



God's First Epistle

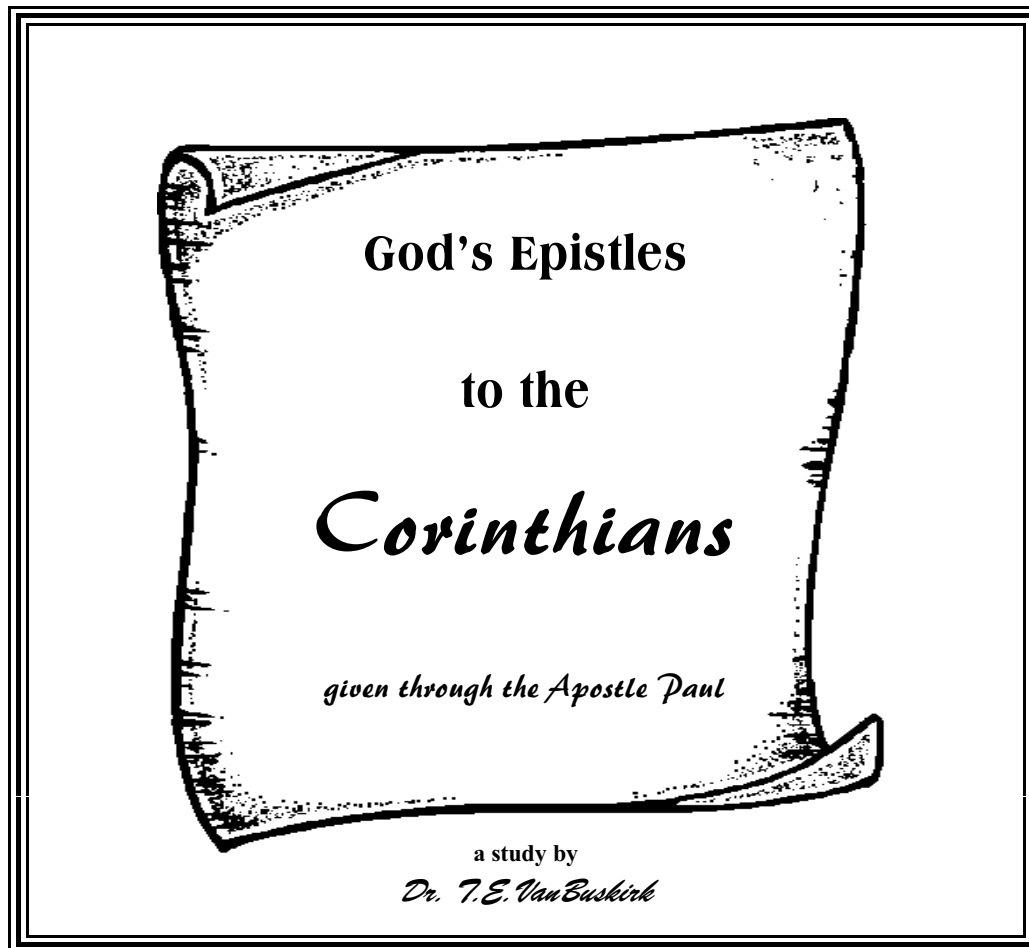
to the

Corinthians

*Given through
the Apostle Paul*

a study by

Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk



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INTRODUCTION

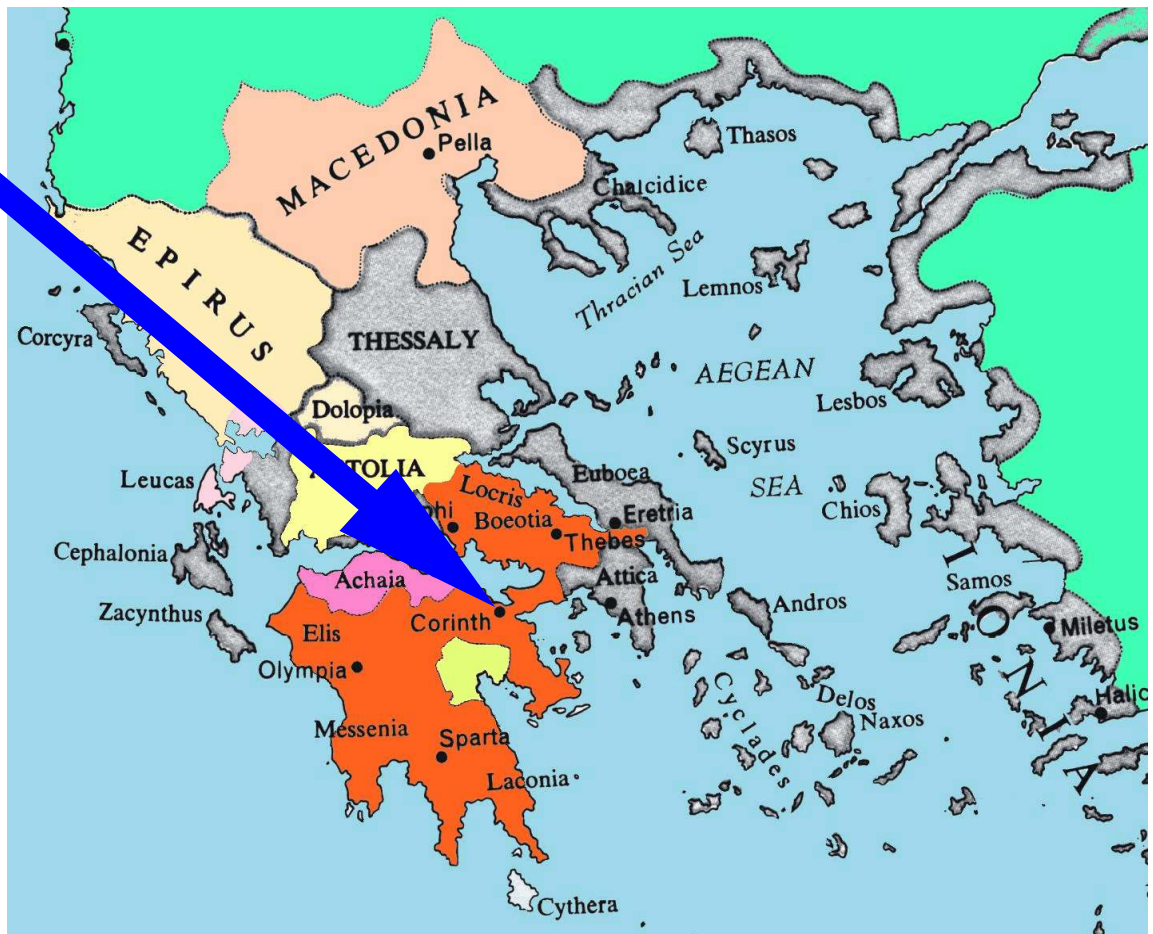
Corinth

The City and the People.

The City-

The city of Corinth was a very ancient city. Although its beginnings are lost in the mists of antiquity, we do know that by the ninth century B.C. it was a city of some commercial importance.^(CD3) The population by that time was around 100,000.

Much of Corinth's early history was closely related to the rivalry between Sparta, to the South, and Athens, to the east. The eventual conquest of Athens by Sparta in 404 B.C. was backed by



Corinth. From the tenth century B.C. Corinth had been building the first Greek ships of war. Due to its strategic location on the four mile wide Isthmus dividing the two portions of Greece, Corinth always had figured prominently in the wars to control the Grecian Peninsula. To the north lay the Gulf of Corinth and the major seaport at Lechaemum and to the east lay the seaport of Cenchrea. These gave Corinth immense importance for maritime commerce. In addition, its location on the narrow isthmus gave it equal importance as a commercial center on the land trade routes. Whether by land or by sea, all trade passed through Corinth and this added to the importance and wealth of the city.

Behind the city stood the Acro-Corinth. This Acropolis stood some 1,886 feet above sea-level and at its summit, later, was built the Majestic temple of Aphrodite. A portion of the Acropolis had been turned into a fortress and from this elevated position the Acropolis of Athens, some fifty miles away, could be seen. Thus, during the period of the wars between the Greek city-states, a close watch was constantly kept from this site on the capitol of Attica.

In 146 B.C., after being conquered first by Alexander the Great and then by Rome, the city was totally destroyed by the Roman general Lucius Mummius because of rebellion. The population was deported and for nearly a hundred

years the site was desolate. Rebuilt in 44 B.C. by Julius Caesar, the city became, once again, an important center militarily, commercially, and socially.

Probably the most complete historical statement on the position, importance and wealth of old Corinth can be found in "History of the Peloponnesian War" (431 BC) by Thucydides. ^(CD3)

"Planted on an isthmus, Corinth had from time out of mind been a commercial emporium; as formerly almost all communication between the Hellenes within and without Peloponnese was carried on overland, and the Corinthian territory was the highway through which it traveled. She had consequently great money resources, as is shown by the epithet "wealthy" bestowed by the old poets on the place, and this enabled her, when traffic by sea became more common, to procure her navy and put down piracy; and as she could offer a mart for both branches of the trade, she acquired for herself all the power which a large revenue affords."

The people-

By New Testament times the city had reached a population of around four-hundred to six-hundred thousand and the wealth of both the east and the west once again flowed through the city. In addition it housed a Roman garrison and had been chosen as the capital of the Roman province of Achaia and was the official residence of Gallio the proconsul. Because of Gallio the new religion of Christianity was eventually given legal standing in that part of the Roman Empire. Later, of course, came the Roman persecutions; but, at this time Christianity was tolerated in the Empire.



The Church at Corinth

Spiritual and moral history of Corinth-

The old city of Corinth boasted the temple of Aphrodite. This magnificent temple, positioned above the city on the Acro-Corinth, was undoubtedly one of “the towers of Corinth crowning the height” mentioned by Thomas Bulfinch in his “Age of Fable.” (1855) ^(Op cit)

This temple rather sets the stage for the moral climate at Corinth. Among the things that the goddess Aphrodite was known for was as the goddess of sexual rapture. It was reported that the great temple at Corinth was serviced by 1,000 temple prostitutes for use by devotees. The proceeds from this massive prostitution went to finance the temple, which was renowned as the most magnificent temple of its day.

In old Corinth debauchery was one of the main items of its reputation. Plutarch in “Aratus” chose Corinth for the setting of debauchery when he set a wedding **“in Corinth, entertaining them with shows and banquets every day, as one that had nothing else in his mind but to give himself up for a while to indulgence in pleasure and mirth;”** ^(Op cit) and by the time of Christ the phrase “to Corinthianize” was a common term used to denote extreme drunkenness and orgiastic behavior. Corinth became even more drunken and corrupt as a major military garrison town and center of Greek commerce in the Roman Empire.

The Christian Church at Corinth-

Into this atmosphere came the Apostle Paul during his 2nd missionary journey. Leaving Athens, he came to Corinth in approximately A.D. 50 and immediately began preaching the Lord Jesus as the Jewish “Messiah.”

Gk , *krist’-on*, meaning “anointed.” A term used for the Jewish Messiah.

Beginning his ministry in Corinth at the Synagogue (**Acts 18:1-6**), as was his custom, he soon came under intense persecution and verbal assault. He then ceased preaching in the Synagogue and went next door to the house of Justus. We are then told that many believed and were baptized (**:7-8**) and we would have to take this as the beginning of the church at Corinth.

At about that time the Lord came to Paul in a night vision and reassured him that he and the rest of the group were under His protection and that there were a great number of the Lord’s people (Christian believers) there in Corinth and that Paul was to preach boldly (**:9-10**). Paul then continued preaching for another year and a half there in the new church at Corinth. This direct affirmation by the Lord Jesus Christ that the believers there in Corinth were in all truth the Lord’s “people” (:10) must have been an immense comfort to the apostle Paul some years later when he had to write his series of letters to the Corinthian church because of their rampant carnality and other problems. The problems in the church at Corinth would have made any preacher wonder about the effectiveness and genuineness of his labours in starting a church that developed such problems; however, the words spoken to him by the Lord in the vision was an affirmation that must have set Paul’s mind at ease in the matter and given him much comfort when he had to address those varied and serious problems later in the two epistles we will study.

Pressures in the Church at Corinth-

The problems faced in the church at Corinth, carnality, divisions, and heretical teachings, can probably be traced to the extreme sinfulness of the city where the church resided. This is not an excuse but it certainly was at least a large part of the reason for it.

This cesspool of carnality called Corinth must have attacked them on two fronts. The first in the area of the lure of fleshly sins and the second in the area of the “spiritual” acceptance of sins of the flesh that was so predominant in that city. Why do I say “spiritual acceptance?” Remember? The great temple of Aphrodite was the predominant “spiritual” guide in the city and the surrounding area; and this “spiritual” guide employed illicit sexual gratification as part of its spiritual teachings. To go one step farther, it also used this principle of illicit sexual gratification as a means of financing the upkeep of the magnificent temple built to the goddess of love, Aphrodite, that was the center of goddess worship there in Corinth. Add to this:

1. The fact that the city was a major Roman military garrison town with the attendant tendency to drunkenness and debauchery that surrounds military life.
2. And the fact that the city was also the major crossroads for all types of commerce, and the money that such endeavors brings allows the rich to be pampered and spoiled and able to indulge any orgiastic desire imaginable; and this guarantees the existence of businesses to cater to any imaginable desire no matter how depraved.

When all of these factors were added together you had a formula for debauchery that was pretty much unsurpassed during that time in history and equaled by only a few other cities. Therefore, the new converts to Christianity that formed the church at Corinth under the leadership of Paul must have had enormous pressure to not only fall back into the sins of the flesh that were so accepted by their society, but they also had to be trained and encouraged to not filter the new spiritual truths that they were learning through the “spiritual” training they had been indoctrinated into from their youth. Their childhood “spirituality” learned in a framework of acceptance of indulgence in adultery and fornication as permissible even for “religious people,” as taught under the cult of Aphrodite, had to not only be totally scrapped but they then had to be built up in true spirituality- and only according to the Word of God. This combination of problems must have been a constant attack on the new converts on the double front of internal battles with true spirituality vs. false spirituality and external battles with societal acceptance of behaviors prohibited by God. The pressures on the Church at Corinth must have been horrendous, exactly as they are for churches today because of the carnally permissive and culticly religious society in which we live that exactly parallels their situation.



First

CORINTHIANS

PART ONE

**Divisions in
the Church**

I Cor chs. 1-4

I. Introduction. (I Cor 1:1-9)**A. Salutation. (:1-3)****1. Personal introductions.****a.** Paul introduces himself.**b.** He then introduces his qualifications.

“... called to be an _____ of Jesus Christ, through the will of God...”

c. He then introduces Sosthenes.

This quite possibly was the ruler of the Synagogue that was beaten in **Acts 18:17** during the time of the starting of the Church at Corinth by Paul. Now, he is a Christian “**brother**” and a co-labourer with Paul in the Lord’s work.

2. Clarification. (:2)

Here Paul will briefly clarify some of the problems at Corinth that he will address in more depth later on in the epistle.

a. The church at Corinth is “... **the church of _____ which is at Corinth...**” (:2a)

It is not the church of Cephas, or Apollos, or Paul, it is the church of God. (cf :12-13)

b. Saints are sanctified (set apart) in Christ Jesus. (:2b)

Many saints in Corinth did not act according to their standing in the eyes of God as they were “**called to be...**”.

c. Expansion to “**all**” saints everywhere that “**call upon**” Jesus Christ. (:2b)

The acts befitting sanctification that God expected of the saints at Corinth He expects of saints everywhere.

d. There is only one “**Lord**” for all saints everywhere. (:2c “**both their’s and ours**”)

This would defuse any ethnic prejudice in the Church or any prejudice based upon position.

Later in this chapter he will address this in more detail. (cf :18-31)

3. Benediction. “_____ be into you, and _____, from God our Father, and ...” (:3)**B. Thanksgiving. (:4-9)****1. Praise to God for His grace to the Corinthians. (:4)****2. Praise to God for the results of His grace to them- spiritual gifts.****a.** Utterance and knowledge are more carefully addressed by Paul in **chs. 12-14**.**b.** Their exercise of those gifts was a confirmation of the testimony of Jesus Christ in them. (**1:5-6**)**c.** The results of God’s grace to them was that they trailed behind no one in the abundance and fulness of the spiritual gifts. (:7a)**d.** “... **come behind in no gift, _____ for the coming of our Lord...**” (:7b)**Gk** _____, *ap-ek-dekh’-om-en-ous, to eagerly wait for*

This addresses the believers attitude while exercising spiritual gifts. It is done in the light of the “coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We should serve God with our spiritual gifts while eagerly looking for the Second Coming of Christ.

3. Security. (:8-9)

Paul now addresses God’s guarantee to the Corinthians and, by extension, to all Christians everywhere. (cf :2)

a. They are confirmed in Jesus Christ. (:8a)“**Who shall also _____ you unto the end...**”**Gk** _____, *beb-ah-yo’-say, to confirm, to firmly establish*

In Christ they are firmly established unto the end; specifically referring to Christ’s Second Coming to get His saints.

b. This confirmation in Christ is God’s guarantee that they will be held blameless in that day. (:8b)“... **that ye may be _____ in the day of our Lord...**” (:8b)**Gk** _____, *an-eng’-klay-tous, not arraigned*

Not only will the Corinthians (and saints everywhere) be found not guilty in that day, but they

will be found unblameable, irreproachable, and, in fact, unaccusable.

- c. The ground of their security. (I Cor 1:9a)

“God is _____, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son...”

The very ground of their security is in the unchanging faithfulness of the eternal God. Faithfulness is not just something that God exhibits in expression toward the Corinthians, it is bound in the very essence of God. In fact, His name is “Faithful.” (Rev 19:11)

- d. The result of this security is fellowship. (:9b)

The fellowship is with Christ, true; but it is even more than that. It is the fellowship “of” Christ not just fellowship “with” Christ. This fellowship denotes a group and this group consists of Christ and all those that are His (all Christians.)

A complete explanation of this “fellowship” can be found in I John 1:3.

4. Transition. (I Cor 1:9)

This reference to the “... fellowship of his Son _____ our Lord.” is an obvious transition to the next section of the letter where Paul addresses the “Christian party politics,” with their lines drawn along both ethnicity and brains, engaged in by the Corinthians. These were the issues that were causing divisions in the church.

Paul would address and expand on these most pressing of problems until climaxing his arguments and closing the subject in the last few verses of chapter three.

II. A Plea for Unity (I Cor 1:10-17)

- A. Division is the biggest problem in the church.

1. It is bigger than fleshly sins; thus it is addressed first by Paul. (:10)

Many of the people in the Corinthian church had been converted under Paul’s ministry four or five years earlier when he had first planted the Corinthian church.

(See the earlier segment- “The Church at Corinth.”)

2. Paul pleads with his children in the Lord. Notice he does not rebuke them sharply.

“Now I _____ you, brethren...”

- a. “Beseech,” _____, *para-kalo*, from the same root words as _____, *para-klaytos*, the Paraclete or “Comforter,” which is the Holy Spirit.

The meaning is that Paul is coming as the Holy Spirit comes, as a teacher; guiding them, exhorting them, and begging them as he tries to bring them out of their error.

- b. Rather than sharp rebuke, he reminds them that they are his Christian brothers in the Lord. “brethren...”

3. He then reminds them that their Saviour, Jesus Christ, is the channel through which all exhortation and learning must take place.

“... by the name of our Lord _____, that ye...”

- a. Christ is the authority for biblical exhortation.
 b. He is the channel through which change can come.
 c. He is the channel through whom we receive the grace of God; both to be saved and to learn how to live godly lives, and to stand firm in the truth.

Ro 5:2 “_____ also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand...”

4. A plea for the church to be of one voice, one mind, one judgment. (I Cor 1:10b)

“... that ye all _____ the same thing, and [that] there be no divisions among you; but [that] ye be perfectly joined together in the same _____ and in the same _____.”

- a. Present a united front to the world.
 b. Present a united front against sin to prevent it from infiltrating the church.
 c. Present a united front against heresy.

5. The church did not even know that unity was its greatest need. (I Cor 1:11)

- a. They had written a letter to Paul about some problems in the church. (I Cor 7:1)

- b. But Paul's knowledge of this problem of division did not come from that letter, it came from the house of Chloe, a member of the church at Corinth.

Chloe was a woman of some standing in the Corinthian church. Some of her house were probably at Athens on business and told Paul about the growing division at Corinth. Possibly they were the three men mentioned in **16:17**.

B. Christian partisanship. (I Cor 1:12-17)

1. Four groups- Christian "parties," if you will. (:12)

**"Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of _____;
and I of _____; and I of _____; and I of _____."**

- a. The Paulican Party, followers of Paul and his preaching on Christian liberty.

