comes to an end. Everything we have outside of Hell is by the grace of God. Grace is the death of pride. It is the ultimate gift (Eph 2:8,9).

## Law vs. Grace

The Law is **perfect**:  
that is why imperfect men cannot keep it.

The Law is **holy**:  
that is why sinners are condemned by it.

The Law is **just**:  
therefore it cannot show mercy to the guilty.

The Law **prohibits**:  
Grace *invites* and *gives*.

The Law **condemns** the sinner:  
Grace *redeems* the sinner.

The Law **reveals** sin:  
Grace *atones* for sin.

By the Law is the **knowledge** of sin;  
by Grace is *redemption* from sin.

The Law was given by Moses;  
Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The Law **demand**s obedience:  
Grace *bestows* and *gives power* to obey.

The Law says **do and do not**:  
Grace says “*it is done*.”

The Law says “**continue to be holy**”;  
Grace says “*it is finished*.”

The Law **cur**ses:  
Grace *bles*ses.

The Law **slays** the sinner;  
Grace makes the sinner *alive*.

The Law **shuts** every mouth before God;  
Grace opens the mouth to **praise** God.

The Law **condemns** the best man;  
Grace *saves* the worst man.

The Law says, **pay what you owe**;  
Grace says *I freely forgive you all*.

The Law says **“the wages of sin is death”**;  
Grace says *“the gift of God is eternal life.”*

The Law says **“the soul that sinneth it shall die”**;  
Grace says *Believe and live*.

The Law was **done away** in Christ;  
Grace abides *forever*.

The Law puts us under **bondage**;  
Grace sets us in the *liberty* of the sons of God (Rom 12:1).

Apart from grace, there is no salvation for anyone. As long as we feel we have something of merit or worth to bring to the table, we are not even a candidate for salvation.

[Bankruptcy: Chapter 11 requirements are that the protection of the court be dependent upon admission of no alternatives; full submission to the court...]

When God creates a new thing, He always begins with nothing.

8] “You have..”: Plural you, the church. [Irony and sarcasm...]

“...become rich”: Denotes satiation; a dangerous state (Rev 3:17 vs. Rom 8:17).

Corinthians were influenced by the Stoic philosophers, priding themselves on being self-sufficient. They claimed to be kings rather than subjects of the King (cf. Diogenes’ Stoic catch-ry: “I alone am rich; I alone reign as king”). Self-sufficient people delude themselves (I

was one). A prophetic example: Church of Laodicea (Rev 3:14-22).

“Reigning...” (2 Tim 2:12; Rev 3:21): Paul’s irony highlights that they were getting ahead of themselves, as well as Paul and Apollos.

9] Apparently, Paul composed this epistle at about the time the riot occurred in Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41).

Lenin: Give me “dead men on furlough.” [How serious are YOU about your Lord? Current trends in this country may give you the opportunity to stand up and be counted...]

“...a spectacle”: *Theatron* (later, theatre). The same word occurs 2X in Luke’s account of the riot where Gaius and Aristarchus were dragged into the theater (Acts 19:29,31).

[Spectacle to angels? (1 Pet 1:12) You always have an audience.]

10] [Irony...] Fools because of Christ (Acts 14:19; 16:22-25; 17:10; 18:12). Kenny Pouré: “A Clod for God.”

Double entendre: they also reflect the truth of the gospel, which is folly in the eyes of the worldly wise.

11] Beatings; floggings; imprisonments; riots, shipwrecks, sleepless nights, hunger, thirst, cold, mortal perils (2 Cor 4:8-9; 6:4-10; 11:23-27; 12:10; cf. Rom 8:35; Phil 4:12).

Paul endured an almost fatal illness in the province of Asia (prob. Ephesus.) See 2 Cor 1:8-11.

12] Paul earned his own living (1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8; cf. 1 Thess 4:11). Every Jewish boy had to learn a trade, usually from his father. Readiness to work with his hands (Acts 18:3; 20:34; 1 Cor 9:6; 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8). Hellenistic Greeks disdained manual labor.

Jesus commanded that the worker must receive his wages (Lk 10:7). Paul clarified this saying that those who preach the gospel should be supported by those who hear it (1 Cor 9:14; 1 Tim 5:18).

“when we are scorned...” vs. (today) “I don’t get mad, I get even.” or, “Make my day.” [Why not, “Make His day”?]

- 13] "...offscouring": *Peripsema*, annually sacrificing criminals or deformed persons. The "scum," or trash, of society. The church always grows spiritually and numerically under persecution and hardships. We'll also get the opportunity...

Material wealth should always be subservient to the cause of Christ. (Abraham was among the wealthiest on the Earth. Job, also.) Greed is idolatry (Col 3:5; Mt 22:37-40).

[Note change of mood: these are real letters...]

- 14] "My beloved sons": Dear children: the admonitions as from a loving father (cf. 2 Cor 6:13; Gal 4:19; 1 Thess 2:11).

- 15] *Paidagogos* (hence, pedagogue): A household slave or freedman who accompanied a child of well-to-do parents to/from school; tutored the child in proper conduct, guarded him from danger and evil influences, encouraged correct speech, grammar, diction, etc. But he was replaceable; the father always remained in charge.

Jewish tradition: The teacher of the Torah was considered a "father:" [Contrast term, "Father": Mt 23:9; Jn 8:44...]

- 16] Imitators of me: cf. 11:1 (also Gal 4:12; Phil 3:17; 2 Thess 3:7,9). We all need examples...

- 17] (Timothy en route? His name not in greetings, as in 2 Cor 1:1.) Timothy was acquainted with the faith of his grandmother Lois and his mother, Eunice (2 Tim 1:5); apparently converted when Paul and Barnabas came to Lystra and Derbe on the 1st missionary journey (Acts 14:8-21). Timothy eventually accompanied Paul and was heartily recommended by the Christians in Lystra (Acts 16:1-3). Timothy frequently completed tasks when Paul himself was hindered. (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea. In these places, Timothy labored in Paul's place (Acts 17:15; Phil 2:22; 1 Thess 3:1-3,6).

"Ways": Rabbinical concept of *halakah*, rule based on Scripture.

- 18] "Puffed up": Leaven is a type of sin. It corrupts by "puffing up." Arrogance blinds a person to reality.

They failed to appreciate Paul's commitment to their spiritual well-being (1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:3-4; Col 1:3-4; 1 Thess 1:2-3; 2 Thess 1:3).

- 19] "...if the Lord wills": Paul intends, after traveling through Macedonia, to arrive in Corinth and spend some time, perhaps the entire winter (16:5-7). He will leave Ephesus after Shavout (Pentecost) (16:8), probably in a.d. 56. Paul (and we) is (are) not a free agent, but subject to the Lord's direction.

- 20] "Kingdom": This term appears chiefly in the synoptic Gospels, but also in Paul's epistles (Rom 14:17; **1 Cor 4:20; 6:9, 10; 15:24, 50**; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:5; Col 1:13; 4:11; 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Thess 1:5; 2 Tim 4:1, 18). Wicked people do not inherit it (6:9-10; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 5:5).

- 21] Paul gives two choices: A teacher challenging his unruly pupils.

## 1 Corinthians 5

In Review: Paul dealt with problems of divisions. Now he deals with the results of arrogance: neglect of morality. Chapter 4 closed with the question: a rod or a spirit of love?

Two problems:

- Private Sin: Incest;
- Public Scandal: The church's failure to respond.

### Review: Paul's Visits and Letters

Three Visits:

- 1) When church was founded;
- 2) The "painful" visit;
- 3) A visit after 2 Corinthians had been sent.

Four Letters:

- 1) The "Previous Letter";
- 2) 1 Corinthians;
- 3) The "Severe Letter";
- 4) 2 Corinthians.

- 1] "It is reported...": Paul received a letter from persons at Corinth (7:1). "It is better for a man not to touch a woman..." Paul then sent Timothy (1 Cor 4:17) to investigate.



The woman is a stepmother (“wife of his father”; not mother). Paul gives the impression that the father is still alive (Gen 35:22; Amos 2:7).

*Porneia*: Sexual immorality. Perversion of one of the most sacred things in the human personality: the perversion of sex.

God takes sex seriously. God uses the marriage to communicate His most precious truths. Sexual immorality was prohibited by Roman law and the OT: (Lev 18:8; 20:11; Deut 22:30; 27:20). In Israel, it was punishable with death by stoning (“A sin unto death”).

- 2] “Ye have not mourned...”: Trying to reason with people who lack humility and constraint: They were arrogant (3:18; 8:1-2); lacking responsibility (6:12; 10:23). They were obsessed with “wisdom” and “philosophy”—oblivious to the *moral* implications of the gospel.

[All through this letter, the failure of “philosophy and vain deceit”—the wisdom appealing to man—is contrasted with the wisdom of God.]

“Tolerance” of some things is an offense to God. Christian freedom is not license for self-life or sin (6:12; 10:23). If a brother sins, we are not to condone it (Mt 18:15-17). Remember Ezra, who mourned over the unfaithfulness of the exiles (Ezra 10:1-6).

They risk being placed under divine condemnation (v.13). Paul says more about the church’s sin than the individual offender. The church is always injured from *within*—never from without. Judgment must begin at the house of God.

[vv. 3,4,5: One lengthy, difficult sentence, which reveals Paul’s inner tension and agitation.]

- 3] (“For” omitted by NIV.) Analogous, perhaps, to Ananias and Sapphira.
- 4] Assemble “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ”: Where two or three are gathered (Mt 18:20)...and confess *their own* failure!
- 5] “Deliver this man to Satan”: Treat *as* one who is unrepentant or a pagan (Mt 18:17).

*Restoration* is always the focus: to seek and to save that which is lost.

This did not mean that they considered him unsaved (which is God’s business 2 Thess 3:6,14,15). Parallel to Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim 1:20).

Underlying concept: The sphere outside the church is the sphere of Satan. To be delivered “outside” is to be delivered into the region in which Satan holds sway. [Sometimes, the best cure to adultery is to *let* them have each other...!]

Physical consequences of spiritual failings:

- Communion risk (1 Cor 11:28-32);
  - Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10);
  - Blindness of Elymas (Acts 13:8-11);
  - Paul’s own “thorn in the flesh” as a “messenger of Satan” (2 Cor 12:7).
- AIDS + sin specific disease...

Believers are safe in the hand of God, from which no one, not even Satan, can snatch them (Jn 10:28-29). Satan can attack only that which God allows (Job 2:4-6; 2 Cor 12:7). Cf. Gomer (Hos 2:7) and the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:24, 32), who never lost his sonship!

“...that his spirit may be saved”: The clause on the destruction of the flesh is subordinate to this main purpose clause. There is a deliverance to be secured. (And it isn’t available to psychology or “therapy.”)

Sexual deliverance: In Jesus alone. Not in psychology, which doesn’t help. It can’t deal with sin; only with the guilt it then attempts to deny.

Physical death irrevocably closes the door to a second opportunity for repentance and salvation (Lk 16:19-31).

“Day of the Lord”: Isa 2:11, 17-20; Zech 14:7.

Holiness demands ardent love for Jesus Christ and total obedience to His commands. It is a serious thing to be a Christian. [How spiritual are YOU? How much do you hate sin? *Not the sinner*: sin.]

Did this “medicine” work? (2 Cor 2:6-8; 7:11). The man was forgiven and restored. It’s amazing how some Christians are unwilling to accept a brother’s restoration.

The only security we have is in the Lord Jesus Himself: He will not let us go. It is the Shepherd that keeps the sheep, not the sheep.

- 6] “Your glorying is not good”: These days of moral laxity in our arrogant, self-indulgent age makes “The Epistle to the Californians” relevant to each of us. [Lot lived just off the 405 freeway...]

## Leaven

A “type” of sin: It corrupts by puffing up (the term is always “evil” in Scripture). OT: Ex 12:15; 13:7; Lev 2:11; 6:17;10:12. NT type: Mt 16:6,11; Mk 8:15; Lk 12:1; 13:21;1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:7-9. It inevitably spreads, cf. Woman and the Leaven (Mt 13:33).

[See notes to Revelation Chapters 1 to 3: Chart of 7 parables, churches, etc.]

- 7] Paul gives a volume of theology in a short sentence! “Christ our Passover”: Delivery from our bondage to evil: Ex 12:7,13,15,33-34,39; (Heb 9:26; Isa 53:5-6; Jn 1:29).

## The Feasts of Israel

The Feasts of Moses are the ultimate teaching aid (Mt 5:17; Rom 15:4); it is to the Law, a tutor (Gal 3:24-25). The feasts are also prophetic (Col 2:16,17). NT in OT concealed; OT in NT revealed.

Calendar: Pope Gregory XIII, in 1582, made the year 365 ¼ days. The Jewish Day starts at sunset and it is a 360-day calendar. All ancient calendars change in 701 B.C. (see *Signs in the Heavens*). The lunar calendar is 1 ½ days shorter. Intercalary months; leap years of 13 months: 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th, 19th leap years.

Feast Days (Lev 23; Num 28-29; Deut 16): God set their feast times (Lev 23:4).

“*mowar*” = “to keep an appointment”  
“holy convocation”: *migraw* = rehearsal

Month of Nisan:

Passover

Feast of Unleavened Bread

Feast of First Fruits  
+ 49 days: Feast of Weeks (Shavuot)

Month of Tishri:

Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah)

Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)

Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth)

## Passover

Commemorates deliverance from Egypt (Ex 12:1-14, 43-48; Lev 23:5). Israel = “my firstborn” (Ex 4:21-23). God predicted deliverance 430 years earlier (Gen 15:13-16) *to the day!*

Lambs observed: 10th - 14th. Slain “between the evenings” of 14th, which was Friday 13th: Egyptian (Gentile) calendar (Veitilkovsky). The entire lamb was to be consumed; nothing left to the next day (Ex 12:1-13; Lev 23:4,5). Lambs originally killed by head of household, not priests: then transferred to the Temple (Deut 16:1-6). Not a bone to be broken on the Passover lamb (Ex 12:46; Nu 9:12; Ps 34:20).

**Jesus:** First introduced as Lamb in Jn 1:29, 36. He is our Passover (1 Cor 5:7); only one of all? (Ex 12:6) “..it..” (Isa 53; Ps 22).

10th of Nisan: Jn 12:1 (6 days before). Observed: Mt 21:23-27; 23. Pilate: “I find no fault in him” (Jn 19:4)...without blemish (1 Pet 1:18-21)...“no bones broken” (Jn 19:31-33,36).

All leaven to be removed (Ex 12:15; 13:7). *Bedikat hametz*: ritual search for leaven...The elimination of leaven was a *symbol of deliverance!*

*Matzah*: It is pierced and striped(!). There are three: the middle one is broken = aphikomen; ½ wrapped in cloth and hidden?

Nothing to be left (Ex 12:10); blood provided life (Lev 17:11; Mt 26:27,28).

Four cups at the Passover meal: “Bringing out”; “Delivering”; “Redemption/Blessing”; “Taking Out.”

Mishna: Wine mixed with warm water? (Mishna, Pes. VII 13; cf. Jn 19:34). Passover Lamb = “His Body”; Haggadah = “showing forth” (Ex 13:8).

## Application

His blood on the doorposts of our hearts (1 Jn 1:7; 1 Cor 15:51-57; Eph 2:13; Jn 5:24).

Uncircumcised could not participate; circumcision of the heart (Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4; Gal 3:26; Phil 3:3; Rom 2:28-29; Gal 6:15; 2 Cor 5:17).

## Feast of Unleavened Bread

*Hag ha Matzah* (Lev 23:6-8). One of three compulsory feasts (Deut 16:16).

Jesus was “made sin for us” (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Jn 3:5). “I Am the Bread of Life” (Jn 6:32-35; 47-51).

Other Bread Models: Manna; Melchizedek and the Bread and Wine (Gen 14—Who gives to whom?); Joseph and the Baker (broken), Wine Steward (redeemed) in Gen 40; Frees from the old life, bondage; call to separation (Eph 4:22).

[For a complete review of this topic, see our briefing package, *The Feasts of Israel*.]

8] “Lord’s Supper”: 1 Cor 11:17-34. Consecrating ourselves to do His Will (Rom 12:1-2; 1 Pet 2:5).

Truth: when the Word and the deed become one (vs. Evil One: Mt 13:19; Jn 8:44).

[Two missing letters...] “Sorrowful Letter” (2 Cor 2:4) and...

9] “The” letter (earlier).

10] Don’t get involved with such people (2 Thess 3:14). (Sexual immorality 4X: vv. 1,9,10,11. v.11 is singular, not generic.)

“...have to leave this world”: Jn 17:14-18.

Distinction: We have fellowship in the church; acquaintances in the world. We were never intended to lead a “monastic” existence; but rather a life of testimony...

*Idolaters*: first use in literature (?) Morris! Every greedy person is an idolater (Eph 5:5; Gal 5:20; Col 3:5).

11] Idolater occurs 4X in this epistle (5:10,11; 6:9; 10:7), plus Eph 5:5, Rev 21:8; 22:15 = 7X!).

In Eastern society, to eat with one was to “become one with him”-- common bread, dish, et al. To not offer food to a relative, friend, or guest could be interpreted as a declaration of war (cf. Luke 11:5-8).

Jesus often ate with tax collectors, et al. (Mt 11:19; Lk 15:2). What’s the difference? The integrity of the church (Mt 18:17; 2 Pet 2:13; Jude 12).

12] Jewish background: “those who are outside” = unbelievers.

Paul was agitated in Athens (Acts 17:16), but lacked the authority to judge *outside* the church.

*Persistent sin inside* requires a corporate response. Christ’s good name is at state.

13] Quote from Deut 17:7. [In Greek, the difference between the present or the future tense of the verb *to judge* depends on an accent mark.] Present? God knows (Gen 18:25, et al.); future? (6:1-4). Both are valid.

“Evil” man: Paul chooses the Greek word that features a play on the Greek word for “fornicator.”

## 1 Corinthians 6

Paul’s discussion of judging (5:12-13) brings up another related area.

The world is attempting to get the Christian community to conform itself to worldly standards. “There is a lawsuit filed every 15 seconds.”

Christian brothers who take their cases to non-Christians are causing the Church to be the laughingstock in the “Gentile” world. (Paul

divides the world into three groups: Jew, Gentile and The Church.) The Jews were forbidden in the Talmud to go to Gentile Judges. They had their own system.

Greeks were particularly litigious. Athenian law allowed, after a private arbitrator, The Forty. They were public arbitrators consisting of citizens in their 60th year. Jury court: 201 citizens (<\$100; (401, over \$100) of citizens over 30.

Christians ought to settle their disputes within the confines of their own fellowship (Jn 13:35).

1] Principles: Luke 6:27. Jas 2:8; “Love your neighbor as yourself” is also found in the Book of Leviticus.

A lawsuit has a life of its own: it is a fight to the death. Winning regardless of the damaging effect on the defendant (and one’s witness).

John Calvin, who studied law at two French universities before he became a theologian, keenly observed that the parties involved in lawsuits were motivated by greed, impatience, revenge, hostility, and obstinacy. [The rigors of the law: Merchant of Venice...Shylock’s “pound of flesh...”]

Underlying motives in civil lawsuits are often incompatible with one’s Christian profession.

One’s “rights” vs. 1 Thess 4:6. They ought not to give the world an opportunity to ridicule Christ and to divide the Church. “Let’s not forget who the enemy is!” Don’t give the enemies of God an opportunity to blaspheme. Jesus settles this in Mt 18:17.

2] “Do you know”: 6X this chapter (6:2,3,9,15,16,19; also 3:16; 5:6; 9:13,24.) 10X this letter of 1 Corinthians.

Paul is accusing them of myopia: Saints will sit in judgment of the world (Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30; Jude 14,15; Rev 20:4). Will also reign with Christ (2 Tim 2:12; Phil 11:2).

3] “...we shall judge angels”: The Fall of the angels (Isa 24:21-22; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6; Rev 20:10). *B’nai Elohim* (Gen 6:1-4); *Nephilim*, fallen

ones; LXX: *gigantes*, “earth born.” [See our briefing package, *The Flood of Noah*.]

4] Greek has no punctuation. (“I would not have you, ignorant brethren.”) Even the least esteemed in the Church are qualified to judge if they adhere to the Scriptures.

Judges from among their own? (Cf. Jethro’s advice to Moses, Ex 18:17-23; Deut 1:9-15). Continued through the Diaspora as their *bet din*. (*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol 4, 719-27.)

Also, King Jehosaphat of Judah appointed judges in the fortified cities of the land (2 Chr 19:5). Compare their qualifications with our judges of today!

Note: Paul resorted to using his rights under the Roman judicial system several times (Acts 16:37; 22:25; 25:11). At Philippi, he refused to leave without public admission of the mistake! God has instituted civil government which includes the judiciary (Rom 13:1-5).

The least esteemed (from within the church) should have been adequate...

5] They should have appointed wise and capable men from their own community to mediate cases for fellow Christians; cf. Christian Arbitration Organization(s).

6] A Christian brother taking a fellow Christian to court is sufficient proof that he has set aside the command to love his neighbor (Jas 2:8). Can a plaintiff in court have the spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial well-being of the Christian brother in mind? Love is the ultimate response that the Lord commands us to take: Chapter 13.

7] In v.6, single incident; in v.7, Paul addresses them all. Paul turns it all *upside down*: winning a lawsuit is a *defeat* for the Christian. Court proceedings have a detrimental effect on both the defendant and the witness to the community. [What is the *Lord’s view* of the proceedings?]

“Unjustly”? The last thing we should ever want is justice! (cf. Mt 5:40; Lk 6:29-30).

Defrauded? (1 Pet 2:19-23). Rights? Jesus did not come to get His rights; He came to get our wrongs, and He did. The only man-made things in heaven will be His scars.

8] A litigious spirit is incompatible with fellowship. Remember, Thou shalt not covet. Excessive litigation is a symptom of the disintegration of a society.

## The Forfeit of the Ungodly

9] "...the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God". Sinful people are barred from God's kingdom (cf. 5:9-11). They will not inherit. The use of the future tense is definite: the unrepentant will *never* inherit the kingdom. Will YOU inherit? Only by Grace (Eph 2:8-9).

Sexual immorality makes a person unclean (v.11; Mt 15:19-20). "Fornicators" includes illicit intercourse between unmarried persons. Paul uses the following terms: "adulterers"; *moichoi* = "homosexuals"; *malakoi* = passive, submissive; "sodomites"; *arsenokoitai* = initiators, active partners (cf. Gen 19:1-10; Lev 18:22; 20:13). Note: "their blood...": is this a reference to AIDS?) Fourteen out of the first 15 Roman Emperors practiced unnatural vice.

## Recent Research Results

The Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., citing dozens of experts and studies, including a study of 5,200 obituaries over 5 years in 16 homosexual newspapers, reported the following revealing results:

The average age of homosexual men dying with AIDS is 39; of all causes is 41; only 3% lived to over 55; only 1% lived to 65 or older. The obituaries in the "gay" press suggest that their "lifestyle" may cut two or three *decades* off one's life expectancy. Among homosexuals, the ratio of men murdered is 50 times that of general population; they have 60 times the suicide rate; and 45 times the rate of auto accidents. That doesn't sound very "gay" to me.

11] "As some of you were." Jesus came to call not the righteous but the sinners (Mk 2:17; Lk 5:32; 1 Tim 1:15). He then ate with them in their homes (Mt 11:19).

"...but ye are washed": Cleansed with "The Christian's Bar of Soap" (1 Jn 1:9). In the Greek, the strong adversative "however" occurs before each of the three verbs; Paul writes the 2nd person "you" in every verb form; it is acutely personal and emphatic.

"Sanctified": NT teaches that everyone that believes in Jesus is sanctified in Him (Jn 17:19; Acts 20:32; 26:18).

"Justified": Paul places righteousness before holiness (1:30). Justification is a declarative act of God whereby the believer is pronounced righteous in Christ and is coordinated with God's act of sanctification. All three verbs are in the aorist tense, describing a single instantaneous action, once and for all. [Note the implied trinitarianism: Jesus Christ, Spirit, and God.]

	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
<b>Incarnation:</b>	Heb 10:5	Phil 2:7	Lk 1:35
<b>Atonement:</b>	Isa 53:6,10	Eph 5:2	Heb 9:14
<b>Resurrection:</b>	Rom 6:4	Jn 10:17	Rom 8:11

## God's Astonishing Grace

Study Manasseh: He was King of Judah, son of Hezekiah. He did evil in the sight of the Lord, worshipped Baal, built altars to the "hosts of heaven" in the Temple, sacrificed his own son, practiced sorcery and divination, place a carved image in God's Temple, led astray the people in his kingdom, and shed innocent blood (2 Kgs 21:1-9, 16; 2 Chr 33:1-9).

When he came to himself in captivity, he repented and God not only forgave him, but restored him as the king of Judah. (2 Chr 33:12-13).

[Why not us, too?]

12] "All things are permissible to me": Paul uses this phrase 4X in this letter (6:12, 2X; 10:23, 2X).

Greeks looked down on the body. “The body is a tomb.” Epictetus: “I am a poor soul shackled to a corpse.” This led either to rigorous asceticism or, as in Corinth, the belief that one could do whatever he felt like.

Arrogance of ego. Freedom exchanged for license. Served themselves rather than the Lord (Mt 22:37-40). Selfishness is contrary to the command to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Paul no longer possesses that which possesses him. All appetites are ultimately unsatisfying (Gen 4:7; Rom 6:16).

“..not profitable.” [Referent omitted: to whom?]

13] “Food for the body, and the body for food”: That is how God designed His creation. (Parallel requirements are evidence of design.) Paul will detail other “food” issues in Chapters 8 & 10.

“...the body is...for the Lord, and the Lord for the body”: God created the human body for His glory, not for immorality. The widespread attitudes violated the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:14) and the decisions of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:29.) God uses the marriage relationship to communicate His highest relationships (see our briefing package, *A More Excellent Way*) and fornication is absolutely contrary to His purpose (1 Thess 4:3-5).

14] Physical resurrection a future event (Jn 5:28-29; 11:24; Acts 24:15; 1 Thess 4:16-17). The resurrection forbids us to take the body lightly. Paul will detail more on this in Chapter 15.

15] The physical body of the believer is actually a member of Christ (12:12,27; Rom 12:5-6). We are His hands and feet.

“Prostitute,” *porne*: from *porneia*, fornication, sexual immorality (vv. 13,19).

16] “The two shall be one flesh”: Citation from LXX, Gen 2:24. There is no such thing as “casual sex.” It’s an oxymoron.

“Cleave” refers more than just a physical union; it includes a bonding relationship that has spiritual implications. God commanded Israel to cleave to Him (Deut 10:20). Solomon erred when he clung to his

foreign wives, who induced him to worship other gods (1 Kgs 11:1-8; cf. Mt 19:5; Eph 5:21-33).

17] “But he who is joined to the Lord...”: Are YOU “glued” to the Lord? Contrast the relationship with the prostitute: it’s momentary, without love, devoid of responsibility, mutually destructive, decidedly ego-centric, shamefully immoral, degrading, and damaging to the soul.

The relationship with the Lord is characterized by permanence, love, trust, edification, obedience, purity and life.

18] (Make it your habit to) “flee”: This verb is in the present imperative form, like Joseph in Potiphar’s house (Gen 39:12, 91).

19] “Your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit” = singular: applies to the individual believer.

*Naos*, (not *hieron*, the temple precincts): Holy Place. [For a complete study on the Temple model, see the briefing package, *Architecture of Man*, and the 8-tape study and textbook, *The Way of Agape*.]

“We do not belong to ourselves.” God created us, Jesus redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit makes His abode within us.

20] “...bought with a price”: *Tetelestai!* Aorist tense; single decisive action, already taken. [Cf. *Sacral manumission*: a slave would save the price of his freedom, pay it into the temple treasury of a god, and then be purchased by the deity as a slave of that god. To the public, he was now free.]

“Glorify God in your body”: Here’s a physical fitness program for you! “Work out” daily...and chart your progress.

“What is the chief end of man? To glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.” (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q & A 1.)

Remember who you are: The most powerful weapon we have is our true dignity as redeemed children, bought and paid for.

# 1 Corinthians 7

Corinth was a church of contradictions. The diverse response to the widespread immorality included licentiousness on the one hand, and legalistic asceticism on the other.

Sex in itself is never a sin. It is the abuse of this God-given function that makes it immoral (Titus 1:15).

Paul uses language found nowhere else in the NT: “By permission...”; etc. (vv. 6,10,12,25,40). Still authoritative, in view of their circumstances. But there is no law so inclusive as to apply to every situation.

This passage on marriage should never be taken alone. The problems in Corinth were not the same as in Berea, Philippi, or Ephesus. (See Paul’s full view of marriage in his other letters.)

1] Paul now responds to a list of questions in their earlier letter. He had sent a previous letter (5:9) and they replied with questions, delivered by Stephanus, Fortunatas, and Achaicus (16:17).

“Now concerning...” = key phrase...

Marriage (7:1-24, 39-40);

Celibacy (7:25-38);

Meat offered to idols (7:8-11:1);

Spiritual Gifts (12-14);

Collection for Jerusalem Christians (16:1-4);

Apollos (16:12).

[also, Resurrection (15), but the key phrase “now concerning” doesn’t appear.]

Let’s remember the pressures they were under: there was not only widespread immorality (comparable to our own) but for them, becoming a Christian was putting one’s life in jeopardy.

“It is good...”: Refers to a quote from their letter. Paul could not have advocated celibacy for everyone, for he would be contradicting God’s utterance: “It is not good for man to be alone” (Gen 2:18). Paul would thus be against procreation (Gen 1:28), God’s covenant blessings from generation to generation (Gen 17:7) and the growth of the

church. He emphasizes a high view of marriage in Eph 5:22-33.

A group of believers in Corinth has set themselves against the widespread immorality in the city by advocating celibacy.

*Anthropos* (man) vs. *aner* (husband) and *gynē* (woman) are indefinite terms implying non-marital intercourse.

Paul points out that apostates forbid people to marry (1 Tim 4:3).

2] “...Every man have his own wife...every woman have her own husband”: It must be kept in mind that the conditions in Corinth were terrible (almost as bad as ours). Polygamy was the common practice. Paul effectively rules out polygamy as well as homosexual combinations.

4] The elegant paradox. Equality and mutuality.

5] “Defraud” can be rendered “deprive.” Marriage is a protective shield that should be employed effectively against Satan’s subtleties (Eph 5:11). Let’s remember that God established the home before He created the Church.

6] “...permission and not of commandment”: Referring to the temporary abstinence that has the consent of both spouses. It is a matter of individual responsibility (cf. Rom 14:5).

7] Marriage is good, but not every person should be married.

## Was Paul Married?

Early church tradition was that he was not. Tertullian (*de Monogam*, 3); Jerome (*Ep. 22*); Origen is doubtful. Methodius (*Conviv. 45*), as well as Clements Alex and Ps. Ignatius believed he was a widower (Farmer, p.78-82). I happen to believe that Paul was either a widower or possibly that his wife left him after his conversion.

He claimed to have failed in none of the duties which Jewish law and tradition laid down. Orthodox belief laid down the obligation of marriage (Mishna, Yeb. 6:6; Talmud, Yebamoth 62, 63; Kiddushin 29, 30). If a man did not marry and have children, he was said to have “slain his posterity,” and “to have lessened the image of God in the

World.” To “be fruitful and multiply” was viewed as a positive commandment of God (Gen 1:28; Prov 2:1-7; 5:18). It was the first of the 613 precepts.

He must have been a member of the Sanhedrin for he says that he gave his vote against the Christians (Acts 26:10); and it was required that members of the Sanhedrin be married, as it was held that married men were more merciful(?).

His enablement to be alone was the result of a spiritual gift.

## Unmarried and Widows

9] “It is better to marry than to burn”: Burn with sexual desire.

10] “Let not the wife depart from her husband”: The Lord’s Command (Gen 1:27; 2:24; Mk 8-12). God hates divorce (Mal 2:14-16).

Matthew (19:9) wrote for a Jewish audience, in which the husband could dismiss his wife for any reason. Mark wrote in a Roman context, in which a woman could take the initiative.

11] “...but if she depart...” (Mt 19:5,6,7): “Reconciliation” is never used of an innocent party. We are reconciled to God; never He to us. Paul teaches what the Scriptures have to say: unadulterated by the culture of his day.