These were probably the ones that were most likely to twist Christian liberty into the false doctrine of Christian "licence" to sin.

- b. The Appollian Party, followers of Apollos the eloquent and gifted preacher from Alexandria. These were probably the Greeks who had never quite shaken off their penchant for philosophical rhetoric.

- c. The Cephite Party, followers of Cephas (Peter.) These were probably Jewish Christians who felt that Cephas, the leader of the Twelve, was more likely to retain some of the Jewish ceremonialism.

- d. The Christian Party, those who claimed to follow Christ. Some probably did truly want to follow Christ, while others simply used the name of Christ as a rallying point for those who did not want to join one of the other groups.

2. The falsity of Christian partisanship. (:13)

- a. Get your eyes off the preachers and back on Christ. Partisanship is divisive.

"Is _____ divided?"

- b. The preacher did not die for you- Christ did.

"Was Paul _____ for you?"

- c. You were baptized in the name of Christ- not in the name of the preacher.

"... or were you baptized in the name of _____?"

- d. Baptism is not the most important thing- salvation is. (:14-17a)

"For Christ sent me not to _____, but to _____ the gospel..."

III. Divine Wisdom. (I Cor 1:17-31)

Here we will see a contrast between human wisdom and divine wisdom. Through the cross we see the wisdom of God as he meets the greatest need of a lost humanity.

- A. Baptism and flowery rhetoric are not in the ascendance, the gospel is. (:17)**

**"... not with _____, lest the cross
of Christ should be made of _____."**

1. It is not the words, the rhetoric, that saves; it is the cross that is effective.

- a. The words, as long as they are from the Bible, are effective to bring us to the knowledge of Christ and our need for a Saviour. (**Gal 3:24-25**)

- b. The words are also effective to direct our faith toward God.

Ro 10:17 So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of _____.

- c. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

Ro 1:16 ...for it is the power of _____ unto salvation to every one that believeth...

- d. But only the cross is the effective means of salvation. (**I Cor 1:17**)

Col 1:20 And, having made _____ through the blood of his cross ...

Col 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, _____ to his cross;

2. Therefore, the wisdom of God is to look to the cross and not to the preacher.

- B. The foolishness of preaching the cross. (I Cor 1:18-31)**

1. A contrast. (:18)

**“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish _____;
but unto us which are saved it is the _____ of God.”**

- a. To the lost it is foolishness.
- b. To the saved it is God’s power.
2. God’s disdain of the Wisdom of the World. (:19-21)
:19 **“... I will _____ the wisdom of the wise, and will bring
to _____ the understanding of the prudent.”**
:20 **“... hath not God made _____ the wisdom of this world?”**
- C. The contrast between the Judeo/Greek thinking and God’s thinking. (:22-25)
 1. The preaching of the cross. (:22-24)
 - a. The Jews want a sign, not the cross; it is a stumblingblock to them.
 - b. The Greeks (non-Jews) think that preaching is foolishness.
 - c. Those who respond when called, to them it is the wisdom and power of God.
 2. God’s least is greater than our best. (:25)
:25 **“Because the foolishness of God is _____ than men;
and the weakness of God is _____ than men.”**
 - a. God’s foolishness is greater than man’s wisdom.
 - b. And His weakness is greater than man’s strength.
- D. So remember our place. (:26-29)
 1. Not many that the world considers great are called. (:26)
 2. The lowly are called and it confounds the great. (:27)
 - a. To show that He, God, is boss. (:28)
 - b. So He will get the glory and not us. (:29)
 3. Our wisdom is from God, not ourselves. (:30-31)
 - a. God shows us the wisdom of His way.
In Christ we receive righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.
 - b. His way gives glory to the Lord and not to man.
“... He that glorieth, let him glory in the _____.”

IV. Paul’s Preaching. (2:1-5)

- A. Not with great, wise, oratory. (:1)
:1 **“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not
with _____ of speech or of wisdom...”**
- B. But with the gospel only. (:2)
“... not to know _____ among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”
- C. Paul’s weakness and God’s power. (:3-5)
 1. Paul was lowly. (:3)
 2. But it showed forth God’s power. (:4)
 3. That put their faith where it belonged- in God and not in men. (:5)
“That your faith should not stand in the _____ of men, but in the power of _____.”

V. Deeper Wisdom. (I Cor 2:6-16)

- A. Contrast. (:6-8)
 1. The wisdom of the world is temporal and comes to nought. (:6)
 2. God’s wisdom is eternal and not understandable by normal intelligence. (:7)
**“But we speak the wisdom of God in a _____,
even the _____ wisdom ...”**
 - a. **“mystery”** Gk *moo-stereo*, a matter to the knowledge of which initiation is necessary.
 - b. The unsaved cannot understand; they must first accept Christ by faith and then they can understand, through the Holy Spirit, the things of God. (cf :15)

. They proved that when they crucified Christ. (I Cor 2:8)

B. Discernment and comprehension. (I Cor 2:9-16)

1. Man cannot naturally conceive of the things of God. (:9)

We have no physical, emotional, or spiritual comparisons to help us.

2. Spiritual discernment. (:10-16)

a. The Spirit searches the deep things of God. (:10)

b. Each spirit discerns its own. (:11)

1) The spirit of man knows the things of man.

2) The Spirit of God the things of God.

c. The Spirit of God reveals the deep things of God. (:12-13)

1) The saved have God's Spirit and can know the things of God. (:12)

2) The saved speak spiritual words by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. (:13)

d. Contrast. (:14-15)

1) The natural man (unsaved) thinks the things of God are foolishness. (:14)

:14 "But the _____ man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are _____ unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are _____ discerned."

2) The spiritual man (saved) knows the difference and is secure in salvation. (:15)

e. Our security rests in the supreme mind (wisdom) of God. (:16)

VI. Carnality vs Spiritual Maturity. (I Cor 3:1-4:5)

A. Definition of carnality. (3:1-5)

1. Carnal Christians are babes in Christ. (:1)

2. They cannot eat but only the milk of the Word, not the meat (the deeper things.) (:2)

:3 "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is among you* _____, and _____, and _____, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

3. Indicators of carnality. (:3-4) (See also Gal 5:19-23)

a. "envying," *zey-los, an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy*

b. "strife," *, eris, contention, strife, wrangling*

c. "divisions," *, dee-khos-tas-ee'-ah, dissension, division*

d. Christian partisanship and its error. (:4-5)

B. The Church as a field. (:6-9a)

1. The process of growing a church. (:6-7)

a. Planted by Paul.

b. Watered (irrigated) by Apollos.

c. But only God can make it grow.

2. The field labourers receive their pay. (:8)

3. But the field and the crops belong to God. (:9a)

C. The Church as a building. (:9b-17)

1. How the building is built. (:10)

a. Paul laid a proper, strong and level, foundation.

b. Those who build on it better build well.

2. The foundation can ONLY be Christ. (I Cor 3:11)

:11 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is _____."

3. The erecting of the building on the foundation. (:12-15)

a. There are many different building materials. (:12)

b. Time will tell if you used the right ones. (:13)

c. Your reward depends on its endurance. (:14-15)

This has nothing to do with your salvation but your service. (:15b)

4. The building (the Church) is the Temple of God. (I Cor 3:16-17)
 :16 “Know ye not that ye are the _____, _____,
 and that the _____ of God dwelleth in you?”
- a. The Spirit of God dwells in the Church. (:16)
 - b. The Temple is Holy, don’t defile it- and this is not an optional thing. (:17)
 :17 “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God _____; for the
 temple of God is holy, which _____ ye are.”
- D. Don’t deceive yourselves. (:18-20)
1. Become world foolish to become God wise. (:18)
 2. God will trip you up in your own worldly wisdom. (:19-20)
 - a. They may think they are crafty.
 - b. But really their wisdom is vain.
 “Vain,” def. *useless, of no purpose*
- E. Glory in God, not in anyone or anything else- He is the source of all things. (:21-23)
1. Glory not in men. (:21-22a)
 - a. No one should glory in any man.
 :21 “Therefore let no man glory in _____. For all things are yours;”
 - b. Because they are yours; i.e., they were given to you to benefit from.
 - 1) Paul can teach you sound doctrine.
 - 2) Apollos can teach you how to communicate the gospel eloquently.
 - 3) Cephas can remind you of your roots in God’s chosen nation, Israel, and the Old Testament that God gave through them.
 - c. Leaders are the servants of the church.
 :21b ... glory in men. For _____ are yours
 :22b ... or things present, or things to come; _____ are yours
 2. Glory not in anything physical, including life and death, for they were all given to you to benefit from. (:22b)
 3. God is the source; and, in the person of Christ, He gave all things to you.
 :23 “And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is _____.”
- F. Evaluation of the teachers/servants. (4:1-5)
1. They are truly ministers of Christ. (:1)
 - a. “account,” _____, *logidzestho*, from *logidzomai*, This word deals with reality. If I “logidzomai” or reckon that my bank book has \$25 in it, it actually has \$25 in it. Otherwise I am deceiving myself. This word refers to facts not suppositions.
 - b. “ministers of Christ,” _____, *hoop-ay-ret’-ace*, *servant, an under rower, subordinate rower*. In a 3-tiered ship, the rower on the lowest level.
 - c. In reality, Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and by implication the pastors, are the basest servants of Christ, given to the church to serve them in His place.
 2. They are truly stewards of the mysteries of God.
 - a. “stewards,” _____, *oy-kon-om’-os*, esp. a steward, manager, superintendent (whether free-born or as was usually the case, a freed-man or a slave) to whom the head of the house or proprietor has intrusted the management of his affairs, the care of receipts and expenditures, and the duty of dealing out the proper portion to every servant and even to the children not yet of age.
 - b. “mysteries,” is a form of the same word as is found in 2:7.
 - 1) _____, *moos-tay’-ree-on*, generally mysteries, religious secrets, confided only to the initiated and not to ordinary mortals.
 - 2) The secret counsels which govern God in dealing with the righteous, which are hidden from

ungodly and wicked men but plain to the godly.
(See I Cor 2:14, and section “V. A. 2. b.” above)

3. The accountability of stewards. (I Cor 4:2-5)

The steward is accountable to no one but his master. (:2)

“Moreover it is _____ in _____, that a man be found faithful.”

a. He is not accountable to man. (:3)

1) He is not accountable to any other person than his master.

2) He is not even accountable to himself.

NOTE: These two statements are relative ones. He used the extreme emphasis to make a point, that being that it is God to whom he is ultimately accountable as he is steward over the things of God.

Remember, however, that it does matter what others think, as far as your testimony goes. Paul will address this later in the epistle (I Cor 8:9) as he also did in Romans and in the first epistle to the Thessalonians.

Ro 14:13 “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man ____ a _____ or an _____ to fall in [his] brother's way.”

I Thess 5:22 Abstain from all _____ of evil.

b. Judgement belongs to the Lord. (I Cor 4:4)

:4 “For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the _____.”

1) Paul knew of no lack of stewardship in himself.

2) But that did not justify his stewardship.

3) Only God (the master) could judge the quality of Paul’s stewardship..

c. Therefore, they should leave all judgement to the Lord. (:5)

1) Don’t get ahead of the Lord’s judgment.

2) That will take place at His coming and in His timing.

3) He will shed light on all of the darkness of wrong stewardship.

4) He will make plain the purposes of each heart.

5) And He will give praise where praise is due.

VII. Carnality and Pride. (4:6-21)

Here Paul gets at the root of factional problems in the Church at Corinth; and, by application, the root of the problem in all Churches that have become factional throughout history. **A.** Examples, Paul and Apollos. (:6)

“And these things, brethren, I have _____ transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes...”

1. Paul and Apollos were the examples but to the purpose of teaching the readers.

2. Don’t think of leaders above that which was written:

:1 “Let a man so account of us, as of the _____ of Christ, and _____ of the mysteries of God.”

a. They are ministers of Christ. (I Cor 4:1a)

b. They are stewards of the mysteries of God. (:1b)

c. They must be faithful in the execution of their stewardship. (:2)

d. Don’t judge one above another or hold one up above another- let God do that; after all, they are HIS servants. (:3-5)

e. God will give them their due praise, in due time. (:5d)

3. We shouldn’t exalt one above another and get all puffed up over our favorite. (:6)

B. No justification for self-glorifying. (:7)

In this segment Paul uses the singular forms of address, “thee,” Gk _____, *see*; and “**hast thou,**”

Gk _____, *ekace*;⁽¹⁶⁾ to make it plain that he is addressing them as individuals, and thus he makes this segment very personal.

1. God makes everyone different.
2. Whatever you do have- God gave it to you.
3. If God gave it to you, then why do you act as if you got it on your own.
4. That sure shoots down the proud rich of today. God supplied it- they just found it.

C. Mocking the prideful. (:8)

“Now,” looks back to verse :5 which speaks of the judgment and millennial reign. They already have their own little “millennium,” going here.

1. They think they are full, rich, and reigning as kings.
2. In **Mt ch.5**, Christ says that these blessings are for those in His kingdom; but, the prerequisite is that they are reserved for those who are: meek, lowly of mind, merciful, peacemakers, pure, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and practice self-denial and sacrifice.
3. The Corinthians, however, seemed to want the blessings immediately in their Christian lives, without the attendant processes of sacrifice and discipline.
4. Paul then wishes that the Kingdom were truly here. (**I Cor 4:8**)
 - a. And that the Corinthians were reigning.
 - b. But it won’t happen for them until we all reign (**:8b**)

D. Contrast. (I Cor 4:9-13)

:9 “For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles _____, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a _____ unto the world, and to angels, and to men.”

The Apostles are put forth in contrast to the prideful false assumptions of the Corinthians.

There are three possibilities here as to what Paul was referring to:

1. A spectacle. (:9)
 - a. He may have simply been contrasting the apostles, as being far from entrance into the Millennium, against the Corinthians who thought they had already “arrived.”
 - b. Secondly, he may have been contrasting the apostles as being last, against the Corinthians being first in a familiar historical manner, of that time, where, at the end of every pagan celebration, condemned prisoners were put to death in a public display of man against animal.
 - c. Thirdly, and most likely, he was referring to the Roman custom of the times known as the, “triumphal entry.”

In this Roman custom the victorious general would ride in pomp and splendor in a pompous show of blessing and victory. At the end of this parade of splendor and spoils would come captives in chains who were herded to the arena where they fought with wild beasts to the death.

- d. Whichever of these views you wish to use, the main idea is that the apostles were not put first, in the “puffed up” group, but were put last, in the group that is humble and suffers as a public spectacle before the world, men, and angels. (“spectacle,” Greek _____, *theatron*, from which we derive the English word, “theatre.”)
2. Paul’s sarcasm comes to the front as he compares the Corinthian’s supposed wisdom, strength, and honor against the apostles’ foolishness, weakness, and dishonor. (:10)
3. Paul was suffering at this very time in Ephesus. Deprivation, abuse, violence, these were ever-present for him and yet, in the spirit of Christ, he continued to render good for evil.
4. Paul said the apostles were treated like, “**Filth... offscouring...**” today we would say, “the scum of the earth.” What a contrast from the conceited and divided Corinthian Christians. (**I Cor 4:10-13**)

E. Loving, fatherly admonition. (:14-21)

Paul now tempers his sarcasm with a father’s love. His words are severe, as the seriousness of the situation demands, and yet he tempers that with the tenderness of a father’s love for his children.

1. His sarcasm was not to shame them but TO WARN THEM! (:14)

“**I write not these things to _____ you, but as my beloved sons I _____ you.**”
2. They had many instructors; but he was their father in the faith. (:15)

- “For though ye have ten thousand _____ in Christ, yet *have ye not many* _____ : for in Christ Jesus I have _____ you through the gospel.”
- a. “instructors,” Gk _____, *pahee-dag-o-gos'*, English, pedagogue.
A tutor; i.e. a guardian and guide of boys. Among the Greeks and the Romans the name was applied to trustworthy slaves who were charged with the duty of supervising the life and morals of boys belonging to the better class. The boys were not allowed so much as to step out of the house without them before arriving at the age of manhood. The Law, in Galatians, is also called a pedagogue. In that verse it is translated, “**schoolmaster.**” (Gal 3:24-25)
 - b. “fathers,” Paul was their father in the faith through the gospel of Jesus Christ which he had delivered unto them.
3. “... be ye followers of me.” (I Cor 4:16)
:16 “Wherefore I beseech you, be ye _____ .”
- a. There is no conceit here. “Wherefore,” refers back to verse :15; so it is “in Christ Jesus” that Paul wants them to follow him.
 - b. He again refers to this in the next verse and in I Cor 11:1.
 - c. We too could say this IF we keep our testimony clean. Far too many Christians, however, do not do that and can not say that!
4. Paul is sending Timothy to REMIND them of Paul’s ways (cf :16) in Christ.
4:17 “ For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into _____ of my ways which be in Christ, as I _____ every where in every church.”
- a. “bring you into remembrance...” This shows Paul’s love and graciousness as a father. He is implying that they did not deliberately disobey; but that they simply (as children oft times do) forgot and needed to be reminded.
 - b. “as I teach everywhere in every church.”
Paul is reminding them, and us, that godly teachings are not regional. They do not vary from race to race nor from custom to custom. They remain the same for all people in all places.
5. Paul will, if the Lord wills it, come back to Corinth. (:18-21)
- a. Some didn’t think he would dare return to Corinth. (:18)
 - b. But if the Lord wants Paul to return, he will; and then it will be seen who has the power of God in their lives and who is just a blowhard. (:19-20)
 - c. From the heart of a father- Paul pleads:
:21 “What will ye? shall I come unto you with a _____, or in _____, and in the spirit of meekness?
He is asking them “*how shall I come unto you...?*”
- 1) As a chastening, disciplining, father with a rod of correction.
 - 2) Or as a gentle father, lovingly holding and commending his children for their obedience.
- d. Paul’s course of action would be determined by their heeding of Timothy’s “remind-ing them,” (v:17) of the ways they had learned from Paul and their following of his example; and their taking steps to rectify the divisions they currently had one with another.



First

CORINTHIANS

PART TWO

FAULTS IN THE CHURCH
chapters 5-6

Introduction: Paul knew that to address the other problems in the church at Corinth would be futile until the most serious problem, divisions, was addressed. Incest, court battles before the lost, and fornication, were problems in the church, true, but if the church is already divided into factions, how could they ever get together to address the other problems? The outward, obvious, problems would never be rectified, nor could they ever be rectified, until there was unity in the church. If the divided church tended, and they did and do, toward the wisdom of the world, (**chs.1-2**) then how could they ever exercise godly wisdom to take care of and rightly judge the other problems in the church? If they were carnal, and their divisions showed that they were, (**ch.3**) then how could they ever be spiritual enough to take care of the other problems in the church. If they were so fictionally divided that they fought among themselves as to which leader was right and which one was wrong (**ch.4**) then how could they ever decide which of those knowledgeable men to follow in deciding the right and wrong of the other problems in the church?

Paul has instructed them to stop their bickering and pride over which leader in the church is highest, smartest, and worthy of praise and pride, and to become united and follow Christ in word, power, spirituality, and actions. And if the servants of God follow Christ then follow those servants, whoever they may be. God gave them to the church and gave them all that they had, they did nothing on their own to get there, so following them (Paul used himself as an example to follow) as they follow Christ, is actually to follow God, in Christ.

Carnal division is a heart problem- centered around pride, the original sin. (**Is 14:12-15** and it was committed by Lucifer.) You must take care of the inward, heart, problem before you can address the outward problems. The outward problems in Corinth were incest, going before the lost with problems between church members, and fleshly sins, such as fornication. These outward problems are really just the outward symptoms of a church with inward (heart) problems. God works from the inside out; so it is very like Him to address the inward (heart) problems first. This He did through Paul in the first four chapters. Now He is going to address the outward problems in the next two chapters, chapters five and six.

Notice that God, through Paul, has still not addressed the questions that the Corinthians had written to ask about in the first place; and He will not in **chs. 5 & 6**.

I. Sexual Perversion (I Cor 5:1-8)

:1 **“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as _____ among the Gentiles, that one should have his _____.”**

A. Incest. (5:1)

1. Def. **“incest,”** *sexual relations between two persons too closely related for legal marriage.*
2. This practice even shocked the pagan Corinthians- and that’s going some.

B. Open-minded liberality. (:2)

:2 **“And ye are _____, and have not rather _____, that he that hath done this deed might be _____ from among you.”**

1. Puffed up.
2. No mourning.
They should have been sick over the sin in their midst!
3. They should separate the sin(ner) from the church to avoid infection.

C. Conceited, proud, arrogant, yet divided and contentious while unconcerned over the evil in their midst- and yet totally convinced of their superiority.**D. God’s judgment- Church discipline!. (:3-5)**

1. Obvious judgment. (:3)
2. Powerful, godly judgment. (:4)
 - a. Not by one person- but as the whole gathering.
 - b. In front of the whole gathering.
 - c. As a last resort.
 - 1) The process was given by Jesus. (Mt 18:15-20)
 - 2) Blatant, public sin. (I Cor 5:1)
 - 3) Dealt with publicly- **“gathered together”** (:4)

3. Put the offender(s) on “Church Discipline. (:5)

“To _____ such an one unto Satan for the _____ of the _____, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

- a. Put away from among the membership. (cf :2)
- b. They are removed from the umbrella of protection of the church.
 - 1) If they don’t repent- then the devil can destroy their flesh. (:5)
 - 2) Their life is in danger!
- c. Their sinful flesh is corrupting their spirit- get rid of the corruption.

E. Warning. (:6)

“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a _____ leaven leaveneth the _____ lump?”

1. The whole church is in danger.
2. Example.
Leaven never stops until it has consumed every bit of food!
Likewise, sin will never stop until it has consumed every bit of a church!

F. Comparison- Passover. (:7-8)

:7 **“For even Christ our _____ is sacrificed _____ :”**

:8 **“Therefore let us _____, _____ with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the _____ bread of sincerity and truth.”**

1. No leaven in the house for Passover- and the house is the church. (:7)
2. Then the CHURCH SHOULD BE UNLEAVENED! (:8)
 - a. No feast until malice and wickedness are purged from the house.
 - b. They must be replaced with sincerity and truth.

II. Evil Brethren (I Cor 5:9-13)**A. Avoid running with those who are mixed up in sin. (I Cor 5:9-11)**

1. Previous communication- don’t keep company with fornicators. (:9)
2. Keep it in perspective.

- a. You are bound to be around them sometime- just like you are around other sinners- because you live on the same planet that they live on. (:10)
- b. To make it perfectly clear- don't be close friends and invite them over to dinner.
In other words, don't run with them- don't be close friends with them. (:11)
:11 **"But now I have written unto you _____ to keep company, if any man that is called a _____ be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one ___ not to ____."**
- c. This also could carry a double meaning. (Personally I think it does.)
 - 1) It could mean individual relations between members and backsliders.
 - 2) It could also be in reference to the Lord's Supper.
- B. God has left judgment of members to the **local Church!** (:12)
- C. Once they are put out- then they are judged of God. (:13)
- D. Therefore, put them out so that God can judge them.
- E. Once they are put out of the Church then they no longer eat the Lord's Supper with the Church. (:11)
- F. The final admonition is:
"... Therefore, _____ from among yourselves that wicked person."

SUMMARY of ch. 5.

- A. God has decreed that Church discipline is proper, necessary, and for the good of the whole Church to protect it and its testimony for the Lord. In addition it is for the good of the errant member.
- B. If it is not exercised then the whole Church will suffer.
- C. There was no time limit on this piece of scripture- therefore, it is also for today.
- D. It is the biggest lack in our churches today; and has resulted in worldly churches that think nothing of social drinking, dancing, Halloween parties, fighting, bickering, hate, divorce, and other worldly practices- all of which should have been and could have been stopped before they got that far. We have wound up with so much of the world in our churches that it is hard to tell the world and the church apart. And a lack of proper discipline is at the root of the problem.

III. Disputes. (I Cor 6:1-20)

- A. Disputes taken to heathen judges.
:1 **"Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the _____, and not before the _____?"**
- 1. A Jew would never think of going to a secular court with a matter among Jews.
 - a. They went to their own courts and were judged by their own people.
 - b. They would never have aired their dirty laundry, so to speak, in front of the heathen.
 - c. The reason is that to do so would set the scene for reproach against **God**, since the heathen would judge Him by the bickering and unforgiving actions of His people.
- 2. The Greeks, and especially us today, have a totally different mind set. We view the courts as a place of a clever combat of the wits. It doesn't matter who is right or wrong, what matters is, who is clever enough, manipulative enough, and eloquent enough to win- and get his OWN WAY- right or wrong, just or unjust- winning is all that matters and who cares who's right or wrong! This ought not to be so- but it is!
- 3. God says that it is totally wrong to take matters to the unjust for judgment! (**I Cor 6:1**)
Even when the courts themselves are fair (and recent events have shown that they are NOT) their very upholders and defenders are representative of an unregenerate world. God is going to give us, through Paul, a better and more godly way.
- 4. We will one day rule and reign with Christ, (**Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30; Rev 20:4; Dan 7:22**) and shall judge the world- can we not judge these little personal differences. (**I Cor 6:2**)
"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the _____? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"
- 5. We will judge angels; i.e., we will judge even in the spiritual, eternal, realm; then things in this puny

physical realm ought to be easy for us to judge. (I Cor 6:3)

6. The lowliest in the Church ought to be able to handle these earthly disputes. (:4)

7. **Shame** in the Church. (:5-6)

:5 “I speak to your _____. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?”

a. If there is not such a wise man in the church that can settle these disputes- then that is a shame to the Church! (:5)

b. When brother fights with brother, with such bitterness and disputings that they would go to unbelievers to settle the dispute- that is a shame to the Church! (:6)

8. An **utter fault** in the Church body.

Because they are defrauders instead of forgivers. (:7-8)

B. Law and liberty.

1. The Law says that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. (:9-10)

:9 “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall _____ the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,”

:10 “Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit _____.”

a. But Christians are released from that curse. (I Cor 15:55-57)

b. They are washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Christ and by the Spirit of God. (I Cor 6:11)

“And such _____ some of you: but ye are _____, but ye are _____, but ye are _____ in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

1) This is an encouragement to true Christians in the midst of ungodliness.

2) And it should also be a wake up call to those supposed, “Christian members of the churches,” that are wrapped up in sin- they will not inherit the kingdom of god! It doesn’t mean they will lose their salvation- it means they never had it in the first place!”

(Read - Mt 7:20-28; Lk 6:46-49; Gal 6:7-8)

3. Liberty says that:

I Cor 6:12 “All things are _____ unto me, but all things are not _____: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the _____ of any.”

a. All things are lawful- we have been released from the curse of the Law. (I Cor 15)

b. But not all things are expedient:

“expedient” def. 1) to bear or bring together; 2) to bear together or at the same time; to collect or contribute in order to help; to help, be profitable

- In other words- not all things help me to be a better Christian and grow in the direction that God wants me to grow- towards the example of Christ.

- Not all things help me to develop toward the spiritual- **collect me or bring me together**- some scatter me abroad to the world, the flesh and the Devil.

c. And to not grow and gather in the spiritual direction that God wants of me **is sin!**

We should not be brought under the power (*enslavement*) of sin- it will ruin us and make us do what it wants us to do, not what GOD wants us to do. (I Cor 6:12)

C. Separation and Sanctification.

1. The libertines say that sex and other fleshly indulgences are just natural fulfillment of needs and desires. God says they will come to nothing! (I Cor 6:13a)

2. But the true use of a Christian’s body is to be for the Lord. (:13b)

Don’t minimize the body- God raised Christ and He will also raise us. (:14)

3. **Sanctify** your bodies as Christians; because you are members of Christ’s body. (:15a)

:15 “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of _____? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an _____? God forbid.”

- a. Let the members of His body be pure- not given over to the perverted use that a harlot puts her natural members to. **(:15b)**
- b. If the members of Christ’s body are given over to harlotry, then we make of Christ an harlot. **(:16)**
What a horrible testimony for Christ’s body!
- c. We should be separated from harlotry (sin) and joined to the Lord in one spirit. **(:17)**
What a wonderful testimony that would be for the lord!
- d. Now a personal application of this principle.

1) Fornication is a sin AGAINST your OWN BODY!

:18 “Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication _____ his own body.”

2) But it’s not really your body- it is the temple of the holy ghost!

:19 “ What? know ye not that your _____ is the _____ of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are ____ your own?”

3) He bought your body- so it is sanctified unto the glory of God- so act like it and deny worldly lusts and glorify god - both in body and in spirit!

:20 “For ye are _____ with a price: therefore _____ God in your _____, and in your _____, which are God's.”

Chapters 4-6 have shown us the proper way to take care of sin in the Church. It has also showed us the way to take care of disputes in the Church.

- ▶ Church judgment and discipline is the only way acceptable to God to settle matters among Christians.
- ▶ Never are we to go to the unbelievers- we must settle matters among ourselves.
- ▶ To not exercise Church judgment and discipline is to allow sin to become rampant in the Church which will have two results:
 1. It will hinder and eventually destroy the Church by stunting the growth of the members and infecting them with sin which will pull them away from Christ and bring the eventual judgment of God upon the Church body.
 2. It will destroy the testimony of the Church among the heathen and hinder or totally frustrate the cause of Christ.

Church judgment and discipline is for today and when it is not exercised the Church will not be properly disciplined (same root word) in the work for which Christ instituted the Church: which is the winning of the lost and baptizing them into the local Church body of Christ, and the training (discipling) of them to continue the cycle until the Lord comes to rapture the Church.



First

CORINTHIANS

PART THREE

ANSWERS TO
QUESTIONS
chapters 7-16

Introduction: Now, after six full chapters in which he instructs and reprimands the church as to their carnality and the cause of it, he finally gets to the answers to the questions that the Corinthians had corresponded with him about. The first six chapters concerned problems that had come to Paul through reports about the church from others (**1:11 & 5:1**); while chapters 7-14 are in answer to written questions from the church itself.

Because of the earlier reports of factions within the church, we can assume that the opposing factions would not have respected Paul's input while those of the Paulican party would do so. Maybe, however, the church at large was tired of the bickering and wanted an outside, godly, opinion. Paul was well known as a man of God and therefore could be believed. He had already written one letter to them (which God has chosen not to preserve) so it is only natural that they ask his judgment on further matters in the church.

I. Marriage and Celibacy. (I Cor ch. 7)

Keep in mind the heathen nature of the city of Corinth as you read this segment. Temptations to practice fornication (and adultery) abounded on every side. In fact, in the moral climate of the city, such perversions were even encouraged. Even many of the so-called Christian community practiced sexual and other immoralities citing spiritual reasons of "Christian liberty." While others of the "Christian" group, influenced by Greek thought and philosophy, taught that only the spiritual mattered, thus one could indulge the flesh in any way one wanted. Such a licentious setting would, of course, necessitate marriage for a large majority of the Christians. Paul recognized this, and instructed the church there, and everywhere else, accordingly.

This particular section is extremely applicable to the entire body of Christians today. We live in a society that is sex crazy. Instead of a beautiful gift from God of intimacy, fulfillment, a physical expression of the union of husband and wife, given to a man and his wife ONLY, it is looked upon as mere entertainment- just one of many ways to feed the lusts of the flesh and mind!! Even within marriage today, it is misused as a weapon; a means of control and coercion- EVEN AMONG CHRISTIANS! It is no wonder that Christian marriages, on the average, last little longer than do marriages amongst the unsaved. The misuse of sex within the marriage union is a very large contributing factor. Therefore, God has instructed us as to its need for some, and why, as well as the contributing factor of the moral climate in which one lives being a consideration as to whether to marry or not and shows how social climate can even make celibacy a torture.

A. General principles. (I Cor 7:1-9)

1. There is nothing wrong with celibacy- for some. (:1)

:1 **"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me:**

It is _____ for a man _____ to touch a woman."

2. But for others it will lead to sin. (:2)

This verse is also a strong commandment for fidelity in marriage.

:2 **"Nevertheless, to avoid _____, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."**

3. The physical relationship. (:3-5)

:4 **"The wife _____ of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband _____ of his own body, but the wife."**

a. The husband and wife **belong** to one another. Not in a dictatorial manner but in a reciprocal, willing, submissiveness to fulfill one another's physical needs. (:3-4)

b. Only by consent can one or the other practice sexual abstinence, even for spiritual reasons, because it gives Satan an opening through which to launch an attack. (:5)

4. But marriage, or celibacy, are a matter of personal need and choice. (:6-7)

:6 **"But I speak this by _____, and not of _____."**

5. Singles (probably widowers by the context) and widows sometimes have one choice thrust upon them through physical appetites brought about by previous experience.

(:8-9) (Once you've tasted your first cookie it is much harder to resist the second one.)

:9 **"But if they _____ contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to _____."**

B. The problems of marriage. (:10-38)**1. Marriage among believers.**

Marriage is to be once and forever- no divorce. (:10-11)

:10 “... Let not the wife _____ from her husband:”

:11 “... and let not the husband put away his _____.”

2. Mixed marriages between believers and unbelievers. (:12-16)**a. General rule. (:12-13)**

1) Jewish law required divorce if one member was not of their religion.

(Ez 9:1-10:44)

2) Not so when a believer is married to an unbeliever. The rule is- no divorce.

I Cor 7:12-13 “... If any brother hath a wife that believeth _____, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him _____ put her away.”

:13 “And the woman which hath an husband that _____, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her _____ leave him.”

b. Why no divorce? (:14-16)

1) The children are clean, not unclean. (:14)

2) The marriage is lawful and, in addition, confers privileges upon the members such as God’s protection.

3) God has called us to peace- and a divorce is not a peaceful solution. (:15b)

4) Limitations.

a) You can’t make them stay. (:15a)

b) You’re not under bondage. (:15b)

c) Again- we are called to peace.

5) Another advantage of staying in that union is that being that close to a member of God’s family also gives the spouse a better chance of being saved. (:16)

:16 “For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy _____? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy _____?”

3. Summary. (:17-24)

a. First statement of the general principle, applied here to marriage but used in every sphere of life- abide in your calling! (:17)

:17 “But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath _____ every one, so _____ walk.”

b. Religious example. (:18-19; cf Ro 2:28-29)

c. Second statement of the general principle- abide in your calling!

I Cor 7:20 “Let every man _____ in the same calling wherein he was called.”

d. Secular example. (:21-23)

You actually are God’s servant if you are a Christian. (:23)

e. Third statement of the general principle:

Abide in your calling! (:24)

:24 “Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, _____ with God.”

“... with God.” Shows that EVERY secular work is a work with God for the Christian.

1) Therefore, every Christian is engaged in full-time Christian work.

2) Whether as a child or an adult, every person has a calling of God. Some may be called into the ministerial fields as pastors, missionaries, etc., and others may be called into secular fields. Remember, however, that God does the calling- we don’t! (cf :17)

3) The most important thing for every Christian is to be in the will of God and involved in the service to which God has called them- whether it be ministerial or secular.

4. Virgins and Widows. (I Cor 7:25-40)

“Now concerning”- *peri de*, indicates that the following is an answer to another part of the letter from the Corinthian Church.

a. Young unmarrieds. (:25-35)

1) The following is just a suggestion because of circumstances. (:25-26)

:25 “Now concerning virgins I have ___ of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.”

:26 “I suppose therefore that this is good for the _____, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.”

2) It is better for a person (_____ - *anthropoh*, meaning a human being) to remain as they are- don’t make any changes- for three reasons. (:26-35)

a) “the present distress”- things are hard enough in these trying circumstances, why add the burdens of marriage on yourself. (:26 cf :28; II Tim 3:12)

b) “the time is short”- The Lord is coming back soon, build your life (including whether you will marry) around that fact. (:29-31)

c) Distraction. (:32-35)

:32 “But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the _____ that belong to the _____, how he may please the _____:”

:33 “But he that is married _____ the things that are of the world, how he may _____ his wife.”

The third reason for remaining single, if you are able to contain, is that marriage is a distraction.

i) You have enough responsibilities without adding more worries. (:32a)

ii) Contrast between married and unmarried men and women.

- The single man can give the Lord all of his attention. (:32b)

- The married man must give attention to his wife’s needs. (:33)

- The unmarried woman can concentrate on serving the Lord. (:34a)

- The married woman must give attention to her husbands needs. (:34b)

iii) As wonderful an institution as marriage is, when you come right down to it, it has to be a distraction that will pull at least some of your attention away from serving the Lord. (:35)

iv. But these are just some helpful words of wisdom- not a commandment. (:35 cf :25)

b. Parents. (:36-38)

1) If there are recognizable signs that incontinence is a problem, then it’s alright to let your virgin daughter marry. (:36)

2) But if you are “steadfast,” (sure) that it is best for your daughter to remain single and that she can contain, then that is good also. (:37)

3) Summary. (:38)

NOTE: This is also the key and summary of the whole chapter.

i) To marry is good; but, to remain celibate is better!

Neither celibacy nor marriage is holier than the other; it’s just that celibacy makes it easier to fully serve the Lord. (cf Col 3:2)

- If she can serve the Lord better being married, and thus be free from the consuming distraction (burning) of physical desires- then that is well.

- However, if she can serve the Lord better being single, not having any necessity of physical desires, then that is better.

ii) But even in marriage, all things are to be in subjection to the will and interests of the Lord.

Since marriage to an unbeliever is not condoned for a Christian, then it is understood that the daughter would only be given in marriage to a believer.

(I Cor 7:38-39 cf II Cor 6:14-17)

In that Christian marriage God would (or should) be put first.

c. Widows. (I Cor 7:39-40)**1) Widows may remarry. (:39)**

In fact, younger widows should remarry. (I Tim 5:3-15)

2) Believing widows may marry only another believer.

I Cor 7:39 “... but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the _____.”

3) But a widow that can contain is better off to remain unmarried for utilities sake.

Again, because she will be better able to give all of her time to the Lord. (:40)

4) Although these are only suggestions, God says that they are for the best- if you can remain celibate. (:40 ... I have the Spirit of God cf :7, 9, 17, et al)**Summary**

If you can contain, sexually, then celibacy is the course to follow so you can serve God without distraction.

If you cannot contain, then marriage is the course to follow so you can serve God without the distraction of physical “burning,” which will lead you into sin.

The best course of action is to follow in the path that God leads you- be in His will.

II. Things Sacrificed To Idols. (I Cor 8:1-11:1)

One of the customs, not only in Corinth but in most of the world at that time, was that of offering animals in sacrifice to the gods. From the animal sacrifices of the Jews to the true god, Jehovah, to the sacrifices offered by others to the heathen gods, the practice was a common part of life.

Now, however, we come to a problem for believers. Almost all sacrifices had some larger or smaller portion of the meat left over after the offering was completed. The common practice was to use the meat at a banquet, if it was left over from a private sacrifice at some-ones residence; or, if it was part of a public sacrifice, it was sold in the market place. In either case, what was the true believer to do?

One- If a believer was invited to a friends house for a banquet where the meat served was the leftovers from a private, in the home, pagan sacrifice- should the Christian eat the meat?

Two- Should a Christian eat meat bought in the marketplace (“the shambles” **I Cor 10:25**) that might have been the leftovers from a public heathen sacrifice at the local temple, and served to him at a meal?

Three- Should a Christian, himself, buy and use meat from the marketplace that had been previously offered to idols?

There obviously was a difference of opinion on the subject at Corinth since the use here of the Greek phrase, “Now as touching,” *peri de*, (which was translated “**Now concerning**,” in **7:1, 25**)- indicates that the following is an answer to another part of the letter from the Corinthian Church.

Paul will answer this ticklish question in several stages. He will give general principles and illustrations of them; and then he gives an admonition and application of the principles to specific situations.

A. General Principles. (8:1-13)**1. Contrast between knowledge and charity (love). (:1-3)**

a. Everyone has knowledge, of some kind. (:1)

b. But beware of the pride of learning- it will puff you up. (:1b)

:1 “Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge _____, but charity _____.”

1) The most dangerous temptation to learned people is to think they know everything. They begin to feel superior because they have more knowledge than others may have. (“puff up,” Gk,

phusio, to make natural, to cause a thing to pass into nature, to bear one’s self loftily, to be proud.)

- 2) Such pride is a “natural” (old nature, fleshly) thing.
- c. Charity (unselfish love towards others), on the other hand, builds up. (edifieth) (:1c)
- d. The proudly learned do not realize that no one has perfect knowledge and that mere knowledge cannot solve all things. (:2)

“As he ought,” has to do with the degree or to the extent that he ought to know. And because of the connection to God in the next verse we can see the fact that no one has perfect knowledge of all things because all things have their origin, substance, and continuation in God; therefore, we cannot have perfect knowledge of anything because the minds of finite men cannot comprehend the infinite God.

- e. Although we cannot fully know God, we can love Him. (I Cor 8:3)

- 1) When we love Him it brings a CERTAIN knowledge of Him.

- 2) It also assures us that He knows us.

- 3) Here is somewhat of a summary.

- a) We cannot know Him perfectly.