## Appendix: The Cost of Broken Families

Postwar generation: 80% grew up in a family with two biological parents who were married to each other. In 1980, only 50% expect to spend their entire childhood in an intact family. An increasing number of children will experience a family breakup two or even three times during childhood.

Scientific evidence demonstrates that children in disrupted families do worse than those of intact families: they are 6X more likely to be poor; 22% of one-parent families will experience poverty during childhood for 7 years or more, vs. 2% of children in two-parent families.

In a 1988 study by the National Center for Health Statistics: Children of single-parent families are 3X as likely to have emotional and behavioral problems; they are more likely to drop out of high school, get pregnant as teenagers, abuse drugs, and be in trouble with the law. They also have a higher risk for physical or sexual abuse, and are less likely to be successful as adults, especially in love and in work. They have a harder time achieving intimacy in a relationship, forming a stable marriage, or even holding a steady job.

Teen suicide rate has tripled; juvenile crime has increased and become more violent; school performance has continued to decline. Our national policies contribute to family instability and breakup. Divorce is the public acknowledgment of failure.

Problems seem to have increased since the 1960’s, when the Supreme Court outlawed mentioning God in schools: Divorce: 10/1000; then sudden growth to (1979) 23/1000. In 1974, it exceeded death as leading cause of family breakup. In 1990: 1/4 women had a child unmarried. Half of all marriages now end in divorce. Remarried couples are more likely to break up than couples in first marriages (56%). One in four children in the 1990’s will eventually enter a stepfamily.

Hollywood celebrates divorce and unwed motherhood. Federal policy celebrates social and sexual variance.

## The “Me” Generation

Fewer than half of all adult Americans today regard the idea of sacrifice for others as a positive moral value. The adult quest for freedom, independence, and choice in family relationships conflicts with a child’s developmental needs for stability, constancy, harmony, and permanence in family life.

Welfare dependency tends to be passed on from one generation to the next. Daughters of single parents are 53% more likely to marry as teenagers; 111% more likely to have children as teenagers; 164% more likely to have premarital birth; 92% more likely to dissolve their own marriages.

Each divorce is the death of a small civilization. It inflicts wounds that never heal.



Survey after survey demonstrates that Americans are less inclined than they were a generation ago to value sexual fidelity, lifelong marriage, and parenthood as worthwhile personal goals.

## The Lack of Love in America

The love of many will grow cold (Mt 24:12). The most basic form of love is found in the family. Heterosexuals reproduce; homosexuals recruit. The family serves as the seedbed for virtues.

This is the first generation in the nation's history to do worse psychologically, socially, and economically than its parents.

[Excerpted: Barbara Dafeo Whitehead, "Dan Quayle was Right," *Atlantic Monthly*, (April 93).]

12] "...hath a wife that believeth not...": Paul is speaking to "mixed marriages," believers married to non-believers. In the OT, God forbade His people to marry Gentiles. Paul tells the Corinthians to marry only in the Lord (v. 39; 2 Cor. 6:14-18).

"If you are a child of God, and you marry a child of the devil, you are sure to have trouble with your father-in-law." (Puritan proverb)

Marrying a Christian isn't all: Let your marriage be "in the Lord."

13] "...lethernotleavehim": In the Greco-Roman world, the wife had the right to divorce her husband.

14] An opportunity to win the partner for Christ.

"Sanctified":

- 1) Set aside for sacred functions (Ex 39:237,44). The Temple sanctified the gold connected with it, or the altar the gift laid upon (Matt 23:17,19).
- 2) To consecrate people by baptism (1 Cor 6:11), Christian marriage (1 Cor 7:14), or atonement for sin (Heb 9:13).
- 3) To reverence people, names, or things (1 Pet 3:15); to place in a position of special privilege (as here).
- 4) To purify someone from evil.

Cf. Acts 16:31. Statistics reveal the tremendous importance of a united home.

## Are Children Saved?

The child of a believing parent is regarded as Christian: Examples include David's response to the loss of his son (2 Sam 12:23) and Paul's position in Rom 7:9.

15] If an unbeliever decides to dismiss his wife, he, not his marriage partner, takes the full responsibility for the divorce.

God has called us to peace (Rom 12:18; 14:19; 1 Cor 14:33; 2 Tim 2:22; Heb 12:14; 1 Pet 3:11).

16] Willingness to live with the Christian spouse is a form of "sanctification": it might lead to salvation. Only God can save His people. We must always hope that God will effect His plan and purpose (cf. 2 Sam 12:22; Esther 4:14; Joel 2:14; Jon 3:9). Marriage is a vow which is not to be broken.

17] Paul digresses to lay down a rule three times: "Bloom where you are planted" (vv. 17, 20, 24).

In whatever situation a person becomes a Christian, he or she must remain there (until He makes it really clear that a move is in His Will). God calls the believer (vv. 15, 17, 18 (2X), 20, 21, 22 (2X), 24).

18] Distinctions disappear in Christ (Rom 2:25-26; Gal 3:28; 5:6; 6:15). Circumcision was of paramount importance, especially after the Maccabean struggle. [Circumcision should not be undone: some Jewish youths tried in order to join the broader Hellenistic world. Josephus *Antiquities* 12.5.1 (241); 1 Macc 1:15.] This was resolved at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-2, 19-21).

20] Paul does not address the issue of slavery. He is not interested in disturbing the existing structure of society.

23] They are slaves in bondage to Christ, much as Israelites were to be in bondage to God (cf. Lev 25:55).

24] The Christian must remember that God is always with him and will never forsake him (cf. Deut 31:6; Josh 1:5; Heb 1:5).

“Man” is used in a generic sense: Mr. & Mrs. Man.

“...abide with God”: Set your mind on heavenly things, not earthly (Phil 3:19-20; Col 3:2).

25] “Now concerning...”: This is in regards to their letter.

## The Heart of Paul’s Whole Position (7:26-35)

26] “...the present distress”: A crisis? A misfortune? A famine? (11:21,34)  
The Greek word for distress occurs in Epictetus 3.26.7 in respect to starvation (cf. 3 Macc 3:16, when Ptolemy entered the Temple in Jerusalem). Some associate it with the famine in the time of Claudius (Acts 11:28). In any case, being a Christian in those days was to put one’s life in jeopardy. When high seas are raging, it is no time for changing ships.

27] God intended that husband and wife remain together. This can also apply to betrothal vows, which in a Jewish context were tantamount to marriage (cf. Deut 22:23-24; Mt 1:18).

28] Paul addresses the hardships of the day for the Christian, and not the matter of sin.

*Parthenos*, virgin: Mentioned 7X in the second half of this chapter (vv. 25,28,34(2X), 36,37,38).

## The Eternal Perspective (7:29-31)

The time is short. [How many weekends do YOU have left?]

These are poetic lines emphasizing that we should be living as if we might leave this world at any moment. Earthly things should not be our ultimate objectives; we should not be absorbed by them.

This world is passing away: so is the America we once knew.

Instabilities are the order of the day. Family life: desertion, divorce, etc. Disease, famine, and poverty cause untold misery, grief, and death. Bankruptcies of individuals and companies will be accompanied by cities, states, and countries. Most of all, this is engineered by those who have an agenda.

Christ’s followers are not of this world (Jn 17:14,16). They are laughed to scorn when they suggest chastity to prevent immorality or sin-specific diseases (Eph 5:3-5); or integrity in the workplace to prevent greed (Prov 11:1) or contentment with basics to prevent envy (1 Tim 6:6). Our citizenship is heaven (Phil 3:20).

32] “I would have you without care”: Paul’s intention is that they be “worry free” (cf. Mt 6:25-34; Phil 4:11; 1 Pet 5:7).

“He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune.” (Bacon)

“A man who is a hero in himself becomes a coward when he thinks of his widowed wife and orphaned children.” (Lightfoot)

Verb “care for” occurs 5X in 1 Corinthians and 2X in Philippians (7X).

33] Care is used in a positive sense. “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Tim 5:8).

34] [Textual problems in this verse.] An unmarried woman is able to give herself fully to the work of the Lord (cf. Rom 16:12; Phil 4:2-3).

35] “I do not put a noose on you.” (only here.) A leash, so to speak.

36] But if any man...”: There’s a lack of clarity of expression; man = ? Father? Guardians? Fianceses? Customs?...

38] He praises marriage and exalts celibacy (as a special calling; not for everyone.) This passage is a likely response to specific cases inquired of in their previous letter.

39] Matthew 19:6. Young widows urged to marry again: 1 Tim 5:14. (Some chose not to: Lk 2:36-37.)

The marriage relationship was established to communicate the relationship between:

- 1) YHWH and Israel
- 2) Christ and His Church

## The Mystical Basis of Marriage (Eph 5:22-32)

- 1) *Biological Basis*: procreation, etc.
- 2) *Psychological Basis*: a union to meet life's challenges, joys, sorrows, etc.
- 3) *Sociological Basis*: the family unit as the primary element of the tribe, community, nation, etc.
- 4) *Supernatural/Spiritual Basis*: God's ordained unit through which He communicates His most significant truths.

**Precminence**: Christ is the *Head* of the Church: Eph 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col 1:18; 2:19.

### **Preciousness of the His People:**

Deut 32:10,      "Apple of His Eye";  
Isa 62:3,        Crown of Glory;  
Zech 9:16,      Stones of crown, ensign;  
Mal 3:17,        Jewels;  
Eph 5:25.

**Love for the Church**: Eph 1:15; Phil 4:1; 1 Thess 2:8; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 5:2. Church = "Bride": Isa 62:5; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev. 21:2; 22:17.

## Marriage as "Prophetic Types"

- 1) Genesis 22 & 24: Abraham & Isaac (Gen 22); Isaac is edited out of record from the offering until Gen 24:62. Isaac & Rebekah (Gen 24); Unseen commitment until the Well of Lahai-Roi; Bride was the Father's gift to the Son.
- 2) Ruth & Boaz: Boaz = *Goel*, Kinsman-Redeemer; Ruth = Gentle Bride; Naomi: Redemption of the Land.
- 3) Hosea: Jehovah & Israel.
- 4) Cana: ("3rd Day" = Tuesday, "Double Blessing" of Gen 1:9-13).
- 5) **Adam as a type of Christ**: [vs. Christ = "Last Adam"];

Adam was not deceived (1 Tim 2:14); Adam loved Eve so much as to knowingly choose to share her destiny!

...without which, there would have been no redeemer, the "Seed of the Woman." Do you love *your* wife that much?

### **Gentile Brides as Types:**

Adam	Eve
Isaac	Rebekah
Joseph	Asenath
Moses	Zipporah
Salmon	Rahab
Boaz	Ruth

*[These Gentile "Brides" have no death recorded]*

## Our "Marriage Proposal":

Written in blood...

On a wooden cross...

Erected in Judea almost 2000 years ago.

## Ancient Jewish Marriage:

*Shiddukhin* (engagement) ...arranged by the father!  
*Kenubah* (the agreement) ...bridegroom absent to build the house (John 14:2,3). Bride taken in the night  
...marriage!  
*Huppah* (wedding ceremony): Seven day celebration.

(Missler, Chuck, & Young, Woody, *Countdown to Eternity*, Joy Publishers, 1992, pp.175-191.)

## 1 Corinthians 8

### Food Offered to Idols

The beautiful thing about being a Christian is the fellowship we enter into among those who love the Savior: it crosses boundaries of race,

class, and background. It draws us together as ONE in Christ. What a tragedy it is when we reveal our low level of Christian experience by allowing a divergence of opinion to break fellowship, or letting our example cause a brother to stumble (cf. Jn 13:35).

Paul spends **three chapters** dealing with “things offered to idols...” It also brings into clearer view the whole question of the influence of this young church on the great pagan city of Corinth.

What are our idols? Ours are not as local as those in Corinth, nor as ancient as Paul’s day: Movies? Television? Social drinking? Table wines?

Or from the other angle: “I must have no fellowship at all with anyone who does not think exactly as I do...”

1] “Now Concerning...” Paul turns to the next question in the letter he had received from the Corinthians.

Meat, idols: Part and parcel of formal etiquette in their society. Reminder of Jerusalem Council: Acts 15:29 (cf. 21:25; Rev 2:14,20).

Private sacrifice: Meat divided into three parts: A token part was burned on the altar; the priests were given the ribs, ham, and left side; the worshipper got the rest.

Location: His home or at the temple... [Oxyrhynchus papyri: “Chaeremion invites you dine at the table of the lord Sarapis in the Sarapeion (temple of Sarapis) tomorrow...”]

Public sacrifice (and by the state): The remainder was sold to shops and markets. One was never sure what one was purchasing...Kosher only? (Gal 2:11-14).

Christian liberty in relation to food eaten in a Jewish-Gentile setting (10:14-33). [Bishop Edersheim: “Bless this pig...”]

“We all have knowledge”: Scholars agree that the last part of the sentence is a quote from the letter the Corinthians had sent to Paul. [Fee, p.365.]

“Knowledge puffs up; love builds up”: Knowledge leads to arrogance; love is never arrogant (13:4)!

God has revealed them to babes and hid them from the wise and prudent (& PhD’s...).

2] Emphasis on “suppose”: Knowledge passes away (13:8-10) because it is incomplete and imperfect. Always limited in scope, extent, and depth.

“To know”: Perfect tense; the person imagines that he knows everything. Haughty attitude, “If any of you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise” (3:18; Gal 6:3).

“He does not yet know”: Aorist inceptive; he has not even begun true knowledge...

“Knowledge is proud that it has learnt so much. Wisdom is humble that it knows not more.”

All knowledge is derivative: it comes from God through Christ (Col 2:3). [Corinth is linked to Gnosticism, which began in the middle of the 1st century...see Appendix.]

3] Knowledge is a bestowment, not an achievement (cf. Ex 33:12,17; Gal 4:9; 1 Jn 4:19).

Early years: Apostle’s Creed; Lord’s Prayer...Instruction to the 16th century church occurred primarily within the family circle.

The Reformation:

- 1529, Martin Luther Catechisms (Germany);
- 1536, John Calvin’s (Geneva);
- 1563, Heidelberg Catechism, led to the reformed churches in Germany, Netherlands, America;
- 1646, Westminster Catechisms (England).

On the one hand it met a need, but on the other hand that also had a subtle effect of making it “head knowledge”; learning the Catechisms instead of the Bible.

Today we suffer widespread Biblical illiteracy, even within the church.

- 4] “Now concerning...”: Paul again quotes from the letter from Corinth. What complicated matters was that, in his age, people believed strongly and fearfully in demons and devils. They believed that the air was full of them and they were constantly lurking to gain entrance into a man. One of the ways was to enter through his food. One of the ways to prevent this was to dedicate the meat to some good god whose presence would put up a barrier against the evil spirit.

“An idol is nothing”: Isa 44:12-20; Ps 115:4-8; 135:15-18. (Also read Jer 10:3-5)

There *are* spiritual beings behind the idols, but not the ones the worshippers thought (1 Cor 10:20). But here, that is not the point. [“Spirits” in Entertainment: *Star Wars; Dark Crystal; Death Becomes Her; Hello Again...*] What should our response be? Read Deut 6:4-5.

The Sh'ma: Recited by Jews two times each day (Deut 6:4-5; cf. Ps 86:10; Isa 44:8; 45:5; Mt 22:37-39).

- 5] “So-called gods”: Ps 82:1,6; 95:3; 96:4; 97:9; 136:2; 138:1. Devoid of authenticity. Even Satan himself is not divine (Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Example of Jonah: Dagon vs. Nineveh...

- 6] Appears to be a creedal statement by Paul (also on resurrection: 15:12-18, 42-44). Jesus teaches us to address God as Father (Mt 6:9; Acts 1:4,7). We are his offspring. This corresponds to Paul’s Areopagus speech (Acts 17:28; cf. Acts 14:15; 17:24-31; Rom 11:36).

“...all things”: Col 1:16; Jn 1:1-3; Heb 1:3. “Through whom we live” doctrines known to the Corinthians...

## The Weaker Brother

- 7] “However...”: A strong adversative. Not every believer (but some) in Corinth had full knowledge of the doctrines of God, Christ, and the creation Paul just alluded to.

The customs of the day were integrally tied to an idol (just as ours: names of days, months, Christmas tree, Easter...). These are all vestiges from Babylon. [See Hisslop, et al; *Mystery of Babylon* briefing package.]

Link with Jerusalem Council, Acts 15:29; 1 Cor 10:27-28. Our conscience must be well informed to function properly.

- 8] This seems to be from the Corinthians themselves; Paul’s response is v.9; (cf. 6:13). Food itself has no religious significance (Rom 14:17). Paul agrees with their view of religious liberty, but takes issue with them for their lack of love and compassion for their weaker brothers and sisters.

- 9] “...this right...”: Reflects Paul’s dislike of their apparent haughtiness (cf. Luke 15:30). Knowledge itself results in arrogance.

Knowledge without love produces pride; freedom without love generates arrogance.

*Exousia*, authority vs. *proskomma*, a stumbling block.

- 10] Common occurrence. Erastus, city’s director of public works (Rom 16:23) and member of the local church, might attend such functions. You are always “on parade.”

- 11] Weaker brother is torn down rather than built up.

Verb “to destroy” is in present tense: action already occurring; being destroyed (cf. Rom 14:15). There is a contrast between the death of Christ and the callousness of the “strong” Christians. There are few decisions that you make that do not involve someone else. “Victimless Crimes?” Only if you disregard those in whose love you live.

TV, movies, et al. are part of your soul’s “diet”: You are what you eat...are you putting a stumbling block across the path of a brother in Christ? Are you cutting off fellowship from the man who does not agree theologically with you in everything you say? You owe him a ministry that only a Spirit-filled Christian can bring: the love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What kind of example are you setting among your immediate circle of friends?

- 12] Verb “to sin” is in present tense: in process. To sin against the brethren is to sin against Christ. Remember the Damascus Road: “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting” (Acts 9:4ff; 22:8; 26:15).

Jesus and his brethren are one. Jesus loves His church. We injure Him when we injure it...you never know when people are watching...

13] Paul uses the general word “food” instead of the term “sacrificial meat,” which was at the center of the discussion (vv.1, 4, 7, 10). Cf. Paul scolding Peter and Barnabas for their refusal to eat with Gentile Christians in Antioch (Gal 2:11-14). He and his associates delivered the letter of the Jerusalem Council to the Gentile Christians. (Acts 1:29).

“Brother”: Paul uses this word 4X in the last 3 verses...

*Skandalizo*: To set off a trap; “cause to fall.”

In the next chapter (9:22), Paul is willing to forego the eating certain foods so that he might advance the cause of Christ and the growth of the church (Mt 22:37-39).

Paul seems lax in Chapter 8 (8:10); and strict in Chapter 10 (10:18-22). In Chapter 8, Paul addresses the strong; in Chapter 10, the weak.

However, whenever a Christian becomes a *participant* in idolatry (10:18,20) he would be forging a spiritual association with an idol. God is a jealous god (Ex 20:4; Deut 5:8; Jas 4:4).

Society winks at sin, esp. sexual immorality (It’s not “sin”; it’s a “character weakness,” etc.) In the Greco-Roman world, sin was simply an inconvenient frustration. It was compared to an archer who misses the mark; a lack of skill that training could overcome.

In the Scriptures, however, sin is a personal affront to God. (Ps 51). Idolatry is spiritual adultery...

Christian fellowship carries a great responsibility: to lay down your own life for your friends (Jn 15:13). Forfeiting things you consider perfectly legitimate in order that your friends may find the way to Jesus more easily.

What is “safe” for one may be unsafe for another. [What is hidden in their storerooms? See *The Way of Agape* book or 8-tape study series.]

No one has the right to indulge in a pleasure—or demand a liberty—that may be the ruination of someone else. Some will say you are “too

narrow.” Others will insist that you are compromising points of doctrine. Abstinence should not be based upon a legalistic argument that only serves to create a vacuum in the life of the one submitting to it, but rather upon the love to the Lord Jesus Christ which involves total consecration of time, money, and everything I am to Him, and upon the consequent concern for my brethren in Christ, especially the young convert, before whom I should ever seek to be an example for His sake. But I must also not appear so strict as to frighten them off...keep a Spirit-filled balance.

## Appendix: Gnosticism

Gnosticism is a system of false teachings that existed during the early centuries of Christianity. Its name came from the Greek word for knowledge, *gnosis*. The Gnostics believed that knowledge was the way to salvation. For this reason, Gnosticism was condemned as false and heretical by several writers of the New Testament.

They consisted of diverse groups, from high-minded ascetics to licentious charlatans.

## Sources

Our knowledge of Gnosticism comes from several sources. First, there are the Gnostic texts, which are known as the New Testament APOCRYPHA. These texts are not recognized as Scripture because they contain teachings which differ from those in the Bible. Then, there are the refutations of the Gnostics by the early church fathers. Some of the more important ones are Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*; Hippolytus, *Refutations of All Heresies*; Epiphanius, *Panarion*; and Tertullian, *Against Marcion*.

A third source on Gnosticism is the New Testament itself. Many Gnostic teachings were condemned by the writers of the New Testament. Paul emphasized a wisdom and knowledge that comes from God and does not concern itself with idle speculations, fables, and moral laxity (Co. 2:8-23; 1 Tim 1:4; 2 Tim 2:16-19; Titus 1:10-16).

John, both in his gospel and in the epistles, countered heretical teaching which, in a broad sense, can be considered Gnostic.

## Teachings of the Gnostics

The Gnostics accepted the Greek idea of a radical dualism between God (spirit) and the world (matter). According to their world view, the created order was evil, inferior, and opposed to the good. God may have created the first order, but each successive order was the work of anti-gods, archons, or a demiurge (a subordinate deity).

The Gnostics believed that the earth is surrounded by a number of cosmic spheres (usually seven) which separate man from God. These spheres are ruled by archons (spiritual principalities and powers) who guard their spheres by barring the souls who are seeking to ascend from the realm of darkness and captivity, which is below, to the realm of light which is above.

The Gnostics also taught that man is composed of body, soul, and spirit. Since the body and the soul are part of man's earthly existence, they are evil. Enclosed in the soul, however, is the spirit, the only divine substance of man. This "spirit" is asleep and ignorant; it needs to be awakened and liberated by knowledge.

According to the Gnostics, the aim of salvation is for the spirit to be awakened by knowledge so that the inner man can be released from his earthly dungeon and returned to the realm of light where the soul becomes reunited with God. As the soul ascends, however, it needs to penetrate the cosmic spheres which separate it from its heavenly destiny. This, too, is accomplished by special knowledge. One must understand certain formulas which are revealed only to the initiated. (Sounds like New Age, doesn't it?)

## Ethical Behavior

Ethical behavior among the Gnostics varied considerably. Some sought to separate themselves from all evil matter in order to avoid contamination. Paul may be opposing such a view in 1 Timothy 4:1-5. For other Gnostics, ethical life took the form of libertinism. For them, knowledge meant freedom to participate in all sorts of indulgences. Many reasoned that since they had received divine knowledge and were truly informed as to their divine nature, it didn't matter how they lived. Such an attitude is a misunderstanding of the Gospel. Paul, on a number of occasions, reminded his readers that they were saved from sin to holiness. They were not to have an attitude of

indifference toward the law. They had died to sin in their baptism into Christ (Rom. 6:1-11) and so were to walk "in newness of life." John reminded the Christians that once they had been saved they were not to continue living in sin (1 Jn 3:4-10).

These Gnostic teachings also had a disruptive effect on fellowship in the church. Those who were "enlightened" thought of themselves as being superior to those who did not have such knowledge. Divisions arose between the spiritual and the fleshly. This attitude of superiority is severely condemned in the New Testament. Christians are "one body" (1 Cor 12) who should love one another (1 Cor 13; 1 Jn). Spiritual gifts are for the Christian community rather than individual use; they should promote humility rather than pride (1 Cor 12-14; Eph 4:11-16).

These Gnostic traditions, exemplified by Pantaeenus, Clement, and Origen of Alexandria, are believed to have influenced the amended texts of Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus that were exploited by Westcott and Hort to promote their own tinctures leading to the New International Version, et al.

## 1 Corinthians 9

1] "Am I not...?": Four questions (that demand affirmative answers). They had to acknowledge his freedom; he had been eating and drinking with them (Gal 2:11-16)!

Paul was called an apostle. (Matthias was the successor to Judas.) Although not numbered among the 12, he had been called (Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:16-18). Paul had *seen* the Lord on Damascus Road (15:8; Gal 1:12, 15-16). (Note Ananias words "...to see..." in Acts 22:14; cf. 26:16).

Paul does not say, I know *what* I have believed, but *whom*. (1 Tim 1:12). [Remember the old saying in business: it's not what you know, but who you know!]

When Paul uses the single name, Jesus, he depicts the earthly Jesus (12:3; 2 Cor 4:10-14; Eph 4:21; Phil 2:10; 1 Thess 4:14).

- 2] As a former persecutor of the church, they would question his apostleship (2 Cor 10:1-11; 12:11-21; 13:1-10; Gal 1:1, 22-23). “..the seal”: authentication; mark of ownership (cf., sealed by the Holy Spirit).
- 3] The Gentile Christians in Corinth were fully acquainted with the Jewish customs and considered him bound to the Mosaic food laws. They were also aware of the Jewish tradition of Tithing.
- When God instituted the priesthood in Israel, He also instituted tithing. The Levites, not receiving an inheritance in the Land, depended upon fellow Israelites for support. (Lev 27:30-33; Num 18:21,24,26-29; Deut 12:17-19; 14:22-29; 26:12-15).
- In Jesus’ day, the practice was strictly observed (Mt 23:23; Mk 12:41-44). Jesus also instructed them that a worker was worth his pay (Mt 10:5-9; Mk 6:7-11; Lk 9:3-5; 10:7).
- 4] He defends his freedom to not exercise his rights (vv. 4,5,12) to further the cause of the gospel. According to the Lord’s command, a worker deserves his wages (Lk 10:7; 1 Tim 5:18). The Corinthians who received Paul’s teachings were obligated to support him financially. But when Paul resided in Corinth at the home of Aquila and Priscilla, he plied his tentmaking trade to support himself (Acts 18:2-3). With respect to the preaching of the gospel, Paul unequivocally informed the Corinthians that he offered his services free of charge (v. 18).
- 5] “..lead about as sister”: Literal Greek, “a sister (in the Lord) is a wife.” The celibacy of the clergy, so-called, was unknown in those days.
- Paul argues that he had the right to travel with a believing wife. (She would have had a rough time: shipwreck, lack of food, clothing; 2 Cor 11:23-28.)
- Acts = Peter and Paul. [Note: Peter was married!]

- “Brothers of the Lord” mentioned by Matthew and Mark: James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3). These were his half-brothers who did not believe until after Jesus’ earthly ministry (John 7:5). Jesus appeared to James after His resurrection (1 Cor 15:7). On the day of the ascension, his brothers with their mother, Mary, and the other women met with the eleven apostles in the upper room (Acts 1:14). The Books of James and Jude are the only other evidences.
- Cephas was the Aramaic name for Peter (John 1:42). Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law in Capernaum (Matt 8:14-15; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38-39). Now we learn that Peter took his wife along on missionary journeys.
- [Since Paul mentions him repeatedly in this letter (1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5) we assume that Peter had visited the church in Corinth.]
- 6] “Or I only and Barnabas..”: Paul’s breach with Barnabas (Acts 15:39-40) seems to have been healed. Barnabas as a Levite and Paul as a Pharisee had each learned a trade. (We don’t know what Barnabas’ was.)
- 7] Soldier, Farmer, Shepherd. God’s people are often portrayed as an army, a vine, and a flock. Also, each exists on a different economic basis: soldier was salaried; owner obtains proceeds out of own yield; shepherd was usually a slave.
- 8] “For it is written..”: Paul repeatedly leans on the Scriptures in this epistle (1 Cor 1:19,31; 2:9,16; 3:19,10; 5:13; 6:16; 9:9; 10:7,26; 14:21; 15:27,32,45,54,55).
- 9] “Do not muzzle the ox while threshing” (Deut 25:4; 1 Tim 5:18). If a Jew muzzled the ox, he would run the risk of a scourging in the local synagogue. Also, “pay him his wages each day before sunset” (Deut 24:15).
- The Creator upholds, from moment to moment, all that he has made. (Col 1:16; Ps 104:14,21; 147:9).
- 10] God stipulates that man must care for the ox because it belongs to God’s creation (Prov 12:10; 27:23). Thus, the church should care for its ministers. [Contrast: “Dentist” vs. “Missionary.”]



“...account of us it is written”; refers to the preceding quote(v.9).

11] “If we have sown unto you...”: Note “we”; Paul and his fellow workers.

12] Neither Apollos or Peter founded the church in Corinth: Paul did. He was their spiritual father (4:15).

“We have not used this right”: Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla and earned his own keep by tentmaking with them (Acts 18:2-3), so as not to become a burden (Cf. Acts 20:34-35; 2 Cor 12:13; 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8).

Paul knew he could never “win”: if he refused his right to support, his critics would charge him with being aloof. If he accepted support, they would call him greedy.

When Silas and Timothy eventually arrived, they brought gifts from the churches in Macedonia, and Paul became a full-time preacher (Acts 18:5; 2 Cor 11:9). The church in Philippi supplied him again and again to aid him in his work (Phil 4:14-16). Paul and his associates strove to assure that their lifestyle would never become a hindrance to the Corinthians.

[*Hindrance* was a military term that connotes breaking up a road to impede the advance of a pursuing enemy; an interruption to a course of action.]

Paul now highlights the similarity between God’s command for the support of the priests and Levites and the Lord’s directive concerning compensation for the messengers of the Gospel.

13] Gentile Christians in Corinth were familiar with the OT stipulations concerning priests and Levites (Lev 6:8-7:38; Num 18:8-31; Deut 18:1-5). Since the tribe of Levi had no land inheritance in Israel, God stipulated that their descendants should receive their income from the gifts to the sanctuary.

## OT Offerings

The Burnt-offering (hides, for trade);

Sin-offering (only fat burned, rest was available);

Trespass-offering (only fat burned; rest was available);  
Meal-offering (wine & oil, only token burned);  
Peace-offering (fat & entrails burned; priest received breast and right shoulder; rest returned to worshipper.)

Also, priests were offered “first fruits” of seven kinds: wheat, barley, the vine, the fig-tree, the pomegranate, the olive and honey.

The Terumah, choicest fruits of every growing thing; 1/50 of any crop went to the priests.

The Tithe. The tithe belonged to the Levites; the priests received a tithe of the that which the Levites received.

The Challah, an offering of kneaded dough. If wheat, barley, spelt, oats or rye, a private individual gave 1/24th part; a public baker, 1/48th.

(The priests’ rapacity was well known; used their religion to grow fat.)

14] “The Lord ordained...(Jesus)”: A worker is worthy of his pay (Mt 10:10; Lk 10:7; cf. 1 Tim 5:18; Gal 6:6). The Lord instructed the beneficiaries of a ministry to supply the minister’s needs. He is not a servant of the church but of the Word of God.

15] Paul supported himself by his own trade during the three missionary journeys. (1 Thess 2:9; Acts 18:3; 20:34; 2 Cor 12:14). Gifts from the church in Philippi were not “remuneration for services rendered” but rather tokens of love for Paul (Phil 4:14-18).

“For I would rather die than...”: Overcome with emotion, Paul often breaks off mid-sentence (Rom 3:25; 5:12; 8:32; 1 Cor 6:9; 10:32). Despite the KJV attempt at smoothness, the force of Paul’s emotions resulted in a rupture of the syntax.

16] On the road to Damascus, Jesus told him to preach to the Gentiles and the people of Israel (Acts 9:15; 26:15-18).

“Woe to me if I do not...”: OT examples: Jeremiah (Jer 20:9); Amos (Amos 3:8). NT: Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:20). Paul is a bondslave of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:1; Gal 1:10; Tit 1:10; cf. Luke 17:10). *Doulos*, bondslave [cf. Coeur d’Alene]

18] "I abuse not my power in the gospel": No one could ever lay a claim on Paul because of some monetary accountability (2 Cor 11:7). In this freedom, Paul could actively proclaim the good news to everyone. Paul refuses to avail himself of his apostolic right and calls his preference to preach without pay his "boast" (v.15). Paul so chose, but nowhere does he abrogate the command Jesus gave to the workers in His kingdom.

19] "Free": Paul returns to the discussion on freedom that began at v.1. He was proud of his Roman citizenship; however. By not accepting compensation from the church at Corinth, he was free from any hindrance that could obstruct his preaching.

Augustine: "Man is most free when controlled by God alone." (cf. Mt 20:25-27.)

20] "First to the Jew and then to the Gentile" (Mt 10:5-6; Acts 13:46; Rom 1:16; 2:9). Although born a Jew (Phil 3:5), Paul implies he is a new creation (2 Cor 5:17) and is no longer a Jew or a Greek. Christ is the end of the law (Rom 10:4); the believer is "not under the law but under grace" (Rom 6:14).

When preaching to the Jews, he adapted himself to Jewish customs: Timothy's circumcision (Acts 16:3); Nazirite vow (Acts 18:18); Purification rites (Acts 21:23-24,26). Paul wished to demonstrate that he had no objections to obeying the law of Moses, having been accused of not teaching the law to Jewish people (Acts 21:20-21).

He asked the Jews not so much to give up the practice of the law as their confidence in it (Phil 3:3ff); their trust must be in the person of Jesus Christ. While submitting to the obedience of the Mosaic law to win Jews, he is also the champion of Christian liberty (Gal 2:4; 5:13).

Although appointed an apostle primarily to the Gentiles (Gal 2:7-9) he preached to both Jews and Greeks (Acts 20:21).

21] "To them that are without law...": Whenever Paul spent time with Gentiles, he did not observe Jewish food laws, circumcision, New Moon and Sabbath celebrations (Gal 2:11-14; Col 2:11,16).

I am free from all men (v.19); I myself am not under the law (v.20); I am not without the law of God but under the law of Christ (v.21).

Law of Christ (Gal 6:2)? He no longer seeks salvation from the law but wants to keep the law to show his gratitude to Christ. "Freedom is not license to do what I want, but liberation to do what I ought." (Green)

Although the ceremonial and civil laws have been abolished, God's moral commands remain.

22] God has chosen the weak and insignificant things to shame the strong (1:26-28).

23] Paul will go to any length, descend to any level... Discrimination was unknown to Paul (Gal 3:28). All people everywhere (Acts 20:24; Phil 3:7-14). As Christ did. Paul would even be willing to visit Illyricum (Albania and Yugoslavia) and Spain (Rom 15:19,24). He was a *co-partner* in the blessings which converts receive.

24] Isthmian Games of Corinth were second only to the Olympic Games (located 10 miles from Corinth, every other year, athletes from all over the world). Paul was in Corinth AD 50-52; games held in spring of AD 51.]

Winning is more than simply starting a race. We should apply our diligence as if in a race...only our best will do.

25] "So run, that ye may obtain": The verb *agonizomai* means "I fight, struggle"; (thus, to *agonize*). Not half-hearted.

"Temperate": Self-control (2 Tim 2:5). An athlete wins by denying himself many "lawful" pleasures. Winning is focussing on one goal: the winning of the prize. Victory is not the result of *one thing*; it's the result of many small "edges."

"Perishable crown": pine or celery. [Example: last week's ball scores?]

26] "Beating air?": Commitment (Phil 3:13-14). Deliberate; purposeful...precision, skill...a flabby soldier does not win battles.

27] *Hypopiazō*, a verb from boxing: "I give my body a black eye." *Adokimos*, disqualified from the games, for the prize. Not of salvation, but a reward for service (3:15).

Paul does not allow his lifestyle to contradict his message.

## 1 Corinthians 10

In the last chapter, Paul was defending his apostleship. He had a fear of losing it (as did Moses and Samson...).

### Warnings from History

The history of the people of God demonstrated that the enjoyment of high privilege does not guarantee final blessing.

Why did the Israelites perish in the wilderness? Despite the miracles, they lacked faith in God. Despite the incredible blessings and privileges, they blew it due to their unbelief... [Hegel: History teaches that man learns nothing from history.]

Ex 13,14: Shekinah

Ex 16: Manna

Num 20: Water from the rock

Idols: Amos 5:6; Golden Calf, Ex 32:1-6

1] “Moreover...”: Connects with Chapter 9, “I would not that ye should be ignorant” (5X) Rom 1:13; 11:25; 1 Cor 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; 1 Thess 4:13.

*Shekinah*: Ex 14:24; Num 12:5; Deut 31:15; Ps 99:7.

“...all our fathers”: Jewish and Gentile Christians. “...passed through the sea”: Ex 14.

2] “All were baptized...”: Paul’s reference links the past and present. He projects the meaning of baptism into Christ (Rom 6:3; Gal 3:27) onto Moses and the exodus (Ex 14:31). Israelites, “baptized into Moses” signified their covenant relationship (Ex 24:4-8). Moses was the mediator of the first covenant which became obsolete; Christ is the mediator of the new covenant (Heb 7:22; 8:6; 9:15).

The cloud and the sea both served to *separate* God’s people from the hostile forces.

3-4] Five times in five consecutive clauses: “All.”

*Manna*: “What is it?” (Ex 16:15). It’s interesting that God never called it manna; He called it “bread.” There is plenty of symbolism here linking it to God’s Word.

Water: At Horeb (Ex 17:1-7) and at Kadesh (Num 20:2-11). Also, Num 21:16; Neh 9:15; Ps 78:15-20; Isa 48:21.

“Spiritual”: 3X in verses 3 & 4 used as a figurative, typical meaning, pointing to Christ (cf. 10:11).

### Jesus as “Rock”

Jacob declares Him “the Rock of Israel” (Gen 49:24).

Moses portrays Him as a rock (Deut 32:4,15,18,30,31).

Psalms call Him a rock (Psa 18:31; 62:2; 78:35; 89:26; 95:1).

[The word is often applied directly to Christ’s redemptive work: Salvation (Deut 32:15; Ps 62:2; 95:1), Savior (Ps 89:26), Redeemer (Ps 78:35), Begetter (Deut 32:18).]

Paul presents the work of the preexistent Christ on behalf of His people. [Also, Paul’s fellow Jew and contemporary, Philo of Alexandria, employed the same allegories.]

Christ was present throughout their wilderness wanderings, and He is present in the church today.

5] Why was God not pleased? The Israelites longed to return to Egypt (Luke 9:62), and they carried idols with them (Amos 5:25-26; Acts 7:42-43).

“Many of them”? The classic understatement of the Bible: Of all who came out of Egypt, all but two perished! (Caleb and Joshua!) The bodies of the rest of them were (*katastromyni*) scattered over the desert (Num 14:16). Thousands perished (Num 16:40; 25:9).

[Taking men over 20 yrs. (603,550; Num 1:46) and adding an equal number of women, a total of 1,207,000, and dividing by 38 (the

number of years spent in the wilderness after the curse) suggests about 90 deaths per day!<sup>1]</sup>

Although recipients of God's daily provision, they still perished—because of unbelief! They rebelled against Him ten times (Num 14:22).

## OT Examples

6] Five historical examples: These are here for *our* learning!

Coveting food (Num 11:4);

Engaging in idolatry (Ex 32:4,6,19);

Committing immorality (Num 25:1-9);

Testing the Lord (Num 21:5);

Grumbling (Num 14:2,36; 16:1-35).

More than just history: the Corinthians were to see their own reflection in the mirror of these historical events. Do WE?

“...these things” = *typoi*, types (Hos 12:10; re: 1 Cor 10:11).

They complained about the food (Num 11:4-6). They tried God (Ps 106:14,15). Quail sent, but they were buried in *Kibroth Hattaavah* (“graves of craving”) with meat still between their teeth (Num 11:31-34). What is *your* favorite “whine”?

Greed is idolatry (Col 3:5). Thou shalt not covet (Ex 20:17; Deut 5:21); the capstone of the Decalogue. Covetousness gives rise to all other sins (Jas 1:14-15).

7] “As it is written”: A direct quote from LXX (Ex 32:6). Aaron and the Golden Calf (Ex 32:1-20; cf. Ex 20:4-5; Deut 5:8-9). They substituted play time for prayer time; indulgence for reality.

“To play”: *Paizein*, can mean debauchery, to sin sexually.

8] “Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed...”: At the instigation of Balaam, the Israelites worshiped Baal-Peor, observed Canaanite fertility rites, and indulged in sexually immoral practices (Num 25:1-9; 31:16). [Cf. Deut 4:3; Ps 106:28-29; Hos 9:10; Rev 2:14.]

Sacred prostitutes were found at many shrines and Corinth had an unenviable notoriety in this respect. “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18).

Zimri, the son of Salu, of the tribe of Simeon, is mentioned by name. He brought a Midianite woman into his tent and was killed by Phinehas, a grandson of Aaron (Num 25:6-8, 14). God struck Israel with a plague as punishment for their faithlessness. Immediately after the plague, God instructed Moses and Eleazar, son of Aaron, to conduct the second census (Num 26:1-2; the first census took place 38 years earlier, Num 1:1-3). The tribe of Simeon dropped from 59,300 to 22,200. It seems that most of the men killed in the plague were from Zimri's tribe (Num 1:22; 26:14).

[Paul quotes 23,000; Moses 24,000. The LXX, Philo, and rabbinical sources support 24,000. This “apparent” discrepancy is variously ascribed to Paul's memory, use of round numbers in Numbers and 1 Corinthians; variant readings, etc. Paul may have had access to information that we don't have. [Note: Paul restricts the 23,000 to those who died in *one day*. Numbers records the total. He also may have made some allowance for those slain by the judges (Num 25:5).]

9] “...destroyed by serpents”: Overconfident after the defeat of the king of Arad, the people were unwilling to travel around the kingdom of Edom. They displayed impatience and blasphemed God, denounced Moses, loathed manna, and clamored for water. God sent a plague of poisonous snakes into the camp. The people repented, Moses prayed, and the brazen serpent was the result (Num 21; John 3:14-15). Of those deserving to die, only *some* did; others were spared...

10] “...neither murmur ye”: Grumbling was a frequent sin (Ex 14:11-2; 15:24; 16:2-3, 8; 17:3; Num 11:1; 14:2-4; 16:11, 41; Deut 1:27; 9:28; Josh 9:18; Ps 106:25). 14,700 died in one instance (Num 16:1-35).

Destroying Angel (Ex 12:23; cf. Heb 11:28; 2 Sam 24:16; cf. 2 Chr 21:15). Rabbinical views were toward one specific destroying angel (Ps 105:23 LXX; Ps 106:23 in Hebrew). Paul focuses on the lessons of history to instill a respect for spiritual leaders (cf. Heb 13:7, 17, 24).

11] “Now all these things happened unto them for examples...” God is a God of history. He includes these as instructive lessons to warn His people. The God of the OT is the God of the NT. He changes not. He hates sin, yet loves the sinner.

Egypt = world; Pharaoh = Satan, the Prince of this World, holding them in bondage. But what does “the wilderness,” “Jordan,” and “Canaan” represent?

Their carcasses fell in the wilderness, not in Egypt. They were out of Egypt, and still under the blood, but short of Canaan. They fell short of victory; short of God’s best.

The Jordan does not represent death. It is rather a picture of leaving behind the wilderness of doubt, defeat, and failures.

Canaan does not represent Heaven. There are battles and enemies to subdue. It represents victory. Few ever reached this “Victory”; only 2, Joshua and Caleb.

We see a similar three levels [Egypt, Wilderness, Land] in the phases of Lazarus:

Dead: then raised, but still bound.

Defeated: alive, but bound by his grave clothes.

Dangerous: freed and a threat to the Lord’s enemies.

“Ends of the ages” have now begun (Heb 9:26; 1 John 2:18).

[Note: Joshua (Heb. for *Yeshua*, Jesus) led God’s people on the conquest to dispossess the land of the usurpers. The Book of Joshua appears to be a “model” (or *typos*) of the Book of Revelation, where our Yeshua leads God’s people to dispossess the entire Planet Earth of the usurpers. The parallels between the two books is startling: two witnesses, 7 trumpets, a leader (“Lord of Righteousness”) uniting for a final defeat with signs in the sun, moon, etc., kings hiding in caves, etc.]

12] “...let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall”: Avoid misplaced self-reliance and inordinate pride.

Rev 3:3: Church of Sardis warned to be “on watch.” The Acropolis of Sardis was built on a jutting spur of rock that was held to be impregnable. When Cyrus was besieging it, he offered a special reward to any who could find a way in. Hyperoades, a soldier, watched as a Sardinian soldier accidentally dropped his helmet over the battlements, and marked his path as he climbed down to retrieve it.

That night he led a band up the cliffs by the same path and found the top unguarded. They entered in and captured the citadel that was counted as “too safe.”

13] [Memory verse candidate] Temptation will come, and it is not unique. What a relief it is to know that God has set limits.

Temptations come from Satan; trials are from God. (God does not tempt anyone: Jas 1:13; cf. Mt 6:13.) Also see Job 1, 2, 42.

A faithful shepherd rescues his wandering sheep. Cf. Lot (Gen 19; 2 Pet 2:7). God is not simply a spectator of the affairs of life: he is concerned and active. God’s faithfulness to His people is perfect, even though man’s faithfulness to him is imperfect (1 Cor 1:9; 2 Cor 1:18; 1 Thess 5:24; 2 Thess 3:3; Heb 10:23; 11:11; 1 Jn 1:9; Rev 1:5; cf. Deut 7:9; Ps 145:13).

“The way of escape”: Definite article in Greek. *Ebasis*, a way out of a defile, a mountain pass.

Faith is a spiritual gift. It diminishes when not exercised; increases when tried (Rom 14:1; 2 Cor 10:15). Withstanding the attacks of Satan is an enduring struggle of faith (Eph 6:10-18; Phil 4:12-14).

14] “Flee idolatry”: (cf. “flee fornication” 6:18). An idol is inanimate, but its setting implies worship (Ex 20:4-6; Deut 5:8-10; cf 2 John 5:21).

15] Earlier Paul ridiculed the wisdom of the Corinthians, but not now (*phoinimos*, sensible, not *sophos*, as in 1:20ff).

No one can serve two masters (Mt 6:24; Lk 16:13).

16] New covenant prophesied (Jer 31:31). [Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-24: first broke bread, then poured wine. In Luke, He gives the cup, then the bread (Lk 22:17-20). Four cups involved (see *Festivals of Israel*). Paul received the formula for the Lord’s Supper from Jesus: 11:23-26.]

- 1st cup: “Bring Out”
- 2nd cup: “Delivering”
- 3rd cup: “Cup of Blessing.” (*eucharist*, from v. *eucharisteo*, “I give thanks.”)
- 4th cup: “Taking Out” (1) [Meal to be completed at the Marriage Supper?]

*Koinonia* means participation, fellowship, communion, or communion.

Lord's Supper: (next) Chapter 11. Our covenant relationship: His Blood (10:1-16; 11:25; Luke 22:20); His Body (10:16; 11:24; Luke 22:19).

17] We all partake of *One* Bread of Life (Mt 26:26-28; 1 Cor 10:16; 11:23-25).

18] Golden Calf (Ex 32:6; 24:3,7; cf. Rom 8:5a; Lev 7:6; Deut 18:1). Had not Moses pleaded for mercy, God would have destroyed them.

19] An idol is vain and vacuous (cf. 8:4). Implied worship is something else again....

20] Cf. Deut 32:15-18. (Note "Rock" twice.) It would seem that Paul's allusion to the Song of Moses implies that the Corinthians probably had memorized it and sang it in their services. Paul's allusion would be a synecdoche for the entire wilderness experiences.

The word "demons" occurs 2X in this verse and 2X in the next. For the Greek every spring, every grove, every mountain, every tree, every stream, every pool, every rock, every place had its demon. For the Jew they were the *shedim*.

The definite article "the" is in the Greek (omitted in the English for stylistic reasons). It denotes demons as an entire class. Paul called them "principalities and powers."

The LXX, used by the Corinthians, clearly describes unfaithful Israel worshipping demons (LXX of Deut 32:17; Isa 65:11; Ps 95:5 (96:5 in Hebrew); Ps 105:36-37 (106:36-37); Bar 4:7; and cf. Rev 9:20).

21] At the Lord's Table, we are one with Christ. As Jesus said on two occasions (Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13) "You cannot serve both God and Mammon." They (and we) must choose.

22] God is a Jealous God (Ex 20:5; Deut 5:9; cf. Deut 32:16.

"..stronger.." He who criticizes the law places himself above the Lawgiver and Judge (4:11-12).

23] 4X. Rejoinders: "..not profitable"; "..do not edify." (8:1; Rom 14:19). This is the basic ground rule—does it edify?

24] "Let no man seek his own...": cf. Rom 15:2; Phil 2:4; Mt 22:39; Rom 13:10.

25] Meat market in ancient Corinth was known as the *makellon*. Some scholars believe that the ordinary citizen in Corinth bought meat products that often had no connection with idolatry. The problem of *eidolothytia* (food sacrificed to an idol) probably would never have come up had not the Cephas group of Jewish Christians not raised it.

No questions: Paul believes that when sacrificial meat is sold to the public, it lost its religious significance.

26] "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof": Ps 24:1 (Ps 50:12; 89:11). Citation used at mealtime. (*Berakoth* 35a-b.) Everything comes ultimately from God (Echoes Acts 10:9-16).

27] The scene now is in a home, not a temple. Conscience is burdened not by things but by individuals (v.28).

28] *Hierothytion*, meat that had been slaughtered in a pagan rite.

30] No one should give someone else a reason to slander (or blaspheme) the Christian religion.

31] Col 3:17 (cf. 1 Pet 4:11).

32] Three categories: Jew, Gentile, or Church of God.

33] This verse is a tie to Chapter 11:1: Be an imitator of Paul, as he is of Christ (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:1-7; 4:9; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 3:7,9).

## Summary: Rules of the Road

1) Live sacrificially for other people. "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." (10:24). You are on the King's business, and He grants no vacations.

2) Separation unto God. Maintain your testimony, living in separation but not in isolation (10:16-17). No monasteries; no

hermetic living. Our fellowship is at Calvary, but our contact must be with the world. Paul distinguishes between our contacts and our communion.

- 3) Singleminded focus on His Glory. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (10:31).”

Thus, three questions:

- 1) Is it a stumbling block to other people?
- 2) Can I ask the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ on this action that I take?
- 3) Can I do this thing for the glory of God?

## 1 Corinthians 11

### Worship

The next four chapters deal with worship.

- 1] “Be followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”: [Really part of the previous chapter.]

2] ...keep the ordinances...”: Remember, we dealing with the multicultural society of Corinth. The Corinthian women had become “emancipated” and began to flout established traditions and decorum. [Inscriptions discovered in Corinth indicates that they competed in the Isthmian Games, including war chariot races, 200 meter runs, etc.

- 3] “Head”: A divine pattern in three clauses; beginning and ending with Christ. *Kephale* (head) = source, or authority.

LXX usage (for Heb. *rosh*): chief or ruler (2 Sam 22:44; Isa 7:8,9). Jewish perspective = authority) or Hellenistic = (source). Source: Col 1:18; 2:19; Eph 4:15. Authority (parallels remain true): Gen 3:10; Eph 5:23.

Paul uses the term 17 times: 7 literal (1 Cor 11:4 (2X), 5 (2X), 7, 10; 12:21), 10 figurative (1 Cor 11:3 (3X); Eph 1:22; 4:15; 5:23 (2X); Col 1:18; 2:10,19).

- 4] Dress codes vary from culture to culture and age to age. Paul was objecting to the blurring of genders, desiring to demonstrate the clear distinction between men and women. (1)

[Gift of prophecy evident (14:1,39). Remember, Joel said, “your sons and daughters shall prophesy...” (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17). From Chapter 14, it seems that the women had assumed certain privileges and positions of dominance.]

*Kata kephale*, “having (something) hanging down from the head.” Same words as Greek author Plutarch (born 46 A.D., 40 miles from Corinth).

In their native land and in their colonies, Romans covered their heads during private and public devotions. Offering sacrifices or praying, they would pull their toga forward over their heads. Praying uncovered fits the context of shunning the worship of idols (f.n., p.368).

[Some scholars view the term as referring to an “unmasculine hairdo,” a possible reference to homosexuality.]

- 5] “But every woman who prays or prophesieth...” (vv.4 & 5 reveal the equality of women in the church.) In OT, it was the man who received the sign of the covenant (Gen 17), and who served as representative for the woman. In NT, male and female are one on Christ (Gal 3:28).

The Corinthian woman, putting aside her head covering (*yashmak*, veil) in public, was a form of rebellion, renouncing her subordination to her husband, going against the structure of creation.

- 6] Shaving a woman’s head was a form of humiliation for an adulterous woman (Num 5:18). [A comedy of Menander, set in Corinth, portrays a shamed shaven woman.]

Although the gospel sets people free from the Jewish civil and ceremonial laws, it does not abrogate the distinctive roles of each gender, and the husband-wife relationship.

- 7] Re: the creation account (Gen 1:26-27; 2:18-24). Image (not likeness) suggests an exact representation. Glory (rather than “likeness”) as in Ps 8:5. Why should a woman bring glory to her husband? See the next two verses.

8-9] The husband takes primary responsibility for his headship, with a nonreversible orientation of the woman towards the man as the reference point in her life (cf. 1 Tim 2:13-14).

10] “For” tightly connects this verse to vv. 7-9.

“...because of the angels”: An obscure phrase with many views. It *does* seem that holy angels are present when saints remember the Lord (1 Pet 1:12). [Rabbinical views (Qumran): “An unveiled woman in a sacred assembly is like a bodily defect which should be excluded.” Holy angels present at worship services are offended by defects.(?) Some also link with Gen 6:1-4.]

11] “...in the Lord”: Christianity has been, and remains, a force that liberates women from oppression and servitude. In many other religions, women are owned by their fathers and husbands, and treated as chattel, or property. Even in ancient Israel, a female was secondary to any male (in a line of an 18-petition prayer, a man renders thanks to God for making him neither a slave, a Gentile, or a *woman*). Women were not considered worthy of studying the Scriptures and were denied an education. They were not even counted in the number required for a synagogue (10).

In the NT, there is frequent edifying and mention of women, and their equality is noted in many ways (Gal 3:28; Rom 16:1-15).

12] Attendance at, and participation in, a service dedicated to worshipping God requires proper decorum. The angels covered their faces in God’s presence (Isa 6:2-3).

In that day, women wore veils as marked distinction from men. God created a distinct difference between men and women and he desires that His people mark this dissimilarity with appropriate dress. Not abiding by these dress codes negates the differentiation which God has designed.

[Paul is not attempting to enforce first century styles on the church; in contrast to Islam which enforces the customs of 7th century Arabia on its followers.]

14] Preserve the natural order of the creation, and avoid confusion. Even the Stoic, Epictetus, who taught in the second half of the first century, speaks of the need to preserve the signs which God has given to avoid

confusion in this regard. Jewish men cut their hair, except during a stipulated period associated with a vow (Acts 18:18; 21:24).

Greco-Roman practice also favored trimmed hair (except for notable exceptions as the Spartans on the Peloponesian peninsula.) To have long hair was considered shameful to them.

The cultural pattern in Israel was that a woman would not unloose her hair in public (except to identify herself as a prostitute). [Simon the Pharisee was horrified when a prostitute entered his home and wiped Jesus’ feet with her hair (Luke 7:36-50).]

“Covering” here alludes to an article of clothing, such as a veil. Paul wants a woman to be distinctively feminine and thus fulfill the role that God has intended since creation. “The unique beauty of a woman is gloriously manifest in the distinctive femininity portrayed by her hair and her attendance to feminine customs.” (MacArthur)

16] “Contentious”: One who loves to argue. Paul has not time for someone whose mind is set on debating an issue for the sake of argument. Paul frequently refers to all the churches (Rom 16:4, 16; 1 Cor 7:17; 14:33; 16:1, 19; 2 Cor 8:1, 18, 19, 23, 24; 12:13; Gal 1:2, 22; 1 Thess 2:14; 2 Thess 1:4). Summary: Rom 12:1,2; 1 Pet 3:3,4.

## The Lord’s Supper

This letter contains the earliest records of the Lord’s Supper; Paul’s letter was written earlier than the Gospels.

17] There was unseemly behavior at their gatherings: some were left hungry; some were drunk. This was not a “love” feast.

18] [“First place...” As elsewhere (Rom 3:2), but he never lists a single one after his “first of all.”]

Worship services generally held in private homes. (As we need to do more, and may *increasingly have to*) During these gatherings, they read Paul’s letters (Col 4:16; 1 Thess 5:27; Rev 1:3) and were given canonical status equivalent to OT Scriptures (2 Pet 3:15-16).

Factions: Different cultural, social, economic backgrounds; Jews, Greeks, Romans, et al; merchants, government officials, professionals living in spacious homes, as well as laborers and dock workers



living in rented quarters. Early translations of the NT Scriptures were in Latin, Coptic, and Syriac, reflecting the different linguistic and geographic developments.

19] True believers, tested by spiritual warfare, should cut themselves off from societies inimical to the gospel (2 Cor 6:14-18).

20] “Agape feasts” (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7,11) were the hallmark of the early church.

21] However, they quickly degenerated into discriminatory unsavory demonstrations. (Jude 12; 2 Pet 2:13). The rich, arriving earlier, finished the best (if not all), often satiated and drunk, with the slaves and laborers arriving late and going hungry.

22] Some prominent people became members of the church: Roman proconsul Sergius Paulus in Cyprus (Luke 13:6-12), the merchant Lydia from Thyatira (Luke 16:14), and Titus Justus at Corinth (Luke 18:7). Excavations at ancient Corinth: the triclinium (dining rooms) could accommodate maybe 20-30 people; the rest would have to stand, or eat in the atrium (courtyard). First comers, friends of the host, were likely to enjoy the triclinium, and the best food, leaving the residue for the late-comers. The rich were despising the church by humiliating the poor.

23] Received *from the Lord*. (!) Jesus communicated to Paul directly on a number of occasions: on the road to Damascus, in Arabia, three years in Tarsus before Barnabas has him come to Antioch (Acts 18:9f; 22:18; 23:11; 27:23-25; 2 Cor 1:2-7; Gal 1:12; 2:2).

“while being betrayed”: Greek verb in the imperfect tense; the deed was in progress at the time; on the very threshold of His coming ordeal, about 25 years earlier...

24] The accounts of Luke 22:19, Mt 26:26 and Mk 14:22 essentially the same. [This epistle is the earliest!]

“...when He had given thanks”: His pattern (Mt 14:19; Mk 6:41; Lk 9:16; Jn 6:11).

“This is my body”: This (*touto*) is neuter, not masculine as it should be if it referred to bread.

**Transubstantiation:** Dogma in the Roman Catholic and some Christian churches; the view that the bread and wine change in substance (though not in appearance) into His body and blood. First called transubstantiation in the 12th century; elaborated by theologians from the 13th-15th century, and incorporated in documents at the Council of Trent (1545-63).

**Consubstantiation:** A variant view in which Christ’s body and blood substantially coexist with the consecrated bread and wine. Often associated with Lutheran doctrine.

He was still in His body as He instituted the sacrament.

“...given for you”: speaking prophetically (Rom 5:7-8).

## Seven Things to Ingest

### 1. A Divine Command

A solemn obligation: To assemble with the people of God for celebration of the memorial of the death of Christ in the Lord’s Supper. To neglect to do so is to be obedient to the Lord’s direct wish.

If you raise the objection that you are not worthy, I suggest that the only ones who have a right to come are those who really believe and confess that they *are* unworthy.

### 2. A Blessed Privilege

The Table is the Lord’s. Jesus Christ is the Host. We, who murdered Him, who reviled Him, and by our sin spit upon Him, and drove the cruel nails though His blessed hands—we are invited to come and sit at His Table with Him as our Host and feast with Him by His grace. What a privilege! And what an insult if we refuse that invitation.

The Table is for His people and not for the world. This chapter, especially, applies to believers only.

### 3. A Necessary Memorial

This reminds us of the infinite cost of our purchased salvation. It is His faithfulness, not ours, that saves us.

251 The third cup. This is cup is *the new covenant* in my blood (not the blood itself).

*en* = “in,” or “at the cost or price of,” especially when translating the Hebrew preposition *be*.

The blood is the life (Deut 12:23). Review the notes on Chapter 5 regarding Passover (all leaven to be removed: Ex 12:15; 13-7; *Bedikat hametz*: ritual search for leaven. The elimination of leaven was a *symbol of deliverance*. *Martzah*: pierced, striped? Three pieces; middle one broken = *aphikomen*. ½ wrapped in cloth and hidden? Nothing to be left: Ex 12:10; Blood provided life (Lev 17:11; Mt 26:27,28).

Mishna: Wine mixed with warm water? (Mishna, Pes. VII 13; John 19:34) Passover Lamb = “His Body”; Haggadah = “showing forth” (Ex 13:8).

Application: His blood on the doorposts of our heart (1 Jn 1:7; 1 Cor 15:51-57; Eph 2:13; Jn 5:24). The uncircumcised could not partake; of the heart (Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4; Gal 3:26; Phil 3:3; Rom 2:28-29; Gal 6:15; 2 Cor 5:17).

Jesus “made sin for us”:

“I Am the Bread of Life”

Manna

Melchizedek: Bread and Wine

[Who gives to whom?]

Joseph: Baker (broken)

Wine Steward (redeemed)

Frees from the old life, bondage;  
call to separation:

2 Cor 5:21; 1 John 3:5  
John 6:32-35; 47-51  
Gen 14  
Gen 14  
Gen 40  
Eph 4:22

[For a complete review of this topic, see our briefing package, *The Feasts of Israel*.]

What is a “covenant”? A unilateral disposition made by God in favor of man. (Not to be understood as a mutual agreement between two parties of equal standing.)

When Moses confirmed the first covenant at Mt. Sinai, he sprinkled blood on the people and said “This is the blood of the covenant that

the Lord has made with you (Ex 24:8; Zech 9:11). Animal blood was sprinkled for the first covenant; Jesus’ blood for the new covenant.

The new covenant made the first obsolete (Heb 8:13). He ratified this new covenant with Christ’s blood shed once for all (Heb 9:26; 10:10). God appointed Jesus as the mediator of this covenant (Heb 7:22; 8:6; Rom 3:25).

The one loaf of bread signifies that all who participate partake of the one Body of Christ (10:17) and form a covenant community. We are His covenant partners.

Consecrating ourselves to do His will: Rom 12:1-2; 1 Pet 2:5.

#### 4. A Willing Testimony

#### 5. A Humbling Confession

251 It is a memorial only for imperfect people. Perfect people would have no need of this memorial.

Our identification with Him also involves our humbling confession of our own helplessness and unworthiness as well. Away go all excuses and all my own “good” works. The death of Christ is the death of all man’s righteousness. I hereby declare myself to be completely unfit in myself.

My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness;  
I would not trust the sweetest frame  
But only lean on Jesus’ Name.

Was it for crimes that I had done,  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity, grace unknown,  
And love beyond degree.

#### 6. An Act of Faith

Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou biddest me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

This is also Eschatological. Our personal relationship and destiny with Him.

The Lord's Table is found in only 4 books in the NT. The Second Coming is in 23 books of the 27. (Of the 4 in which there is no reference to His Second Coming, 3 of them have only 1 chapter; the other is Galatians.)

The Lord's Supper looks not only backward to the Cross but forward to the Crown as well. It is a memorial only for the time of His absence. When He comes, this supper will be supplanted by the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

When the Lord Jesus left the Last Supper with His disciples, He went out to die for them. The disciples went out, one to betray Him, others to be prayerless and forgetful, all to desert Him. Often we have broken this bread together around the Lord's Table, and then we have gone out to do just what those disciples did—we have denied Him.

## 7. A Solemn Warning

27] The sentence is clear in Greek, but not in English. It means that the nonchalant (profaning) partaker of the Lord's Supper is guilty of murdering Jesus.

Christians should never regard the celebration as a mere ritual.

Those who profane the elements are guilty of the body and blood of our Lord, putting the Son of God to open shame and treat Him with insolence (cf. Acts 7:52; Heb 6:6; 10:29).

Note: *unworthily* is an adverb, not an adjective as *unworthy*. Not frivolous and careless, but focussed and committed.