- b) But in the perfection of God’s knowledge He knows every one of us. (:3)

From an earthly point of view, everyone knows the King but the King does not know everyone, personally. In the case of our King, however, we cannot really know Him, but we can love Him; and He does know every one of us, personally and intimately. (“is known of him.”)

- f. Essence of the contrast was given in verse :1.

Knowledge puffs up but charity builds up!

If we show charity (love as God showed it to us) then we will look to the needs of others and it will build them (and us) up in the Lord.

- 2. God and idols. (:4-6)

:4 “As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is _____ in the world, and that there is _____ but one.”

- a. Idols (plural) are not real, but God (singular) is. (:4)

- b. Some think there are many gods and lords. (:5)

“gods,” = deity. Pharaoh, Caesar, various idols, etc., were all revered as “gods.”

“lords,” = owner and boss. Any sovereign, prince, or chief. Used also of the Roman Emperor.

A title of honor expressive of reverence and respect with which servants salute their master.

- c. But we know that there are not many lords and gods.

There is only one God and Lord. (:6)

:6 “But to us there is but one God, the Father, _____ are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, _____ are all things, and we by him.”

- 1) God the Father is the only real deity.

- a) He is the source of all things. (“... the Father, _____ are all things...”)

- b) He is also the source of and the aim of, and the reason for, our existence as Christians. (“... we in {def. into, unto, for, towards, among} him...”)

- 2) The Lord Jesus Christ is the only true Lord.

He is the Creator, and, as such, He is the only owner, and boss. (“Lord”)

- a) The agent in the physical creation.

(“... Jesus Christ, _____ are all things...”) (cf. John 1:3)

- b) The agent in the New Creation. (Christians and the Church.)

(“... and we by him.”) (II Cor 5:14-17; Col 1:15-18)

- 3. Weak brethren. (I Cor 8:7)

:7 “Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being _____ is _____.”

- a. Not all people have the knowledge that idols are nothing because they represent only imaginary “gods;” and that there is really only one God who is infinite and, therefore, could never be represented by any finite idol.
 - b. Some still retain the idea that the idols really do represent a real “god,” and, therefore, when they eat the sacrificial meat they eat it as meat sacrificed to a real but false “god,” not to their God. This means they think they are involved with idolatry; and, therefore, are rightly troubled by eating.
 - c. This weakness in knowledge defiles them because their conscience, being weak, is defiled.
 - d. **“conscience,”** - that part of the soul which distinguishes between the morally good and the morally bad.
4. Your Christian liberty and the weaker brother.
- a. Meats and godliness. **(I Cor 8:8)**
:8 “But meat commendeth us _____ to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.”
 - 1) Those who understand and possess this new found liberty probably sought out sacrificial meat to consume, thinking this would bring them closer to the true God.
 - 2) God tells us that whether we eat such meats or not has nothing to do with whether God is pleased with us.
 - 3) In the *International Critical Commentary*, it is stated, **“It is the clean heart, and not clean food, that will matter; and the weak brother confounds the two.”**
 - 4) That is true but not complete; for the brother exercising his rightful liberty, and doing so to get closer to God, also is making the same mistake. Therefore, we should say that **“The heart matters, and food matters not at all, to the strong and the weak.”**
 - b. Cautionary words about exercise of liberty. **(:9-12)**
 - 1) The exercise of liberty by the strong may cause the weak to stumble. **(:9)**
 - 2) It might cause them to eat and offend their conscience! **(:10 cf Ro 14:23)**
Ro 14:23 “And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is _____.”
 - 3) Remember, Christ died for both the strong and the weak; for those of liberty and for those with a weak conscience. **(I Cor 8:11)**
 - 4) For the strong Christian to so wound a weak Christian is to commit sin against Christ himself.
:12 “But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against _____.”
 - c. An exhortation. **(:13)**
 If your liberty harms (offends) a brother, then you should never exercise that liberty!
Ro 15:1-2 “We then that are strong ought to _____ the infirmities of the weak, and not to please _____. Let every one of us please [his] neighbour for [his] good to edification.”
Gal 6:1-2 “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, _____ such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”
- B. Illustrations of the Principles. (I Cor 9:1-27)**
 Paul was both an Apostle and one who himself possessed Christian liberty.
1. Proof of his apostleship. **(:1-2)**
 - a. Requirements of Apostleship. **(Acts 1:21-22)**
 - 1) Must have the baptism of John.
 - 2) Must have seen the resurrected Lord.
 - b. Paul’s Apostleship.
 - 1) He saw the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. **(Acts 9:3-8)**
 - 2) He had the baptism of John. **(Acts 9:18)**
Acts 9:18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was _____.
 - c. Specific Corinthian proof of his apostleship. **(I Cor 9:1-2)**

2. Examples of liberty. (Right, authority, or power to do.)
 - a. Paul’s personal examples of liberty.
 - 1) Some had obviously questioned Paul’s conduct and teachings while among the Corinthians as well as the genuineness of his apostleship. (:3)
 - 2) He already had proved the genuineness of his apostleship in verses one and two.
 - 3) He (and the other Apostles) have the right (liberty) to sustenance for themselves and any of their family they might be responsible for. (:4-6)
 - 4) Examples of liberty in the secular realm. (:7)
 - 5) Liberty is also confirmed by the Law of Moses. (:8-10 cf. Deut 25:4)
 - b. Examples of liberty in the secular realm. (:7)
 - c. This liberty is also confirmed by the Law of Moses. (:8-10 cf. Deut 25:4)
 - d. Application to the right of sustenance of the preacher. (I Cor 9:11-14)
 - 1) The teacher has the right to sustenance; and even more so in this particular case since the spiritual is so much more important than the physical (carnal). (:11)
 - 2) The preacher has the right to exercise or not exercise this liberty. (:12)
 - 3) This liberty is in effect under the Old Covenant. (:13 cf. Num 18:8-24)
 - 4) This liberty was also affirmed under the New Covenant by the Lord Himself. (Mt 10:10; Lk 10:7)
 - 5) God’s rule in this matter. (:14)

:14 “Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which _____ the gospel should _____ of the gospel.”
 - e. Paul had not exercised this right to sustenance as an example that preaching is not done for the money but by necessity laid upon the preacher by God. (I Cor 9:15-16)

“... necessity is laid upon me...” This refers to his call and commission from the Lord Jesus Christ on the Damascus road. (Acts 9:6-15)

Acts 9:15 “... he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the _____, and _____, and the _____ of Israel:”
 - f. If Paul willingly exercised his rightful liberty he would have a material reward. (I Cor 9:17a)
 - g. But if he chose to not have a material reward then he would be proving his place as a steward and also, incidentally, his apostleship. (:17b)

“dispensation,” means the stewardship over another’s property. Paul proved his special place as steward over the gospel of Christ by not taking a material reward.

Stewards were of the class of slaves (Lk 12:42-43) and as such received no pay; i.e., they were simply doing their duty. (Lk 17:10)
 - h. All of this did not negate the fact that **“the labourer is worthy of his hire,”** Paul is just showing that in his case he chose not to exercise the right of sustenance when with the Corinthians for reasons of his own and a desire for reward from God as a good steward.
 - i. Paul later apologizes to the Corinthians for not allowing them to sustain him because it eventually led to the stunting of their growth in the area of giving. (II Cor 12:13)
 - j. Paul summarizes his reasons for not exercising his liberty of sustenance; and they are two. (I Cor 9:18)
 - 1) His reward is to preach the gospel without charge.
 - 2) He also doesn’t want anyone to be able to even hint that he is abusing his special power as an apostle.

NOTE: Remember, one of the requirements for apostleship was that they must have seen the resurrected Christ; but, only two of the apostles not only saw him after His resurrection, as did the other apostles, but they also saw Him after His ascension! Paul was one of these and the other one was John. Christ’s appearance to Paul is recorded in Acts; and His appearance to John is recorded in the Book of the Revelation. This puts both Paul and John in a rather unique place among the apostles.

3. Some of Paul’s methods of ministry. (:18-23)

a. He made “... **I may make the gospel of Christ _____** _____ ...” (:18)

b. He depends on no man to supply his needs. (:19a)

In **Phil 4:15-19** Paul tells us who all of us should depend on and that’s **GOD**.

c. He made himself a willing servant to all. (**I Cor 9:19b** “... **servant to all...**”)

d. He approached each group of people from their own background. (:19-22)

1) To the Jew he approached them as a Jew. (Which, of course, he was.) (:19a)

2) To those under the Law he approached them as one that kept the Law. (:19b)

The phrase, “... **as under the law...**” does not mean that Paul put himself back under, “**the** (Mosaic) **law,**” in order to win those under the Law. The word “**as**” makes that perfectly clear. That word signifies, *in like manner*. Paul, and every other Christian, should keep the law of God (live godly lives according to the precepts of the Bible) out of their love for God who not only gives them life and all material and spiritual blessings but who even died for them and took their just punishment in the person of Jesus Christ. (This also applies to verse :21.)

3) To those without “**the Law,**” meaning the Gentiles, he became as one without the Law. (:21) (:21 “... **but under the law to _____ that I might ...**” makes it plain that Paul wasn’t lawless.)

4) To the weak, meaning those weak in the faith who have not yet grown enough to exercise, or even understand, the liberty of a stronger Christian, he became as one that was weak. (**I Cor 9:22a** cf. **8:13**)

5) Summary. (**9:22b - 23**)

a) Technique:

▸ He became all things to all men. (:22b)

▸ Remember, this in no way means that Paul ever mixed in any type of ungodliness but rather various types of godliness.

b) Motive:

▸ The salvation of their souls. (:22c)

▸ In other words, the furtherance of the gospel so that all may be partakes right along with Paul. (**I Cor 9:23**)

:23 “And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof _____.”

4. The necessity of discipline; given here by comparison to a race. (:24-27)

This example is taken directly from the Isthmian Games held every two years near Corinth and would have been very familiar ground to the Greek listeners.

a. Everybody runs but only one person is the victor. (:24a)

b. If you are going to run- then run like a winner. (:24b)

:24 “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ___ may _____.”

“**prize**” - A prize is something you earn, and since salvation is a “**gift**” (**Ro 6:23**) then it is obvious that Paul is not talking about salvation but a “**reward**” (cf., :17-18; **Phil 3:11-14**) for good service which can be earned through hard work, as in a race.

c. How do you run like a winner?

I Cor 9:25 “And every man that striveth for the mastery is _____ in all things. Now they do it _____ a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.”

1) Be temperate. (**I Cor 9:25a**)

An athlete must train diligently to stay in shape; otherwise he will falter and fall somewhere in the course of the games.

2) Remember the goal- an incorruptible crown. (:25b)

The crown won in the games was going to fade in the minds of the people as well as fade physically. In the Isthmian games it was a wreath of pine which is really of insignificant worth

who's glory would soon fade. Picture the glass case full of trophy's in a modern day house which are precious to the winner but really mean nothing to the world at large. At the death of the owner they are of no more use to him at all and usually are disposed of as next to worthless. Whereas the glory of our crown is sustained forever and is a symbol of eternal spiritual rewards. It is as eternal as God who gives them to us.

3) Be decisive in action. (:26-27)

a) In today's terms we would say, "**remain focused.**" Our every thought and action must remain focused on the goal of winning. We can let nothing distract us since distraction curves our energies away from our goal.

b) Paul's personal example. (:27)

:27 **"But I keep under my body, and bring it into _____:
lest that by any means, when I have preached to others,
I myself should be a _____."**

"castaway" , *ad-ok`-ee-moss*, def. *unapproved, rejected, worthless*

Paul is not talking about loss of salvation. He is talking about one who loses his reward, i.e., one who does not obtain the crown of victory. Think of a castaway on an island. He is not dead (loss of salvation) he is simply isolated from and unable to take part in the mainstream of life and society and the rewards thereof. A castaway Christian is one who is separated from the mainstream of Christian life and not able to partake in the rewards of it because of a lack of temperance and indecisiveness in proper godly living; i.e., he has become a worthless servant.

C. Admonition and Application to the Believers. (I Cor 10:1-11:1)

Paul is about to conclude his discussion of meats offered to idols with an admonition (10:1-13) and application (10:14-11:1).

1. Admonition. (10:1-13)

He has already discussed the need for personal discipline and given warning of the loss of rewards for the undisciplined. To illustrate that point he will now use the nation of Israel as an example of failure; i.e., how most of them to maintain proper discipline and, "win the race." Then he will go on to admonish the believers to not be disapproved of, as Israel was (:5) but to "**take heed**" (:12) lest they also fall.

a. The advantages (privileges) of Israel. (I Cor 10:1-4)

The whole nation ("**all**") received the blessings of God. However, most perish-ed in spite of the blessings. (Here the connection with 9:24 is inescapable.) The application to nominal church members today is one of a screaming warning to "**take heed lest he fall!**" (Remember this is concerning their rewards, NOT their salvation!)

1) They ALL "**were under the cloud,**" (I Cor 10:1a)

This points to the prolonged supernatural **guidance** of God.

(Ex 13:21-22; 14:19; Mt 28:20)

2) They ALL "**passed through the sea;**" (I Cor 10:1b)

This points to the supernatural **deliverance** of God.

(Ex 14:15-22; I Pet 1:18-20)

3) They ALL were "**baptized unto Moses.**" (I Cor 10:2)

This refers to their closeness to their leader who, under direction and em-powerment from God, provided them with supernatural **leadership**.

4) They ALL ate the same "**spiritual meat ... spiritual drink;**" (:3-4a)

They all partook of supernatural **provision**.

(Ex 16:1-36; I Pet 2:1-3; Ex 17:1-9; Num 20:1-13)

b. NT applications and correlations.

1) Paul may have been making an intentional correlation here with the two ordinances of the NT Church. (I Cor 10:2-4)

- a) Baptism. (:2)
- b) The Lord’s Supper- showing that it is both spiritual and symbolic. (:3-4)
- 2) The phrase, **“that spiritual Rock that followed them...” (I Cor 10:4b)**
 There is an old rabbinical legend that the physical rock, Rephidim, from which came the water, actually followed the children of Israel in their wanderings; and that Miriam, more than any of the others, possessed the secret of getting the water from it. Paul may have been referring to that legend but giving it a spiritual twist making it an allegory of Christ. To make this clear God added the phrase, **“that Rock was Christ.”**
- 3) **“... that Rock was Christ.”** The Israelites had miraculously been given water both at the beginning of their wanderings in the wilderness (Ex 17:1-9) as well as at the end of them (Num 20:1-13) and the obvious inference of this phrase (“that Rock was Christ”) is that Christ, the Supplier of the water, was actually with them all the way.

c. Direct admonition to the believer. (I Cor 10:5)

One would think that after all of the privileges enjoyed by the Israelites (God’s supernatural guidance, deliverance, leadership, and provision) that success would naturally also be attained by them. This, however, was not the case. Much blessing from God does no good unless it is coupled with a willing heart on the part of the believer. Nevertheless, God, to the extent of care and nurture and the availability of deliverance, still blesses His people, both the obedient and the disobedient. Because He does so, then a lack of a willing heart on the part of the people simply enhances God’s justification in pouring out His wrath upon such as are stiff-necked among them; be it such in Israel of the Old Testament wilderness wanderings; or such of the New Testament readers to whom God was writing in the book of Hebrews; or even such stiff-necked Christians today who should benefit from all such examples from the Scriptures but willingly refuse to do so!

I Cor 10:5 “But with _____ of them God was not well pleased: for they were _____ in the wilderness.”

- 1) Privileged people can still incur divine displeasure. (:5a)
- 2) **“... many...”** is somewhat of an understatement. All from the age of twenty years old and upward were overthrown in the wilderness except Joshua and Caleb. (:5b cf. Num 14:29-33)
- 3) **“... overthrown...” (I Cor 10:5b)**

The Greek word translated here is *kat-as-tro'-theh-san*.
 The meaning of the word is: *to strew over (the ground), to prostrate, slay, (cf. to lay low)*

This is the only place this particular Greek word is used in the Bible; and it conjures up a picture of many bodies, and here specifically the bodies of those who were stiff-necked and disobedient, widely strewn across the landscape, filled with God’s supernaturally provided food and drink, but, nevertheless, dead!

- 4) The use of Israel’s negative examples to forewarn us that God will judge His people. (10:6-10)
 - a) A general warning that we should not lust after evil things as they did. (:6) (cf Num 11:4-6 Lusting after the world’s provision instead of God’s provision.)
 - b) A warning that we should not be idolaters as they were. (I Cor 10:7 cf Ex 32:1-14; I Jn 5:21)

I Cor 10:7 “Neither be ye _____, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.”

- c) A warning that we should not commit fornication as they did. (I Cor 10:8) This refers to Israel’s sin with the Moabite women. (Num 25:1-9)



- i) Paul in First Corinthians numbers 23,000 that fell in just “**one day.**”
- ii) Moses in Numbers chapter twenty-five gives the figure 24,000 which is the total that died as a result of the plague. Most died on that first day but there were others that died in the following days from complications brought on by the plague.
- d) A warning that we should not tempt Christ as they did. **(I Cor 10:9)**
This was Israel’s sin of presumption. **(Num 21:4-9; Ps 78:19)** To angrily confront God and suggest that He is not able to do what He said, i.e., to doubt His ability to keep His Word, is the same as saying He is a liar, a fraud, and also is a dare to Him to go ahead and discipline the doubters- if He is able. (Moffatt called this the sin of “ungrateful suspicion.)
- e) A warning that we should not murmur as they did. **(I Cor 10:10)**
This sin of murmuring **(Num 16:41-50)** caused the death of 14,700, plus the 250 that wrongly offered incense in the door of the Tabernacle, plus the households of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram which went straight down into the pit of hell. For a total of some 15,000 that died because of murmuring.

NOTE: S. Lewis Johnson, in the Wycliff Bible Commentary,⁽¹⁰⁾ believes that this verse **(I Cor 10:10)** could be a “... **gentle Pauline allusion to the Corinthians’ attitude to their own spiritual leaders in the matter of idol meats (the other four reasons [warnings listed above] can be linked with this problem).**”

I agree with Mr. Johnson in this matter since we are still in that section of Paul’s letter where he is considering the question of meat offered to idols.

- 5) The reasons for considering the trespasses of Israel. **(I Cor 10:11)**
**I Cor 10:11 “Now all these things happened unto them for _____ :
and they are written for our _____ , upon whom the ends
of the world are come.”**
 - a) Examples.
The trespasses themselves were examples (“**ensamples**”) to us. **(:11a)**
 - b) Admonition. **(:11b)** The accounts given to us here of those trespasses were written as an “**admonition**” to us to not follow in the steps of Israel.
 - c) Application. “... **the ends of the world are come...**” **(:11c)** This phrase applies the verse to us learning from previous ages, translated here as “**world.**” The terminus (“**ends**”) of all preceding ages of history is the age of the reader. This phrase then applies the admonition (to not follow Israel into sin) to us today as well as to the Corinthians.
- 6) Reliance on God for the ability to resist the sins of Israel. **(:12-13)**
In these two verses Paul gives a warning to the strong (those who use their liberty in the matter of meats sacrificed to idols- and this is applicable to other liberties also- at the expense of the weaker brethren) and an encouragement to the weak er brethren (those who stumble at the meat sacrificed to idols- this is applicable to other areas as well.)
 - a) A warning to the strong to, “**take heed.**”
:12 “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth _____ lest he fall.”
 - i) The self-reliant only “**thinketh he standeth.**” It is a false and fallible strength.
 - ii) They need to “**take heed,**” be cautious and learn from the examples and admonition just drawn from the problems experienced by Israel when they thought they could do it on their own- **AND FAILED!** (cf :5)
 - b) An encouragement for the weak. Reliance on God will be rewarded with His power and provision in your time of need to resist sin.
**:13 “There hath no _____ taken you but such as is common to man:
but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that
ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape,
that ye may be able to _____.”**

- i) The temptation of men is a common occurrence. (:13a)
 “temptation” Gk _____, *pi-ras-mos*, meaning *a trial or proving*.
 - ii) Those who rely on God and trust Him have special help in resisting or overcoming sin during a trial or proving such as came upon Israel.
 (I Cor 10:13b)
 - iii) And all (note the word “ye”) are providentially protected from any excessive temptation.
 (:13b ... God will _____ suffer you to be tempted above ...)
 - iv) God will provide a way out. (:13c)
 - v) Trust God and accept His help and you will, “**be able to bear it.**” (:13d)
 Not trust God and you will fall even though you think you won’t. (cf :12)
- b. Application to the Believer. (I Cor 10:14-11:1)**
- 1) Heathen Religious Festivals. (:14-22)
 - a) Here Paul returns to the immediate matter. Should you or should you not eat meats sacrificed to idols? (:14)
 - i) “**Wherefore,**” Because of what was just presented in order to teach that reliance on God brings success and self-reliance brings failure, apply this to the matter of meats and idolatry in general.
 - ii) “**flee from idolatry.**” Do NOT depend on your own strength, maturity, understanding, or anything else YOU can do, take God’s way out immediately! Now that the question has been brought up and the temptation (the trial, the proving) is obvious and, so to speak, in your face, depend on God and his way “**lest he** (the strong Christians) **fall.**” (cf :12)
 - iii) If you are really wise you will understand this admonition and obey. (:15)
 - b) Religious tables.
 Partaking of the food is partaking of the being to whom the table is set.
 - i) The Christian table. (:16-17)
 - ii) The Jewish table. (:18)
 - iii) The heathen Gentile table. (:19-21)
 - (1) The idol is nothing and his table is nothing; but, demonic forces use them to lead people away from God. (:19-20 also Deut 32:17, 21)
 :19 “**What say I then? that the _____ is any thing, or that which is offered in _____ to idols is any thing?**”
 :20 “**But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to _____, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have _____ with devils.**”
 - (a) This is exactly the same principle involved with God’s strict prohibition against OT Israel taking strange (heathen) wives. (I Ki 11:6-8)
 - (b) It also is the same principle as in God’s strict prohibition against a Christian taking an unsaved mate. (II Cor 6:14-18)
- NOTE:** In the Old Testament God’s people were ordered to divorce their heathen wives. (Ezra ch. 10) Whereas, in the New Testament, if they were already married and one converts to Christianity but the other one didn’t, they are ordered to NOT divorce them but try to be a good Christian example and try to convert them. (I Cor 7:12-16)
- (2) You can’t have it both ways; you must make a choice, the Lord’s table or the heathen, demonic, table. (I Cor 10:21)
 - (3) Warning. (:22)
 Do we want to provoke God to jealousy? Are we strong enough to risk his anger?
- 2) Meats purchased in the markets. (I Cor 10:23-26)
 - a) Repeat of the general principles of Christian liberty. (:23-24)

**:23 “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not _____ :
all things are lawful for me, but all things _____ not.”**

:24 “Let no man seek his _____, but every man _____ wealth.”

- i) The first rule is will it benefit me as a Christian? (**:23a “expedient”**)
 - ii) The second rule is will it edify me as a Christian. (**:23b “edify”**)
 - iii) The third, and most important, rule is will I, by exercising or not exercising my liberty, promote the welfare of other Christians? I should do so above the promotion of mine own welfare. (**:24 “another’s wealth.”**)
- b) Permission to eat meat sold in the market. (:25-26)**
- i) Just buy it, eat it, and don’t purposely trouble your conscience by asking if it is or is not meat previously sacrificed to idols. (**:25**)
 - ii) God made it all and you can eat any of it with proper giving of thanks. (**:26**)
This is part of our Christian liberty. (cf **:30; I Tim 4:4**)
- c) Private dinner parties at homes of unbelieving friends. (I Cor 10:27-30)**
- i) In general, eat whatever is set before you and don’t trouble your conscience (same as at the market) by asking where the meat came from. (**:27**)
 - ii) However, if a weaker brother, maybe privately, mentions that this meat was previously sacrificed to idols, don’t eat it! Respect and protect the conscience of the weaker brother.
:28 “But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for _____ that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof:”
:29 “Conscience, I say, not thine _____, but of the _____ : for why is my liberty judged of another man’s conscience?”

This principle escapes many Christians today. There are many things we could do but definitely should not do because it would defile the conscience of a weaker brother. (Smoking, drinking, or in some other way put a stumblingblock before them.) True, our exercise of certain liberties also could prevent a lost person from being saved but that is not the principle

involved here. Here we are talking about causing harm to a brother or sister in the Lord.

The latter part of verse **:28 “... the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof:”** is not included in the minority manuscripts from which the New Translations are taken, and some of the liberal commentators believe that this portion of the verse shouldn’t be there. So they don’t try to comment on it. However, we believe God put it there and it is in the majority of the manuscripts. Therefore, since it is there, then we know we can understand it. This we can do by seeing that it can be worked in here by context.

(1) This part of the verse is a quote of **Ps 24:1**.

**Psa 24:1 “The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof;
the world, and _____ that dwell therein.”**

(2) When we look at **Ps ch. 24** we see that the first half of it includes not just the world but also they that dwell in it. (**Ps 24:1b**)

(3) It also speaks (**:4**) about having “... **clean hands, and a pure heart...**” as a saved person. (**:3-5**)

(4) This Psalm was most probably very familiar to the Christians of Paul’s day. We can infer that from his use of it twice in this section of Scripture in Corinthians. (**I Cor 10:26 & 28**)

(5) In context in Corinthians, we are discussing not defiling the conscience of a weaker brother; and, also from the context of this and earlier sections, not looking down on the weaker one as somehow being less of a Christian or, if you will, some kind of a “lower class” Christian and still, maybe, just a bit “unclean” or “common.”

(6) Therefore, we have a dual use of **Ps 24:1** in **I Cor 10:26-28**.

- (a) In verse :26 Paul is talking about the food being eaten.
- (b) In verse :28 Paul is talking about the one eating the food.
- (7) The reason for the use of the verse.

(a) The use of the verse (**Ps 24:1**) shows us that both belong to God.

We cannot look down on the weaker brother any more that we can look down on the food. This may have been a subtle reprimand of the Cephas Party (**I Cor 1:12**) who may have fallen into the error of their hero, or leader, Peter in the book of Acts. (**Acts 10:9-13, 28**)

Peter may or may not have cautioned them against such practices; but we can probably assume that he did since it is such a cutting edge teaching for the Jewish converts to Christianity.

However, being taught something does not guarantee practice of it by the one being taught.

- (b) The use of the verse also reminds us of the fact that we should all keep clean hands and a pure heart.
- (c) If we cause a weaker brother to eat and thereby defile his conscience, then we are causing him to transgress. (**Ps 24:4** cf **Ro 14:19-23**)

Rom 14:23 “And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is _____ is sin.”

- (d) Also, if we harm a weaker brother in this way then we are trans-gressing by doing so. (**Ps 24:4** cf **Ro 14:20 -24**)
- (e) Liberty and grace should not be blamed for offending a brother.

(I Cor 10:29-30)

3) Summary of the principle- do all to the glory of God. (**I Cor 10:31-33**)

:31 **“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the _____.”**

:32 **“Give none offence, neither to the _____, nor to the _____, nor to the _____:”**

:33 **“Even as I please all men in all things, _____ seeking mine own _____, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”**

- a) If you exercise your liberty, do it to the glory of God. (:31)
- b) Be careful to give no offence (such action would not glorify God.) (:32)

NOTE: A threefold division of mankind is given in this verse that is as useful today as it was back when God gave it. This threefold division is:

- The Jews, the lost under the law.
- The Gentiles, the lost without the law.
- The Church of God, those saved by grace through faith in Christ.

c) Watch out for the other guy over your own self. (:33)

i) **“... please all men...”** in this verse does not mean do the things that will cause others to look upon you with favor; it means to do the things that will be favorable to their spiritual welfare.

ii) Do no thing that would hinder the lost from being saved.

c. Final admonition. (**I Cor 11:1**)

- 1) Follow Paul’s example.
- 2) He followed Christ’s example.

D. Summary.

- 1. The principle is Christian liberty.
- 2. God, through Paul, is very careful to uphold and explain Christian liberty.
- 3. He also puts some constraints upon it.
 - a. It must be to the glory of God and it must, in love, consider the weaker brother’s conscience.

b. It must also give no offense that the lost could use as an excuse to reject God's grace for Salvation.

III. The Veiling of Women In Public Worship. (I Cor 11:2-16)

In the next four chapters, eleven through fourteen, Paul discusses, primarily, matters concerning public worship and the church.

Chapters twelve through fourteen, inclusive, concern the questions addressed to him by the Corinthian church about spiritual gifts. (, *peri de*, used by Paul when addressing questions asked in the letter from the Corinthians.)

First, however, he addresses the proper place, in God's plan, of both men and women in the church, specifically in the worship service. (11:2-16)

A. Praise for the Corinthians for their willing obedience. (11:2)

"... **ordinances...**" Here Paul is not referring to the ordinances of the Church (baptism and the Lord's Supper) but to the traditions (all godly and Scriptural) that Paul had taught to the Church at Corinth. Oral teachings in contrast to written teachings, as in this letter.

B. The Theological reasons for the woman's covering. (:3-6)

1. In God's order:

a. The man is under Christ. (:3a)

b. The woman is under the man. (:3b)

Remember, subordination does not necessarily mean inequality. (Gal 3:28)

c. Christ is under God. (I Cor 11:3c)

2. A man is not to pray or prophesy (for us today- preach) with his hat on. (:4)

3. A woman must be covered. (:5-6)

a. Paul is not saying that a woman could or should pray or prophesy; (he will address that latter error in the Corinthian Church later) what he is saying is that a woman should be covered when taking an active part in the worship service as a sign of submission, else she is dishonoring her head (may or may not mean her husband.)

b. Pauline sarcasm. (:6)

"**Let her be shorn...**" Paul is saying that to publicly pray in the worship service uncovered is such a shame to a woman that she might as well go all the way and shave her head, which was the shameful sign of an adulterous woman in those days.

C. The Biblical reasons. (:7-12)

There are two biblical reasons put forth here: the facts of creation; and the presence of angels during the worship service.

1. Man represents God's authority on earth. Thus, he should not be covered. (:7)

2. Woman is **of** and **for** the man; i.e., she has her origin and purpose in man. (:8-9)

a. In creation, man was first and then woman. (:8)

b. He was not made for her; she was made for him. (:9)

NOTE: The practice of the woman taking the man's name upon marriage is an affirmation of this teaching. She is acknowledging the authority and headship of the husband in the marriage relationship. Likewise, the modern practice of women refusing to take the man's name, even by the use of a hyphenation of her name and his, is an act of willful disobedience to God and His order of authority in the marriage.

3. Because of the presence of angels at worship. (:10)

a. "**... power on her head...**" The veil (covering) is the sign of man's authority.

b. "**... because of the angels...**" Angels are present at each worship service; and they observe the proceedings.

1) The evil angels would not be offended, in fact they would rejoice, because they already are in rebellion against God.

2) The good angels, on the other hand, would be offended by such a blatant sign of insubordination

where the women are refusing to acknowledge the authority of the husband since they, the good angels, know no such insubordination to their authority (God.)

4. Balance. Now Paul gives, as he does many times in his writings, a bit of balance lest the men get too puffed up with themselves. (:11-12)

:11 “Nevertheless neither is the man _____ the woman, neither the woman _____ the man, in the Lord.”

:12 “For as the woman is ___ the man, even so is the man also ___ the woman; but all things ___ ___.”

- a. It takes both, men and women, to propagate the race. (:11)
- b. Woman was, originally, by the man; but now, all men are of the woman. (:12)
- c. And God, the Creator of both, set it up that way. (:11 ... in the Lord... :12 ... of God)

D. The physical reasons. (:13-15)

1. Judge in your new Christian heart, is it proper for a woman to reject her husband’s authority by praying uncovered? (:13)

2. The argument from nature. (:14-15)

:14 “Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a _____ unto him?”

:15 “But if a woman have long hair, it is a _____ to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.”

- a. Long hair is a shame to the male in nature. (:14)

As with the Lion who lets the female do all the hunting while he lies around looking pretty and acting macho.

- b. Long hair is a glory to the female. (:15)

- c. This natural sign agrees with and, if you will, proves the necessity of, the sign during prayer and prophecy in the worship service.

Remember, Paul is not saying that women should be prophesying in the service, he will answer that question a few chapters from here. What he is giving here is the rule: women must be covered and men cannot be covered when praying or prophesying during the worship service.

- d. “... given her for a covering.” This should not be construed as negating the rule given in verses :2-14; rather it is given as a natural example proving the necessity of the rule. That being, the woman is to show subservience in these matters by being covered and the man is not to cover his head when praying or prophesying during the worship service.

3. Application for today. Some say that this was just a matter of custom there in Corinth or back then during New Testament times. My answer to that is: the arguments put forth by God through Paul are rooted in Creation order and Nature. That quite effectively leaves the realm of “custom” completely out of the picture and, thus, negates it as a proper argument. These arguments given by God have not changed and will not change with the customs or whims of any age.

- a. Creation order is rooted in the Word of God and that makes it unchanging fact.
- b. Natural arguments are rooted in nature not custom and are the same today as then.
- c. The rooting of the teaching in those two arguments summarily negates the argument from custom and relegates it to the realm of immaterial.
- c. Therefore, the rule of the covering of women is still the same today as back then.

E. Application with Balance. (I Cor 11:16)

:16 “But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”

There are two main understandings of this verse.

- 1. The first understanding is that if anyone argues about whether a woman should be veiled or not, don’t argue about the custom.
- 2. The second understanding is that if anyone argues, Paul is clarifying that there is no such custom as

women praying or prophesying in church uncovered so you should instruct them concerning the biblical teachings in the matter.

3. Given the force of Paul's arguments in verses :2-15, it would seem strange for him to all of a sudden switch and say it is not important. Therefore, the probability is that the second of the two is what is meant here.
4. However, balance must be kept when applying this rule to new converts, both male and female.

Do not expect them to automatically follow this, or any other rule, automatically. They must be taught; then the Holy Spirit must apply it to their hearts; and then they must mature enough that they will obey God. Extra care and nurture may, and probably will, be needed. Especially in matters of dress, submission, and deportment that, as in this matter of hair, are so contrary to the customs of today. (**Gal 6:1; II Tim 2:23-25**)

IV. The Lord's Supper. (I Cor 11:17-34)

Here Paul will address the only ordinance, the Lord's Supper, for which the Lord gave specific instructions. In addition Paul will address a related matter, the custom of the fellowship (*agape*) meal preceding the ordinance itself. This meal, practiced in the early church and patterned, I'm sure, after the last supper observed by Christ and His followers preceding the institution and observance of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, was meant to be a meal of fellowship and unity in the Church, not just a social function. Paul will address the twisting of the *agape* meal as well as the proper observance of the Lord's Supper itself.

NOTE: The accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper in the gospels made no division between the *agape* meal and the ordinance itself. Both were actually one continuous process patterned after and replacing the Passover Meal given by God to the Hebrews in Egypt. Therefore, the practice of consuming alcoholic wine at the Lord's Supper, including the *agape* meal, is contrary to the lack of leaven demanded by the Scriptures at the Passover and, by extension, the Lord's Supper. This custom, the lack of alcohol, was later negated by the religious leaders of Judaism who said that only alcohol made from certain materials was not allowed; but, this perversion by the religious leaders of Judaism is as contrary to the scriptures as are many of the customs celebrated by supposed Christians today.

A. The Agape meal. (I Cor 11:17-22)

1. Paul's rebuke begins. (:17)
2. Rebuke of divisions (cliques, or splits in the body). (:18)
3. Heresies. Divisions along the lines of espoused religious viewpoints. (:19a)
4. Those two wrongs, unfortunately, show the unapproved from the approved. (:19b)
5. What they did may have been a supper but it was not the Lord's Supper. (:20)
6. Obvious errors in the supper they did eat.
 - a. Exclusion of some from part of the meal. (:21a "taketh before other")
 - b. This causes some to go without. (:21b "one is hungry")
 - c. Some are drunken. (:21c)
7. The true Lord's Supper (here, speaking of the *agape* meal portion) is not just a social gathering but a spiritual fellowship meal; and they could do the previous at home. (:22)
 - a. Their exclusion of some members actually showed despite to the church of God because the poor are also part of the church..
 - b. It shamed the poor, for whom Christ also died. (I Cor 8:11)
8. A second sharp rebuke. (11:22 "... I praise you not.")

B. Delivering of the true observance of the ordinance. (:23-26)

Here Paul delivers the true observance so that his rebuke will be seen to be justified by simple comparison with what the Corinthians were doing with what ought to be.

1. Declaration of authority. (:23a ... the Lord...)
 - a. "received of the Lord" There are two theories as to what this means:
 - 1) He may have received it directly from the Lord.

2) Or he may have received it from the Lord through another source.

It makes no difference either way. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write this and deliver it to the church at Corinth and all Churches in general from that day to this; therefore, it is true and accurate in every detail because of its inspired delivery.

b. **“delivered unto you”** It is obvious that the church at Corinth had no excuse for errors in their observance since Paul had already instructed them at least once in the proper observance of the ordinance.

2. Proper observance of the ordinance according to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

a. The bread is the body of Christ given for us. (:23b-24)

b. The cup is the new testament in the blood of Christ. (:25)

c. How often should you observe the ordinance- not specified. (:26)

(cf. :25 **“...as oft as ye drink it...”**)

d. The purpose of the ordinance- remembrance of the Lord’s sacrifice for us. (:24, 25)

:24 **“And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do _____ of me.”**

:25 **“After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, _____ of me.”**

NOTE: There is no saving value to the ordinance itself. It is obvious from the scripture references (:24-26) that the purpose is **“remembrance”** and to **“shew the Lord’s death...”** If there was any saving merit to the ordinance then God would have used such words as: **“partake, partaking, etc. in the Lord’s death.”** No such connotation is even remotely conveyed by the actual words used; which were, **“remembrance,”** and **“shew...”**

3. Application to those taking the Lord’s Supper.

a. Those observing the ordinance must bear several things in mind:

1) To eat unworthily is to make you guilty of Calvary. (**I Cor 11:27**)

2) You must examine yourself as to what, how and why you are observing it. (:28)

3) To wrongly observe it brings condemnation upon yourself. (:29)

4) This results in both physical and spiritual problems in the church. (:30)

:30 **“For this cause many are _____ and _____ among you, and many _____.”**

b. Self-judgment is always best and easiest on us. (:31)

NOTE: Bear in mind that the context of this verse is sins, divisions and heresies in the church resulting in wrongful observance of the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper.

The wider application, however, is self-judgment leading to confession of any sin to God to prevent any wrongful participation in the ordinance. Any unconfessed sin will prevent you from properly discerning the total and effectual sacrifice of the Lord’s body, physical. The context of this passage in Corinthians shows improper discerning of the Lord’s body, the Local Church, by dividing it into cliques and thereby making some less a part, or a less important part, or even, essentially, saying or acting as if some were not even a part of it in the first place.

c. Judgment will come from God if we force it. (:32)

His judgment upon the believer is different than His judgment upon the world.

1) It brings chastening upon the believer.

2) But it brings condemnation upon the unbeliever.

d. Exhortation. (:33-34)

1) Wait till you are all there for the *agape* and the ordinance.

2) And I’ll teach more on the Lord’s Supper at a later time.

V. Spiritual Gifts. (I Cor 12:1-14:40)

In this segment Paul is going to address more of the questions presented to him by the church at Corinth. (again we find *“peri de”* - “now concerning”)

Through a combination of ignorance and previous idolatrous beliefs and practices, (that undoubtedly still haunted them and hounded their footsteps as they progressed as Christians even as we are pursued by our own past) the Corinthians were misusing some of the divinely endowed gifts as well as wrongly emphasizing some of the more spectacular ones, such as speaking in tongues. **(ch. 12)** They did not understand that supreme over the gifts rules love. And not just human love but the expression of the divine type of love translated in our KJV as “charity.” **(13:1)** Charity is a selfless, giving, willing, type of love, given to others knowing they cannot, nor do you expect or require them to, pay it back. This is the same kind of love that God showed to us. [cf. **Jn 3:16; Ro 5:8; et al**, from the same root word, **agape (agapay)**] And, finally, they did not understand that the giving forth of God’s Word (prophesying for then and preaching for today) rules, or should rule, supreme in importance and in the purpose of the church.

This portion is divided by Paul into, basically, three segments:

1. The unity and diversity of gifts. **(I Cor 12:1-31)**
2. The primacy of love over seeking gifts. **(13:1-13)**
3. Proper exercise of the gifts. **(14:1-40)**

NOTE: The heresy of some groups, that you **MUST** speak in tongues as proof that you really are saved, is contradicted by God in **I Cor 12:30**.