28] Self-examination is essential. Never with contempt or frivolity (2 Cor 13:5-6). Never with unbelief nor disobedience. (Does not accord with the theories like transubstantiation: the bread remains bread at the moment of reception.)

29] Failure to submit to self-examination results in God's subsequent judgment (Ps 15:1). The guest at the Lord's table must be blameless, righteous, truthful, morally upright, and obedient to God's law.

Prepared (1 Jn 1:9), washed with the Christian's "bar of soap."

There is a stress on the corporate nature of the service and the responsibility of each to all. One loaf = one Body.

30] Spiritual ills can have physical results. [Divine healing, not "faith" healing. It is *His* sovereignty, not our initiatives.] James 5 often misconstrued. It applies to those particular cases of sickness which are due to unconfessed and unjudged sin (Jas 5:14-16).

Ignorance of the will of God causes much sorrow in the life of the believer. Hosea: "My people are destroyed because of the lack of knowledge" (4:6).

31] We must self-examine ourselves, not become a self-appointed judge of others (cf. Job and his friends).

32] "Distinguishing": *Diakrino*, distinguishing between what we are and what we ought to be, so that we do not come under judgment (*Krino*).

33] Spiritual rather than physical nourishment.

## Summary: Seven Things to Ingest

1. **A Divine Command**
2. **A Blessed Privilege**
3. **A Necessary Memorial**
4. **A Willing Testimony**
5. **A Humbling Confession**
6. **An Act of Faith**
7. **A Solemn Warning**

# 1 Corinthians 12

## Spiritual Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:1-13 reveals more about the work of the Holy Spirit than does any other passage in this book. The Greek word *pneuma* appears 12 times in 8 verses: 12:3 (2X), 4, 7, 8 (2X), 9 (2X), 10, 11, 13 (2X). A study of the Trinity is essential to one's understanding of the Holy Spirit.

## Joint Actions of the Trinity

### Incarnation

Father Heb 10:5  
Son Phil 2:7  
Holy Spirit Luke 1:35

### Atonement

Father Isa 53:6,10  
Son Eph 5:2  
Holy Spirit Heb 9:14

### Resurrection

Father Rom 6:4  
Son John 10:17  
Holy Spirit Rom 8:11

The Holy Spirit is a person, repeatedly referred to as "He." (The neuter word *pneuma* proves important when unraveling the "restrainer" in 2 Thess 2.)

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit should begin with creation (Gen 1:2; Ps 104:30). He is the source of knowledge (1 Cor 2:10,11). He has a mind (Rom 8:27) and a will (1 Cor 12:11). He loves us; only those who love us can truly "grieve" (Eph 4:30). He was given a special assignment during our Lord's absence (Jn 16:7-14) and He abides with us forever (Jn 14:16). But is there something more?

## Our Relationship with the Holy Spirit

Three Greek prepositions are used to describe our relationship with the Holy Spirit.

*Para*, "with": The Holy Spirit works *with* us to convict us of sin and lead us to Jesus Christ.

*En*, "in": Once we've accepted Christ, the Holy Spirit dwell *in* us (Jn 14:17).

*Epi*, "upon you": There are some events where the Holy Spirit comes *upon* us (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:8; 10:44; 19:6).

He is Living Water: a yearning (Ps 42:1,2).  
He is our Spiritual source within our bodies (Jn 7:37).  
"Without me you can do *nothing*" (Jn 15:5).

1] "Now concerning...": Familiar introductory words responding to issues raised in their earlier letter, such as marriage, virgins, food offered to idols, and others.

"Brothers": A term Paul uses when entering a sensitive topic (cf. 1:10).

"Spiritual gifts": *Pneumatikon*, gifts from the Holy Spirit, synonymous with *charisma*, gift of grace. In this chapter, *charisma* points to activities of the Holy Spirit.

"I do not want you to be ignorant...": Cf. Rom 1:13; 11:25; 1 Cor 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; 1 Thess 4:13. All key passages!

Ignorant of what? The proper use of spiritual gifts. Paul will spend the next three chapters on how to evaluate and use spiritual gifts. These are to be used for the benefit of fellow believers, not as badges of superiority. They are given to unite, not divide, the Body.

Two common errors having to do with spiritual gifts: Ignoring them or overemphasizing one gift over another.

2] "Mute idols" (Ps 115:5; Hab 2:18-19; 3 Macc 4:16): Icons of wood and stone are voiceless and the gods they represent have nothing to say. Greek verb for "led" is imperfect, indicating repeated occurrences.

3] "Accursed...": Some suggest that Paul is opposing Gnostic teachers who taught a dualism of the material and spiritual. However, the Holy Spirit is the issue, which occurs twice. One blaspheming Jesus' name

will not be uttering a curse through the God's Spirit. A person—Jew or Gentile—confessing Jesus as Lord does so by the Holy Spirit.

Paul may be recalling his own past history. He forced many to blaspheme (Acts 26:11). Paul is stressing the absence or the presence of the Holy Spirit by how people speak of Jesus. Paraphrase: "No man speaking by the Spirit of God is *indifferent* to the Lord Jesus Christ."

The confession "Jesus is Lord" is one of the oldest creeds in Christendom (cf. Jn 13:13; Phil 2:11). *Kurios* is a tremendous word; it was the official title of the Roman Emperor. On the day of Pentecost, the Jewish converts received Jesus as both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). Converted Gentiles forsook their pagan past and pledged allegiance to Jesus as both their Lord and Savior (Acts 16:31; Rom 10:9). Christians received Jesus as ruler of the world, as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim 6:15; Rev 17:14; 19:16).

Some will call Jesus "Lord," and even perform valuable tasks in His service, but if they are not filled with God's Spirit and therefore fail to do the Father's will, Jesus will dismiss them by saying "I never knew you" (Mt 7:23). Jesus exercises His sovereign will in this world. He recognizes only those people who, led by the Holy Spirit, acknowledge His true identity and obediently bow to His authority.

4-6] Note the 3 pairings: gifts, administrations, operations; Spirit, Lord (Jesus), God (Father). The **Trinity** at work (Eph 4:8).

Every believer has some gift or gifts, but never all of them (1 Pet 4:10). Unity but not uniformity in its parts.

Paul lists nine *charismata* in this chapter: wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, faith, healings, miracles, spiritual discernment, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

[There are at least 21 in the NT: Some would count administration and apostleship from this chapter, along with serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing, leadership, showing mercy (Rom 12:6-8), celi-bacy (1 Cor 7:7), evangelism, pastoring (Eph 4:11), and public service (Acts 6:2-4). I do not believe that any of the "lists" are intended to be complete, only representative.]

No one should boast of having received a greater gift. No servant is greater than his master (Jn 13:15-16).

7] "The manifestation of the spirit is given to every man": God's kingdom is without borders. There is no distinction between sacred and secular. He wants His people to minister to a hurting world that needs help physically, emotionally, spiritually, and materially. Nor is there a limitation of only one gift. Paul had received the gift of continence and of speaking in tongues (7:7; 14:18).

The gift is for the common good of the entire community and the edification of the Body (Eph 4:12). Paul will deal with this in Ch. 14.

8] "...to another": Diverse gifts, this is just a representative list. Wisdom first; tongues last. (1)

**Wisdom** (*sophia*): Divine wisdom, contrasted with human wisdom (1:17, 20, 25). One of the "Seven Spirits" of Isa 11:1-2. Fulfilled in Christ (Lk 2:52); given to Steven (Acts 6:10; cf. Acts 7); and available to us all (Jas 1:5).

**Knowledge** (*gnosis*): It depends not on intellect, but on love; an intimate personal relationship. [Both of these discussed earlier: 2:6-16.] Contrast Peter's rhetorical performance *prior* to Pentecost with his two sermons (Acts 2 & 3) *after*!

**Faith (v.9)**: Not "saving faith," but an unshakable trust that God will perform miracles. Peter and John in opposing the Sanhedrin, preaching the gospel, healing the cripple (Acts 3:1-4:2). Paul's call to Rome (Acts 23:11), his behavior during the storm on the Mediterranean Sea (Acts 27:23-26, 34), etc. Hebrews 11, et al. Even Elijah was "a man like us." (Jas 5:17-18).

**Healing** (cf. Jas 5:14-15): Not a permanent gift, but a sovereign manifestation of the Spirit. Even Paul's own "thorn in the flesh" went unhealed (2 Cor 12:9). Furthermore, he indirectly admits that he lacked the ability to heal either Epaphroditus (Phil 2:27), Timothy (1 Tim 5:23), or Trophimus (2 Tim 4:20). We should not cease asking (Heb 4:16; Jas 5:16).

**Miracles (v.10)**: More miracles took place during Jesus' ministry than at any other time in Biblical history. The supreme one being the resurrection which will be the subject of Chapter 15. Miracles were the distinctive mark of an apostle (2 Cor 12:12). They were used to confirm the message of the gospel (Acts 6:8; 8:7; 13:6-12; Heb 2:4).

**Prophecy:** “Forthtelling” a key element at Corinth (as seen in Chapter 11). Sometimes predictions (Agabus, Acts 11:28; 21:11) or to interpret God’s Will to the church (Eph 4:11). Prophetic utterances are always to be judged by Scripture (Acts 17:11). God’s Word is always the standard.

Satan (often as an Angel of Light, 2 Cor 11:14) communicates false information and deceit, as with Eve (Gen 2:16-17; 3:1, 4-5). The prophet Micah revealed to the kings of Israel and Judah that a lying spirit spoke through the mouths of all the prophets of Israel (1 Kgs 22:21-23; 2 Chr 18:20-22).

Jesus discerned the voice of Satan in Peter (Mt 16:23). Paul recognized Bar-Jesus as the son of the devil (Acts 13:10) and the fortune-telling of the slave girl (Acts 16:18). John instructed us to test the spirits (1 Jn 4:1-3). In the end times, Satan and his cohorts will work miracles (2 Thess 2:9-10; Mt 24:24; Rev 13:1-14). There will be false teachers also (Jude 4; 2 Pet 2:1-2; 1 Tim 4:1).

*You protect yourself from counterfeiters by carefully studying the genuine.*

**Tongues:** Speaking in unknown tongues often accompanied the *epi* relationship (Acts 2, 10, 19). The exercise of this gift also generated so many problems that an entire chapter (14) will be devoted to them.

11] “…as He wills”: No one received all the gifts and no one is without a gift. The Spirit neglects no one and all is the result of His divine prerogative. We each can have all of the “graces” (Gal 5:22-23) but we cannot have all of the “gifts.”

Throughout this passage, Paul speaks in the present passive indicative (“is being given”) to convey that God continues to give these special gifts to His people.

## The Body

12] “One spirit”: Having looked at the “trees,” Paul now turns to the “forest.” Jesus taught that He and His people are one (Mt 10:40; 25:45; Acts 9:4).

13] “Baptized”: Jesus baptizes his followers with the Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8). “All of us were baptized” in the metaphorical sense. James and John were challenged whether they were able to be baptized as He was (Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50; Acts 1:5; 1 Cor 10:2). Words extend to a circle enclosing *all believers*.

[Some view the text as referring to the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The Greek verb tense calls for a single occurrence of drinking, which is incongruent with the repeated observance of the Lord’s Supper. The sacraments are not Paul’s focus, but the internal transformation by the Holy Spirit bringing people into a living relationship with Christ.]

“One Body”: Paul is stressing the unity of the Church in its diverse forms.

“All were made to drink”: This seems to rule out any interpretation which requires a later rite for the impartation of the Spirit (cf. Gal 3:27-28).

Greek verb, *potizo*, “I give to drink” (Mt 25:35); or “I irrigate” (1 Cor 3:6-8); as in “living water” of Jn 4:10; 7:38-39), yielding the harvest of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).

14] “For the body is not one member, but many”: Varied, but coordinated parts.

15-16] The intention here is to eradicate all envy with respect to a particular spiritual gift that a member has not received.

17] Paul is stressing our mutual dependence and one another and the absurdity of nurturing jealousy because of spiritual gifts. I need you to have your gift; you need me to have mine.

18] God is the subject of this verse. Gifts are given in accordance with His design. [Bezalel, Oholiab, and other craftsmen building the tabernacle (Ex 31:1-6).]

19] Compare with the discovery of interdisciplinary groups for “operations research” et al.

20] [Example of musical harmony.]

- 21] Absurdity of independence. Self-sufficiency flies in the face of servanthood (9:19; 2 Cor 4:5; Gal 5:13).
- 22] Jesus Himself told Paul: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor 12:9)
- 23] Our unrespectable parts are treated with even more respect.
- 25] Unity is the principal purpose. No one should ever be neglected within the church. “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” (Lev 19:18; Mt 22:39.) Any gift which does not provoke love, tolerance, and forbearance toward other believers is not a gift from the Lord. Love is the final and acid test.
- 26] An organism, not a society; a communion, not a guild; a fellowship (*koinonia*), not an association.
- 27] “You are the Body of Christ”: Despite their quarrels, divisions, failure to expel an immoral brother, bringing lawsuits against fellow brothers, criticizing apostles, not properly observing the Lord’s Supper, etc.
- One entity without division. Christ loves His church. To injure or insult it is to injure or insult Him. You can’t join—you must be “born” into it.
- 28] Apostles beyond the 12: Paul (Rom 1:1) and Barnabas (Acts 14:14). They were accorded the authority of the OT prophets.
- The church has predictive prophets, as Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:10), Barnabas, Simeon Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, in Antioch; in Caesarea, the four daughters of Philip (Acts 21:8-9); in Jerusalem, Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32).
- Do not treat prophecies with contempt (1 Thess 5:20).
- 29] Paul asks seven rhetorical questions: No one gift is universal. How strange it is that the gifts were to facilitate the unity of the church. And yet some insist that a single gift is essential, and thus divide the body. Others deny the validity of the gifts, and they, too, divide the body.
- 31] Desire the greater (higher) gifts. (Chapter 14 will relegate tongues to the last on the list; extolling prophesying—forthtelling the gospel.)

Yet I will show you a more excellent way...an intro to Chapter 13... Love is not a “spiritual gift” but rather a complete way of life (Gal 5:22-23).

## Are the Spiritual Gifts for Today?

- 1) The Holy Spirit is immutable.
- 2) Where does it say they are to terminate?
- 3) If the gifts are not, what about teaching, et al?
- 4) Until the “close of the canon?” vs. the Upper Room confirmations. The 1 Cor 13:8-10 view: Rev 10: Do the seven thunders leave the *canon incomplete*?

## 1 Corinthians 13

### Our Most Urgent Essential

We look for love in the wrong places (horizontally rather than vertically). We love “if”: a conditional, manipulative love. We love “because” (you’re beautiful, talented, smart, rich...position); leads to bondage, fear, and insecurity.

This chapter introduces us to a totally different kind of Love: *Agape* (God’s unconditional Love); Romans 8.

Paul gave us a love letter without equal (except for the one written in blood on wooden cross erected in Judea almost 2000 years ago!) and a lifetime is inadequate to unveil its full meaning.

The Corinthians “came behind in no gift” (1:7). Twelve chapters of pain bring us to this pinnacle. Paul’s remedy: First correction, chapters 1-11; then instruction, 12-14. It is interesting that it was Paul the theologian, not John the disciple of love, who brought us this passage.

*Caritas* (Latin Vulgate): Wycliffe; “charity.” The use of “love” is ambiguous (Jn 3:16, et al. 1 Jn 4:10; Mt 22:37-39; Deut 6:4,5)

**Eros:** After the god of love in Greek mythology, son of Aphrodite;

thus, sensual love between the sexes, etc. Appears nowhere in NT (OT: Proverbs, Hosea, Ezekiel.)

**Phileo:** Friendship among friends; kind feelings toward one another; natural affection.

**Storge:** Filial love within the family.

**Agapao (v):** This is not “divine love.” (cf. Jn 3:19; Lk 11:43..) It means “to be totally given over to”; or to “agonize over.” It is the root from which we get *agony*.

**Agape (n):** This is a coined word in NT; (20X in LXX; 116 X in NT, 75 in Paul). It is a love lavished on others without a thought whether they are worthy or not. It proceeds from the nature of the lover, not from any attractiveness in the beloved. It is a commitment, not a feeling (cf. use of *agape* and *phileo* in Jn 21:15-17). Peter couldn't get himself to use *agape* until receiving the fullness of the Spirit at Pentecost.

1] From the first verse, Love must be sovereign in the heart. The power of your tongue is not the extent of your vocabulary but the depth of your heart. Placement of the Greek verb *to speak* between the words of men and angels is meant to stress the reference to angelic speech. A unique construction, used only here in Greek NT (Kistemaker).

Gongs and cymbals were familiar at Corinth from their use by devotees of Dionysius or Cybele. Pliny the Elder: “Corinthian bronze is valued before silver and almost even before gold. (SPC, p.86, Morris). Bronze vases were used as resonators in some theaters. (Morris, 177 f.n.).

2] “and have not love, I am nothing”: Love must be sovereign in our intellect. Prophecy is the power to declare the things of God, the power to bring the word of heaven to bear upon the earth, the power to bring eternity into time (14:1-5; vs. tongues).

Is it possible to have the gift of prophecy and have not love? Balaam (Num 23 & 24): “The people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations (23:9).” True for 3500 years. (Caiaphas, the High Priest, prophesied in Jn 11:49-50).

Some take “knowing all mysteries and all knowledge” as amplifying “prophecies.” Others say knowledge is not unlike our science; mysteries are truths that people could never find out for themselves. Doctrine of mysteries: God's secrets. Prophecies and mysteries are linked (Rev 10:7). A true prophet receives insight into God's mysteries and explains them to the people. Paul speaks God's wisdom in a mystery (2:7), for he and his coworkers “are stewards of god's mysteries” (4:1).

Faith is God's gift to man, a gift which the recipient must constantly exercise, strengthen, and amplify (12:9).

“Moving mountains” is a Jewish proverbial saying that conveyed the idea of making the impossible possible. (SB vol 1, p.759)

3] “...and give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing”: Love must be sovereign in a man's will. First century people commonly saw great merit in deeds of charity and in suffering. Paul devalues spectacular sacrifice without love. It can be easier to die for Christ than to live for Him. Contrast the Church at Ephesus, who left its first love (Rev 2:2-4). One without love is without God.

In this chapter there are two contrasting images. First: lots of gifts, no love (vv.1-3). Second: love, no reference to gifts! (vv. 4-7). The second is a “photograph” of Jesus Christ. Sin and Satan have robbed us of all likeness to God's character.

### Fourteen Ingredients of Love

4] **Love suffereth long:** Although wronged, God's Love is still patient and silent. Patience is often used of God (Lk 18:7; 2 Pet 3:9; Rom 2:4; 9:22, etc.) Contrast with Allah: capricious; thus, untrustworthy. Jesus: when reviled, reviled not again. How about us?  
**and is kind:** Not a triumph of obstinacy but a triumph of grace. Going out of your way. (Note Jesus' treatment of even Judas.)

**Love envieth not:** Jealousy is disastrous: Murder, Cain and Abel (Gen 4:3-8); Slavery, Jacob's sons & Joseph (Gen 37:11,28); High priest, jails apostles (Acts 5:17-18); Jews of Paul and Barnabas, expelled them from Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:45-50). Love desires the best for others; how can it envy?



**love vaunteth not itself**, It never brags (The Greek implies a “wind-bag”) It “makes no parade.” (Moffatt). Jesus never showed off. His greatness often revealed in what He suppressed.

**is not puffed up**, God’s Love is “not arrogant”; “Gives no airs” (Moffatt). Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up (8:1). Arrogance is inflated selfishness; love is genuine humility. Arrogance and love are mutually exclusive.

Pride is absent in the last two verbs.

5] **Doth not behave itself unseemly**, It is never boorish.

Never rude, inconsiderate, inattentive. It avoids the whole range of unseemliness. No uncouth religion, no blundering goodness, no unlovely witness, etc. The right way at the right time, always.

**seeketh not her own**, God’s Love does not grasp for its own “rights.” This rules out selfish love: love “if”; love “because”; etc. Paul was an example. He served as their pastor for 1 1/2 years without financial support from them (9:18). Repeatedly instructed them to seek the welfare of others, not their own (10:24,33; cf. Prov 3:29; Zech 8:17). Our greatest discovery is the joy we receive in serving others. Jesus came entirely for us (Phil 2:5-8).

**is not [easily] provoked**, (modifier absent!) “Does not become irritated”; “is not touchy.” Even Moses, a very humble person (Num 12:3) lost his temper when people quarreled with him over lack of water (Num 20:2-11). Jesus was never angry at wrongs done to Himself. Never vindictive; never retaliated. There’s no excuse for a bad temper...or even grumbling!

**thinketh no evil**; “Does not keep a record of wrongs.” *Logizeshhai*, means “keeping of accounts”; it’s a bookkeeping term. Jesus came to blot out transgressions and remember them no more. The Book of Remembrance (Mal 3:16); our memory should be devoted to kindnesses, not suspicions.

6] **Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth**; Love is never glad when others go wrong; it does not delight in exposing the weaknesses of other people. No gloating or gossip here (no “investigative reporters” here.) Example: Jesus and the woman taken in

adultery (Jn 8). “Love is gladdened by goodness.” (Moffatt) See Phil 4:8.

7] **Beareth all things**, God’s Love is always active, never passive. It always protects; never retaliates. It’s inexhaustible. Jesus: “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

*Stego*, to endure, to cover. Covers “a multitude of sins” (1 Pet 4:8; cf. Prov 10:12; 17:9).

**believeth all things**, God’s Love always gives the benefit of the doubt. It is not gullible, but charitable. There’s no suspicion or cynicism here. Faith of commitment; loyalty.

**hopeth all things**, Introduces hope (triad of v.13). Paul uses 19 of its 31 occurrences in NT. It never takes failure as final. It never despairs of anybody; even ingratitude. It is based on truth, not vague dreams.

**endureth all things**. God’s Love cannot be conquered. *Hupomenin*, to bear or endure; not just passively, but in bearing them it can conquer and transmute them.

Perseverance: Key to all success (vs. intellect, education, etc.). Paul: If we endure with Christ, we will also reign with Him (2 Tim 2:12). Peter urges slaves to endure the pain of unjust suffering for the Lord’s sake (1 Pet 2:19-20); John on Patmos endured exile for God’s Word (Rev 1:9). Ultimate test: A wooden cross, erected in Judea almost 2,000 years ago (1 Jn 3:16).

Now, its **permanence**.

8] “Love never faileth”: Never is a long time. Gifts have only a finite duration. Love is eternal since it is one of God’s attributes (1 Jn 4:8, 16). Love never fails; the very talented people in Corinth did fail (their luxury, lack of discipline, cleverness, and philosophy was to no avail):

Indulgence breeds selfishness; lack of discipline breeds shallowness; worldliness breeds compromise; materialism breeds spiritual atrophy and laziness.

*Katargein*: (4X in vv.8,10,11) to set aside, or pass away, or cease. The word means “never fadeleth,” as a flower; it never falls to the ground. The petals begin to fall because there is decay in them. “Never loses strength”; it is inexhaustible. “Never leaves its place”; it is immovable; tireless.

Jesus “having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them *unto the end*.” (Jn 13:1)

“...they shall cease”: The verb *to cease* is a synonym and a variant of the verb *to set aside*; there is virtually no distinction between the two Greek verbs that describe the termination of both prophecies and tongues. “Prophecies” use passive voice, the believer is implied; “tongues” use active voice; difference is stylistic, nothing more. (Kistemaker).

Paul describes the temporary character of the spiritual gifts (vv. 8-10), contrasts them with love, and then gives three illustrations: a child, reflection, and knowledge (vv. 11-12).

9] “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part”: Our knowledge and prophesying is incomplete, and will remain so until we are with Him. The more we know, the more we realize that we do not know.

“When I was young, I knew all the questions and their answers. Later, I knew the questions but began to doubt some of the answers. Now I simply have an elaborate rationale for my present state of humility...”

10] “But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away”: When perfection comes, the partial will be set aside. Paul uses the personal *we* in the general sense. The present tense of the verbs does not appear to be limited to his own time.

A study of the verb *to prophesy* in the Greek text of 1 Corinthians shows that this particular verb always appears in the present tense. Whether it is in the indicative or the subjunctive mood, whether it is a participle or an infinitive, the verb conveys present continuous action (1 Cor 11:4-5; 13:9; 14:1,3,4,5,24,31,39).

Up until 1906 scholars viewed “perfect is come” as the Second Coming of Christ. The “completion of the canon” concept developed as a rebuttal to the Pentecostal movement.

When has the time for perfection arrived? We can hardly expect the Corinthians in A.D. 55 to link perfection to the closing of the canon in the last decade of the first century.

Our knowledge remains partial until we personally see Christ face to face. Our perfection cannot be complete until Christ’s return, the resurrection (Chapter 15!), and the final consummation (1 Cor 2:6; 14:20; Eph 4:13; Phil 3:15; Col 1:28; 4:12).

Proof of enduring till He comes: Joel’s (2:28-32) quote in Acts (2:17-21) continues until the Day of the Lord. Also, the Seven Thunders of Revelation (Rev 10:3-4) inhibit any doctrine based on “canon completeness.”

11] “...I put away childish things”: The tense is perfect, which shows that he put away childish things with decision and finality (contrasting an infant vs. immature man). Make heaven your goal, maturity your aim; Christ your object.

12] For now we see through a glass, darkly...”: The city of Corinth was known for its mirrors (polished bronze). The state-of-the-art, however, was far short of mirrored glass (only available since the 13th century).

We see *en ainigmati*: indistinctly (n. enigma, or riddle), in puzzling, baffling reflections...

“Face to face”: God uses this expression when he tells Aaron and Miriam that he addresses Moses personally (cf. Num 12:8; Ex 33:11; Deut 5:4; 34:10).

The first “know” in this verse is *ginosko*: second usage, *epiginosko* (“I am known”). *Epi* = directed; full and complete knowledge. “I am known” is in the aorist tense which implies the same. The knowledge God has of Paul is not something that is growing or becoming more and more perfect. God’s knowledge is perfect and complete (1 Jn 3:2).

It’s a mistake to think of eternity as finality. Rather, it is the continual communication of God whose beauty and glory and majesty are inexhaustible. In a resurrected body with a redeemed spirit, brought to live in His very presence with a progressive, increasing capacity to receive more and more of His glory.

13] “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love”: These three set are apart. This triad occurs frequently (**Rom 5:2-5**; Gal 5:5-6; Eph 1:15-18; 4:2-5; **Col 1:4-5**; **1 Thess 1:3**; 5:8; Heb 6:10-12; 10:22-24; 1 Pet 1:3-8, 21-22).

**Faith:** Trust that leads to action. The foundation of our relationship with God; the only way we become His children (Jn 1:12; Heb 11:6).

**Hope:** One of the essential abiding realities. Our God is the God of hope (Rom 15:13). Hope is our confidence in the future. Not a vague guess, but an absolute, confident assurance based on Him and His truth.

Faith possesses the past; hope claims the future. When a tripod loses one of its legs, its fall is inevitable.

**Love:** Greater than hope (v. 7) and faith (v. 2). It contains them both! Love is foundational; God’s eternal love for his Son and, through him, expresses His love for His people (Eph 1:5-6). God is love (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 4:7-8, 16).

Now, two Comparisons:

- 1) Put Christ in the place of “love.” It fits. How can you receive this kind of love? Confess your need & receive it.
- 2) Put your own name in the place of “love.” What is the degree of difference? [As many of you know, I’m married to one who comes remarkably close…] Love, appropriately, is the last word in this chapter (14:1 should be included).

With soiled and dirty hands, coupled with an engineer’s clumsy frustration at communicating, I have attempted to handle a thing of exquisite beauty and holiness. No exposition can be adequate to this theme.

Yet I cannot excuse myself from the opportunity to try to make plain what these words have come to mean in my life..and no Christian can excuse himself from the duty of trying to show in his life what these words have come to mean for him.

*“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”*

Gal 2:20

That day will come when you and I will be able to say:  
I suffer long and am kind.

I envy not;

I vaunt not myself, am not puffed up;

I do not behave myself unseemly;

I seek not my own;

I am not easily provoked;

I think no evil.

I rejoice not in iniquity, but rejoice in truth.

I bear all things, believe all things,

hope all things, endure all things.

Follow after love. God is love. Love is the last word in more ways than one.

## 1 Corinthians 14

### The Gift of Tongues

There are two common errors concerning the gifts of the Spirit: the denial that they are for today; and the other extreme, the over-emphasis of both the gift and the experience, which substitutes aspiration for inspiration.

The goal of this study is healing, not exhortation. Let’s set aside our preconceptions. Some say they are not for today. Many good scholars support this view. Others say that the “gift of tongues” is the primary sign of the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Let’s first listen to Paul (not Chuck Missler, or whoever). Test everything by the Word of God, not some book you’ve read or tape you’ve heard!

And pray for discernment.

## Where do the Gift of Tongues Appear in the NT?

- 1) At Pentecost, in Acts Chapter 2.
  - 2) In Mark 16:17, where the Lord Jesus was saying farewell to His disciples, “these signs shall follow them that believe...they shall speak with new tongues.”
  - 3) Following Peter’s address in the house of Cornelius, the Holy Spirit fell upon those assembled there and they spoke with tongues (Acts 10:45-46).
  - 4) When Paul came to Ephesus he found a few believers who were unrecognizable as Christians. He asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit and they said they had never heard of it. They then received the Holy Spirit and we are told that they spoke with tongues (Acts 19:6).
- That’s it...and in 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14.
- 1] Paul gives three directives: First, pursue love (in many ways this concludes Chapter 13); second, desire (strive eagerly) spiritual gifts; third, especially that you prophecy.
- [Paul uses the word “pursue” eight times in his letters (Rom 9:30; 12:13; 14:19; Phil 3:12; 1 Thess 5:15; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22). The verb requires intensity and determination.]
- The fruit of the Spirit, love (Gal 5:22-23), is more important than gifts. (I believe we do better to be “fruit inspectors” rather than “gift inspectors.”)
- “Strive eagerly for the spiritual gifts”: God’s sovereignty does not cancel man’s responsibility. It’s interesting that there appears to be a commitment on our part. We must ask (Lk 11:13; Jn 16:24).
- “...especially that you may prophesy”: Prophecy is preferred, repeatedly. It seems that the church at Corinth had become extremely preoccupied with the gift of tongues.
- 2] “For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue...”: Paul does not deny that the gift of tongues exists. Tongues are deemed for private worship directed to God (v.4); in personal prayer.

- 3] “But he that prophesieth”: For the NT prophet, the task of predicting the Messiah’s coming had been completed and that of proclaiming the gospel had begun.

## Predictive Prophecy in the New Testament

- Agabus:** Prophesied a severe famine in the entire Roman world during the reign of Emperor Claudius; also, Paul’s arrest (Acts 11:28; 21:11).
- Paul:** Prophesied aboard the storm at sea that the lives of all 276 people would be saved despite the shipwreck (Acts 27:23-26).
- John:** His prophecies on Patmos (Rev 1:3; 22:9).
- Prophecies for preaching and teaching (12:28-29; 14:3; Acts 13:1; 15:32). The Holy Spirit promised to speak through them (Mt 10:19-20; Acts 4:8-12, 19-20; 5:29-32; 6:5; 7:2-53).
- 4] “Edify, edification”: This Greek word occurs seven times; three times as the verb (1 Cor 14:4—twice—, 17), four times as the noun (1 Cor 14:3, 5, 12, 26). Paul is speaking positively (note v.5). Edification was the goal. (How is *your* gift helping other people?)
  - 5] Not everyone receives the same spiritual gifts (12:30). The view that the gift of tongues is the *only* evidence of the fullness of the Spirit has no basis whatever in the Word of God. (Cf. Moses, when he was told that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp of Israel and Joshua perceived a threat to Moses’ leadership, asked: “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit on them!” (Num 11:29).

## The Key Tests

How do you validate the reality of God the Holy Spirit in a Christian’s life?

- 1) The Holy Spirit is concerned with character and not with gifts (1 Cor 13:4-7; Gal 5:22-23).
- 2) The Holy Spirit comes to us to glorify the Lord Jesus, not Himself (Jn 16:13, 14). The Holy Spirit is always shown in the role of the “unnamed servant” (Gen 24; Ruth 2).