A. The unity and diversity of gifts. (12:1-31a)

Introduction: Validity of utterance by gift. **(12:1-3)**

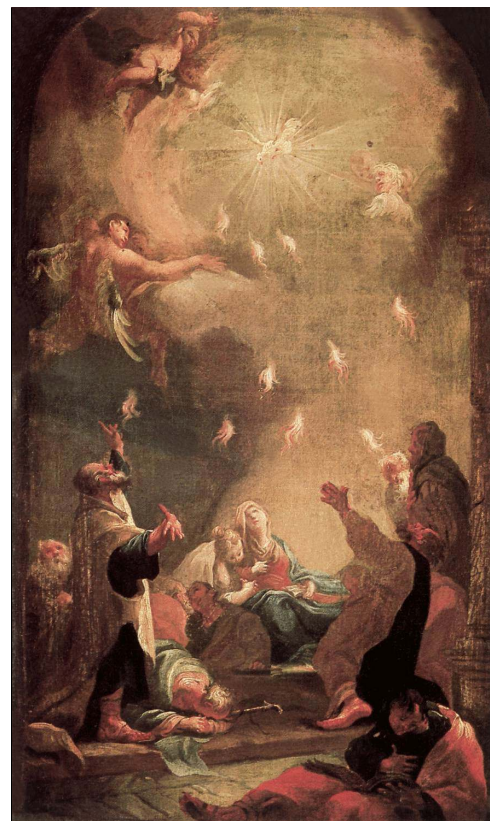
Before getting into the meat of the passage, Paul digresses for just a moment to delineate bedrock criteria for a valid utterance by Spiritual gift.

1. Their need of instruction in this matter.
 - a. Obviously there were problems at the church of Corinth concerning spiritual gifts. Some of which was caused by ignorance (simply, not knowing any better.) **(:1)**
 - b. Their previous experiences, in idolatry, are no help. **(:2)**
2. Basic instruction as to a valid utterance by gift. **(:3)**
 - a. Negative criteria.

“... no man _____ by the _____ _____ calleth **Jesus accursed:**”
 - b. Positive criteria.

“ **no man can say that Jesus is _____, but by the Holy Ghost**”

3. It is obvious that Paul is talking about true utterance from the heart since any liar could call Jesus “Lord,” and not mean it. In addition, those using the Lord’s name in vain (cursing) could include this statement and obviously not mean it. In these, and possible other similar instances, would they be speaking by the Spirit of God? No! They would be speaking by the spirits of lying and cursing and various other spirits, if by any spirit at all. Rather, they would more than likely just be speaking from their own deceitful, wicked hearts because of their fallen nature. I mention this because this verse was brought up to me in a conversation concerning various heretical groups that speak the name of Jesus. It was proposed that they are all Christians just because they call Jesus “Lord?” That is absolutely untrue! They are falsely using the name of the Lord, not using it in valid utterance by the Holy Ghost. This passage is simply giving criteria for valid utterance by gift; not saying that everybody that utters in the positive is of God or is doing so by gift. Only the basic, bedrock, criteria for a valid utterance is what is in sight here in **v:3**; not the condition, saved or unsaved, scriptural or unscriptural, doctrinally straight



or doctrinally corrupt, of various groups that may use the phrases mentioned in this verse. Remember the context of this verse is exercise of the Spiritual gifts, many of which are not for today, (we will discuss that topic shortly;) therefore, to apply this passage in the sense of “everyone speaking the name of Jesus is saved or speaking by the Spirit of God” is a gross misapplication of the verse.

MAIN DISCOURSE ON THE UNITY OF GIFTS: (I Cor 12:4-11)

There are many (diversities of) gifts; and here we are talking about spiritual gifts. All are enabled by divine grace (“gifts,” *char’-is-ma-ton*, from *charis*, meaning grace.)

Viewing of the gifts:

1. From the Spirit they are seen as “gifts.” (:4)
2. From the Lord they are seen as “administrations,” or services to the church. (:5)

“Administrations,” Gk- *dee-ak-on-ee’-own*, service or ministry. From the same root as “deacon;” but, here we are talking about spiritual gifts in the church, not spiritual offices in the church, such as deacons or elders (pastors.) (See under v:7.)
3. From the Father they are seen as “operations,” or supernatural workings in the church.

“Operations,” Gk- *en-erg’-ay-ma-tone*, an effect, operation, or working. In this case, it is “God which worketh.” Therefore, we can say “supernatural workings” in the church. (:6)
4. These gifts are from the Spirit. (:7)
 - a. This shows the basic unity of the gifts.
 - b. And they are “given to every man.”

This shows the distinction between gifts and offices. Gifts are given “to every man;” while offices, such as deacons or pastors, are given to only a few.

This verse also denotes these gifts as Spiritual Gifts given to each member of the church rather than gifts to just certain ones. This allows us to distinguish between these gifts and the Son gifts, that are given to the church in Ephesians ch. four, by making a comparison between the two passages of Scripture. Here, in First Corinthians, we are talking about gifts given to each of the members by the Spirit to profit the church. In Ephesians we are talking about gifts given to just certain members by the Son to profit the church. The first are gifts from the Spirit (I Cor 12:7) while the second are gifts from the Son; (Eph 4:7-12)

5. A list of some of the Spiritual gifts. (I Cor 12:8-10)

:8 “For to one is given by the Spirit the _____; to another the word of _____ by the same Spirit;”

:9 “To another _____ by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of _____ by the same Spirit;”

:10 “To another the working of _____; to another _____; to another _____ of spirits; to another divers kinds of _____; to another the _____ of tongues;”

- a. “... the word of wisdom...” (:8a)

“wisdom” Gk - *so-phi-as*, wisdom, here specifically, wisdom super-naturally communicated from God.

Before the completion of the Bible it was necessary for God to directly communicate His wisdom to the church. This was done through those given this particular Spiritual gift. With the completion of the Bible, this gift was no longer needed and was done away with by God; i.e., He no longer directly communicates wisdom through people with this Spiritual gift but through His Word to the church. However, God does give wisdom to those who ask for it, individually. (Jas 1:5) The “word of wisdom” spoken of as a Spiritual gift here in I Corinthians is a slightly different matter. It was supernatural wisdom delivered to the church, by God, through the person possessing the Spiritual gift. The wisdom given then was necessary because the Bible was not completed. Now, wisdom given to men must be judged by God’s Word which is the bedrock upon

which our faith and the church is based. The Bible talks about the “**wisdom of men**” and the “**wisdom of God**” in **I Corinthians ch. 2**, and **James ch. 3**, the only way to tell whether the wisdom is from God is to compare it to the Bible. The early church did not have that standard to go by; therefore, they needed a direct communication from God by way of the Spiritual gift of “**the word of wisdom.**”

NOTE: Many of the Spiritual gifts in **I Corinthians** were temporary until the completion of the Bible. This transition time from the Old to the New Covenants is called by many a “**twilight time.**” During that time of transition, many things, offices, and gifts, were necessary for the preservation, growth, and edification of the Church; many were later replaced by the completed Bible. (**I Cor 13:8-11**) We will discuss that more under each of the gifts that were so affected.

b. “... the word of knowledge...” (I Cor 12:8b)

Knowledge, Gk *gnow'-sos*, general knowledge or intelligence.

This would have been knowledge for Christians of a more practical nature. This gift was also a temporary one. (cf. **13:8**)

c. “... faith...” (12:9a)

This is talking about a gift of extraordinary faith; not the faith that is given to every person for Salvatory purposes. This verse is talking about manifestations of faith by those possessing the gift, far above the faith of other Christians. (**13:2**) Men such as George Mueller or Hudson Taylor expressed that kind of faith and showed it with extraordinary deeds and expressions of trust in God far above that of others of their time. Faith was not a temporary gift. (**ch. 13**)

d. “... the gifts of healing...” (I Cor 12:9b)

These gifts (plural) included not only healing of sicknesses but also restoration of life.

Acts 9:40 The raising of Tabitha by Peter.

Acts 20:9 The raising of Eutychus by Paul.

The modern charlatanism of “faith healers” is not what is being spoken of here in **I Corinthians**. The Bible does, however, teach “divine healing,” according to the pattern set forth in **James 5:14-15**; but, it does not teach the modern heresy of “divine healers.”

Therefore, this gift was also for then but not for today. If what is being propagated by the charlatan “healers” today was a true manifestation of the gift of healing, then they would raise the dead as part of their ministry. In addition the modern perpetrators of this heresy, such as Oral Roberts, would not have to raise multiplied millions of dollars to build hospitals to treat the sick and dying. All that they would need is to have the people brought to them and they would heal them instantly and then send them home whole.

e. “... miracles...” (I Cor 12:10a)

From Gk *doo'-na-meh-own*, meaning the working of various supernatural manifestations of the power of God.

f. “... prophecy...” (:10b)

Prophecy was the *foretelling* and/or the *forthtelling* of NEW revelation from God. This gift was the way that God talked to the Church, by direct communication through the prophets of both the New and the Old Testaments, in order to deliver His instructions to the Church body. With the completion of the Bible, we now have the completed will, thoughts, and instructions from God. There is no need of further communication from God to man; and any further communication is NOT from God! This is stated in the Book of the Revelation. (**Rev 22:18-19**)

The job of the local New Testament church today is the proclamation and the teaching of the completed revelation of God, the Bible, and NOT prophesying which is adding more to it. (**Mt 28:18-20**)

g. “... discerning of spirits...” (I Cor 12:10c)

This is now done by the Holy Spirit through the Word. Every spirit is to be tried by the Word

of God and will be found true or false by such comparison. Even a voice from Heaven itself is to be tried by the Scriptures. (II Pet 1:18-20)

h. "... diverse kinds of tongues..." (I Cor 12:10d)

Tongues, Gk *gloss-own'*, here meaning a language spoken by a particular nation of people; i.e, a known language The gift of tongues was speaking in a language not previously learned by the speaker. This gift and the related one (interpretation) were also done away with upon the completion of the Bible. (13:8-10)

i. "... interpretation of tongues..." (12:10e) This was the supernatural gift of interpreting those utterances without previously knowing the language involved.

Without the gift of tongues, the gift of interpretation cannot be used; therefore, it disappeared along with the gift of tongues upon the completion of the Bible, the "that which is perfect," spoken of in I Cor 13:10.

6. The source of the spiritual gifts shows their unity. (I Cor 12:11)

:11 "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame

Spirit, _____ to every man severally as ___ will."

a. The Holy Spirit is the sole dispenser of gifts. ("... as he will.")

b. He alone decides who will receive which gift or gifts. ("dividing to... as he will")

c. Since the gifts are all from the Holy Spirit then there is a unity by source.

NOTE: Since the Holy Spirit decides who will receive what gifts and when, then to propagate the heresy that every Christian will speak in tongues as a sign that they have received the Holy Spirit (which we know they all receive at Salvation) is to manifest a profound ignorance of verse :11, at best, or an overt willingness to ignore God's Word, at the worst. And to ignore God's Word is to ignore God.

MAIN DISCOURSE ON THE DIVERSITY OF THE GIFTS: (I Cor 12:12-31)

In this segment Paul will show how that all of the members, and their gifts, are not only all related to one another; but, he will also show how those are related to the church as a whole. To do this he will use the illustration/example of the human body and relate it to the church, which is His body.

1. There are many parts of the whole body. (:12)

a. This is true of the body of a human being.

"... members of that one body, being many are _____ body..."

b. This is also true of the church, the body of Christ. ("so also is Christ.")

2. The unity of the church body. (I Cor 12:13)

a. "For by one Spirit... baptized into _____ body..."

This is speaking of a spiritual baptism at the moment of salvation, not the physical baptism which follows salvation. And this body into which you are baptized spiritually is the Universal Church- which exists ONLY in Heaven (Heb 12:23). On earth, churches are manifested ONLY as local bodies of baptized believers such as the one there at Corinth to which this application will be made.

b. It doesn't matter who or what you were.

I Cor 12:13b "... Jews or Gentiles... bond or free..."

c. We were many in nation and station; but now we have all been made one by the one Spirit of God who indwells every believer, even the carnal ones at Corinth.

:13c "... all... drink into one Spirit."

d. Also, the tense (in the Greek) of the word "baptized" shows that it is a past fact never to be repeated. This shows the indwelling of the Spirit who never again leaves. This is a very good thing, especially for the carnal Christians at Corinth. If they could have lost their salvation (which would mean the Holy Spirit would leave them) they would have. And yet Paul called them brethren, which he would not have done to lost people. (3:1-2) He tells us in Hebrews that if you could ever lose your salvation you could NEVER get it back. (Heb 6:4-6)

3. The illustration. (I Cor 12:14-20)

- a. The human body. All of the parts are important to make up the whole. (:14-17)
- b. God made all the parts of the whole as He pleased. Therefore, no one part can gloat over another part because God made all the parts to please himself, not us. (:18)
- c. All of the parts are interdependent and important to the proper functioning of the body as a whole. Their diversity is necessary to their unity. (I Cor 12:19-20)
- d. Dependent relationship of the parts. (:21-24)

- 1) Each part needs the other parts. (:21)

- 2) The seemingly most feeble are very necessary. (:22)

- 3) The uncomely parts need more care- so we give them more care. Literally, we “clothe them.” (:23-24a)

, *per-ee-tith'-ay-mayn*, to clothe or put on a garment.

The parts that need the less help must care for the parts that need the most help because those weaker parts are necessary to the body as a whole; which, of course, includes the stronger, less needy parts.

- 4) The strong protects, cares for, naturally makes up for, any lack in the weak; and together they become a strong unified whole. (:24)

, *soong-ker-as'-en*, to mix together and commingle so as to make two or more elements become one compound.

- e. The reason for the uniting of the several into the one body. (:25)

- 1) That there be no divisions in the body- now it is one.

- 2) And so that every part could be cared for so that the body could function as one.

- f. The results- common sharing of troubles and blessings. (:26)

:26 “**And whether ___ member suffer, ___ the members suffer with it; or ___ member be honoured, ___ the members rejoice with it.**”

4. Application to the church at Corinth, the body of Christ manifested locally. (:27-31b)

- a. The application to the local church at Corinth.

- 1) It is one body, the body of Christ, and is unified, just as a man’s body is. (:27a)

- 2) That body of Christ is made up of many members with many functions, just like the human body is. (:27b)

- b. The hierarchy of functions of the members of the local Church. (:28)

- 1) Hierarchy of rank. “**First apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers...**”

- 2) List of gifts, probably in hierarchy of importance.

“**miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.**”

NOTE: Contrary to the defacto practice and teachings of the Charismatic movement, tongues is listed last, as probably the least important gift.

5. The diversity of the functions of the members. (:29-30)

Not all have the same function. “**are all... have all... do all... ?**”

Gk , *may pantays*, meaning an understood negative of the question- “all.”

These are all rhetorical questions; and the expected answer to each is “**No!**” We know this is the proper understanding of this verse because of the analogy given in the previous verses. Not all members of the human body have one single function, as Paul just showed us, else there would be no functioning whole- the body. Likewise in the body of Christ, the Local Church at Corinth, all members cannot have a single function, else the body of Christ, the whole, could not function.

NOTE: I Cor 12:29-30 once and for all, shows the lie of the Charismatic movement concerning tongues. Their heresy dictates that speaking in tongues is the sign of possession of the Holy Ghost, which we know happens at Salvation. Here in this passage we see that not all of the Christians spoke in tongues even back then when it was proper to do so. In fact the obvious inference is that no one Christian exhibited all of the gifts; i.e., each person possessed one or several of the gifts but no one person possessed them all. Does that mean that those who did not speak in tongues were lost?

6. The best gifts. (:31)

a. Earnestly desire the best gifts. Be zealous in the pursuit and use of them; but, don't covet them in a carnal, envious way. Instead, covet them because they are gifts from God; and gifts from God are always something to be coveted (for spiritual reasons).

b. Better gifts.

Here we are told to covet the best gifts; and tongues is far down on the list. In fact, interpretation is a separate gift but it is inextricably involved with speaking in tongues; and we are told that speaking cannot be done without interpretation. The speaking and the interpreting, then, must be considered as but two parts of the same category- tongues. Then we can see that even back then tongues was a good gift but not the best one since the category was put last on the list. What Paul was telling them was to covet teaching, prophecy (which today has been replaced by preaching,) miracles, helps, etc., above speaking in tongues.

B. Love is better than gifts. (I Cor 12:31b-13:13)

Introduction:

:31 “But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a _____ excellent way.”

Here Paul makes a transition.

1. After showing that gifts were good and fine (for then) and showing the unity in diversity of the gifts, and then correcting the misunderstanding about which of the gifts were the best ones, Paul now goes on to show that love excels above any of the gifts.

2. “... way...” Gk _____, *hod'on, a way, a road*

God's use of this particular word here indicates He is going to show us a course of life (a way) that is better than gifts; rather than the manner (in love) in which the gifts are to be expressed. This makes it clear that the teaching is that love excels above gifts. If He had wanted to show us that love is the manner in which to exercise the gifts of chapter 12, then he would have used _____ *tro'-pon, (way or manner)* instead of, _____, *hod'on, (a way, a road.)*

NOTE: When you really look at it in the right way, was not God's love the greatest gift that He ever gave to mankind? And did He not express that love in the greatest and most supernaturally charitable way by giving His only begotten Son to die for us and, thereby, satisfy His own righteous judgment on sin? Was it not God's love that then gave us the gift of the Holy Spirit at Salvation to preserve us, sanctify us, quicken us, and keep us on the upward path toward righteousness and godly living instead of just leaving us to bumble and fumble our way through life after Salvation? When we look at it from that angle, then love has to be recognized as the first gift from which all other gifts flow!

God will now show us, in the following verses, that living a life of love (an inner, heart, condition that is expressed outwardly- hence the use of the word charity instead of the root word, love) is vastly superior to spending our life in seeking gifts and the outward manifestations of them. He will show us that love for us (as it was for Him) is the well-spring from which all other gifts must flow, and that exercising love from the heart must be the basis for all of our life (including the exercise of gifts), then we will see that without that basis of love everything else is NOTHING! He will then show us that love has properties far nobler than the gifts and that it is forever, while gifts are not.

1. The pre-eminence of love. (I Cor 13:1-3)

“Charity” Gk _____, *a-gap'ayn, love, affection, good will, benevolence*

a. Over tongues. (:1)

:1 “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as _____ brass, or a _____ cymbal.”

It does not matter how good or godly you may sound, it is what is in the heart that counts. Without love, tongue speaking is just noise- “sounding brass... tinkling cymbal.”

b. Over prophecy (understanding of all mysteries and all knowledge) and faith enough to move mountains. (I Cor 13:2)

Others may consider those things to be something magnificent and those that do them are quite something; but, without love I am really *oo-then'*, no one, nothing, as Robertson put it, **“an absolute zero.”**

c. Over philanthropy and martyrdom. (:3)

:3 “And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me _____.”

There is no profit in these acts, no matter how selfless they may be. **“... it profiteth me nothing...”** Without love, inwardly, prompting these selfless acts, then they are nothing profitable; i.e., they are just acts of egotism and are worthless.

d. Summary.

Without love, the tongue speaker was just a big noise and those gifted with prophecy and knowledge were just total zeros. In addition, even the most noble of selfless acts, springing from the wrong motives, are totally worthless.

In essence, no matter how many gifts we may have, without love we are just blowhard zeros and are totally worthless to God and man.

2. Love and its nobility are described. (:4-7)

If the Corinthians had followed the truths about love in these next verses, then their problems discussed earlier in depth would have been solved.

Sounds like a description of the life and character of the Lord Jesus Christ does it not. If every Christian followed love instead of self they would lead a totally fulfilling life.

I Cor 13:4 seems to sum up verses **:4-7** by the means of two divisions:

- **“Charity suffereth long,”**
- **“[and] is kind...”**

a. **“Charity suffereth long...” (:4a)**

Summarizes the following 7 characteristics of love.

1) **“envieth not”** Helps those who felt (or, when appropriate today, feel,) that their gifts were or are inferior, to not envy those with the supposedly superior gifts to the point of unchristian jealousy which is in reality, covetousness.

(Answer to **12:14-17**)

2) **“vaunteth not itself”** Doesn't blow its own horn. (Answer to **12:12; 21-26**)

3) **“is not puffed up”** (Answer to **1:10 - 4:21**)

4) **“Doth not behave itself unseemly”** (Answer to **7:36 & ch. 11**)

5) **“seeketh not her own”** (Solution to meats sacrificed to idols. **8:1-11:1**)

6) **“is not easily provoked”**

(Would have solved the contention over lawsuits. **6:1-11**)

7) **“thinketh no evil”** None of the contentions of the early chapters would have taken place if this characteristic of love had been practiced. There would have been no evil schemes and contentions concocted by the various perpetrators if they had yielded to love instead of to self.

8) **“Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth”** Clearly refers to **5:1-13** and the problems of immorality and the acceptance of it and the resultant lack of discipline of the perpetrators by the church body.

b. **“... and is kind...” (I Cor 13:4b)**

Summarizes the following 4 characteristics of love.

1) **“Beareth all things”** If he doesn't part his hair exactly the way you do, so what! If he's not as spiritually mature as you are don't look for a fight over it- give him time to grow. On the other hand it does not mean to be so open-minded that you will overlook sin. When sin is known, go to the erring one in the spirit of helpfulness and meekness and help him bear his load while you try to lift him up out of the mud.