- 3) The Holy Spirit has come to *equip us* for Christian ministry and testimony (Acts 1:8).

[He does manifest Himself in some dramatic ways. More on this later...]

- 6] “Brothers”: Parlance of the day included sisters, too. A lack of communication signifies a lack of love. If comprehension is lacking, people turn away and leave the church.

- 7] “...pipe or harp”: Flute playing was common at both funerals and weddings (Mt 9:23; 11:17). Probably a term for wind instruments in general. Psalmists mention the harp (*kitara*, from which we get “guitar”) frequently (Ps 33:2; 137:2; 149:3; 150:3) implying use in worship services, etc.

- 8] “...trumpet”: The trumpet was a warning call to every able person to prepare for battle, etc. Bugle calls traditionally signify various collective instructions: advance, retreat, etc.

- 9] “Distinct” as the converse of the adjective “indistinct” (v.8).

- 10] Meaningless speech is an oxymoron.

- 11] *Barbaros*: One who did not understand Greek (hence, a barbarian).

- 12] “Seek that ye excel to the edifying of the church”: Compare with verse 1; Paul has come full circle (also cf. Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 3:13).

- 13] “...pray that he may interpret”: Paul was multilingual, but did not understand the Lyeaonian dialect of the people in Lystra (Acts 14:11-14). Public worship is in view. Concerning the spoken word, unless it’s lucid and instructive, the speaker is to remain silent. Paul questions the usefulness of religious activity that is devoid of edification.

- 14] Unless the spirit and mind stay engaged, the result is without benefit to the church. Paul ignores other possible purposes.

[Spirit vs. mind? See *The Architecture of Man*, by Chuck Missler, or *The Way of Agape* by Nancy Missler.]

- 15] “...pray...sing...”: Both prayer (and petitions) and praise (joyous response to blessings received) in view. 17th century English bishop Tomas Ken, the doxology:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Sing (*psallo*) means sing to the accompaniment of a musical instrument; here its use is more general. Songs in NT (Lk 1:46-55, 68-79; 2:14; Rom 11:33-36; Eph 5:14; Phil 2:6-11; Col 1:15-20; 1 Tim 3:16; 2 Tim 2:11-13; cf. Eph 5:19; Col 3:16).

- 16] “Unlearned”: *Idiotēs*, “uninformed,” “inquirer” (also vv. 23). Possibly one in between a believer and unbeliever; the singular implies a Hebrew idiom that actually means to play apart, or fill a role. (Josephus, *Wars* 5.2.5 [88]; Epictetus *Diss.* 2.4.5)

- 17] *Amen*: A transliteration from the Greek, of what was already a transliteration of a Hebrew term: the participle of the verb “to confirm” used adverbially as “truly” or “So let it be.” (Ps 106:48; 1 Chr 16:36; Neh 5:13; 8:6.) The effect in public worship in view.

- 18] “I speak with tongues more than ye all”: No sour grapes here. He’s not disparaging something he doesn’t have. Peter and Paul at times fell into a trance (Acts 10:10; 22:17; 2 Cor 12:1-6).

- 19] “...five words”: Some view “5” as a symbol of grace. Example of five words, “Christ died and rose again” [cf. Gospel of Chapter 15!]

“I teach”: *Katecheo*, thus, catechism. It is better to be useful than brilliant. “In church” meant in “an assembly”; there were not Christian buildings during this period.

- 20] “Brothers” (includes sisters): Again, Paul uses this term to introduce a sensitive topic and to soften the rebuke. They demonstrated their immaturity by flaunting their gift of tongues and demeaning others who lacked this gift. They were more interested in amusement than usefulness; entertainment rather than education (cf. Jer 4:22).

Paul parallels Jesus’ remarks in Mt 10:16: “Therefore be as shrewd as serpents and as harmless as doves.”

21] “In the law it is written...”: There are 17 quotes from OT in 1 Corinthians; six are from Isaiah: 1 Cor 1:19 (Isa 29:14); 2:9 (Isa 64:4); 2:16 (Isa 40:13); 14:21 (Isa 28:11-12); 15:32 (Isa 22:13); 15:54 (Isa 25:8). This particular one from Isaiah isn’t from Hebrew nor LXX; similar to the translation of Aquila:

*Very well then,  
with foreign lips and strange tongues  
God will speak to this people,  
to whom he said,  
“This is the resting place, let the weary rest”;  
and “This is the place of repose”  
—but they would not listen.*

Isa 28:11-12

Isaiah is being ridiculed by intoxicated priests and prophets who mock him by asking whether he is trying to explain his message to small children. “Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule.” (Isa 28:10,13). In Hebrew these lines sound like baby talk: *sav lasav sav lasav, kav lakav kav lakav*. Their simplicity approaches meaninglessness.

The Israelites scorned Isaiah, who came to them with God’s word expressed in simple and clear Hebrew. Now God would come to them with Assyrian armed forces, whose soldiers would speak to them in a foreign language (cf. 2 Kgs 18:26, where Assyrian officials addressed the people of Jerusalem in the Hebrew tongue). Because of their unbelief, they would be exiled to Assyria, where they would hear unintelligible speech (cf. Deut 28:49; Isa 33:19; Jer 5:15).

In the next 3 verses, Paul uses the term “unbelievers” 4 times.

22] Problematic...? Many differing ways of treating the text: rhetorical question et al.

24] Unbelievers who reject the gospel with hardened heart and blinded mind are like the Jews who in unbelief mocked the prophetic word of Isaiah (Isa 28:11). Many of his contemporaries were unbelievers for whom his message proved to be unproductive.

25] Quote of Isa 45:14 (cf. Zech 8:23). Alcibiades, the spoiled darling of Athens, was the friend of Socrates and sometimes said to him,

“Socrates, I hate you, for every time I meet you you make me see what I am.”

Under conviction, the prostrate depicts his unworthiness when God Himself is present (cf. 1 Kgs 18:39). A broken and contrite heart, under conviction of sin, is an essential prerequisite to salvation and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Examples: David, preached by Nathan (2 Sam 12:7; Ps 51:17); The woman of Samaria said, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did” (Jn 4:29); Paul, preached by Jesus (Acts 9:4).

There are none so blind as those who will not see. No agony more severe than our full awareness of our sin.

## Orderliness and Individualism in Worship

26] “Brothers”: Another sensitive topic...

27-28] Five constraints for tongues in worship:

- 1) Numbers: two or three at the most.
- 2) Orderliness: each in turn.
- 3) Interpretation: essential for edification.
- 4) Silence: in absence of interpretation.
- 5) Devotions: speaking to God in private has nothing to do with church at worship.

29-31] Orderliness and decency. Prophets in OT at risk (cf. Deut 13:1-5). The standard for discernment is The Word of God.

32] “The spirits of the prophets are subjects to the prophets”: Every person is in full control of his or her senses.

33] The key insight: God does not cause confusion.

34-35] Widely misunderstood. Paul is saying “observe the customs.” Not to needlessly flout the accepted ideas of the day. Among the Greeks, women were discouraged from saying anything in public. Plutarch says that the virtuous woman “ought to be modest and guarded about saying anything in the hearing of outsiders (*Advice to Bride and Groom*, 31.). First century women were generally uneducated and illiterate.

The Greek verb *laleo* (300X in NT) means “talk, question, argue, chatter. It has nothing to do with praying, prophesying, or singing. It is not public speaking. Synagogue pattern: Women and men on opposite sides of center aisle. Questions of their husbands created a distraction during the service.

“Keep silent”: to restrain women from passing judgment on men. Pattern from Genesis 2:18-24 (cf. 1 Cor 11:8,9; 1 Tim 2:11-14).

## Women in Christian Ministry

What would the mission fields have done without women? What would the Christian church have done without the ministry of women from the very beginning? What about the woman of Samaria who preached to a whole city? What about Philip’s four daughters who prophesied? What about Mary Magdalene who spread the news of the risen Lord? What about Priscilla, who straightened out the great professor Apollos with points of doctrine?

36-37] Paul commissioned by Christ (Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:15-18). Paul instructs them to look beyond Paul to the Lord Jesus Christ as the speaker.

38] “But if any man think himself ignorant, let him be ignorant (cf. Mt 10:33; 2 Tim 2:12). This warning is the severest Paul has pronounced thus far in his epistle to Corinth.

39] Three clauses in the imperative mood. Repeats verse one almost verbatim: Be eager to prophesy. Do not forbid people to speak in tongues. He spoke in tongues himself (v. 18) and wished everyone would have it (v.5). To prohibit it would grieve the Spirit of God (Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19).

## Limitations for Tongues in Worship

Only if interpreted:

Only if it’s beneficial for the hearers;

Only if it is thus intelligible;

Only if done orderly;

Only if given in the context of love.

We get an interesting glimpse of the early church: there was spontaneous involvement. Many church members today think far more of

what the church can do for them than of what they can do for the church...other than criticize.

## Are Tongues for Today?

“The canon is complete?”: Dallas Theological Seminary position. The view that the phrase “that which is perfect” refers to the canon came about in 1906...exalted, but wrong.

**Paul:** When Paul wrote in 55 A.D., could the “completion of the canon” have been anticipated by the Corinthians readers?

**Peter:** In Acts 2:17-21, Peter’s quote of Joel 2:28-32 clearly continues to the Great Tribulation.

**Jesus:** In the Upper Room, limitations of the gifts of the Spirit (or their temporariness) are absent in Jesus’ announcement of the gifts.

**John:** In Rev 10, John is instructed *not* to record what the Seven Thunders said. Their utterances are still missing from the canon. The canon is not complete.

Knowledge will also vanish when “that which is perfect comes.” Has it? Teaching? Miracles?

One valid case destroys a doctrine limiting the Holy Spirit. He is sovereign still. [Examples from Calvary Chapel, Pat Boone, etc.] Let’s not lose sight of the primary focus: the unity and purpose of the church (Eph 4:3-7, 12-13).

No one individual believer ever comes to the fullness of the stature of Christ by himself. You cannot live as a Christian in isolation. Not all are affected the same way by the Holy Spirit. Don’t impute one person’s experience to another. He is sovereign and not limited to formulas.

Christ loves His church. Don’t injure or insult Him by your attitudes toward those who have a different view or style.

## 1 Corinthians 15

This is the most important chapter in the Bible (and the longest in this epistle). It deals with the ultimate enemy of mankind: death. This chapter is regarded by many as the centerpiece of Christianity and the climax of Paul's message.

1] "I declare unto you the Gospel": What is the gospel? Paul gives it to us in a nutshell. *We must learn precisely what the gospel is.*

Paul had already preached it (Acts 13:30; Gal 1:1). After his Damascus conversion, Peter and James spent time with Paul in Jerusalem to fill in the details (Gal 1:18-19). After 14 years passed, he returned to Jerusalem to confirm with the apostles whether his preaching was in harmony with the gospel they proclaimed (Gal 2:1).  
"...received": This is in the aorist tense, which points to a decisive act.

2] "You are (being) saved": This term is in the present continuous tense.

### Three "Tenses" of Salvation

**Saved:** (Spiritually) Past tense. Regenerated by the Spirit. Aorist: once and for all. Spiritually linked to Jesus. The Shepherd keeps the sheep.

**Being Saved:** (Here, your soul) Present tense. Growing as an instrument of His Grace. We need to apply our salvation to our lives. You may be saved, but what have you done since?

It is possible to believe in vain. It is not just an "insurance policy" against going to hell.

3] **Will be Saved:** (Here, the body) Future tense. The resurrection. First of all, Jesus died. He did not just disappear. The authorities (both Jewish and Roman) made sure that his death was undeniable! The authorities outwitted themselves when they took so many precautions to make sure Jesus was dead and remained in the grave!

Their promoting the story that the body was stolen was an admission that the sepulcher was indeed vacant.

Paul says twice in 3 verses "according to the Scriptures (OT)." Jesus' death and resurrection was not an afterthought. This was planned before the foundations of the world (and hidden in the genealogy of Noah in Genesis Chapter 5).

Definition of the Gospel:

He died for our sins (not just died);

He was buried;

He was raised on the third day;

He appeared...

If you take any piece away, you do not the gospel. (It is interesting that Paul does not mention a word about the *life* of Jesus; his teachings, the Sermon on the Mount).

"First" of all: First in importance, not chronology.

"Christ" (not "Jesus"): Paul uses his official title of the Messiah, our *goal*, the kinsman-redeemer.

"According to the Scriptures": **Isa 53:5-6, 8-9; Ps 22:16**; cf. Mt 26:28; 1 Pet 3:18).

"For our sins": Rom 5:8; 8:32; Gal 1:4; Eph 5:2; Titus 2:14. In these passages the Greek preposition *huper* (for) expresses the idea of Jesus being both our representative and our substitute.

The phrase "Christ died for our sins" is the doctrinal summary of the atonement:

- 1) As our substitute, Christ died to appease God and meet the demands of the law (Rom 3:25-26; 5:9-19);
- 2) As our advocate, He effected reconciliation and made us righteous before God (2 Cor 5:21; 1 John 2:1-2);
- 3) As our mediator, he established a new covenant and accepted us as partners (Lk 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25);
- 4) As our savior, he grants us eternal life through faith in Him (Jn 3:16).

"...he was buried": Only Paul mentions the burial. It points backward to the reality of death and forward to the character of the resurrection. Paul identifies the believer's baptism with Christ's burial (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12).



Also a pattern: Something in us must die when we become Christians. And it must be buried. Nothing that hasn't died can be resurrected. (That's why the cherubim guarded the way to the Tree of Life in Genesis 3.)

“...he rose again”: The Resurrection. Translations fail to exploit the differences in Greek verb tenses between vv.3, 4:

The Greek uses the past tense to describe a single action in the past for Jesus' death and burial. But for the verb “to be raised” the Greek has the perfect tense to indicate an action that occurred in the past but has lasting relevance for the present (vv. 12,13,14,16,17,20; cf. 2 Tim 2:8).

Jesus was raised from the dead and continues His life in the resurrected state (Rev 5:6). The passive voice denotes the implied agent, God (Acts 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 37).

If the Roman or Jewish authorities could have produced the body of Jesus, all the rumors would have quickly stopped, and it all would have ended. But they could not.

The empty tomb emphasizes that Jesus' resurrection was *physical*! (Emphasized in all four gospels that the body was missing: Mt 28:5-6; Mk 16:5-6; Lk 24:3-4; Jn 20:6-8.)

After His resurrection, Jesus' physical body could be touched (John 20:27); could be recognized...with difficulty (John 20:14-15; 21:4,7); could come and go through locked doors (John 20:19, 26); could eat and drink with them (Luke 24:42-43; Acts 1:4; 10:41).

Jesus' resurrection body was transformed to transcend time and space (1 John 3:2).

“Third Day”: Jesus taught that He would be killed and raised the third day (Mt 16:21).

“Third day according to (what) Scriptures”? Jon 1:17, linked with Mt 12:40. Also, Ps 16:8-11 with Ps 110:1; Fee, p.727 cf. Acts 2:25-36. Some also point to Hos 6:2.

Gen 22 is perhaps the most dramatic example: Abraham's offering of Isaac. Isaac was “dead” to Abraham for three days.

## Other “Three Days” Examples

- 1) Third day of Creation: Double Blessing Gen 1:9-13
- 2) Akedah: Abraham's Offering of Issac Gen 22
- 3) Joseph Interprets Two Dreams Gen 40:8-22
- 4) Baker (bread) Dies Third Day
- 4) Cupbearer (wine) Freed Third Day
- 5) Crossing of the Red Sea: The Third Day after Passover

- 6) Departed from Mt Sinai Num 10:33
  - 7) Spies En Route From Jericho Jos 2:16
  - 8) Jonah in the Great Fish Jon 1:17
  - 9) Esther Fasts Three Days Esther 4:16
  - 10) Wedding in Cana on the Third Day Jn 3:1
  - 11) Christ Was Three Days in the Tomb Lk 24:21
  - 12) Saul's Blindness in Damascus Acts 9:9
  - 13) Hosea: Israel's Petition for Lord's Return Hos 5:15-6:3
- 5] “And he was seen...”: Appearances of Jesus. On that Sunday, Jesus appeared to the women, Mary Magdalene, two men on the road to Emmaus, Peter, and the 10 disciples in the upper room (Mk 16:1-11; Lk 24:13-43).

(Paul does not list the appearances to women: his Jewish background is showing. Women were not eligible as witnesses under Jewish law.)

Paul first mentions Peter, whom he usually calls Cephas (1:12), the Aramaic name for Peter (Jn 1:42).

Sunday evening, the disciples in the upper room told the men from Emmaus that He appeared to Simon (Lk 24:34). That morning the

angel instructed the women to tell the disciples “and Peter” to go to Galilee where Jesus would meet them (Mk 16:7). There Jesus forgave Peter and reinstated him (Jn 21:15-19). The book of Acts reveals that immediately after Jesus’ ascension Peter became the undisputed leader in the Jerusalem church.

Next, Paul lists the “Twelve,” the common collective term for the disciples.

Would you believe that JFK was shot with an arrow? Why not? Witnesses are still alive who know better! So, also, during the first century with respect to Jesus Christ.

6] “Five hundred brethren at once”: Nothing in the Gospels or Acts clearly corroborates the figure of 500 brothers. Some associate this with the closing words of Matthew’s Gospel and the great commission. (A crowd would not be surprising since He announced this appearance through the women earlier.)

(In a Jewish court of law, the presence of two or three witnesses was mandatory to prove the veracity of an event.)

Most of the 500 were still living at the time Paul wrote this epistle (about 25 years after the crucifixion). Apparently both Paul and the Corinthians were acquainted with many of them.

7] Half a year before Jesus’ death, his brothers, including James, still did not believe on him (Jn 7:5). But immediately after Jesus’ ascension, his brothers believed and were with the apostles in the upper room (Acts 1:13-14; cf. also 1 Cor 9:5).

James listened to Paul when the former persecutor returned to Jerusalem as a believer (Gal 1:19). James filled Peter’s place when the apostle fled Jerusalem after his release from prison (Acts 12:17). After his third missionary tour, Paul reported to James and the elders in Jerusalem (Acts 21:18-19).

“Apostles”: In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the word signifies the Twelve (Mt 10:2; Mk 3:14; Lk 6:13). By contrast, in Acts Luke uses the term to include Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:14). Andronicus and Junias, according to Paul were outstanding among the apostles (Rom 16:7).

In this context, we assume it refers to the Twelve.

8] “Last of all”: Paul places himself, on the basis of the Damascus Road, last.

“...untimely born”: (only once in NT; 3X in LXX: Num 12:12; Job 3:16; Eccl 6:3). Appointed from his mother’s womb to be an apostle (Gal 1:15).

If any had a basis before God, Paul did (Phil 3:4,6,7). But he saw, on the Damascus Road, what a wretched, arrogant, independent, selfish creature he was.

We need to come to the same place. We need to cross out the capital “I”. This isn’t just theological theory. Unless there is, in your own life, a true recognition of sin, “self” in all its ugliness, you are not saved. You can speak of salvation only as the blind speak of color...

Jesus stepped down from the throne to the cross, devoid of the guilt of sin, and attacked death itself. As Peter said on the Day of Pentecost, “because it was not possible that he should be holden of it” (Acts 2:24). As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, “by one man’s obedience many are made righteous” (Rom 5:19).

This does not happen gradually by growth as the years go by, but it results from the crisis of certain moment in your life. Have you picked up your passport to life?

9] “For I am the least of the apostles”: Paul’s initial acceptance was junior to them. After 14 years, he returned to Jerusalem to confirm the harmony of his gospel with them (Gal 2:1-2). The apostles recognized Paul’s special ministry and later placed him on an equal footing with them (Gal 2:9-9). He always presents himself as the least among the apostles (cf. Eph 3:8; 1 Tim 1:15). He continually reminded himself that he persecuted the church of God (Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:9; 14; Gal 1:13).

10] “...the grace...was not in vain”: Grace is used 3X in this verse. “Vain”: not reaching his goal. [I’m amazed at what he accomplished in only two decades (2 Cor 4:8-11; 6:4-10; 11:23-29).] He toiled as a tentmaker in Ephesus (Acts 20:34); instructor in the rented hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9); preached house to house (Acts 20:20) etc.

12] “rose from the dead...”: To raise, perfect tense. By conquering death, Jesus Christ never has to face death again.

With Philetus, Hymenaeus denied the doctrine of a bodily resurrection and destroyed the faith of some (2 Tim 2:17-18). Paul handed him over to Satan (1 Tim 1:19-20).

13] A Gospel without the tenet of the resurrection has no message of redemption. Paul highlights six history-changing facts that would have followed if Jesus had not risen from the dead.

14] To deny the resurrection is to go against all the pertinent evidence that was available in the early church.

15] Can you imagine Paul testifying falsely of God? Paul was a Pharisee: the penalty in OT for being a false prophet was death (Deut 18:20-22); in the NT (1 John 5:10; 2 John 10; cf. Job 19:25).

17] “...ye are yet in your sins”: Step by step, Paul reveals to them the spiritual implications of denial. The justification of believers rests squarely on the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

18] “Asleep”: A NT euphemism for those who have died. (Greek of Mt 27:52; Jn 11:11-12; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor 7:39; 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess 4:13-15; 2 Pet 3:4). Thus, Paul can speak of death as “gain” (Phil 1:21, 23).

A denial of the resurrection would mean that all have perished, including Jesus. It makes the believer a martyr to an illusion. Death is unable to break the bond that exists between Christ and believers in this earthly life. That bond continues into the life hereafter and lasts eternally (cf. Rom 6:11). After writing seven conditional statements to demonstrate the effect of denying the resurrection, Paul returns to the consistent doctrine of the Christian church: Christ’s resurrection.

20] While unbelievers continue to scoff, Christians do not need further proof than the empty tomb and the appearances in vv. 3-8.

“Firstfruits”: Lev 23:9-11. Counting of the Omer (49 days) (Lev 23:15-17; Deut 26:1-11; see also *Feast of Israel* briefing package).

A century later, Israel was called the firstfruits (Jer 2:3). Paul applied the term to the first converts in western Asia Minor and in southern

Greece (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:15 NASB). The 144,000 redeemed from the earth are offered as the firstfruits to God (Rev 14:3; cf. Jas 1:18; Rom 8:23; 2 Thess 2:13, NRSV).

The firstfruits indicates that the first sheaf of the forthcoming grain harvest will be followed by the rest of the sheaves. Christ is the *guarantee* for all those who belong to him that they also will share in the resurrection (v. 23; 2 Cor 1:22).

(The sons of the widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite, the daughter of Jairus, the young man of Nain, and Lazarus, all died later. They were raised, but not resurrected into a resurrection body.)

21] Semitic parallelism. The Bible is the story of two men: Adam and Christ, “the last Adam.” The Greek has the preposition *dia* (by) to show that man is the agent responsible for death. We have a genetic defect; penalty of death (Gal 2:17; 3:19).

“Before the fall, Adam was able to sin or not to sin; after the fall, he was not able not to sin.”

Augustine.

Christ alone lived without sin and conquered death for all His people. Death, having been caused by a human being, can be made ineffective only by a human being (Rom 5:12, 18. Rev 5:3,4; thus, the *goel*, the kinsman-redeemer, as typified by Boaz in the Book of Ruth.)

There are only two spheres: Adam and Christ. You are either in one or the other. In Adam, all die. The marks of death are upon each of us today. Sin is the decaying fruit of self-life. We need to born a second time. We need to be rescued from the domain of Satan. We were helpless slaves to the enemy.

[We did not even have the ability to choose without the intervention of His Spirit. Factor that marvelous insight into your view on “eternal security”!]

You had nothing to do with your first birth, but you are involved in its sin. You have nothing to do with your second birth, but you are involved in its deliverance and implicated in the purity of God.

The pursuit of the present immorality is a denial of the resurrection.

22] “All” = Christ’s. Not universalism. (Jn 5:21; 6:63; Rom 4:17; 8:11; 1 Cor 15:45).

23] “Firstfruits”: Study the Feast of Firstfruits and Feast of Shavout (Weeks, Pentecost).

“First”... “then”: 1 Thess 4:16-17. Notice that Christ says nothing about the resurrection of unbelievers. The dead who die out of Christ are not left in disintegration and corruption (Rev 20:12). Unbelievers will also ultimately be resurrected, to shame and everlasting contempt (Dan 12:2; Jn 5:29). [You have never met a mere mortal!]

Are you personally involved in the program of God?

24] “put down all rule”: Abolish, *kartarageo*, making all ruling powers ineffective, terminating and setting them aside.

“Rule”, “authority” and “power”: Jewish terms designating demons. (Rom 8:38; Eph 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:16; 2:10,15). Note that Jesus reigns now. He is in control now. What a reassurance that is!

25] Quote from Ps 110:1. Quoted by Christ in Matthew 22:44. At Christ’s ascension, “angels, authorities and powers were placed in submission to Him” (1 Pet 3:22).

“...must”: An imperative. His reign is a reign of conquest. There can be no maverick molecules in the universe. You cannot go into glory except under the sovereignty of the One who has won the right for you to enter.

26] “The last enemy...is death”: Christ holds the keys of death and the grave (Rev 1:18). When Christ destroys the last enemy, death, He will already have delivered His kingdom to the Father.

If there is a resurrection of all believers, the power of death ends once and for all. Both death and Hades will be thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death (Rev 20:14). In the renewal of Heaven and Earth, death will be no more (Rev 21:4).

27] Ps 110:1, broadened to include everything (similar to Ps 8:7). This passage has been noted by scholars as having an interesting “inversion” that takes place in verses 24-28, with parallel passages are noted:

A) Then comes the end (v.24),

B) when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father

C) after he has abolished all rule, and all authority and power.

D) For he must rule until he has put all his enemies under his feet (v.25).

E) The last enemy that will be abolished is death (v.26).

D) For he has put all things under his feet (v.27).

C) And when he says, “All things are put under him,” it is clear that the one who subjected all things to him is excepted.

B) And when all things are subjected to him, then even the Son himself shall be subjected to the one who subjected all things to him (v.28).

A) so that God may be all in all.

The purpose of Ps 8 is to reveal Adam’s sinlessness before the fall. The stark reality of sin undermined man’s authority, thus Heb 2:8-10.

God has put all things under Christ’s feet (Eph 1:22); through whom He created the universe (Jn 1:3; Col 1:16; Heb 1:20).

When all things are eventually subject to Christ, then he delivers the kingdom to the Father, making the end of his mediatorial work: interceding for them (Rom 8:34) and preparing a place for them (Jn 14:3).

28] The verb “to subject” occurs here three times in three different Greek forms; 6X in two verses. Even the wind and waves of the Sea of Galilee obeyed him (Mt 8:27); the demons submitted to him (Mt 8:28-34); and Satan himself fell from heaven (Lk 10:18).

The Son proceeds eternally from the Father (Ps 2:7) and confesses that He can do nothing of Himself, only those things which he sees the Father doing (Jn 5:19). “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen” (Rom 11:36).

“All in all” echoes Zech 14:9; Deut 6:4; Isa 43:11. He invites His people to sit with Him as judges (Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30; Rev 3:21; 4:4; 20:4).

29] “...baptized for the dead”: Throughout the centuries, the explanations for this verse have been numerous and varied. The teachings of Christ

and the apostles never included uttering prayers for the dead. Paul states the fact as untrue. If Jesus Christ is not alive, why be baptized in the name of a dead savior?

30] “And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?“. If Christ *is* dead, why stand we in jeopardy every hour? Paul’s next letter catalogs the perils and adversities he has borne (2 Cor 4:8-11; II:23-29).

31] “Daily I die”: Paul was never out of peril.

32] Paul spent three years in Ephesus during his third journey, but the only account of this interval is in Acts 19:1-20:1. Paul relates that God raised him from the dead as it were (2 Cor 1:8-10).

“Wild animals”? Could Paul have been exposed to wild animals in the arena at Ephesus? He was delivered from “the lion’s mouth” (2 Tim 4:17); but Roman laws would restrict local authorities from throwing Paul, a Roman citizen, to the lions. When imprisoned in Caesarea, he appealed to Caesar on the basis of that citizenship (Acts 25:11). Figuratively? Demetrius and his associates behaved “like wild beasts” (Acts 19:23-41).

He quotes from Isa 22:13. Also, Jesus echoes this proverb (Lk 12:19-20).

33] “Be not deceived...”: Paul quotes a proverb from *Thais* of the Greek poet Menander. “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” This is the second time Paul warns the Corinthians not be deceived by their own society (6:9). (Cf. Gal 6:7; Jas 1:16; 1 Cor 3:18). Paul realizes the ease with which people accept perverted principles and lifestyles as normative.

“Speech” or “company”: Gr. *homiliai* (as “homily”). Our speech reveals our inner self.

34] “Awake to righteousness”: Be alert to the spiritual dangers which surrounds you. [Does this fit us?] *Eknepsate*, “come back to your senses.”

“Stop sinning”: present tense, imperative mood.

35] “...with what body do they come?“. Greek philosophers taught the immortality of the soul but denied the immortality of the body. At the

end of his Areopagus address, the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens scorned Paul (Acts 17:31-32) over this point.

The Jewish rabbis believed that God created man as a body and spirit (cf. Job 19:25-27).

## The Physics of Immortality

Frank J. Tipler, Professor of Mathematical Physics at Tulane University, is a major theoretician in the field of global general relativity, that rarefied branch of physics created by Stephen Hawking and Roger Penrose. In devising a mathematical model of the end of the universe, Tipler (a professed atheist) came to a stunning conclusion. Using the most advanced and sophisticated methods of modern physics, relying solely on the rigorous procedures of logic that science demands, he has created a proof of the existence of God.

He believes that every human being who ever lived will be resurrected from the dead. He claims that he arrived at his proofs of God and immortality “in exactly the same way physicists calculate the properties of an electron.” His book explains why he now believes that the central claims of Judeo-Christian theology are in fact true, and that these claims are straight-forward deductions of the laws of physics as we now understand them.

36] “Thou fool...”: From v. 34. Paul introduces the analogy of a seed. (In 12:24). [Many of our Freeway nomads may never have seen one in their asphalt/concrete lives...]

It is no more difficult to believe in the resurrection than it is to believe in harvest! The Greek passive voice conveys the sense that God alone is the agent who creates life.

37] Jesus’ physical body was placed in the tomb. On the third day a new glorified body came forth, no longer subject to time and space. (In 20:19, 26; Lk 24:31).

What emerges from a seed that “dies” is incomparably more glorious than what was planted. Examples: bulbs vs. gladiolas.

38] Plants (and people) do not rise of their own volition, nor by chance. Only by the decisive (aorist) action of God.

39] Order reversed from creation account (Gen 1:20-27). Overwhelming variation that is complimentary through its nonconformity. [DNA: 3 out of 4 error-correcting code, using the same for all. Digitally different but a common architect.]

## Six is the Number of Man

At the cellular level, an intact human immune system will virtually always recognize and reject a nonhuman transplant as foreign. What is the underlying characteristic within humanity that speaks of our uniqueness?

On virtually every nucleated cell in a person are small markers (*lipoproteins* to be precise) called *antigens*. Their official designation is “histocompatibility antigen” or “**human leukocyte antigen (HLA)**.” These certain antigens are the same in every human and are only found in humans, although given individuals may have different arrangements and collections of these molecules. (For example, these antigens are responsible for the different ABO and Rh systems important in blood transfusions.) The irony is that in every person, on virtually every cell, this marker of mankind is a product of one certain chromosome: Chromosome #6.

40] “Glory”: Geometric means; see the *Beyond Coincidence* briefing pack.

41] “One star differs from another star in glory”: No two are alike. Even without a spectrograph. Even the moons of Jupiter are each unique. There are 100,000 million stars in the Milky Way alone; (at 1/sec, 2500 years to count them). And yet God knows them all by name. Can’t God do the same for us? To ask the question is to answer it.

42] Here we find four lines of recurring verbs and contrasting nouns (not “in”; anticipation of the Holy Spirit?).

43] “Dishonor”: *Atimnia*, loss of the rights of citizenship. A corpse has no rights. It is “unclean” (Nu 19:11).

“Sown in corruption”: Entropy? The entire creation is subject to the “bondage of decay” (cf. Romans 8:19-21). Entropy began in Genesis 3; decay of *c’?* etc. See *Beyond Time and Space* briefing pack.

Burials are vivid and constant reminders of the curse of death pronounced in Genesis. The dissolution of the human body in the grave is the ultimate humiliation to we who were originally crowned with glory and honor to rule God’s creation (Ps 8:5b; Heb 2:7b, 9).

Burial is a figurative sowing in anticipation of the future harvest at the time of the resurrection. A believer has received eternal life already (Jn 17:3; 1 Jn 5:11-13).

## Jesus’ Resurrection Body

- Could appear and disappear at will: Lk 24:31; Jn 20:19.
- Could move through solid walls: Jn 20:19,26. [1 dim-ensions?]
- Could be seen and felt; palpable: Mt 28:9; Lk 24:36-42.
- He could eat food, although it wasn’t apparently necessary: Lk 24:41-43.
- Though glorified, He could be recognized: Luke 24:30-31
- No more experience of death, aging, crying, mourning, sorrow, or pain: Rev 21:4.

All believers will be given new bodies like the glorious body of the Lord (Phil 3:21; 1 Jn 3:2). Otherwise, we’d be better off if we died at 25!

44] Our new body has a different dimensionality (1 Jn 3:2). [See *Beyond Perception* briefing pack.]

“Raised a spiritual body”: Our new, natural bodies will be “spiritual,” completely Spirit-filled and Spirit-governed. Our bodies have become temples of the Holy Spirit (6:19, et al.).

45] Jesus emphasized that His new body is *material* (“Flesh and bone,” Lk 24:39), but with the Holy Spirit thoroughly filling and governing this body. Note: the Holy Spirit’s role in the Creation (Gen 1:2).

Note the intended parallelism between Adam and Christ.

Our physical bodies will be like his own (2 Cor 4:14; Col 1:18; Phil 3:20-21; Rev 1:5). After His resurrection, im-mortality for His people became a certainty. I have never seen you; the *real* you. You have never seen the real me.

We are baptized into one Body [1]

## What is the “Body of Christ”?

The Church is a living organism called “The Body of Christ” (Eph 1:22-23). It is not just a “figure of speech” but an actual organic reality. Every believer is mystically joined into a living union with Jesus Christ (and each other! 1 Cor 12:12-28; Gal 3:27-28).

*Ekklesia* first mentioned by Jesus Christ in Mt 16:18. (The Confession was the foundation, not Peter: the *Petros*, masculine, does not agree with “rock,” *petra*, neuter, as it must do.) It is in this confession of faith in Jesus that one enters into the one true “church,” the body of Christ.

“I will be in you, and you in me...”. In 14:16,17,20. “In Christ” = This phrase is used 165 X in the epistles: “A Mystery”: Col 1:26,27; 2:12; 1 Cor 12:12,13; Gal 3:27,28.

In the Church period, there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile (1 Cor 10:32, 12:13; Rom 10:12; Gal 3:27-28; Col 3:11). However, Israel is yet distinct (cf. Dan 9:27, and Rev 6-18) until the New Jerusalem which combines both.

The Gentile is judged in Mt 25:31-46; Israel in Ezek 20:34-44; the Church in 1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:10; 2 Tim 4:8; cf. Rom 8:31-34. The Bride returns *with* Him, already adorned (Rev 19:7-9, 11, 14).

47] Confirming, again, the Creation record: not from primates, etc.; a unique creation.

48] Adam was the pattern, we are his copies. In Christ, He is the pattern (we are His copies, re: 1 Cor 13). You have been designed for *this* environment: the Earth. [cf. Space suits, diving gear, et al.] Just as a caterpillar enjoys a new dimensionality when it transforms into a butterfly, you and I will also enjoy a new dimensionality in our resurrection bodies. We’re headed for an “upgrade.”

49] Seth was born in *Adam’s likeness and image* (Gen 5:3). Children born of their parents bear not only the external image, but also the talents, traits, and characteristics. [We don’t have to teach them sin.] We are “born again” in Him.

50] “Flesh and blood” and “corrupt” are identical in meaning. (John 3:5,6f). Note: “flesh and bone” (Luke 24:39); His blood has been shed (Lev 17:11; Heb 9:22).

There will be a generation that will not die.

51] “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed”: (They called their burial places *koineteria*, “dormitories,” from which we get the word “cemetaries.”)

52] “...in a moment”: *Amos*, an indivisible unit. (In quantum physics, an indivisible quanta of time is 10<sup>-33</sup> seconds.)

## The Rapture of the Body of Christ

Cf. 1 Thess 4:15-17. The doctrine of the rapture is one of *ecclesiology* rather than eschatology! (The OT saw both comings in one picture.)

The rapture is introduced in John 14: Before the millennial kingdom, He would leave and go to heaven. He would prepare a place for them in heaven, and He would come back to receive them unto Himself. He would take them to glory *before* he set up his kingdom on the earth.

**Note:** Promise to the *Church*

Holy Spirit to take up residence in them;  
Specific place reserved for them; [separate from return to the Earth: Zech 12, 14:4-9, etc.]

This is, in a sense, the opposite of the Thessalonian problem: there they were worried about those who preceded them! Here it is with the living...

“at the last trump”: For some, this means the Teki’ah Gedolah, the “great blowing” of the series which make up the Feast of Trumpets (see the Feast of Trumpets in the *Feasts of Israel* briefing pack). To others, it is simply the final trumpet on earth for the redeemed. [USNA Bell System: 1st, muster; 3 min., Late Bell; 4 min., “Absent” Bell. Last of the series.]

This is not really the “last” trump in the Bible: another trump calls the elect (Mt 24:31); there will be others in the Millennium, etc. Even the 7th Trumpet Judgment of Revelation isn’t the last: they assemble no

one; they are not symbols of salvation; they are not symbols of deliverance; they are symbols of judgments on a Christ-rejecting world.

It is called the “Trumpet of God” in 1 Thess 4:16, used only there and in Ex 19 at Mt. Sinai.

Paul is not saying anything about timing. No one but the Father knows the day and the hour (Mt 24:36; Mk 13:32; Acts 1:7).

53] “This mortal must put on immortality...” We cannot dress ourselves. God does it all. We are disconnected from our past (and even time itself).

55] “O death, where is thy sting”: Quotes from OT (Isa 25:8; Hos 13:14). [It is neither in the LXX nor Hebrew text. It was probably from a translation of Aquila and Theodotion. Kistemaker, p.585 n.)

Death’s days are numbered. The LXX term for grave is *Hades*. Paul never uses the word Hades in all his epistles: Greek readers viewed Hades as a Greek god and the underworld was called “the house of Hades.” *Hades* was not part of Paul’s vocabulary to avoid misunderstanding.

56] Here in a single verse, Paul expresses the doctrine of sin, the law, and death. Two years later, Paul expanded the complete doctrine in his Epistle to the Romans (Rom 6:23; 7:9-11,13).

57] Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ”: The key word is victory, echoing vv.54-55. (1 Jn 5:4; Rev 1:18). It is in the present tense; He keeps on giving us victory.

Do you have *your* passport for the transition that’s coming?

58] “Therefore”: How then shall we live? Out of gratitude for our salvation provided through the Son (Heb 6:10).

The Bible is not a textbook, or a book of theory. It is the compass, the chart, the guide for your whole life. Not applying it is the ultimate sin. We are to prepare for the victory that is ours, and not let anyone or anything rob us of that confidence. Don’t allow yourself to be moved away from the hope of the gospel. Never be satisfied with anything less than giving yourself wholly to it.

There is victory ahead for Christians. But it must be said: if you are not a believer, death is no friend to you. Chapter 16 now wraps it up.

## 1 Corinthians 16

1] “Now concerning”: *Peri de*, Paul’s formula introducing topics mentioned in the letter *from* Corinth.

“collection for the saints”: Collection for poor (persecuted) Christians in Jerusalem (1 Thess 2:24f); also for famines (Acts 11:28-30). Paul and the entire Gentile mission were suspect by some of the more conservative elements in the Jerusalem church.

2] “First day of the week”: Jn 10:19,26; Acts 20:7; Rev 1:10. The day of the *Resurrection!* “Each one,” every believer. “Set aside,” separate from personal funds. “As God has prospered...”: in direct proportion.

### Tithing

God’s direct challenge (Mal 3:8,10) and instituted *before* the Law (Gen 14:20). Four reasons for the Tith:

- 1) It acknowledges the Creator’s rights. The Tenth of all is His.
- 2) It is the antidote for greed and covetousness.
- 3) It is a test of our faith.
- 4) It is the solution to every financial problem.

**OT Pattern:** Gen 28:19-22; Lev 27:30-32; 2 Chr 31:4-6; Neh 10:34-37; Mal 3:7-10.

**NT Confirmation:** Christ does *not* set aside the tith in Mt 23:23; it was also implied in the “even so” of 1 Cor 9:13-14; the “lay by him in store” in 1 Cor 16:1,2 alludes to Mal 3:10; 2 Cor 8:14; Heb 7:5,6, etc.

The tith is even *more binding* on us since our privileges are greater: “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.” (Luke 12:48) A tenth of all is His: be strict, be careful, be systematic. Separate His funds upon arrival (a separate box, checking account, whatever). Keep records; your “giving” only comes *after* the



return of *His* tenth. (You *can* take it with you: Lk 16:1-13.) Use the Portfolio Concept: “Need” is not the criteria: Evidence that the Lord is in the action, is.

4] “And if it be..”: Paul’s plans were uncertain. Indicated earlier (4:18,19) that, despite skepticism of some, he would come.

6] He ultimately went from Ephesus to Macedonia, then to Greece where he stayed three months (Acts 10:1-3). [Paul’s travel plans even included Illyricum (Albania and Yugoslavia) and Spain (Rom 15:19, 24, 28).]

God’s people should always have their plans subject to God’s Will (Acts 18:21; Rom 1:10; 15:32; 1 Cor 4:19; Heb 6:3; Jas 4:13-15). When you’re walking with the Lord, it is important to “hang loose.” (Jas 4:13-15)

8] Pentecost, late May or early June.

9] Great work is never unhindered. Great opportunities also have serious difficulties. Acts 19 describes how great were Paul’s adventures at Ephesus. Paul always heads for “ground zero.”

10] Paul spoke earlier (4:17) of sending Timothy to Corinth. Timothy, accompanies by Erastus, went first to Macedonia (Acts 19:22). Paul points to Timothy’s timid disposition (2 Tim 1:7) and his youth (1 Tim 4:12).

12] Last occurrence of *peri de* formula. Apollos highly esteemed in Corinth.

13] Like a drill sergeant, Paul gives short orders in rapid succession, with expectancy of obedience. All verbs in these two verses are present imperative: not momentary, but of continuing states.

“Be on your guard”: *Gregoreite*, implies a determined effort at wakefulness. As of the Second Coming (Mt 24:42f; 25:13; Mk 13:34ff; 1 Thess 5:6; Rev 3:3; 16:15).

“Acquit yourselves like men”: *Andritzesthe*, no place for cowards or weaklings.

“Be strong” (cf Ps 31:24) passive; derived from God.

14] Cf. Chapter 13.

15] A good example is always helpful. Paul had baptized him and his household (1:16).

16] “Submit yourselves”: The tendency of the Corinthians to do the reverse. Work and toil not quite synonyms: working implies being productive (“How many people work at Company X?” “A bout of 1/3 of them.”); toiling implies working long and hard in the interest of attaining a goal. Many work, a few toil.

18] The deserving should be recognized. This is the third time Paul mentions Stephanas (1:16; 16:15, 17). Greek, “the one who wears a crown.”

19] “Asia” is the Roman province of that name; Asia Minor.

Aquila was Jew, originally from Pontus on the southern shores of the Black Sea, but settled in Rome. When Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome (49 AD), he and his wife Prisca (Luke, “Priscilla”) settled in Corinth as tentmakers. When Paul first came to that city he lodged and worked with them (Acts 18:1-3). They were courageous, risking their life for Paul. At Ephesus they also corrected the understanding of Apollos (Acts 18:26). [In 4 of the 6 places they are mentioned, Prisca’s name comes first.]

Students of Paul became founding pastors in the western part of Asia Minor:

Ephaphras: Colosse, Laodicea, & Hierapolis (Col 4:12-13);  
Tychicus: Colosse & Ephesus (Acts 20:4; Col 4:7; Eph 6:21);  
Philemon & Archippus: Colosse (Hilemon 1-2);  
Trophimus: Ephesus

20] Paul frequently suggested a holy kiss (Rom 16:16; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; cf. 1 Pet 5:14). A warm greeting should dissolve cliquishness.

21] Paul learned a lesson from the forger: he responded to in 2 Thess (3:17). (See also Gal 6:11; Col 4:18.)

Last 3 verses:

A curse;  
A petition for the Lord’s return;  
A benediction.

22] *Anathema*: A solemn curse. *Maranatha*: Aramaic, not Greek; origin in early days of the Church in Judea. *Man, Lord, an, ana, "our"; atha, "to come."* (Probably an imperative, similar to Rev 22:20.)

Other Jewish vocabulary:

*Abba* (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6);

*Hallelujah*, Rev 19:1, 3, 4, 6);

*Amen*, (14:16; 16:24; 2 Cor 1:20);

*Hosanna*, (Mt 21:9, 15; Mk 11:9-10; Jn 12:13).

Paul's last sentiment is love; His last word is Jesus.

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\* \* \*

## 2 Corinthians 1

### Introduction

There seems to be very little “system” in this letter: “Second Corinthians” may possibly be an amalgam of several of Paul’s letters to Corinth.

Some time after Paul first left Corinth, he wrote a letter to the Corinthian church, a letter which apparently perished (1 Cor 5:9). (Some believe it is preserved as 2 Cor 6:14 - 7:1.) This letter had been misunderstood (1 Cor 5:9-10) and Paul mentions it to clear up a misconception.

[Remember: The chapters were not divided up until the 13th century; the verses not until the 16th.]

### Occasion of 1 Corinthians

The household of Chloe brought him news of cliques in the church (1 Cor 1:11) and the church wrote him a letter (re: 1 Cor 7:1), presumably brought to Ephesus by Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus (1 Cor 16:17), who probably added their own comments.

The situation was serious. Paul responded with the letter we know as 1 Corinthians.

### The “Painful Visit”

The situation worsened. Paul felt it necessary to leave his work in Ephesus and pay a hurried visit in the attempt to set things right. (This visit is implied in passages in 2 Corinthians, which speak of Paul as being ready to pay a third visit to Corinth (2 Cor 12:14; 13:1; his second visit is past, 13:2.)

His references to coming again in sorrow (2 Cor 2:1) indicate that this visit had been an unpleasant one. It failed to clear up the situation and Paul went away profoundly disturbed.

### The “Severe Letter”

Paul determined to write another letter, obviously very severe in tone and it cost him much to write (2 Cor 2:4; 7:8). Had it not been successful it might have conceivably meant a final rupture between Paul and this church he had founded. This letter seems to have been lost, although many scholars feel part of it is preserved in 2 Cor 10-13.

The letter was apparently taken by Titus, who was to return via Macedonia and Troas (2:4-9; 7:8-12).

In anxiety over the possible effect of this drastic letter and impatient over Titus’ delay in returning, Paul traveled north from Ephesus to Macedonia. There, Titus met him and to Paul’s relief and joy reported that the Corinthians had punished the ringleader of the opposition and repented (2 Cor 2:5-17; 7:5-7, 13).

Paul then wrote a fourth letter (2 Corinthians), recounting his former anxiety and expressing his joy over the reform in Corinth. Almost certainly he visited the church soon afterwards.

### Four letters (1-4); and

### Three Visits (A, B, C):

- A) When the church was founded
- 1) The “Previous Letter”  
(Household of Chloe visit Paul with a letter *from* Corinth)
- 2) “First Corinthians”
  - B) The “Painful” visit
- 3) The “Severe Letter”  
(Titus’ report)
- 4) “Second Corinthians”
  - C) 3rd visit

### Style & Content (Summary)

First Corinthians is unique among Paul’s letters because of the variety of its practical concerns. Second Corinthians is one of Paul’s most personal letters, containing a wealth of insights into the heart of Paul the pastor.

The Corinthian correspondence draws us into a world much like our own. Paul, the anxious pastor, wrote to young believers who were concerned with the problems involved in living the Christian life in a highly pagan environment.

Both letters reveal the degree to which Paul identified with his churches, suffering in their shortcomings and celebrating in their victories.

First Corinthians focuses on a church which is being corrected and instructed; Second Corinthians includes the account of man being disciplined and matured. Nowhere else does Paul open his heart to his readers so completely as he does in this second letter, relating God's dealings with him in his inner life. By revealing the price he has paid, his ministry is vindicated and his authority recognized.

News has reached Paul from Titus (2 Cor 7:7) of the mixed reception of his first letter. A majority had genuinely repented of sin, a minority challenged his authority, suspected his motives, and questioned the validity of his ministry.

The letter begins with reference to a painful experience of rejection at Corinth (Paul's "painful visit").

Paul gave thanks that the Corinthians were now reconciled to him, Chapter 1; but he recalled his torment over their stubbornness, Chapter 2. Chapters 3 and 4 are theological reflections on ministry, and Chapters 5 and 6 are on reconciliation. [ 2 Cor 6:14 - 7:1 = "Previous Letter"?)

In Chapter 7, Paul shares his joy at the church's repentance. Paul changes perspective in Chapters 8 and 9 by turning to the matter of the collection for the church in Jerusalem.

The tone of 2 Corinthians changes in Chapters 10-13. These are thought by some to be portions of the "Severe Letter." These chapters are laced with warnings to the Corinthians and Paul's opponents, defenses of his apostleship, and a rehearsal of Paul's sufferings as an apostle. If Chapters 1-9 reveal Paul's joy and relief, Chapters 10-13 let us see the wounds, both physical and emotional, which he bore as an apostle. The letter closes with the only trinitarian benediction in the Bible (2 Cor 13:14).

1] "...in all Achaia": Achaia was the name of the district; Corinth was its chief city.

"An apostle...": No greater authority than that!

2] "Grace be to you and peace from God": Not the grace that saves; the grace that sustains (Heb 4:16).

Peace *from* God (not peace *with* God; that's already theirs, Rom 5:1); Isa 26:3.

### Thanksgiving (1:3-7)

Paul establishes the values of experience, then the experience itself. If they grasp the values, they will be surprised at the relevance of the experience (us too).

3] "...the God of all comfort": Comfort (v 18X; n 11X) "to come along side to help; (L. *com* with strength; *fortis*, with strength); Gr. *paraklesis*, called alongside to help.

Jesus: will send Another to "disannul your orphanage"!)

Praise:

Because He is God:

Eph 1:3, for what He did in the *past*;

1 Pet 1:3 for *future* blessings;

Here: the *present* accomplishments.

Because He's the Father (In 17:26; Rom 1:7; Eph 1:6) of mercies (vs. grace) (Ps 23:6), which are manifold (Neh 9:19); tender (Ps 25:6); and inexhaustible (Ps 5:7; 51:1; 69:13; 16; 106:7,45; Lam 3:22, 32).

4] "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation": 10 Greek words for suffering; five of them in this letter. Most frequent *thlipsis*, "narrow, confined, under pressure," translated "affliction" (2:4; 4:17), "tribulation" (1:4) and "trouble" (1:4, 8).

Your life is a ministry. You don't have to look far to find broken hearts, broken lives, and broken homes. Is your life a sacrifice? a fulfillment? or both! (Mt 20:25-28).

Ministry = “the supernatural life of God at work in my/your life in such a way as to bring growth and spiritual fruit in the lives of others.” (It must have its source beyond our fallen nature.)

5] In vv. 5, 6: *Parthena*, “suffering,” also used of the sufferings of our Savior (1 Pet 1:11; 5:1). Christ is still suffering in the world though His Body!

...never by accident! God is in control. (Do we trust Him?)

Suffering occurs sometimes because of our own sin and rebellion (Jonah); sometimes to keep us from sinning (Paul, 2 Cor 12:7). It should perfect our character (Rom 5:1-5), helping us to share the character of God (Heb 12:1-11).

Also, to help us minister to others; to prepare us for something he was yet to do. A training program for all of us.

God can do more with a broken man than with one who seems strong in his own strength and power. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:3).

He has to work *in* us before He can work *through* us. It is easier to grow in knowledge than to grow in grace (2 Pet 3:18).

“Don’t let the tyranny of self-sufficiency rob you of the miraculous!”

His grace is invested into our lives as godly character (Rom 5:1-5); it is intended to yield dividends.

## Bankruptcy Model

- It’s a procedure to avoid total destruction;
- All assets must be declared insufficient;
- Must put oneself under complete subjection to the court.

Spiritual and emotional anguish is greater than the physical (financial)!

“Don’t let the lessons be wasted.” ...growth to maturity... Self-pity leads to isolation instead of involvement; we need bridges, not walls. Remember what God does for you, so that He can work *through you*.

6] Preparation for the ministry cannot be gained from a degree or diploma—or learned in a college, seminary, etc. Faith and obedience, not “knowledge” alone. Our sorrows, indeed, become our credentials.

7] “...as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation”: Be a channel, not a cistern. “Thorn in the flesh”...no matter what your “thorn” may be, His Grace is sufficient...

8] “We were pressed out of measure, above strength, inasmuch that we despaired even of life”: Paul did not deny his emotions (7:5) Even his “Sentence of Death...”

Under pressure beyond our ability to endure (but not His!). Even despaired of life...discouragement is no respecter of persons. But death is not the end.

9] “But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead”: God can’t begin until we end...what really motivates us? (Jer 17:9)

10] “...we trust that he will yet deliver us”: God delivers. The church’s most dangerous jeopardy is when it is enjoying the patronage of the world. When the wintry blasts of trouble and persecution break out, then the church wraps itself all the more tightly in its garment of salvation.

11] God is glorified through our trials. Paul is never ashamed to ask for prayer (in seven of his letters: Rom 15:30-32; Eph 6:18-19; Phil 1:19; Col 4:3; 1 Thess 5:25; 2 Thess 3:1; Phil 22). K-House is built upon prayer. Yours.

17] “When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness?”: Detractors implied he was insincere (1 Cor 16). False accusations are painfully destructive.

18] “But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay”: With no frivolous promises with fickle intentions.

20] “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us”: [His “Yea”; our “Amen”!]

## Plot of the Bible (A Walk Thru the Bible briefing pack)

God made mankind in His own image to love Him and to enjoy Him. Mankind chose to rebel and disobey God and was driven from the garden. This loss included both alienation from God and physical death. There in the garden the Creator promised that He would redeem them and restore paradise and that the redemption would come from the Seed of the Woman.

The focus of mankind's hope through the centuries has rested on that promise. The incarnation stands as the pivotal event of history. Christ Himself is the "yes" to all of God's promises. (Truth = when the Word and the Deed become one.)

The climax was at Easter, not Christmas! The resurrection of Christ from the tomb was the exclamation point of God's revelation! Have you said "Amen" — in the depths of your heart and soul?

21] "...he which stablisheth us with you in Christ": sanctification, setting apart (1 Cor 6:11).

Regeneration: "born again" (1 Pet 1:23). John 3:5: "born of the water and the Spirit..."

Whatever it means in John 3, it is the same in John 4, and it isn't baptism: we keep our lips closed when we are immersed. Water of Life (Rev 22:17).

Anointed. OT anointed with oil: Prophets, Priests, and Kings. [King, Father, Shepherd = all clearly assume God's responsibility to lead His people and to assure their security...]

22] "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts": When we give Him our "Amen," God sends His Holy Spirit to seal His ownership and to complete what He has begun (Phil 1:6).

Sealing: Evidence of Divine Ownership! Can He lose that which is His? (Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13; 4:30; Phil 1:6). "Abide with you forever" (Jn 14:16).

"Amen": Rom 8:28. Three most important words, "For we know..."

24] "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy; for by faith ye stand".

- Two kinds in this audience: Those that have no roots, swept by every wind; unstable. Christians of convenience. No real "Amen" here.
- Those that are rooted soundly, whose branches are yielding fruit. "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Ps 16:8).

## 2 Corinthians 2

1] "But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness": Having shown the reason why he came not to them, he requires them. . . .

- to forgive and comfort that excommunicated person (v.6),
- even as himself also upon his true repentance had forgiven him (v.10),
- declaring withal why he departed from Troas to Macedonia (v.12),
- and the happy success which God gave to his preaching in all places (v.14).

2] He didn't want to come in sorrow, with tears in his eyes.

3] He preferred to come in joy, having word from them that they had corrected those things he had written them about.

4] "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears": [The severe letter...?] If Paul grieved over them, how much more Christ?! (Zech 13:6).

### Restoring a Sinning Saint

6] "Sufficient to such a man [is] this punishment, which [was inflicted] of many": Now they should forgive him.

7] Not to forgive the repentant is as wrong as it is to tolerate the sin in the

first place. What is heaven but a home for repentant sinners. Forgiveness is the medicine that helps to heal broken hearts (Gal 6:1).

11] “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices”: Satan accuses believers to believe that their case is hopeless.

**What are his devices?** Deceit, deception, deviation from truth, unforgiveness, self-vindication, self-focus of any kind, prejudice, emotions, confusion...

Balance is difficult: Satan pushes us one way or the other... Remember, we are all capable of any sin—yes, it’s in our genes!

12] When I came to Troas to [preach] Christ’s gospel...”: He had been very near to them, just across the water. He wasn’t fickle; he was being *faithful* to the opportunity which God had provided him.

13] “I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother”: Anxious, Paul went over to Philippi in Macedonia to receive Titus’ report.

## Triumphant Ministry

14] “Now thanks [be] unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.”

**The Roman Triumph, A Model:** If the commander-in-chief won a complete victory on foreign soil, killed at least 5,000 enemy soldiers, gained new territory for the Emperor (not just a disaster repelled, or a civil war), then he was entitled to a Roman Triumph.

A public holiday was declared to honor the returning (victorious) general. All the people thronged—all day and most of the night—to view the triumph.

First came the state officials and the senate, then the trumpeters. Then were carried the spoils taken from the conquered land (i.e., when Titus conquered Jerusalem, the menorah, the golden table of shewbread, and the golden trumpets were carried through the streets of Rome).

Then came a long line of captive princes, leaders in chains; then the lictors bearing their rods, followed by the musicians with their lyres; then priests swinging their censers with the sweet smelling incense burning in them.

Then the general, following in a golden chariot drawn by four horses; he was clad in a purple tunic embroidered with golden palm leaves, and over it a purple toga marked with golden stars. In his hand he held an ivory sceptre with the Roman eagle at its top, and over his head a slave held the crown of Jupiter. After him rode his family, then the army with full decorations; then another long line of captives, with more Roman priests bearing censers. The procession would follow a special route through the city and would end at the *Circus Maximus*.

There were two groups of captives: Those in front were to be set at liberty, and the fragrant incense is the odor of life to them. Those behind are condemned to die, and are going to the arena; they are to be thrown to the beasts or put to death in some other manner. The fragrant incense that arises from their censers was the savor of death.

15] “For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish”: Two classes (1 Cor 1:18; Lk 11:14-22; Col 2:15; Eph 4:8). Christ has the victory! Every knee must bow to him, every tongue shall confess!

16] Is there any greater joy than to have people discover the Messiah?

17] “For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God”: “Corrupt”: a Greek word used for small trading; suggests the thought of what we call “grafting” or “huckstering.”

## 2 Corinthians 3

1] “Do we begin again to commend ourselves?” [Romans 16 is an example of a letter of commendation written to introduce Phoebe, a member of the church at Cenchrea, to the church at Rome.]

One of the greatest trials that Paul had to meet was the opposition of false brethren; those who professed to be Christians but who were in reality Jewish legalists who had never apprehended the freeness and the liberty of the gospel.

## What Is a “Legalist”?

One who believes righteousness can be obtained through his own effort. Genesis 3: Aprons of fig leaves replaced by skins of animals. God taught them that by the shedding of innocent blood they would be covered. Genesis 4: Cain and Abel. Works vs. faith.

Pharisees... Nicodemus example... John 3. The New Covenant was not invented by Paul: Nicodemus was chided for not knowing it (Jer 31:27-34; Ezek 11:14-21).

2] “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men”: Paul had been with them for a year and a half, and his life had been an “open book.” They themselves constituted his letter of recommendation. We are Christ’s “letter.”

## The Requirements of a Letter

- Legibility: one should be able to read it.
- Clarity: clear, definite statements; understandable.
- Authenticity: it should reveal the personality of the one who writes it.

[How do people read you? Has *grace* changed *your* life?]

4] “And such trust have we through Christ”: Trust—the proof of the pudding is in the eating (cf. Ps 34:8).

5] “... our sufficiency [is] of God”: Renunciation of all self-confidence (Rom 8:28). Paul: “For when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Cor 12:10). The Christian life is not the natural life lived on a higher plane; it is a divine life manifested in the energy of the Holy Spirit.

You can’t live a Christian life until you have a Christian life to live. [Nicodemus himself had to be “born again...”]

**John 1:11-14:** not of blood... of the spirit (John 3:6);  
not of the will of man;  
not by his own will.

You can’t do it; He must! (1 Pet 1:23,25; Phil 2:12-16).

## Contrasts Between the Old and New Covenants

6] “...ministers of the New Testament”: “New” (not *neos*, new in point of time and that alone) but *kainos*, new in quality.

Old covenant based on a written document (Ex 24:1-8). The Mosaic Law never gave life. [Moses himself could not be saved by the law! Why? He himself was a murderer!]

Did the representatives of Judaism go out into all the world to proclaim the glories of the Old Covenant? Not at all... (Rom 3:19). You can’t be too literal reading your Bible.

## Parenthesis: (3:7-16; cf. 5, 6 to 17)

Contrast of the fading glory of the old covenant with the unchanging, unending glory of the new covenant of grace.

7] That glory was to be done away.

8] Note the contrast of the two ministries: of death and of the spirit.

9] “The ministration of righteousness” is the righteousness which we have in Christ Jesus.

10] “For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth”: The glorious gospel of the blessed (happy) God. Why? Because He Himself has found a way whereby His love can go out to guilty sinners and make them fit for His presence. God is a lover of mankind. He delighteth in mercy (Micah 7:18). He hath “no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his wicked way and live” (Ezek 33:11).

11] “That which is done away”: The Law.

13] “And not as Moses, [which] put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished”: This reference is to the *second* giving of the Law.

When Moses came down from the Mount the first time, they had already broken the First commandment (Ex 20:3-5). Moses broke the two tablets, came down empty handed, and became their intercessor.



He went up the mount a second time for forty days, and this time God gave the law tempered with mercy, providing a system of sacrifices whereby the penitent could draw nigh to God with that which typified His Blessed Son. The Law tempered by grace. Moses' face was beaming from his association with God (Ex 34:30, 33).

Moses put a veil over his face until he was done speaking with them, and when he went before the Lord again he took it off. Paul tells us why he did that.

He knew that the glory was fading and passing, and he did not want the people to see the glory disappear. The glory of that covenant could not last because too much depended upon sinful men.

Veils: Prejudice, wishful thinking, disobedience, an unteachable spirit.

14] “But their minds were blinded”: Blindness definitive (and temporary!) Luke 19:42 to Romans 11:25. [Gentiles blinded too. See Chapter 4.]

15] “But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart:” Acts 10:43. Yet, David raised questions, Job was bewildered, and Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and wept when he faced death. We have greater assurance than they had.

16] “It” = their heart. Man’s trouble is heart trouble.

17] “Now the Lord is that Spirit”: Jesus is the Spirit of the OT.

## Quo Vadis, America?

[Is there liberty in America? It is because of the Lord. Will it continue during the denial of Him?]

18] “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the (unveiled face of the) Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, [even] as by the Spirit of the Lord”: Changed = “*transfigured*” in the gospels.

## We Become Like the Gods We Worship

Psalms 135:18. [Egypt trip: the preoccupation with death (Cairo Museum, etc.); their god, the Scarab = the dung beetle; the countryside... more than poverty... this wasn't a “poor” nation: they ruled the world! But now... they are now living on a dung hill.]

Is the world hard? cruel? unforgiving? If you worship the world, you will become cruel, hard, unforgiving...

The most insulting “god” of all: randomness; thus, emptiness...

## 2 Corinthians 4

Paul may well have been the greatest intellect in the history of the Western world, and who perhaps has influenced our civilization more than any other. [What better way to explore the inner life of another person than to read his or her mail!]