2) **“believeth all things”** Don't look for contentions, i.e., don't be suspicious and look for a fight. Don't overlook sin, by any means, but don't go looking for a reason to start trouble with a

brother. Again, he may be more immature than you- give him time to grow. Help him along; don't dog his tracks and lay a stumblingblock of suspicion and mistrust in his way.

- 3) **“Hopeth all things”** Always be looking up for guidance not looking around for trouble. Give the other guy the benefit of the doubt and always maintain a positive attitude.
- 4) **“Endureth all things”** Always put the other person first and bear any affronts in the spirit of love and forgiveness.
- c. As I said, if the Corinthian church of then and the members of the churches of today would have and will live in the realm of love, as explained in verses :4-7, rather than in the realm of self, as most Christians do today, then the majority of the problems in the churches would be solved and all would live more fulfilling and profitable lives.

We are supposed to be the body of Christ. Then it is only logical that if we follow the characteristics of love, enumerated and explained in these four verses, that exactly parallel the life and characteristics of Christ, then we will automatically be the body of Christ in truth and also in actions. The immature will be nurtured until able to take their place as functioning members of the body and schisms will not develop. Christ is not divided and neither should we be; and as the true body of Christ, emulating the loving characteristics of Christ, we will grow and show the world Christ in fact and action, not just in words.

3. The permanence of love. (:8-13)

:8 “Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall _____; whether there be tongues, they shall _____; whether there be knowledge, it shall _____ away.”

- a. Love (Charity) never fails. (:8a)
- b. Three of the gifts will fail. (:8b)

- 1) Prophecy shall fail. **“fail”** Gk _____, *kat-arg-eh’-thes-on-tie, cease, abolish, annul, be done away with.*
- 2) Tongues shall cease. **“cease”** Gk _____, *pow-o-son-tai, cease, restrain, stop.*
- 3) Knowledge shall cease. **“vanish away”** is once again _____, *kat-arg-eh’-thes-on-tie, cease, abolish, annul, be done away with.*

c. Prophecy and knowledge are always partial; and these partial expressions from God are to be done away with. (I Cor 13:9-10)

d. When are they to be done away with? (:10)

:10 “But when that which is _____ is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

“perfect” Gk _____, *tel-i-on, perfect, finished, complete.*

- 1) There are three theories concerning what the phrase **“that which is perfect”** is referring to.
 - a) Perfect love.
 - b) The return of Christ and the ensuing time of perfection.
 - c) The perfect Bible.
- 2) The 1st and 3rd of those are both correct.
 - a) By context, perfect love, or “charity” as the Bible calls it, is the surface meaning.
 - b) The “return of Christ and the ensuing time of perfection” cannot be what is meant for the following reasons:

- The phrase **“... that which is perfect ...”** is, in the Greek, “_____,” which, by definition, is a neuter noun meaning *complete*. Because of the ending of the Greek word (which is _____), which makes the word neuter, and the preceding “_____,” which signifies a noun when the two are used together, then only an inanimate object can be what is being referred to in this passage of scripture. Since Jesus Christ is a **“He,”** which is always

masculine, and not a “**that**,” which refers only to an inanimate object, not a person, then it cannot be Christ which is being referred to in this passage.

- Also, concerning the “ensuing time of perfection, perfect Law will reign with the Coming of Christ and on during the entire time of the millennium, but perfect love will not come until AFTER the millennium.

c) The perfect, completed Bible, is also an acceptable object that the word “**that**” is referring to. There are several reasons why this is so:

i. The Bible is “**perfect**” in every sense of the word.

It is “*complete, perfect, and finished.*”

ii. This can be said of nothing else in this universe.

iii. Even the Church does not meet this qualification. It is neither complete, perfect, nor finished. Nothing is except the Bible.

iv. The Bible also is the completed revelation of the perfect love of God.

God’s love for man’s soul was expressed in Christ. His love for man is completely revealed in the Scriptures: in part in the Old Testament, more fully during the time of Christ, and completely now that we have the completed Bible. We now have that completed revelation; therefore, those gifts (prophecy, knowledge, and tongues) through which God gave those partial revelations, were replaced by the perfect Bible which fully reveals His love, especially as it is shown to us in Christ.

e. Why are they to be done away?

:11 “When I was a child, I _____ as a child, I _____ as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I _____ childish things.”

1) The three gifts, prophecy, tongues, knowledge, were part of the infancy of the church. (**I Cor 13:11 “.. as a child...”**)

a) “**When I was a child, I spake as a child...**” Tongues were the baby talk.

b) “**... understood as a child...**” Prophecy was the baby discovering new things.

c) “**... thought as a child...**” Knowledge was the baby understanding new things.

d) These gifts were necessary in the infancy of the Church.

They were necessary for at least three reasons:

i. To help it grow properly. (**Eph 4:7-13**)

ii. Authentication. (**Heb 2:3-4**)

iii. Edification. (**I Cor 14:3**)

2) Comparison. (**I Cor 13:12**)

i. Perceptions gained through the gifts was like looking into the unreliable metallic mirrors of that day (_____ , *es’-op-trou, mirror*) that gave only a distorted reflection of reality. (“**... through a glass darkly...**”)

Knowledge gained in that way was almost like deciphering a riddle.

“**... darkly...**” _____ , *ah’-ee-nig-ma-ti, a riddle, an enigma*

ii. But when the perfect Bible would come, then the church could see as clearly as if looking “**... face to face...**”

No more enigmatic riddles. No more piecing things together from wide spread prophecies spoken in various tongues and relayed through interpreters; and then carried by word of mouth or notes from church to church and pieced together from those various fragments without any hope of completion. No more obscurity but absolute clarity from God to the members of the churches through a written record of the revelation of God to mankind. When the perfect Bible was come then the partial revelations by the gifts ceased.

iii. When that time comes, Paul said, there would be no more partial understanding but absolute clarity. He said he would then know as well as if looking directly at his own face rather than at a distorted reflection.

“... now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

3) The transcendence of faith, hope, and charity. (I Cor 13:13)

:13 “And now abideth _____, _____, _____, these three;
but the greatest of these is _____.”

- i. These three are abiding and not temporary like the gifts; therefore, they obviously transcend the gifts.
- ii. Charity (love) is the greatest force in the universe; and the greatest expression of it was at Calvary.

C. Tongues and Prophecy. (I Cor 14:1-36)

Because of the obvious misuse of the gift of tongues by those in the Corinthian church, Paul now gives the argument for the superiority of prophecy over tongues. He then continues with a series of instructions for the proper exercise of the gifts and the rules for regulating participation by the women in the public assembly.

NOTE: The modern tongues movement cannot be the biblical gift of tongues for several reasons.

ONE: The modern movement is based solely on the precept of ecstatic utterance.

The biblical gift of tongues, however, was the ability, under empowerment by the Holy Spirit, to speak in foreign languages.

- This can be seen by the first New Testament instance of the exercise of the gift.

In Acts chapter two, verses 4 through 11, on the day of Pentecost, we find the rules, according to the precept of first instance, by which the gift of tongues is to be understood. Bear in mind that Acts was written after I Corinthians, by Luke a close companion of Paul, and that Luke used the same terminology as Paul. In these two books, both use the word _____, *glowssa*, meaning a *language or dialect*.

- In addition, Luke added the word _____ *dialektow*, to expressly define tongues as an existing language or dialect of a group of people (which *dialektow* always means.)

In addition, the word “**unknown**” in I Corinthians is not in the Greek text but was added by the translators to assist in our understanding of the verse. In this case it was added to help us understand that the language (tongue) being spoken was foreign (unknown) to the one doing the speaking and to most of the others listening. Including the one with the gift of interpretation. That one could only interpret by use of the gift and not by any previous understanding of the language being spoken by the one exercising the gift of tongues. Thus, “unknown” explained the situation so we would know that it was an exercise of gifts and not a use of previously acquired linguistic ability.

TWO: Also contrary to the modern tongues movement was the purposes for which the biblical gift of tongues was given.

a. First it was as a sign to the Jews that this was from God (I Cor 14:21-22) as prophesied in the OT (Is 28:11). In every instance of the exercise of the gift in Acts, Jews were present. (Acts 2:4-11; 8:17-18; 10:46; 19:6)

b. Also, according to Acts 1:8, it was given in order to facilitate the carrying out of the Great Commission and Acts 2:11 tells us that it is used to preach the “**wonderful works of God.**” The proponents of the modern tongues movement adamantly deny that this is the real purpose for the use of the gift. And while denying this biblical use, many use the gift, instead, for reasons of self-edification. We will address that issue shortly.

c. The gift given at Pentecost was a work of the Holy Spirit by which God reversed the curse of Babel, (Gen 11:1-9). Since this gift was given to do away with the curse that God brought on mankind at the tower of Babel, then to introduce ecstatic utterance into the equation would only confuse matters once again, and in more ways than one, and upset the balance of God’s plan and bring in confusion to the completed equation. And God is not the author of confusion. (I Cor 14:33)

Further proof that tongues were known languages and not ecstatic utterances will be given as we study the text of **I Corinthians**.

1. The relative importance of tongues and prophecy. (**I Cor 14:1-25**)

a. First the transition from the previous section.

:1 “Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophecy.”

1) We should follow after charity.

“follow after,” *diokete*, means to *seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavor to acquire*.

2) Then we are told to desire the gifts.

Since we are told to desire (earnestly pursue) the gifts, then the obvious connotation is that although the gifts are divinely bestowed, they are not necessarily always bestowed at salvation. Then it follows that if they are not bestowed on us at that time, the admonition here is that we are to pray and earnestly pursue their later bestowal. (Remember, all of the gifts are not for today; but, we are to pursue the ones that are.)

3) Finally, **“but rather”** shows us that God is giving a contrast concerning the relative positions between these things. Charity (love) is the most important to pursue and gifts comes after. Then, according to the context of the following verses, we will see a contrast is actually being drawn between the exercise of the gifts of tongues and prophecy.

b. Contrast between tongues and prophecy.

1) Tongues edify self, not the church. (**I Cor 14:2-5**)

a) Without an interpreter, no one understands you but God. (**:2**)

b) Prophecy is greater because men understand; i.e., it edifies, exhorts, and comforts the members of the church. (**:3**)

c) Without an interpreter, speaking in tongues is strictly for self. (**:4**)

d) Therefore, prophecy is greater than tongues if there be no interpreter. (**:5**)

2) Tongues are of no benefit without an interpreter. (**:6-15**)

a) Even with an interpreter, tongues are only a medium. (**:6**)

They are a medium for four things, given in order of importance:

i. A revelation, i.e., a direct presentation, under inspiration of the Holy Ghost, of new knowledge from God.

ii. Knowledge. An understanding of something.

iii. Prophesying. A discourse, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to declare the purposes of God, either present or future.

NOTE: This definition of prophecy, as pertaining to a gift, clears up some confusion caused by the common definition of the word.

- The common definition of the gift of prophecy is a foretelling of the future. This is in error because it is not in line with the biblical definition of “prophecy” nor that of “prophet,” which we will get to in the later verses of this chapter.

- The Biblical definition of the gift is, as was stated above, “*A discourse, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to declare the purposes of God, either present or future.*”

iv. Doctrine. The authoritative teachings of God.

If tongues are not used to carry out the giving of one of these four, then what use are they? And without an interpreter, the hearer cannot be edified in these areas.

NOTE: All of these are partial and were terminated, actually it would be more accurate to say that they were replaced, by that which is perfect (**I Cor 13:8-10**).

And we have already seen that is referring to the perfect love of God and His perfect Word which reveals it to us.

b) Two Illustrations. (**I Cor 14:7-12**)

i. First illustration- instruments.

They must give a clear distinction in sound to be of use. (**:7-9**)

- (1) It is impossible to tell the tune if the musician doesn't play distinct notes on his instrument. (:7)
- (2) And it is impossible to know if it's time to charge if the trumpeter doesn't play the proper notes on the trumpet. (:8)
- (3) Application to speaking in tongues in the Church- it must be useful. (:9)
 - If you can't be understood then your speaking is of no more use than an instrument playing one note instead of a tune or a battle-trumpet playing one note instead of "charge."
- ii. Second illustration- language. (:10-11)
 - If it cannot be understood, then it is useless.
- c) If you speak in tongues, then pray for interpretation.
 - Without interpretation, tongues is an exercise in unfruitfulness. (:13-14)
- d) Understanding is essential! So the Corinthians were encouraged to use the fit in a manner that would promote it. (:15)
- 3) Tongues without understanding causes only confusion, not edification. (:16-17)
 - a) If the **"unlearned"** (those who don't know the tongue you are speaking in) can't understand then how can they agree with you, even in as elementary matter as giving of thanks. (**I Cor 14:16**)
 - b) If he can't understand, he won't be edified no matter how gifted you are and how well you may be giving thanks to God. (:17)
- c. Paul's use of himself as an example in order to instruct them. (:18-19)
 - 1) Paul spoke more foreign languages than any of them. (:18)
 - 2) Yet to speak in tongues in Church if it does not teach (**"with my understanding"**), if what he said could not be understood, then that is something that Paul would not do; and the inference is that neither should they- or we. (:19)
- d. Application to non-believers. (:20-25)
 - So far Paul has been addressing the effect of tongues without an interpreter on the congregation of believers. Now he will address the effect on visiting non-believers.
 - 1) Warning to the Church at Corinth. (:20)
 - 2) Tongues were for a sign to the Jew. (:21-22)
 - a) It was prophesied in the Old Testament. (:21 cf **Is 28:11-12**)
 - The ones speaking with tongues in **Is 28:11-12**, are the Assyrians; and the sign to the unbelieving Jews was that God's presence was with the gentile speakers.
 - b) New Testament corroboration.
 - In the book of Acts, the gift of tongues is mentioned four times, **Acts ch. 2; ch. 10; ch. 19;** and **ch. 8** also speaks of signs and the receiving of the Holy Ghost so we may assume that tongues was one of the signs that followed because that would be in tune with the rest of Acts.
 - In every instance, Jews were present whenever the gift of tongues was exercised.
 - c) Contrast. (**I Cor 14:22**)
 - :22 **"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but _____ serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which _____."**
 - i. Tongues are spoken for the benefit of, and in order to try and convince, the unbelievers. (This meaning the Jews who have rejected, according to the context. cf :21)
 - ii. However prophecy benefits the believer because he is taught by it.
- 3) Application. (:23-25)
 - Now Paul shifts gears somewhat. In the preceding verses those who have heard and rejected were in view, as the comparison with unbelieving Israel shows. In these next three verses (:23-25), however, first time visitors (hearers) are being referred to.

- a) Tongues without an interpreter causes visitors to think it is madness. (:23)
 - b) Prophecy, made plain by the interpreter, convicts the visitor of his sin. (:24)
 - c) And when this happens, he is moved to worship and acknowledgment that God is truly with the Church. (:25)
2. Directions for the exercise of the gifts and the rules for women participating. (I Cor 14:26-35)
- a. All exercise of gifts must be done in a way that builds up. (:26)
 - b. Tongues in particular, as we have already seen, can tend to confusion; therefore, they were only allowed if certain rules were followed to prevent such confusion. (:27-28)
 - :27 “If any man speak in an unknown tongue, ___ ___ ___ two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one _____.”
 - :28 “But if there be no interpreter, let him keep _____ in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.”
 - 1) Use of the gift is restricted to two or, at the most, three speakers.
 - 2) The speakers must take turns; i.e., they cannot speak over each other (which would lead to a cacophony of noise and an increase in confusion for the visitors).
 - 3) Finally, it is not allowed at all unless there is one present with the related gift of interpretation.
 - c. Prophecy. (:29-32)
 - 1) Prophecy by those speaking in tongues follows the same rules as tongues in general. Two or three speak and an interpreter must be present. (:29)
 - a) “prophets” _____, *prophetai*, a spokesman for another, in the NT, a person that speaks for God; and, in this case the spokesman is speaking in tongues.
 - b) “judge,” _____, *dee-ak-ree’-ne-tow-san*, to make a distinction.
 In verses :7-12 Paul talks about how things without distinction tend to confusion? This verse shows that the interpreter of tongues (the medium by which the prophets speak) is the one that gives the distinction, clarity, to what is being said so that confusion can be avoided. He is the “judge” or the clarifier of the prophecies.
 - 2) This is not a competition. If someone else prophesies, then you keep silent. Let God speak through whomever He chooses. (I Cor 14:30)
 - 3) Such order leads to benefit to all in the service; both the lost and the saved. (:31)
 - 4) Following the rules is possible because, although the gifts are given by God, the use of those gifts is under the complete control of the recipients. (:32)
 This admonition is one of self-control. Although it is used here specifically in the matter of exercising the gifts of God, the admonition is obviously applicable in EVERY aspect of our Christian lives and in our service to God.
 - d. A warning. (:33)
 - :33 “For God is ___ the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”
 Anything that leads to confusion or tumult, such as the indiscriminate use of tongues without interpretation, or anything else that leads to confusion, is not of God.

NOTE: If such confusion is not from God; then who is it from and why did it happen?
 Obviously there are only two reasons for it happening and one source.
ONE: It could be from the human proclivity towards self-aggrandizement.
TWO: Or it could be the devil using good Christians or wolves in the flock to prevent both the saved and the lost from being edified by the Word of God.
THREE: No matter what the reason for it, there can be only one source. If it is not from God then it must be from Satan.
 - e. Rules for the participation of women in the public worship service. (I Cor 14:34-35)
 There seems to have been a problem with the female worshippers adding to the confusion caused by indiscriminate speaking in tongues.

- 1) The context of verse :34 is that of speaking authoritatively for God for the purposes of edification, and doing so in a way to avoid confusion. (cf :4-6 et al)
 - a) Obedience and subjection of the wives to their husbands is a consistent teaching of scripture, both in the Old Testament and in the New.
(I Cor 11:3; Eph 5:22; Col 3:18; Ti 2:5; I Pet 3:1; Gen 3:16)
 - b) The “law,” here, means the Old Testament; and is referring to the command, and judgment, of God upon Eve for her part in The Fall which resulted from her disobedience to God and leading her husband to follow in that disobedience.
Gen 3:16 “ ... and thy desire [shall be] to thy _____, and he shall rule over thee.”
 - c) It is obvious that what is being taught in **I Cor 14:34** is that women are not to assume a place of authority by speaking for God and giving commandments to men. This is in accord with the other scriptures on submission as well as the admonition in First Timothy.
I Tim 2:12-14 “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to _____ authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”
 - d) Therefore, the wife’s primary source of learning should be her husband; and to avoid confusion in the service she should ask him at home. (**I Cor 14:35**)

NOTE: It must be noted that in verses :34-35 no mention is made of the widows nor the unmarried women in the Church who would have no “**husbands at home**” to ask and to learn from. We must keep in mind that the context here is that to avoid confusion the women were not allowed to speak in tongues (authoritatively speak for God) which would be an usurpation of authority over the man that is not allowed in the church and would lead to the same confusion caused when Eve tried to lead Adam. Therefore, we must conclude that the same rule applied to the unmarried women that applied to the married women. That rule was that women were not to speak authoritatively, in context by speaking in tongues and the giving of prophecies delivered by use of that gift, from God to the church. This would allow “amens” and other expressions of assent to the preaching and teaching since they are not usurpations of authority; quite to the contrary, they are admissions of agreement with the authority of the man preaching. And, if they are not overdone, they do not add confusion to the service but instead add a feeling of “one accord” to the service. Restraint should be the rule of the day; and any questions they may have about something preached or, in the case of the appropriate use of tongues in the early church, prophesied in tongues and translated for the church, should be discussed later in private and not during the main service which would lead to confusion in the service.

Two things should be kept in mind.

ONE: Remember that we are talking about the main worship service of the church. Bible studies, Sunday School, Ladies Meetings, etc., are not in view here. Those would be appropriate times for questions and discussions, while the main service would not. Questions in the latter would lead to the edification of all involved. Questions in the former, the main service, would not lead to edification but could easily lead to confusion. The avoidance of which is one of the main reasons for this section of Scripture in the first place.

TWO: Also, this section is addressing the proper submission to authority by women. Therefore, questions in the main service should be saved for later when they should ask their husbands (their authority) at home. God is not illogical, so He would not expect an unmarried woman to ask a husband that she did not have, to explain things to her. He would, however, expect her to maintain proper decorum in the main service and ask whomever her authority was, to explain it later and privately.

Finally, when we notice that Paul does not address the issue of unmarried women, we can draw two possible conclusions.