Each of us has a ministry; our life is no longer a self-seeking, aimless, purposeless existence. But a ministry received is a ministry to be communicated...

## The Cost of Communicating (4:1-15)

Our modern tools are marvelous (fax, email, et al.), yet inadequate (and irrelevant).

1] “...we faint not”: “We do not lose heart!”

Paul, instead of complaining about what he *didn't* have, rejoiced in what he *did* have. You and I can do the same thing! The way you look at your ministry helps to determine how you will fulfill it.

“This kind of” ministry brings men life, salvation, and righteousness; one that transforms lives (1 Tim 1:12-17).

The church is the only organization in the world which exists entirely for the sake of those who are not members of it!

Would God have entrusted this ministry to him so that he might fail? With divine calling came the divine enabling... God finishes what He begins. [Great tasks can inspire great achievements: Handel wrote *The Messiah* in 22 days!]

2] Paul's attitude kept him from being a deceiver. False teachers handle God's Word in deceptive ways.

Satan, in his "temptations" of Christ, quoted Scripture deceitfully (Mt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13). This should remind us that in watching for Satan's ministers, don't overlook the pulpits!

## The Blinded Eye

3] "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost": Revealed only by the Spirit of God; not by "apologetics."

Are the unsaved *able* to receive without the intervention of the Holy Spirit? (no).

4] The "god of this age" and the "prince of this world" are not casual titles: they are accurate (3X: Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

[Lord's Prayer: Mt 6:13: "Deliver us from the Evil One"!] ]

This is not a theological concept, but a fact of experience. Satan is real. He is incredibly powerful. He has targeted you. The world is *his* turf; it is hostile to your interests. His principal weapon is deceit and deception.

Even Persian Zoroastrianism saw the whole universe as a battleground between the god of the light and the god of the dark, between Ormuzd and Ahriman.

Characteristic examples: Evolution (biogenesis); humanism; defecation of man—despite his visible decline morally, physically, and mentally! [Species evolve? Why then are we so concerned by the extinction of species? Why isn't there more "evolving"??]

Why are we so concerned about subtle changes in the ozone layer, etc.? If there is such a delicate balance in nature, who originally balanced it? Balance implies design; design implies a designer; a

designer implies an ultimate purpose...and responsibility to the designer! [See *The E.T. Scenario, Beyond Time and Space*, and *Beyond Coincidence* briefing packs.]

Isn't it fascinating what people adopt after rejecting the truth? Watch the bizarre views of the pantheism of the "New Age," or the paranormal assumptions which replace the Biblical truth, etc.

[The Bible has been designed to anticipate hostile jamming: The Message is spread on the available bandwidth, Fourier analogy (Isa 28:?)]

Methods of "blinding": religious pride, legalism, intellectual pride. The presumption that the mind of man is the highest intelligence in the universe leads to the belief that one's own rationality is the final appeal to truth and authority. It follows that anything outside the limited sphere of man's rationality is unreal and impossible.

C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*: (p.14-15, MacMillan, NY, 1962):

*If the mind of man is the highest intelligence in the universe, then our minds have come into being without a Creator, a result of cause and effect in the processes of nature. It follows then that the mind is only a chemical process having evolved out of inorganic materials.*

*If this be true, then I have no reason to trust my thoughts as being valid. There is no reason to believe that the chemical process going on in my mind and causing these thoughts has any meaning or correlation to reality (if there is such a thing). When I think a profound thought it may only be a chemical reaction from having too much pepperoni on the pizza.*

*And what reason is there to believe that the thought that there is no God has validity either?*

Many cannot see God's glory in Christ because their rational presuppositions rule it out. [Pre-trib, pre-millennialism derives from a literal presupposition towards the Word of God; vs. allegorization, skepticism, etc.]

I am fascinated by people who talk endlessly about the search for truth, yet have no interest in talking with anyone who claims to have found it! Searching for truth appeals to one's sense of pride, but finding the truth demands submitting to it.

How do we communicate with people who are blinded by pride? Humbly. [Technology operates in a world of largely unanswered questions.]

5] “For we preach not ourselves...”: There is no room for “promoters” here.

6] “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to [give] the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”: Comparison to the Creation as in Gen 1:3:

Initially formless and empty, hopeless; (from a precedent judgment?) until the light of the Spirit causes a “new creation.” (5:17) [See *Genesis and the Big Bang* briefing pack.]

“He who has seen me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9)

His Word, and initiative, “Let there be light,” makes everything new.

“His Face”: 2 Chron 7:14 “...seek His face...”? Why do so many Christians behave like spoiled kindergarten kids? *Because they have not seen His face!*

## Why was His Face so Difficult to Recognize?

- Mary in the garden... John 20:11-18
- On the Emmaus Road... Luke 24:13-32
- In the upper room... Luke 24:36-43
- On the Galilean seashore in the morning... John 21:12 (!?)

Fulfillment: Isa 53...50:6; Rev 5:6! [The only man-made thing in heaven will be His scars.]

All the sum and substance of what God has to say to this world is said when He has spoken in these last days in His Son. We have nothing to add.

If you have seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, you will never be the same again. Paul received a unique ministry—and so have you. Unique, because nobody else is capable of doing it.

There is a life to be revealed—not a system of theology; a character which despises things that the world holds very close. “He will guide you to all truth.”

Do you have the leisureliness (quietness of heart, calm readiness) of Christ; the authority to say “no” to the world and “Amen” to the Lord?

7] “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us”: Earthen vessels = mud pots. We must focus on the treasure not the vessel. It is the treasure *within* the vessel that gives it its value.

Example: Fine china, elegant place settings, but without nourishing food for the hungry, desperate to be fed...

Isa 42:8: God will not give His glory to another. God has made us the way we are so that we can do the work He wants us to do (Acts 9:15).

A vessel must be clean, empty and available for service (2 Tim 2:21). The real characteristic of man is not his power but his weakness. Pascal said, “A drop of water or a breath of air can kill him.”

Our very genetic structure (despite its defects inherited from Adam) is in the hands of God (Ps 139:13-16).

The following is one of three sections in 2 Corinthians listing Paul’s sufferings (also 6:1-10; 11:16 - 12:10):

8] “[We are] troubled on every side, yet not distressed; [we are] perplexed, but not in despair”: Paul was not afraid of suffering or trial because he knew that God would guard the vessel so long as Paul was guarding the treasure (see 1 Tim 1:11; 6:20). God is glorified through weak vessels. The true test of ministry are scars not stars.

9] “Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed”: At our wit’s end but never at our hope’s end. “No pain, no gain?” “No Cross, no crown!” The storm is the measure of the sailor.

10] “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body”: “Crucified with Christ (cf. Gal 2:20); “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil 1:21).

Jesus = Life. No one ever died in His presence. He never foretold His death without foretelling His resurrection.

11] “For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake”: Paul knew his lifestyle was dangerous, by choice. [Is your lifestyle as dangerous?]

12] “So then death worketh in us, but life in you”: Cf. The Judaisers.

They did not suffer. Instead of sacrificing for the people, they made the people sacrifice for them (11:20). The false teachers did not have a treasure to share. All they had were some museum pieces from the Old Covenant, faded antiques that could never enrich a person’s life.

## The Secret of Endurance

13] Believing is seeing (not the other way around!) Of what was Paul so confident? Four basics (remember these, especially when gripped with fear and doubt):

### 1. Of ultimate victory:

14] “Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present [us] with you”: 1 Cor 15 emphasizes this point and is considered by some to be the most important chapter in the Bible!

C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*:

Five promises to the believer:

- 1) We shall be with Christ;
- 2) We shall be like Him;
- 3) We shall have God’s glory;
- 4) We shall be fulfilled;
- 5) We shall reign with Christ.

A.W. Tozer: “On the whole our problem is not that we desire too much but rather are satisfied with so little.”

### 2. That God will be glorified:

15] “For all things [are] for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God”: Rom 8:28 (not for everybody!).

### 3. That his trials were working for him, not against him:

16] “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward [man] is renewed day by day”: Paul’s sufferings: (2 Cor 11:23-28). We need to communicate as a dying man to dying men: having come to terms with our own mortality.

One day at a time:

Yard by yard, life is hard!

Inch by inch, life’s a cinch.

Renewal is continuous (Isa 40:31).

17] “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding [and] eternal weight of glory”: His trials were actually working for him (Rom 8:18).

Note contrasts: affliction, glory; light affliction, weight of glory; light affliction but for a moment, weight of glory that is eternal.

Our troubles are:

- 1) Light (Romans 8:18);
- 2) Momentary;
- 3) Are God’s tools to shape us for an eternal glory.

### 4. That the invisible world was real:

18] “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: “Look” is not a casual glance but an intense examination, a constant scrutiny, a steady gaze after clear focus... gripped by the reality... [5:11, “..knowing the terror of the Lord.”]

Our physical universe is really a “virtual reality”:

- 1) Atomic model: nucleus = 1 part in 100,000 by volume, mostly empty space. All “matter” results from an electrical simulation! Its “solidness” is only an illusion.
- 2) Missing mass of the universe? 95% still missing. [See related articles in Personal UPDATE.]
- 3) Particle physics: 10 dimensions; quantum measures deny an actual reality... beyond Heisenberg... [See also *Beyond Perception*, et al. in our “Cosmic Quartet.”]

Heb 11:1, 3: Paul said of Moses, “He endured as seeing him who is invisible” (Heb 11:27; cf. 1 Jn 3:2). When we see Him face to face, will we hide our faces in shame for:

- our failure to speak as God would have us speak?
- our failure to love as God would have us love?
- our failure to respond in terms of a crucified life?

## 2 Corinthians 5

- 1] “For we know”: How do we know? (John 14:19). We are software, residing in temporary “hardware.” We are heading for an upgrade! [Dinosaur DNA in *Jurassic Park*: Creature was reborn from his codes. Immortality is an information sciences issue, not a biological one.]

[Note “I?”: It is possible that Paul felt he may never die... “imminent” return...]

- 2] “For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven”: Good news! We’re just “renting” (cf. John 14:2).

The pattern of exchanging our “tent” for our permanent home is viewed, by some, as the same pattern as in the Feast of Tabernacles. [See *Feasts of Israel* briefing pack for details.]

“Getting old”? Each year brings me closer to the time when I shall see Him face to face!

- 3] “Clothed”: Adam and Eve, not with the results of their own efforts, but with skins of animals! [Originally, with light: see below.]  
 “Our righteousness is as (used menstrual cloths).” Isa 64:6.  
 Cf. Rev 3:17. Where can you find clothing acceptable for the eyes of God? In Isa 61:10. Wedding Garment (Mt 22:11-14). Bride adorned by the Bridegroom (Isa 61:10).

- 4] All will be resurrected (Acts 25:15; Jn 5:29). Resurrection is not a blessing for the unsaved.

- 5] “Ernest,” *arrabon*: a first installment, a down payment, a deposit, a pledge which obligates the contracting party to complete the transaction. (Sealing: 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13-14.) Gen 24: Eleazer give the bride gifts to assure the transaction.

- 6] “Therefore [we are] always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord”: None of God’s people are in the grave: they are either on earth or in heaven (Eph 3:15). This is our confidence: 2 Tim 1:12.

- 7] “(For we walk by faith, not by sight)”: Sight is wholly inadequate. [See *Beyond Perception* briefing pack.]

- 8] “We are confident, [I say], and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord”: Indeed! [Note: There is no intermediary state! No concept of purgatory in the Bible.]

- 9] What we *believe* and how we *behave* must always go together.

Philip Brooks: “Christianity knows no truth which is not the child of love and the parent of duty.”

“..wherefore we labor” = “are ambitious.”

Heaven was not simply a destination for Paul: it was a motivation. Eph 1:6: God has made us “accepted in the Beloved.” In Him! That is our position. We must also aspire to be accepted *of* Him.

“Accepted” = well-pleasing. How? By presenting our bodies as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1); by living for others (Rom 14:18); by

separating ourselves from evil (Eph 5:10); bringing our offerings to Him (Phil 4:18); children submitting to parents (Col 3:20); permitting Jesus to work out His perfect will in our lives (Heb 13:20-21); by seeking—in every one of our decisions—to please Him!

Why? There will be a *Final Exam!*

10] “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad”:

Is there any other verse in the New Testament that challenges *the believer* as this one does? [Unbelievers are dealt with at the Great White Throne in Revelation 20.]

**Judgment Seat of Christ:** 1 Cor 3; 2 Cor 5; Rom 14;

**Sheep and Goats:** Mt 25:31;

**Great White Throne:** Rev 20:12. The Big One.

Also:

**Judgment of Israel:** Ezek 20:37;

**Judgment of the Fallen Angels:** Jude 6.

## Judgment Seat

**Bema seat:** tribunal, judicial bench, judgment seat, throne.

Acts 12:21: Herod Agrippa I addressed the people of Tyre and Sidon; John 19:13 (cf. Mt 27:19): Jesus brought before Pilate; Acts 18:12,16,17: Paul accused before Proconsul Gallio; (This relic still among the ruins in Corinth). Acts 25:6,10,17: Paul brought before Festus at Caesarea.

When we visit Corinth, we can see the very judgment seat that Gallio passed judgment on the apostle Paul: a richly decorated rostrum, centrally located in the market place. It was the place where rewards were given out for victory in the Isthmian games. These rewards consisted of garlands, trophies, crowns, and special social benefits such as exemption from taxes. But punishments were also administered here as well.

Of everything that was the result of His Holy Spirit's control over their lives. All else is vain.

Five Crowns:

- of righteousness, 2 Tim 4:8;
- of glory, 1 Pet 5:2-4;
- of life, Rev 2:10;
- incorruptible crown, 1 Cor 9:25-27;
- of rejoicing, 1 Thess 2:19,20.

All will ultimately be revealed (Lk 12:2-3). Paul already warned us that our lives will be subjected to careful examination (1 Cor 3:14-15).

Jesus continually exhorted His fellows to full discipleship by reminding them that one day they would face an accounting for their stewardship (Mt 10:26-42; 16:27; 24:45-51; Mk 8:38; Lk 12:42-48).

He challenged them to pursue rewards (Mt 5:1, 46; 6:1-6, 16-18) and treasure in heaven (Mt 6:19-21; 19:21; Mk 4:24-25; Lk 12:13-21; 16:1-13).

Prominent NT theme: Jas 3:1; 1 Pet 4:17; 1 Jn 4:17. Rewards: Rev 22:12; 1 Cor 3:8, 24. Lk 6:23, 35; Mt 6:1, 6; 10:41-42. [Rewards are a legitimate motive: Mt 6:1; 1 Cor 9:24; 1 Pet 1:17; Jas 1:12; 2 Jn 8; Heb 12:2.]

Both the character of our service (1 Cor 3:10-15) and the motivations *that impelled us* (1 Cor 4:1-6) will be revealed. Jeremiah to Baruch: “Seekest though great things for thyself? Seek them not.” (Jer 45:5)

It will be a time of reckoning (Rom 14:8-13). Now is the time to prepare! How do we prepare for our “final exam”? With a clear conscience (v.11) and ignoring the praise (v.12) and criticisms (v.13) of men (cf. 1 Cor 11:31).

## Criteria

- 1) Our Deeds (1 Cor 3:13; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 2:23) must be according to Scripture (1 Cor 9:24; 2 Tim 2:5).

Must emerge from motivation to bring honor to God (Rev 2:23; 1 Cor 4:5; Mt 6:1-4; Heb 4:12-13; Col 3:22-25; 1 Cor 10:31).

2) Our Faithfulness (Mt 24:45; 25:23; Lk 16:10; 1 Cor 4:2; Rev 2:10).

3) Our Words (Mt 12:36-37; Lk 12:2-3). A sobering thought!

Sin, if it is to be forgiven, must be forsaken. Any other doctrine of forgiveness is a fallacy.

We need:      passion in our prayers,  
                  sacrifice in our service, and  
                  real dedication in our daily living!

The judgment seat of Christ is not a possibility, but a certainty! You and I have a definite appointment on the calendar of God. Are you ready?

Paul's reaction to verse 10 is recorded in verse 11:

11] "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men: but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb 10:31 (cf. 1 Pet 4:17, 18). Yet, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10.

It is interesting that Paul's fear is not of hell; it is fear of heaven. We will be accountable for what He has given us. The issue is not whether we are saved, but what have we done with our salvation? (1 Pet 4:17-18).

12] God uses imperfect instruments:

- Peter denied his Lord.
- John and James evidenced ambition to sit on His right and left hand.
- Paul insisted upon going up to Jerusalem against the voice of the Spirit.

Your effectiveness with others will derive from your own readiness for the Bema Seat.

13] We care not for man's approval: only dependence upon the Holy Spirit. To glorify Christ and to seek to save the lost. That's what it's *all* about.

14] "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead": "Love" is the third of three impelling motives:

- 1) realization that we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ;
- 2) recognition that all men are lost without Him;
- 3) the love of Christ...

15] This is all a stewardship issue: Who *owns* you? (A steward manages what someone else owns.)

Christ created you; and redeemed you. The *owner* sets the priorities. Remember the "gospel": vicarious death, burial, and resurrection (1 Cor 15:1-4).

Adam deliberately (knowingly, 2 Tim 2:14) disobeyed God and fell—and the entire human race fell with him. All mankind is now under penalty of death.

However, "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph 2:6)

Last Adam: 1 Cor 15:45 (cf. Rom 5:12-21).

16] "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we [him] no more": It is not the Christ of the manger, with whom we are linked, but the resurrected Christ! We interpret the manger by the throne!

Death of self: See *The Way of Agape* textbook and workbook.

17] "Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new": Paul's definition of a Christian—a totally new person (In 5:24).

18] "...and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation": Even more than justification. Justification is the sentence of the judge in favor of the prisoner: not guilty (Rom 5:1).

Reconciliation goes a step further: He receives us into His Forever Family.

19] "...imputing": Imputation (banking term) "to put to one's account." Cf. Philemon 17,18. Paul paid the bill for Onesimus and Philemon to be reconciled.

This permiss justification: a not-guilty verdict can be now rendered since the demands of the law have been met (Rom 4:1-8; Ps 32:1-2). He came not to condemn, but to save (Jn 3:17). Cf. John 8:3-11; also Jer 17:13.

20] Ambassadors to a bankrupt world...enslaved to the Ruler of This World...

21] For he hath made him [to be] sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

"Made sin"? What can that possibly mean? He had nothing to gain by scooping from the throne to the manger. His love took Him to the cross. Our sins put Him on the cross.

The nails couldn't have held Him there. It was the strength of His love for us!

Summary: it behooves us to examine our own lives regularly in light of the coming "Final exam."

We can exempt issues from the Final by taking them to the Throne beforehand!

We no longer look at life the way we used to. It's time to stop "playing at" Christianity, and start taking it seriously...

## 2 Corinthians 6

These two chapters bring a heartfelt conclusion to Paul's explanation of his ministry.

- 1, 2 a triumphant ministry,
- 3 a glorious ministry,
- 4 a sincere ministry,
- 5 based on faith in God.

In 2 Corinthians, you get the impression that the church did not really appreciate Paul and the work he done among them.

### Paul the Evangelist

1] "We then, [as] workers together [with him], beseech [you] also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain": Is it possible to receive God's grace in vain?<sup>1</sup>

What have you done with *your* salvation? The law of God made heavy demands. The grace of God makes even bigger demands.

Has God invited you into the arena? Are you watching for your risen Lord to invade your circumstances and invite you to be a fellow worker with Him?

2] "...behold, now [is] the day of salvation": Isa 49:8. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found" (Isa 55:6).

Good news: it's not too late; it's also not too early...

Would you be willing to postpone your salvation one year? Six months? Three weeks? Then, why not receive it NOW? God's time is always today. Going to undertake something heroic for the Lord? Do it *now*.

### Paul the Example

How do you expect the grace of God to be displayed in your life? [vv. 3-10]



- 3] “Giving no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed”: One of the greatest obstacles to the progress of the Gospel is the bad example of people who profess to be Christians. Paul was careful never to be a stumbling block (Rom 14).

Keep your pathways uncluttered.

- 4] Here are nine conditions of testing. “Patience,” *hupomone* (32X in NT) = endurance; an active response to circumstances (Jas 1:2-4):

- afflictions = trials under pressure,
- necessities = everyday hardships,
- distresses = experiences that pushes us into corners where there seems to be no escape (Greek: “narrow place”).

Our mistakes are our lessons; our sorrows are our credentials.

- 5] • In stripes,  
• in imprisonments,  
• in tumults,  
• in labors,  
• in watchings,  
• in fastings.

No “health and wealth” Gospel here... Now, nine characteristics of the man of God:

- 6] • by pureness = chastity (cf 1:1:2). There is no piety without purity.  
• Blessed are the pure in heart... unspotted from the world.  
• by knowledge,  
• by long-suffering = patience with difficult people—do you know any?  
• by kindness,  
• by the Holy Spirit,  
• by love unfeigned,  
• by the Word of Truth,  
7] • by the Power of God,  
• by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left:

He wore the (whole) armor of God (Eph 6:10ff).

Now, nine paradoxes (contrasts):

- 8] “By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and [yet] true”;

- 9] “As unknown, and [yet] well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed”;

[No “name-it-and-claim-it” (or “blab-it-and-grab-it”) gospel here!]

- 10] “As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and [yet] possessing all things.”

He became poor that they might become rich (cf. 1 Cor 1:5; 2 Cor 8:9). What a price Paul paid to be faithful in his ministry! [Too many churches are prone to take for granted the sacrificial ministry of pastors, missionaries, and faithful church officers.]

James 1:2-4: “Count it all joy...”

**Mid-course Exam:** Is your spiritual life advancing? What has your Bible study been like this week? Are you progressing toward consistency?

11] “enlarged” = growth.

## 2 Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1 (“The Previous Letter”?)

*Three Visits:*

**Four Letters:**

1) *When church was founded:*

1) **The “Previous Letter”** (1 Cor 5:9-10)

= 2 Cor 6:14 - 7:1?

2) **1st Corinthians**

2) *The “painful” visit:* (2 Cor 12:14; 13:1,2)

3) **The “Severe Letter”** (2 Cor 2:4; 7:8)

= 2 Cor 10-13?

4) **2nd Corinthians**

3) *A visit after 2 Corinthians had been sent.*

Complete your consecration: “Be ye separate.”

- 14] “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers”: **Unequal yoke** Deut 22:10: “Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.” The ox was a clean animal to the Jews; the ass was not (Deut 14:1-8).

“Yoke” = ? The yoke was an instrument so that they would walk the same path. Thus, a yoke is an intimate relationship that necessitates the adopting of like values and goals.

To be joined to Christ and be wholly His, one must be cut off from whatever is incongruous with His character and holiness. Your spiritual state will be reflected in your lifestyle.

[Cf. Revelation: the “Earth-dwellers” vs. those that are His.. Many are caught up in affections that fly in the face of total commitment to God.]

## Why Separation ?

Three Reasons:

- 1) **The nature of the believer.** He should want to associate himself only with that which pleases the Lord.
- 2) **Because of His promise:** He had declared His intent to come and dwell among them.
- 3) **The command of Scripture:** Elements from Leviticus, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea (Isa 52:11; with echoes of Ezek 20:34, 41).

“Come out” = definite act required. “Touch not” = a warning against defilement (R-rated movies? et al.).

God’s command of separation is found throughout the Scriptures; Israel is warned not to mingle with pagan nations in the land of Canaan (Num 33:50-56); then was punished upon disobedience.

The church must separate itself from those who reject the doctrine given by Christ and the apostles (Rom 12:1-2; 16:17-20; Col 3:1-2; 1 Tim 6:10-11; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 4:3-6; 1 Jn 4:6; Rev 2:14-16, 20-24; 18:4ff).

- 18] “And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty”: God’s love is possessive (Jer 3:14; Isa 54:5; Hos 2:14, 20; 2 Cor 11:2,3).

Friendship with the world is enmity with God (James 4:4).

Think about exchanging a thousand petty loyalties for one life-uniting passion for God. Think about never being alone again.

Unfortunately the *doctrine of separation* is widely misunderstood and abused by some. Some sincerely zealous Christians have turned separation into isolation until their fellowship has become so narrow they have difficulty even getting along with themselves. Self-made saints are often inflexible, critical and joyless individuals.

In contrast to this extreme position, others have torn down the walls and will fellowship with anybody, regardless of what they believe or how they live.

We are not called to monasticism, but *to be a witness*.

You are narrowing your life by worldliness.

Principles rather than rules:

Is it to the glory of God? 1 Cor 10:31.

Has it the appearance of evil? 2 Thess 5:22.

Is it a stumbling block to a weaker Christian?

## 2 Corinthians 7

- 1] “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God”. How? Refusing to hide our failures and rebellion. See the “Inner Court Ritual” below (see also *The Way of Agape* books and tapes; *The Architecture of Man* briefing pack). Also, the Christian’s “Bar of Soap”: 1 John 1:6-9.

\* \* \*

## “The Inner Court Ritual”

1) **Recognize, acknowledge and experience** the negative emotions, desires or actions that have just occurred. Don't vent these feelings and don't stuff them. Learn to give them to God. Get alone with Him and experience your emotions. Name how you are feeling. Ask Him to *expose the real root cause of your emotions* (the pride, the unbelief, the fears, the insecurities, etc.)

2) **Confess your responsibility** in holding on to these negative emotions. They have separated you from God and they are sin. **Choose to repent of them**—i.e., change your mind about holding on to them—and choose to follow what God is telling you to do. Be sure to **unconditionally forgive others**. God will then also forgive your sins.

3) **Give over to God all that He has shown you**, not only the negative emotions, but their root causes. God then will purify your sin and reconcile you to Himself.

4) **Immerse in God's Word.** Be sure to replace the lies with the truth. God then will cleanse and heal your soul with “the washing of the water of the Word.”

At this point, by faith—whether you feel like it or not—you have been emptied of self life and filled with God's Life: His Love, His Thoughts and His Power to perform. You have totally given yourself over to God and loved Him, so for this time you are a cleansed vessel. Others should be able to see Jesus in you and you can say, like Paul “*Forme to live is Christ.*” (Philippians 1:21)

8] “Repent” is a missing word in our language. (Two Greek words for “repent”: here, regret; in v.10, “to be regretted.”)

*Metanoia:* A radical change of heart which turns a person (as in the Prodigal Son), and heads him back to the Father.

10] “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation...”. Wounds from a friend can be trusted (Prov 27:6a). Blessed is the man whom God corrects, so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. For He wounds, but He also binds up; He injures, but His hands also heal.” (Job 5:17-18)

11] We may remain correct and proper in doctrine, yet lose a sense of passion for God and love of the brethren. [The Letter to Ephesus (Rev 2:4-5) which lost its first love. See The Letters to Seven Churches briefing pack.]

12] “...but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you”; Love is the basis.

16] “I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all [things]”: What a contrast to 1 Corinthians!

- strife, envyings, divisions (3:3)
- some puffed up (4:18)
- doing wrong, defrauding brethren (6:8), etc.

vs.

Now: “...confidence in you in all things!” Revival through repentance. One of the most difficult things to do is to rebuild a shattered relationship...

We must face problems honestly: deal with problems Biblically and lovingly; and seek God's involvement.

## 2 Corinthians 8

### The Grace of Giving

Paul was taking up a special “relief offering” for the poor Christians in Judea (Acts 11:27-30).

Paul has *chutzpah*: Having been accused of being “in it for the money,” he was bold enough to press for an offering for the saints in Jerusalem.

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Where did the Lord say this? Only in Acts 20:35.) Paul saw the Gentiles as “debtors” to the Jews (Rom 15:25-28).

1] “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia”: Paul uses nine different words to

refer to the offering; the world *grace* most often (7 times in these two chapters). Also, ministry, fellowship, debt (Rom 15:27), fruit (Rom 15:28).

## In Spite of Circumstances

2] “How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality”: Their difficulties could be traced directly to their Christian faith. They may have lost their jobs or been excluded from the trade guilds because they refused to have anything to do with idolatry.

No computer can analyze this formula:

great affliction and deep poverty

+ *grace* =

abundant joy and abounding liberality! (cf. 6:10)

Also, it reminds us of the generous offering taken at the building of the tabernacle (Ex 35:5-6) and the temple (1 Chr 29:6-9). We should be challenged to break out of our self-centered posture and trust God. Enthusiastically and Sacrificially

3] For to [their] power, I bear record, yea, and beyond [their] power [they were] willing of themselves.”

## A Privilege to Be Sought

4] “Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and [take upon us] the fellowship of the ministering to the saints”: The Macedonian churches needed no prompting; they were not only willing to share, *they begged to be included!*

## As Jesus Gave

5] “And [this they did], not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God”: Renouncing all self-life—self-esteem, self-importance, self-righteousness, pride, arrogance. He who knows he does not own himself will never again say that he owns his money.

6] “Inasmuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also”: A common myopia. Salvation is more than simply dodging hell; it is that we should be filled with the fullness of God...

## A Measure of Spiritual Maturity

7] “Therefore, as ye abound in every [thing, in] faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and [in] all diligence, and [in] your love to us, [see] that ye abound in this grace also”: The Corinthians were so wrapped up in the *gifts* of the Spirit that they had neglected the *graces* of the Spirit (1 Cor 4-5). To claim to have *experienced* the grace of God in forgiveness, yet fail to *display* the grace of God in action is a total contradiction.

## A Test of Love’s Sincerity

8] “I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love”: Generosity is essential to spiritual development. It is the nature of God to be generous. It is impossible to love God and ignore the needs of your neighbor (2 Cor 5:15).

## The Ultimate Example

9] “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich (Gal 1:4; 2:20)”: Jesus is always the ultimate example: in service, suffering, or sacrifice. How can we measure the gap between the throne and the cross?

He was born of a woman

so that we could be born of God;

He humbled Himself

so that we could be lifted up;

He became a servant

so that we could be made co-heirs;

He suffered rejection

so that we could become His friends;

He denied Himself

so that we could freely receive all things;

He gave Himself

so that He could bless us in every way.

## Consistency and Integrity

10] “And herein I give [my] advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago”: There can be a great difference between promise and performance.

Promises were made but not kept, and an entire year had been wasted. The delay was due to the spiritual condition of the church: when a church is not spiritual it is not generous. [Also, the Judaisers probably siphoned off as much money as they could (11:7-12; 20; 12:14).]

## Attitudes, Not Amount

12] “For if there be first a willing mind, [it is] accepted according to that a man hath, [and] not according to that he hath not”: Our motive for giving is God’s spiritual blessing in our lives; our measure for giving is God’s material blessing. “Let every one of you lay by him store, as God hath prospered him” (1 Cor 16:2).

## Meant to Meet Mutual Needs

13] “For [I mean] not that other men be eased, and ye burdened.” [Direct statement against communism. The communal sharing of the early church (Acts 2:44-47, 4:32-37) was voluntary. Socialism is theft.]

14] Paul uses the miracle of the manna as an illustration of the principle (Ex 16:16-18). Paul recognizes that the (composite) church is one.

15] We are not squander, nor to hoard (Ex 16:22-26; Jas 5:1-6). “Give us this day our daily bread” (Mt 6:11).

## Qualifications to Handle Money

[Competent delegation is crucial. Three were appointed (vv. 16, 18, 22): Titus and two others (traditionally, Luke and Apollos. Titus had previously visited Corinth and was known to them. He later became the bishop of the church of Crete.)]

### 1) A God-given desire to serve

16] “But thanks [be] to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you”: Paul didn’t “draft” him.

## 2) A burden for lost souls

18] “And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise [is] in the gospel throughout all the churches”: This keeps the priorities straight.

### 3) A desire to honor God

19] There is no such thing as “secular and sacred” or “business and ministry.” The most spiritual thing a ministry can do is to use its money wisely for the Lord’s ministry.

### 4) A reputation for honesty

21] Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

22] Diligence is always a key requirement.

### 5) A cooperative spirit

23] Whether [any do enquire] of Titus, [he is] my partner and fellow helper concerning you”: ...a good team member, an honor to Christ.

24] “Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf”: The adventure of grace giving.

## 2 Corinthians 9

### Heaven’s Law of Supply and Demand

Why do we need to give even though God does not need our gifts? Five encouragements:

#### 1) Your giving will provoke others

2] “...and your zeal hath provoked very many”: Paul had used the promises of the Corinthians to challenge the Macedonians; now he uses the performance of the Macedonians to challenge the Corinthians! (Heb 10:24). Generosity is contagious.

3] “Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready”: It should be planned. Paul had written before on procedures (1 Cor 16:1-4).

5] “Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as [a matter of] bounty, and not as [of] covetousness.”

## 2) Your giving will bless you

6] “But this [I say], He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully”: Luke 6:38; Prov 11:24; Rom 8:32; Gal 6:8. You can ignore God’s laws but you cannot escape them.

Your gift is an *investment* in the kingdom. [Incidentally, you can “take it with you.” By sending it on ahead (cf. Lk 16).]

## Two Seas

There are two seas, each fed by the same source (the Jordan). One is characterized by life. The other one, nothing but barrenness and death. What is the difference between the two? There is no difference in the source of supply, the same river supplies both.

In the one, the Galilee, what it receives it gives. It takes in, it gives out. All around it is life, fruit, abundance.

The other jealously hoards its resources and refuses to let out a single drop. It keeps everything it takes in. Its name is the Dead Sea.

7] “God loveth a cheerful giver”: Cheerful = Greek: *hilarios*, hilarious!  
8] “And God [is] able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all [things], may abound to every good work”: *All* is not an exaggeration.

“Abound”: This letter opened with abundant suffering matched by abundant comfort (1:5); abundant grace (4:15) and abundant joy and liberty (8:2) allows us to abound in every good work (Lk 6:38).

9] “As it is written”: Isaiah 55:10-11.

10] “Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for [your] food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness”: You cannot outgive God. We are trusting in His sufficiency. God is able.

11] “Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God”: We are enriched, and we enrich others. He enriches us *so that* we may give even more bountifully.

## 3) Your giving will meet needs

12] “For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God”: Priestly service—spiritual “sacrifices” (if given in the name of Jesus: 1 Pet 2:5; Heb 13:15-16; Phil 4:10-20).

Grace never looks for a reason; it only looks for an opportunity.

## 4) Your giving will glorify God

13] “Whiles by the experiment of this ministratiion they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for [your] liberal distribution unto them, and unto all [men]”: Cf. Matthew 5:16.

## 5) Your giving will unite God’s people

14] “And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you”: Without Him we can’t. Without us, He won’t.

\* \* \*

## Appendix: Stewardship

Learn the *supernatural* elements of stewardship. This is the solution to *all* financial problems.

(Man's) purposes for Money:

- 1) provide for security
- 2) establish independence
- 3) create power and influence

	<b>Man's Way</b>	<b>God's Way</b>
<b>Focus:</b>	power and position	submission
<b>Emphasis:</b>	rights and freedom	personal responsibility
<b>Desire:</b>	gain for self	meet the needs of others
<b>Concern:</b>	immediate fulfillment	lasting achievement
<b>Yearning:</b>	praise of men	approval of God
<b>Aspiration:</b>	to be served	to serve others
<b>Need:</b>	to push ahead	for patience
<b>Striving:</b>	to lead men	to follow God
<b>Interest:</b>	competition	cooperation
<b>Motivation:</b>	self-glorification	God's Glory

Financial Freedom = realizing that true prosperity comes only from God (Deut 8:18) and committing ourselves to God's purposes for money (Mt 6:30).

## God's Four Purposes for Money

- 1) Provision 1 Kgs 17:4
- 2) Direction 1 Kgs 17:7
- 3) Fellowship 1 Kgs 17:9
- 4) Demonstration Jas 5:17

### 1) To Provide Basic Needs Mt 6:26, 28-30; 1 Tim 6:8

- To establish daily dependence on Him (vs. Eden) Mt 6:11
- To deepen our love for the Lord Col 2:10; Jn 15:5  
(vs. Israel in wilderness)
- To develop a spirit of gratefulness
- To teach us to live within our means 1 Tim 6:6
- To help us enjoy our possessions Heb 13:5  
(vs. discontent)

### 2) To Confirm Direction Ps 37:7

- To build our faith and vision
- To determine who is the Lord of our life 1 Tim 6:17
- To protect us from harmful items 1 Tim 6:9
- To teach us patience Rom 5:3; Jas 1:3-4
- To concentrate on true riches Phil 3:7-8

### 3) To Give to Christians Rom 12:3

- To unite Christians 2 Cor 8:14
- To demonstrate the mark of a Christian Tit 2:14; 2 Cor 9:8
- To initiate spontaneous thanksgiving 2 Cor 9:11
- To multiply the potential for giving 2 Cor 9:6

### 4) To Illustrate God's Power 1 Kgs 18:21-40

- To cause Christians to trust Him
- To mock the false gods of our age Ps 66:18
- To purify our lives and motives Acts 5:12-14
- To bring non-Christians to salvation Ps 50:15
- To glorify God

## Tithing

God's direct challenge:

Mal 3:8,10

Tithe instituted *before* the Law:

Gen 14:20

OT Pattern: Gen 28:19-22; Lev 27:30-32; 2 Chr 31:4-6; Neh 10:34-37; Mal 3:7-10.

NT Confirmation: Christ does *not* set aside the tithe in Mt 23:23; it also implied in the "Even so" of 1 Cor 9:13,14; the "lay by him in store" in 1 Cor 16:1,2 alludes to Mal 3:10; 2 Cor 8:14; Heb 7:5,6, etc.

## Four Reasons for the Tithe

- 1) It acknowledges the Creator's rights. The Tenth of all is His.
- 2) It is the antidote for greed and covetousness.
- 3) It is a test of our faith.
- 4) It is the solution to every financial problem.

Even *more* binding on us since our privileges are greater: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." (Lk 12:48)

## Practical Suggestions

A tenth of all is His. Be strict. Be Careful. Be systematic. Separate His funds upon arrival: a separate box, checking account, whatever. Keep records; your "giving" only comes *after* the return of *His* tenth. You *can* take it with you: Luke 16:1-13.

**The Portfolio Concept:** Your giving is a "portfolio." Portfolio managers are measured at the end of the reporting period, in retrospect. "Need" is not the criteria; evidence that the Lord is in the action, is the key. Validation before commitment...

**Our Spiritual Bankruptcy:** Chapter 11 Court Analogy. It requires admission that our obligations cannot be met; court stands between debtor and his creditors; ultimate discharge fully satisfies all demands of the future on the past. Telestai!

## 2 Corinthians 10 "Secrets" of the Ministry

### Rebels Challenged

Paul was writing to a divided church (1 Cor 1:11ff), resisting his authority and being seduced by false teachers. First he explained his ministry and challenged them to participate in the offering, etc. Now, in this section, we find him challenging the rebels in the church (cf. Jude, et al.).

Paul challenges them directly (10:7, 10-12; 11:4, 20-23; et al). He does not equivocate: they are the ministers of Satan (11:12-15).

"Boast or glory": 20X. Paul was not defending himself personally, but his ministry and apostolic authority. Paul "gloried in Jesus Christ" and not in himself or his own achievements (Rom 5:11; Gal 6:14; Phil 3:3). He emphasized his sufferings, not his successes.

He boasted to others about the Corinthians, but now it seemed that his boasting might have been in vain.

### How to Wage Spiritual Warfare (10:1-6)

Spiritual "mysteries" are usually contrary to our fallen human nature...

- 1] "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence [am] base among you, but being absent am bold toward you": The rebels—the Judaisers—said Paul was courageous when writing letters from a distance, but was timid and weak when present (cf. vv.9-11).

Christians usually grow after the manner in which they are born. If in an atmosphere of dictatorial leadership, they grow up depending upon man's wisdom and strength. If in an atmosphere of humility and love, they learn to depend upon the Lord.

Paul's purpose was to exalt Christ and not himself (1 Cor 2:1-5) so he played down his own authority and ability. They failed to perceive that true spiritual power is in "meekness and gentleness." ["Paul" means "title."]



Jesus also exhibited meekness and gentleness (Mt 11:29, et al.). [Jesus could also be stern and angry when occasion demanded: Mt 15:1-2; 23:13-33; Mk 11:15-17; Jn 2:13-16.]

Usually the only way to bring positive change in a strained relationship is by submission...mutual submission to God. [See Nan's book, *Why Should I Be The First to Change?*]

Marriage: an unconditional commitment to an imperfect person. "Submission is learning to duck so God can hit your husband!"

Our prayer is often a substitute for submission rather than a petition to enable it.

3] "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh": Many do not realize that the church is continually engaged in warfare. Those who do understand the seriousness of the Christian battle do not always know how to fight the battle. Human methods are doomed to failure. You cannot fight spiritual battles with weapons of the flesh (Eph 6:10ff).

[The failure of psychology: Heb 4:12...]

4] "For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds": "Warfare" (Greek, *strateia*) = "campaign"; not just a skirmish. The powers of darkness are still trying to destroy the work of God (Mt 16:18).

Walls of resistance: reasonings opposed to the truth of God's Word; pride of intellectualism, exalting itself in arrogance (Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 1:18ff et al.).

Humility is one of the strongest spiritual weapons; pride plays right into the hands of Satan. Humility is not self-denigration, lack of confidence, or inability to accept affirmation. It is a *realistic view of oneself from God's perspective*.

Its manifestation is meekness: a resourceful inner strength that enables one to respond with gentleness and steadfastness in the midst of opposition, criticism, or rejection. It grows out of being able to see oneself as God sees.

Other weapons:

The Sword of the Spirit: Word of God.

Love: the power of the Spirit at work in his life.

Prayer: the heavy artillery—even from a distance. Spiritual warfare is usually won on our knees!

He did *not* depend upon personality, human abilities, or even his authority as an apostle.

5] "...bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"; Taking every thought captive. Catching every thought and bringing it into obedience to Christ. This is one of the failings of "psychology"; re-mulling previous hurts without bringing them into obedience to Christ.

[Mind, *dianoia*: *dia*, "channel"; *noya*, "mind"; willpower; correlative to the Porch of the Temple Model. See *The Way of Agape* workbook and textbook]

6] "And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled"; "Revenge" = Greek: *ekdikao*. It means 1) to vindicate one's right, do one justice 1a) to protect, defend, one person from **another**; 2) to avenge a thing 2a) to punish a person for a thing.

7] Position and power are no evidence of authority (cf. Mk 10:35-45).

8] Paul's objective was to build them up, not tear them down. It takes more skill to build than to destroy. How many churches, conversely, treat their pastors shamefully.

10] "For [his] letters, say they, [are] weighty and powerful; but [his] bodily presence [is] weak, and [his] speech contemptible": Paul's physical appearance was weak and unimpressive.

We all have heard impressively expressed sermons, but "the Lord was not in the wind" (1 Kgs 19:11).

11] In other words, "Better get ready because if it is necessary I will show you how powerful I can be...." It is always a "no win" situation: if he was a true apostle he would show it by using his authority. If he "threw his weight around" they would have found fault with that. "Wisdom is justified of her children" (Mt 11:19).

Their criticism backfires: if Paul was not an apostle, he was a counterfeiter. If so, the church he founded at Corinth was not a true church. If he was a deceiver, then the Corinthians were the deceived!

## How To Measure Spiritual Ministry

12] “For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise”: How do you measure ministries? How do you measure a miracle?

Quantity is no guarantee of quality. [The early church did take note of numbers: Acts 2:41; 4:4.]

External activities are easier to measure than internal transformation. Sometimes those that are growing the most feel like they are less than the least.

Cf. Seven Letters to Seven Churches: Rev 2 & 3. The Lord measured them far differently than they measured themselves. [Key study: *Letters to Seven Churches* briefing package.]

13] “But we will not boast of things without [our] measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you”: Sanctified sarcasm: The area Paul was assigned included even the Corinthians!

## Three Key Questions

### 1) Am I where God wants me to be?

14] “For we stretch not ourselves beyond [our measure], as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in [preaching] the gospel of Christ”: It was not the Judaisers who had come to Corinth with the gospel. Like the cultists today, they are parasites feeding on another’s ministry (Rom 15:15-22).

### 2) Is God glorified by my ministry?

17] “But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord”: Paul quotes Jer 9:24, as in 1 Cor 1:31. They were prone to glory in men.

### 3) Can the Lord commend my work?

18] “For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth”: No PhD’s (or H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>’s ) welcome here! (The Judaisers came with impressive credentials.)

Paul’s resume would not impress most review committees: a “rap sheet” a mile long, with most of his time spent “in the can”; always the center of riots and civil disturbances, often left for dead; always the center of controversy, etc. Hardly the type fellow welcome in most of our churches.

Nor can statistics reveal the true measures. External measures rarely reveal inner transformations.

## 2 Corinthians 11

If you were a pastor, how would you go about convincing the people in your congregation that you really loved them? If Paul reminded the people of what he did for them, they would simply accuse him of bragging. If he said nothing, they would point to that as he had not accomplished anything.

Seeing the church being seduced by false teachers, and then having himself unfavorably compared to them had to be more than painful for Paul.

Paul faced this problem by developing the image of the “spiritual father” caring for his family. Disciplining as necessary (1 Cor 4:14-21) but wanting the very best for them.

He pointed out three things: his jealousy; his generosity; and his anxiety with respect to them.

2] “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ”: Don’t confuse jealousy with envy. True love is never envious, but it has a right to be jealous over those who are loved. It seeks the best for the one loved.

- A husband rightfully resents and resists any rivalry that threatens their love for each other.
- A true patriot has every right to be jealous over his freedom and will fight to protect it.
- A parent is jealous over his children and seeks to protect them from anything that will harm them.

The model that Paul lays out is that of a loving father with a daughter engaged to be married. His desire is to keep her pure: He sees the church as a bride (Eph 5:22ff; Rom 7:4; Rev 19:1-9).

[The idiom “the Body of Christ” for the church also speaks of the marital intimacy (Gen 2:24). The mystery of the “Rapture” of the church is more one of ecclesiology than eschatology!]

- 3] “...as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ”: “Simplicity” = sincerity, singleness of devotion. A divided heart leads to a defiled life and a destroyed relationship (cf. Jer 2:2; Rev 2:4).

### Satan: The Person Behind the Peril

He can **burden** the consciences of believer who have sinned (vv.10-11); He **blinds** the minds of unbelievers (4:4); He **beguiles** the minds of believers (v.3); He **buffets** the bodies of God’s ministers (12:7).

Here, the focus is on Satan as a liar, as in Gen 3:

- 1) He questioned God’s Word:  
“Yea, hath God said...?”
- 2) He denied God’s Word:  
“Ye shall not surely die!”
- 3) He substituted his own lie:  
“Ye shall be as gods...”

Satan is the master of the counterfeit: counterfeit ministers (vv.13-15) preaching a counterfeit gospel (Gal 1:6-12).

Three times Paul uses the word “transform” referring to their work (vv.13, 14, 15); the Greek word *metaschematizo* means “to disguise, to masquerade.” They can be cloaked in appealing costumes: world peace, environmentalism or social issues.

- 4] “For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or [if] ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with [him]”: Many preach “another Jesus” (Gal 1:6-8), *but consider carefully the exhortation in 2 John 5-11.*

- 7] “Freely”: without charge; for nothing.

- 8] “I robbed other churches, taking wages [of them], to do you service”: Irony: Yes, he had been a “robber.” He “robbed” other churches so that he would not have had to “rob” them! (Now the Judaizers were actually robbing them!)

Paul had labored as a tentmaker (Acts 18:1-3); and even received gifts from other churches so that he might evangelize Corinth. It had cost them nothing. *Those that have free seats at the play hiss first* (ancient Chinese proverb).

- 9] Paul’s policy was explained in 1 Cor 9. He had given up his financial rights for the Gospel’s sake; and for the sake of lost who might stumble over anything that gave the impression of being in a “religious business.” No person could accuse him of covetousness or selfishness (Acts 20:33-35).

“Be burdensome, be chargeable”: *katamarkao* from *markao* (to be numb);

- 1) to cause to grow numb or torpid;
- 2) to be torpid, inactive, to be to the detriment of one;
- 3) to weigh heavily upon, be burdensome to.

[From the image of an electric eel numbing its victim with its shock. The numbed part of the body would be a burden to the victim.]

- 15] “Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works”: When watching for the ministers of Satan, don’t overlook the pulpit.

18] “Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also”: Since “boasting” seems to be the “in thing,” Paul plays along. “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit” (Prov 26:5).

19] “For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye [yourselves] are wise”:

## A Summary of the Methods of the Judaisers

20] “For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage”: Bondage = legalism is contrary to grace.

“Devour”: exploited privileges, support.

“Take of you”: “Take you in,” fool you; baited. (Greek, *lambano*) As a bird caught in a snare, or a fish with hook (or a fly!).

“Exalt”: Exalted themselves, not the Lord Jesus Christ. (This is always a useful badge they wear!)

“Smite you”: Slap in the face; public embarrassment.

21] “I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold (I speak foolishly), I am bold also”: Irony again. “In shame I admit that we were too weak for that.” (NIV) The Corinthians confused meekness for weakness; arrogance for power (a common mistake).

22] Paul speaks satirically. He had surrendered his “credentials” on a road leading to Damascus.

25] “Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep”: (Only one of the three shipwrecks are recorded in Acts 27.) How many of his precious personal possessions were lost?

All of these because of his ministry. He knew it would happen (Acts 9:15-16; 20:23).

26] “[In]journeys often, [in]perils of waters, [in]perils of robbers, [in]perils by [mine own] countrymen, [in]perils by the heathen, [in]perils in the city, [in]perils in the wilderness, [in]perils in the sea, [in]

perils among false brethren”: Although these were “natural” hardships, they probably were caused by the enemy to hinder the work of the Lord. He was a marked man.

27] “In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness”: [Even with the conveniences of modern travel, even it is wearisome... How much more for him. All because of the burden—not around him, but within him. Why?]

28] “...the care of all the churches”: Care (Greek, *merimna*) = pressure, stress, anxiety.

Key verse. Other experiences were external (“without”) and occasional. His burden for the churches was internal and constant.

29] “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?” Whatever happened to his children touched his own heart...our children never understand our pains until they become parents.

31] “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not”: In contrast to the vain glory of the Judaisers, Paul recounts, on himself, his humiliation at Damascus.

## Dr. W.A. Criswell Illustration

A faithful missionary couple returned on the same ship that brought Teddy Roosevelt home from a safari in Africa. Crowds and reporters clamored to see Roosevelt; no one was on hand to welcome the missionaries. In reviewing their arrival, the husband was somewhat bitter: “It isn’t fair. Roosevelt comes home from a hunting trip and the entire country comes out to meet him. We get home after years of service and nobody was here to meet us.” His wife had the right answer: “Honey, we aren’t home yet.”

\* \* \*

May we never take for granted the sacrifices—the commitments—that others have made so that we might enjoy the blessings of the Gospel today!

## 2 Corinthians 12

### The Climax of Paul's Defense of His Ministry

1] "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord". The Judaizers had boasted of honors and "their letters of recommendation" (3:2ff). Paul did not look for honor from men; he let God honor him.

God had honored Paul with visions and revelations:

- 1) Paul saw the glorified Christ on the very day he was converted (Acts 9:3; 22:6).
- 2) He saw a vision of Ananias coming to minister to him (Acts 9:12).
- 3) He had a vision from God when he was called to minister to the Gentiles (Acts 22:17).
- 4) He had a vision of God when he was called to Macedonia (Lutke?) (Acts 16:9).
- 5) When his ministry was difficult in Corinth, God encouraged him by a vision (Acts 18:9-10).
- 6) After his arrest in Jerusalem Paul was encouraged by a vision (Acts 23:11).
- 7) In the midst of the storm at sea an angel appeared to him and assured him that he and the passengers would be saved (Acts 27:33).

Along with these special visions related to his call, spiritual revelations of divine mysteries were also communicated to Paul: the mystery of the church itself (Eph 3:1-6).

God also honored Paul by taking him to heaven 14 years earlier (AD 43?), between his departure for Tarsus (Acts 9:30) and his visit from Barnabas (Acts 11:25-26).

Jewish rabbis were accustomed to speaking about themselves in the third person and Paul adopted that style in sharing this experience with his friends (and enemies) in Corinth.

2] "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven". Note the contrast between the close of the previous chapter—"I let down" in a basket and being "caught up" to the "third" heaven!

The "first" heaven was the sky; the clouds, etc. The "second" heaven, outer space; the "third heaven," paradise where God dwells in glory.

3] "And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)": So overwhelmed, Paul seems unsure whether this was bodily or whether his spirit left his body.

5] "...yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities": We are a culture which has become obsessed with personal peace and comfort. We almost view it as a right. This presumption not only sets the stage for disappointment but also blinds us to the powerful role that discomfort and pain can play in our spiritual growth.

6] "For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but [how] I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me [to be], or [that] he heareth of me": How could Paul, after such an experience, remain humble? Because of his *second* experience:

### The Stake in the Flesh

The Lord knows how to balance our lives. The mystery of human suffering is the topic of the oldest record in the possession of Man: the Book of Job. His critical "friends" felt that if he just had more faith... or if... etc. What makes this speculation dangerous is that there is some (occasional) truth in it.

Sometimes we suffer because we are foolish and disobedient. Sometimes for chastening (Heb 12:3ff). Cf. David, because of his sin (2 Sam 12:1-22). God forgives us, but we must reap what we sow.

Sometimes we suffer to build our character (Rom 5:1-5). Along the shore you can see rocks that are sharp in the quiet coves; but polished in those places where waves beat against them. God can use the "waves and billows" of life to polish us, if we let Him.

- 7] “...there was given to me a thorn in the flesh”: Thorn = in the Greek, *skolops*: 1) a pointed piece of wood, a pale; a stake 2) a sharp stake, splinter; a sharp stake used for torturing or impaling someone. (Also used for a stake upon which people were impaled to be crucified.) See also Gal 4:12-16.

Thus: something agonizing; (“stake in the flesh”) mysterious (“messenger of Satan”?)

## Speculations

- 1) Something of a spiritual nature?
- 2) Some form of carnal temptations? (Roman Catholic writers: Aquinas, Gregory, et al.).
- 3) Physical malady (Chrysostom, Greek fathers, Augustine, et al.).
- 4) Epilepsy? Humiliating: repellent to those witnessing it; regarded as having supernatural implications...

### 5) Acute ophthalmia.

Physically blinded on the Damascus Road (Damascus was notorious for the prevalence of the disease); next to lepers, most repugnant of illnesses in the Middle East. [Galatians: “would have dug out their eyes...”]

Note Paul “signs in a large hand...”(Gal 6:11; also, 2 Thess 3:17). Paul apologizes for not recognizing the High Priest (Acts 23:5). (Seated at the end of the hall, with the *Ab Beth Din* on one side and the *Chacham* on the other.)

Paul required travelling companions, and preferred not be left alone (1 Thess 3:1; 2 Tim 4:16, et al.).

“Satan buffet..” Greek, *kolaphizo*:

- 1) to strike with the fist, give one a blow with the fist.
- 2) to maltreat, treat with violence and contumely.  
tense (verb: aorist active indicative (plural!)) implies was either constant or recurring.

Note: the (intended) ambiguity of the precise nature of Paul’s “stake in the flesh” allows us to more easily apply it to our own “stake...”

- 8] “For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me”: He appealed 3X, just as Jesus did in Gethsemane.

There are those who believe that an afflicted Christian is a disgrace to God. If Paul had access to “instant healing” why didn’t make use of it for himself, or for others such as Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25ff)?

- 9] “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me”:  
**GRACE: God’s Riches Available at Christ’s Expense.**

Sufficient Grace = there is never a shortage of Grace. It is sufficient for our spiritual ministries (2 Cor 3:4-6) and our material needs (9:8) as well as our physical needs (12:9).

Strengthening Grace: My power is being made perfect in your weakness.

He does not remove the affliction, but He gives us grace so that the affliction works for us and not against us.

Paul learned that his “stake” was a gift from God. His suffering was not a tyrant that controlled him, but a servant that worked for him (cf. Ps 106:15: And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul).

“rest” = *episkenoō*, tabernacle upon me.

## Summary

“Thorns” may be divinely permitted for three reasons:

- 1) to cause us to be humble (v.7),
- 2) to caution us against presumption in prayer (v.8),
- 3) to exhibit the all-sufficiency of God’s grace (v.9).

- 10] “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities...for when I am weak, then am I strong”: Paul had moved beyond acceptance to praise and gratitude.

Have you ever visited a potter's shop? (Jeremiah did; Jer 18). You can watch the wet mud shaped into a proper vessel and then placed in a kiln—a heated oven. You ask the potter how he would know when to remove it: "I just open the oven and flick the vessel with my finger; if it sings I know it is ready to come out of the heat."

Our greatest enemy is pride. Bitterness, self-pity, an accusing, complaining spirit are all symptoms of a heart struggling with rebellion... and pride.

That's why usually fail in our *strongest* suit, not our "weakest." Cf. bold Peter denying his Lord... "Save us from the strength that hams.." (*The Everlasting Arms*, A.B. Simpson.)

## Practical Lessons

- 1) The spiritual is far more important than the physical.
- 2) God knows how to balance the burdens and blessings, sufferings and glory.
- 3) Not all sickness is caused by sin. Job's comforters were incorrect. God often permits these things to accomplish greater things in (through) our lives.
- 4) Sin is worse than sickness; and the worst is pride. Afflictions can keep us humble.
- 5) Physical affliction need not be a barrier to effective Christian service.
- 6) We can always rest in God's Word. Whenever you are going through suffering, spend extra time in the Word of God... We do not live on explanations; we live on promises.

13] "For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except [it be] that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong": "Forgive me for not charging you!"

One of the dangers of the Christian life is that of getting accustomed to our blessings. (Especially in America! The pagan left is aiming to repair that...)

14] "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children": It is a tragic thing when children do not appreciate what their parents do for them...

15] "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved": No limit to his (our?) expendability. No extraneous motives.

19] "Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but [we do] all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying": Lack of appreciation = lack of consecration.

20] "...lest [there be] debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults": Quarreling, anger, intrigues, plots, disorder...

21] In addition to the sins of the spirit (7:1), there were also sins of the flesh (1 Cor 5, 6).

## 2 Corinthians 13

### Self-Test Time

[One of the most painful of sins: **gossip**—a form of betrayal! (Lev 19:16 ; Prov 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20; 26:21; 26:22)]

1] "This [is] the third [time] I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established": Deut 19:15; Num 35:30; Mt 18:16; Jn 8:17; 1 Tim 5:19; cf. Rev 11:3-7. They didn't follow Mt 18:15-20.

5] "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobrates?": Heed any warning of self-deceit. Plato warned that the unexamined life is not worth living. However, self-examination is something that we cannot do ourselves. Remember Jer 17:9: "The heart is deceitful above all things and incurable. Who can understand it?"

## Are You Really “Born Again”?

- Do you have the witness of the Holy Spirit in your heart? (Rom 8:9, 16)
- Do you love the brethren? (1 John 3:14)
- Do you practice righteousness? (1 John 2:29; 3:9)
- Have you overcome the world? Are you living a life of godly separation? (1 John 5:4)

A series of questions from John Wesley and the Puritans of 200 years ago:

1. Am I consciously (or unconsciously) creating the impression that I am better than I really am? Am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts or words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?
4. Can I be trusted?
5. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
6. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying or self-justifying? Do I grumble or complain constantly?
7. Did the Bible live for me today? Do I give it time to speak to me every day?
8. Am I enjoying prayer?
9. When did I last speak to someone else with the object of trying to win that person for Christ?
10. Am I making contacts with other people and using them for the Master’s glory?
11. Do I pray about the money I spend?
12. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?

13. Do I disobey God in anything?

14. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?

15. Am I defeated in any part of my life? Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, distrustful?

16. How do I spend my spare time?

17. Am I proud?

18. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?

19. Is there anybody who I fear, dislike, disown, criticize? If so, what am I doing about it?

20. Is Christ real to me?

This is not something that we can do ourselves:

Psalm 139:23,24:

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts... And see if [there be any] wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

The focus of our examination is not our sin, but Christ! Is he living in you now? Although awakened to new longings for Christ, our spiritual desires have been buried and distracted with trivial pursuits.

People are more important than projects.

Yet we can see right away that we are not yet where we ought to be, but by God’s grace we are not where we once were. God is not through with any of us yet. God has called every believer to the ministry.

6] “But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates”: *Dokimos* = reprobate, counterfeit:

1) not standing the test, not approved; properly used of metals and coins;



2) that which does not prove itself such as it ought; unfit for, unproved, spurious, reprobate.

Know for sure: 1 John 5:11-13.

8] “For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth”: There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord (Prov 21:30).

9] “For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, [even] your perfection”: “wish” = *euchomai*, pray.

“perfection” = spiritual maturity. *Katarisis*, “to be fitted out; to be equipped. Medical: to set a broken bone; adjust a twisted limb. Outfit a ship for a voyage; equip an army to battle. ( Mt 4:21, “mending nets.”)

The Lord has a ministry of perfecting His people (Heb 13:2021). He uses the Word of God (2 Tim 3:16-17) and the fellowship of the local church (Eph 4:11-16). Christian growth is impossible in isolation: you can no more raise one Christian than you can raise one bee. Sheep flock together.

10] “Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction”: Corinth was famous for wisdom and wealth; its luxury and its license. Equivalent to the cities of our world...

Paul’s first epistle was organized, deliberate, practical. His second Epistle to the Corinthians defies analysis: it is an outpouring of his heart. It is like an electrocardiogram: it shows us the condition of Paul’s heartbeats. Honest and vulnerable, he gives us insight into our own.

These last four chapters seem to differ from the first nine, which had sense of warmth, comfort, and thanksgiving. These last four seem to be written to the critical minority, and are sad and severe. (This is why some believe they may be a fragment of his “fourth” letter.)

11] “Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you”:

- “Farewell” = *chairo*
- 1) to rejoice, be glad
  - 2) to rejoice exceedingly
  - 3) to be well, thrive
  - 4) in salutations, hail!
  - 5) at the beginning of letters: to give one greeting, salute

“Be perfect” relates to Paul’s prayer in v.9: be mature, “fitted for life.”

“Be of good comfort” means “be encouraged.”

14] “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, [be] with you all. Amen”: The NT benediction. The manger... the cross... Pentecost...

The ultimate antidote to the divisions, the competition, the problems in the Corinthian (or any) church...

The church is a miracle: only depending upon the grace of God, walking in the love of God, participating in the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit can make us a benediction to others...

\* \* \*

[The second [epistle] to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, [a city] of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas.]

## Closing Prayer

May God give us the love of commitment that Paul felt toward his spiritual family. And help us to keep ourselves in perspective. Give us the depth of resource—humility—that we may exhibit—and exalt—our Lord Jesus! May our prayers be a petition for humility rather than a substitute for it... Help us to take every thought captive... and acknowledge our ownership of each negative thoughts... and draw us to repentance so that we can forgive others where we (feel we) have been wronged.

Give us a thirst for your Word. Keep us free from the bondage of legalism or the false comfort of rules. Equip us with the “full armor” for the warfare that we are engaged in; help us to see clearly just where

you want us to be—and help us to relish the comfort and security that place assures us...

## Notes:

Help us to measure everything—especially credentials—by the cross and not our flesh. May our own “resume” reflect “gold, silver, and precious stones” and not the pursuit of “wood, hay, and stubble.” Help us to focus with a singleness of devotion to our Lord, that we not be beguiled or blinded by the wiles of the enemy or the glitter of a temporal world...

Keep us diligent toward false teachers and treacherous doctrines... yet let us never abandon our “first love.” For we do love you, Father. Help us to see you ever more clearly, and thus love you even more...

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(Supplements the bibliography for 1 Corinthians)

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# About The Cover Design

*(on the tape cassette volumes)*

## **The “Front” cover:**

The Greek border: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).” The center design element symbolizes the Word of God Incarnate, illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

## **The “Back” cover: (the “front” to the Jewish reader)**

The Hebrew border: “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (from the Sh’ma, Deut 6:4-5).”

The center design represents the Burning Bush, made up of Hebrew letters which proclaim “the Eternal One cannot lie.”

## **The Spine:**

The spine includes a Menorah from the Old Testament, a Maranatha Dove suggesting the New Testament, and the Koinonia House logo at the base.



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