ONE: Either the unmarried women were not a problem, i.e., not involved in the confusion being caused in the main service:

TWO: Or he did not address them because they were in proper subjection to their authority (their fathers, or older brothers or mothers in the case of a woman without a living father) and were not causing confusion in the Church by usurping authority by speaking in tongues or prophesying.

If this were actually the case, then the same thing could not be said of some of the husbands that obviously were allowing their wives to do things contrary to God's rules for men and women, by letting them cause confusion in the main worship service.

Summary

The misuse of tongues, whether by the men or the women, is somewhat of a moot point today because the use of the gift of tongues to authoritatively speak for God, which we have already seen was both temporary and partial, was done away with upon the completion of "that which is perfect," the Word of God, which we are to preach and teach today. Preaching and teaching the existent, perfect, completed, authoritative, Word of God is the only authoritative speaking for God allowed today. And the preaching of that Word from the pulpit in the main service is a job that God has given to the man the same as the use of the gift of prophesying in the main service was back when tongues, in this portion addressed as the medium whereby some prophecies were given, were appropriate.

Since neither tongues nor this particular gift of prophecy is for today, then what is the application of this portion of Scripture for us? Today, as then, the main point was that it is a matter of subjection to God's proper authority. And that authority in the Church who is to preach (prophecy in the broad sense of one speaking for God by expounding the Word of God) and teach in the main Church service is the pastor, who is to be male, or a representative chosen by him, who must also be a male. And in other spheres, such as the home, the authoritative preacher/teacher is also always to be the male when one is available. Therefore, a woman cannot preach or teach the Bible in the main service or any other service where men are present since to do so would be disobedience to God's command that the woman not usurp authority over the man, as Eve did over Adam.

Therefore, total silence from the woman is not commanded in the main service; but self-control and care to avoid confusion are. Also, there is no prohibition against women teaching women, and, for that matter, children, such as in Sunday School. In fact, the older women are even commanded to teach the younger women. **(Ti 2:3-5)** However, it would not be appropriate for the woman to teach male teens. Those boys are becoming men and need to learn from a godly man how to be godly men, just as teen girls need to be taught by a godly woman how to become godly women themselves.

D. Conclusion of Tongues, Prophecy, and the Participation of Women. (I Cor 14:36-40)

1. Authority and source for gifts; including tongues and prophecy. (:36)

a. They are from God, not from the speaker. (:36a)

b. They are not unique to Corinth nor any other church at that time. (:36b)

2. Paul's authority was from God and any truly spiritual person would recognize that fact.

**:37 "If any man _____ to be a prophet, or spiritual,
let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto
you are the commandments of the Lord."**

a. Anyone exercising true gifts from God would agree with Paul's teaching of the Bible principles concerning them and their proper use.

b. Paul's teachings were to be considered commandments directly from the Lord.

3. Don't spend time in disputations such as were addressed in the early chapters concerning Christian partisanship, murmurings, and other carnal disputations. Teach the things of God, yes; but if a person is willingly ignorant then you're probably going to have to leave them that way. You're not going to

change their minds anyway. Encourage them at every opportunity, yes; but you can't force them into submission. When I was young I had a plaque on my wall as a joke. It said, "Don't confuse me with facts, my mind is already made up!" And that's exactly the way some people are concerning the things of God. **:38 "But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant."**

4. Tongues and prophecy (which were for the early churches) were right when used right. So they were not to forbid their use. In fact the best gifts were to be coveted. **(:39)**
5. Decency and orderliness were to be the order of the day. **(:40)**
:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order."

Conclusion- The gifts, including tongues and prophecy, were proper and even necessary, in the early church, because they did not have the completed Word of God. That is why God gave them to them. They were, however, to be superceded by the Bible, "that which is perfect," upon its completion. This happened in approx. 96 AD with the writing of the book of the Revelation by the Apostle John. From that time on the gifts of tongues, prophecy, revelation, knowledge, etc. began to be phased out as the completed Bible, giving the complete revelation of God's love and plan for mankind, began to be widely disseminated.

As to when, exactly, those gifts ceased altogether, we cannot definitely say. We can, however, definitely say that they are not for today for the following reasons. The various histories of Christianity (which really should be called histories of the Catholic Church because of their all too apparent bias and focus) as well as the various commentaries, etc., of the New and Old Testaments, cite the close of the canon as between the fourth and sixth centuries, depending on whether you are talking about the Eastern or Western Church. Again this is based upon Catholic acceptance in the East and West, not upon Christian acceptance in general. We, however, as Independent Baptists, do not consider the Catholic acceptance of the completed canon as actually being relevant at all. Even the Catholics accept the dates of the completion of the majority of the books of the Bible to be the same as we do. Nor does their acceptance have much if anything to do with the general availability of the Bible. Nor does the Catholic Church's acceptance of it give any support for the authority of it; i.e., the authority of the Bible rests with God, not with the Catholic Church. Therefore, their acceptance of it affects us in no way in particular. Rather the acceptance of it by the cult of Catholicism in the fourth to the sixth centuries is the only thing that is delineated by those figures. The Independent Christian churches accepted the canon at various times in various places as complete; or, as the commentators and historians say, "closed." The completion of it, as was stated earlier, was in approx. 96 AD. The acceptance of it by Christians in general varied from that time forth until the fourth through the sixth centuries. Incidentally, the Catholics accepted not only the true Bible, but along with it they accepted other spurious books (known as the Apocrypha) contrary to what was accepted by much of Independent, non-Catholic, Christianity. In addition, the acceptance of it by any particular group of Christians is not the factor that is required. The factor that is required is that it is "come," according to **I Corinthians 13:10**; not that it is "accepted." (And that happened ca. 96 A.D.)

If you use general acceptance as the criterion, however, then to put an exact date as to when tongues, prophecy, etc., ceased altogether is impossible. As the Bible was made available to a particular area, then the information delivering and signatory gifts ceased in that area. However, they would continue in another area until the Bible was finally made available to that area also, then they would cease in that area at that time. This fact alone makes it obvious that the cessation of those gifts would have to have taken place over a considerable period of time. In fact, the hold out of Catholicism (East and West) concerning the acceptance of the completed Bible could conceivably put the final cessation of the gifts into the sixth century. (Assuming that the Catholic cult should even be included.) However, its acceptance by mankind is not necessary for the cessation of the gifts; only the availability to them of the completed Bible. Since history tells us that the Bible was readily available to both branches of Catholicism as well as Independent Christians at large by the second to third centuries then we can move the cessation of tongues at least to the end of the second century. True, Catholicism and some other groups argued for and against certain books for another two to three centuries; however, that obviously does not negate the fact that the books were still available to them. To the contrary, the fact that the books were there for them to argue about from at least the second century on is in itself historical argument for their widespread availability at that time. And if you use general availability as the criterion, then this

reinforces the plausibility that the complete cessation of tongues must have taken place by approximately the end of the second century.

In conclusion, the earliest plausible time for the cessation of the gifts in question would be upon the completion of the Bible in 96 AD; and the latest plausible time would be the end of the second century upon its widespread availability to the churches and Christians at large.

Also, another fact that was made obvious in this section is that order, edification, and biblical propriety were the rules of the day concerning the proper exercise of the gifts. Order and edification were to rule in the exercise of the gifts by men and biblical propriety defining the commandment against women ever exercising the gifts at all, at least in the public service. Paul gave clear and convincing arguments from the Bible in order to define both the role of women in the public services, arguments grounded in Creation and not culture, and concerning the purpose of God in the giving to and the proper exercise of the gifts by men.

Therefore, we must conclude from the clearness of the biblical evidence that the gifts in question are simply not for today. In support of this I also have put forth the methods of the exercise of the so-called gifts by our brothers and sisters who are of the charismatic bent, showing that their, "speaking in tongues," which are actually categorized as ecstatic utterances, are totally contradictory to the bible as well as the fact that today's "gift of tongues" in no way resembles the true, biblical, "gift of tongues." And, as an addendum from a study I have just recently completed, we have to add to that the fact that most charismatic theologians and preachers, after the original failure of the revival of what they thought to be the biblical "gift of tongues" that sparked the beginnings of the Pentecostal movement, many taught and believed that the so-called "gift" that they were exercising was something "new" and, therefore, really was not the biblical gift of "tongues." Some Pentecostals and charismatics, various offshoot groups that originated with the Pentecostals, still hold that line today; but many have gone back to the original error of believing that what is being manifested today is the biblical gift of tongues in spite of the biblical and linguistic experimental proofs to the contrary.

(See Dr. VanBuskirk's upcoming treatise and class on the subject.)

Because of the confusion concerning the gifts and their place and biblically appropriate use that dominates in Christianity today, I have felt it necessary to dwell on the subject at this somewhat extensive length.

VI. The Resurrection. (I Cor 15:1-58)

A. The Certainty of the Resurrection. (:1-34)

1. The Gospel and the resurrection. (:1-4)

a. It is THE true gospel. (:1-2)

:1 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you _____ which I preached unto you, which also ye have _____, and wherein ye _____;”

:2 “By which also ye are _____, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.”

It was preached to them, received by them, they stand (are fixed, established firm) in it; and they were saved by it!

“... **believed in vain...**” This phrase probably is referring to the fact that a faith that does not persevere is not a saving faith.

Also, in the context of this portion of I Corinthians, Paul could be (and probably is) referring to belief in the resurrection. Without the resurrection Salvation would be impossible; and many of the Greeks as well as the Sadducees at that time denied the fact of the resurrection. Therefore, belief in Christ to the saving of the soul is impossible without a belief in the resurrection, which is part of the Gospel according to the following verses. And the Gospel is the power of God unto Salvation.

Ro 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the _____ unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

Therefore, to deny the resurrection, which is an inseparable part of the Gospel (see the next section of this study), is to deny the Gospel. And by doing that one exhibits a type of belief that is a belief that is “in vain.”

b. The complete gospel includes the resurrection. (I Cor 15:3-4)

:3 “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that _____ for our sins according to the scriptures;”

:4 “And that he was _____, and that he _____ the third day according to the scriptures:”

- The complete Gospel given here is the Gospel that Paul received from Christ. (**:3a** cf. **Gal 1:12**)

1) The death of Christ. (:3b)

2) The burial of Christ. (:4a)

3) The resurrection of Christ. (:4b)

Note: Notice that this was all “**according to the scriptures,**” denoting that they were fulfillments of prophecies from both the Old and the New Testaments.

“... **died ... according to the scriptures.**” (Ps 22:15 etc.; Is 53:5-6 etc.; Dan 9:26; Zech 13:7; Lk 24:26, 46; Acts 3:18; 26:23; I Pet 1:11; 2:24)

“... **rose again... according to the scriptures.**” (Hos 6:2; Lk 24:26, 46; Acts 2:25; I Pet 1:11)

c. Attestations to the resurrection. (I Cor 15:5-11)

1) He was seen by Cephas (Peter) and then the twelve. (:5)

2) He was seen by over 500 others. (:6)

3) He was seen by James and then by all of the Apostles. (:7)

4) Last of all He was seen by Paul. (:8-10)

Paul also draws a comparison between himself and the other Apostles; calling himself the “**least of the apostles.**” He didn’t consider himself fit to be an apostle because of his persecution of the early church.

In verse **:8** he calls himself an _____, *ek’-tro-mah-ti*, an abortive, a miscarriage (“... **one born out of due time.**”) This could be in reference to the experience he had on the road to Damascus. It had an air of force about it; much like an abortion or a miscarriage, and much

like the treatment that Saul (Paul) brought upon the members of the early Churches. (Acts 8:3; 9:1; Gal 1:13 et al)

He also gives glory to God who saved him and, by His grace, used him more than all of the other Apostles. (I Cor 15:10)

- d. The resurrection of Christ was preached and it was effective toward the Corinthians.
 - 1) It was preached by all of the Apostles, including Paul. (:11a)
 - 2) It was believed by the Corinthians. (:11b)
 - 2. The resurrection of the Believer.
 - a. The link between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the believer. (:12)
 - :13 **“But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ ___ risen:”**
 - :14 **“And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching ____, and your faith is also ____.”**
 - b. If there be no resurrection of the dead, then the man Jesus was not raised. (:13)
 - c. And if He was not raised then the preaching of the Apostles is vain and the faith of the believer is vain; i.e., they do not have a living faith but a dead one. (:14)
 - d. Also, all of the apostles, including Paul, are liars if there be no resurrection of the dead because they testified that Christ was raised. (:15)
 - e. The effects of non-resurrectionism. (:16-19)
 - If the dead rise not, then Christ is not raised. (:16)
 - 1) If He is not raised, then your faith in Him for Salvation is vain. (:17)
 - “Vain” means *of non-effect*; i.e., *void of useful aim or effect*.
 - 2) If He is not raised then the dead are perished; i.e., they were not saved and, therefore, they are not in Heaven but in Hell. (Or still in the grave.) (:18)
 - 3) If He is not raised then we have no hope of future bliss but only condemnation; and this makes us heirs of nothing but misery in this life, and the next. (:19)
 - 3. The refutation of non-resurrectionism. (:20-22)
 - a. Christ is risen; therefore, the resurrection is certain because it has already been demonstrated in Christ, the first one raised from the dead. (:20)
 - b. Death came by a man; so the resurrection also must come by way of a man. (:21-22)
 - Adam brought death; and Christ brought life.
- Note:** Paul is not teaching the heresy of Universalism. The use of the phrase **“in Christ shall all be made alive”** is restricted to only those who are **“in Christ.”** Universalism teaches that because of Christ, all of humankind is reconciled to God. This heresy is not backed up by the Scriptures. The Scriptures teach that only those who believe are **“in Christ;”** and most of mankind has not and does not believe in Christ.
- Also, Paul is not teaching, in this passage, that every one will be resurrected; although that is a biblical doctrine. (Jn 5:28-29) Rather, what he is teaching here is resurrection to life of all those who are **“in Christ.”**
- 4. The order of the resurrection. (I Cor 15:23)
 - :23 **“But every man in his own order: Christ the _____; afterward they that are Christ's at his _____.”**
 - a. Christ was first.
 - b. Then at His coming the rest will be resurrected.
 - 5. The complete end of death. (I Cor 15:24-26)
 - a. When will it happen? (:24)
 - After the millennial reign.
 - “Then,”** Gk *ay'-tah*, means *afterwards*.

In the writings of Paul, the use of this Greek word always refers to an interval. Just as the closely related word translated **“afterward”** in the previous verse refers to an interval already extending nearly 2,000 years from the resurrection of Christ until the present and will extend on

until the Second Coming and the resurrection of the believers, so the word translated “then” here in verse :24 also means an interval of time. The rest of this verse shows that the interval being referred to is the Millennial reign, at the end of which all enemies will be completely conquered (“put down”).

b. Why at the end of the Millennium?

Because Christ the Son must reign until all enemies have been conquered. (:25)

:25 “For he must reign, till he hath put ___ enemies under his feet.”

c. The end of death, the last enemy, realized. (:26)

:26 “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is _____.”

At the end of the Millennial reign, death & hell are both abolished.

(:26 cf Rev 20:7-15)

d. The mechanics of it. (I Cor 15:27-28)

1) God the Father has put all things (including death, v:26) under the Incarnate Son. All things, that is, except Himself. (:27)

2) The reign of the incarnate Son will last until Christ Himself turns rulership of the Kingdom back over to the triune God.

:28 “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be _____ unto him that Put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

i. As the incarnate Son, Christ has all power. (Mt 28:18)

Mat 28:18 “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, _____ is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

ii. After all enemies have been put under His feet, including death (the last enemy) then the Kingdom shall be no longer under the rulership of Jesus Christ (the man) the incarnate Son (Messiah), but under the rulership of the triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.) “**Messiahship is a phase of the Son’s eternal Sonship.**” (Wycliff Bible Commentary, p. 1257) And at the end of the earthly Kingdom, that phase will pass and God (Triune) will reign.

6. Negative objections to non-resurrectionism. (I Cor 15:29-34)

a. Why do the cults baptize for the dead if there is no resurrection? (:29)

b. Why do the believers suffer deadly persecution? (:30)

c. Why was Paul persecuted daily? (:31)

d. A lack of belief in the resurrection results in moral decay. (:32 cf Is 22:12)

7. The results of the teachings of non-resurrectionism. (I Cor 15:33)

a. Don’t be fooled by their foolishness.

b. Listening to corrupt teachings will corrupt the listener.

8. A warning. (:34)

:34 “Awake to righteousness, and _____; for some have not the knowledge of ____ : I speak this to your _____.”

a. Wake up out of that evil and quit sinning. (“Wake up and fly right!”)

b. No matter how smart they may think they are, not all know God.

c. Shame on you!

B. Answers to objections to the resurrection. (:35-57)

1. Two questions. (:35)

a. How is it possible?

b. What kind of body could they have?

Everyone is familiar with the putrefication and dissolution of the body after death; so what would the resurrection produce, a bunch of walking putrefied corpses?

2. Answers. (:36)

a. The body is but a seed.

b. And a seed must die to grow a new plant.

3. Illustrations from the natural world. (:36-41)

Here Paul deals with two common errors:

:36 “Thou fool, that which thou _____ is not quickened, except it die:”

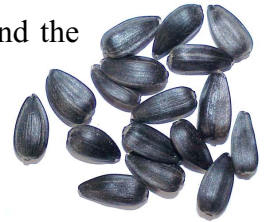
:37 “And that which thou sowest, thou sowest _____ that body that shall _____, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:”

:38 “But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased _____, and to every seed his own body.”

- a. The first error is that there is no connection between the natural body and the resurrection body.

The answer is given in verse **:36**.

- 1) The natural body is the seed that must die and is connected with the resurrection body just as a seed is to the plant that grows from it.
- 2) Resurrection to life naturally comes from death in the natural plant world.



This is seen in the cycle of sowing the seed. The seed dies and in doing so it produces new life.

- b. The second error is that the resurrection body is simply the dead and corrupted body, but reformed, i.e., made living and whole again.

The answer is given in verses **:37-38**.

- 1) You sow grain to get plants; not plants to get plants. (**:37**)

“... **not that body...**” shows us that the body resurrected is different than the body natural; the same as the body of the plant grown is not the same as the body of the seed sown.

- 2) God gives the right body to the right seed; and thus the identity of the seed is retained in the body of the unique plant grown from it.



Even the study of genetics in the natural world shows us that seeds, even within one species or family, do not produce identical plants. Yes, all seeds of, say wheat, produce similar plants. But, because of the driving forces of the variations in the genetic makeup of each individual seed, each seed produces a different and unique plant with large or small variations from its kin.

- i. Look at corn plants- each one is corn and yet each one is unique.
- ii. Look at pine trees- each one is a pine tree and yet each one is unique.

- 3) The point God is making in **I Cor 15:37-38** is that each human that dies is unique; and the body that is resurrected from that human “seed” is going to be uniquely tied to that “seed.” It will not be the dead body made whole again, but it will still be uniquely tied to that person that died.



- c. Natural illustrations of the diversity of the resurrected bodies. (**I Cor 15:39-41**)

- 1) There is diversity in natural flesh. (**:39**)

“**All flesh is _____ the same flesh...**” This sure shoots down the theory of evolution.

- 2) There is diversity in the creation; and the glory of each is unique.
 - i. The glory of the observable, created, universe (Sun, Moon, Stars, etc.) is different than the glory of the terrestrial portion of the creation. (:40)
 - ii. And even in the universe portion of the division into celestial and terrestrial, there is diversity in the bodies of which it is composed. (:41)
- d. Application of those natural illustrations to the resurrection of the believer. (:42-44)
 - 1) It is sown in corruption (death) and it is raised in incorruption (life) just like the seed. The difference, however, is that the resurrected body is no longer capable of corruption as the seed and the plant both were. (:42 cf :53-54)
 - 2) It is raised in glory and power. (:43)
 - i. The natural body was dishonorable (vile, shameful, disgraceful,) while the resurrection body will be glorious (dignified, honorable.)
There will be no more sinful nature; ergo, no more sin.
 - ii. The natural body was weak (sickness, impotence, and death) while the resurrection body will be powerful and able.
 - 3) It will no longer serve as an instrument to the flesh but will henceforth be an instrument to the spirit. (:44)
- e. Scriptural attestations to these truths. (:45-49)

Verse :45 “... first ... last ...” show us that there are only two races of human beings, the natural, in Adam, and the spiritual, in Christ. There can be no third one.

 - 1) The two Adams.
 - i. We inherited our natural body from Adam, the natural man. (:45a)
 - ii. We will inherit our spiritual body from Christ, the life giver. (:45b)
 - 2) Scripture shows that the natural comes first and the spiritual second. (:46)
We can even see this from the fact (cf :45) that Adam came first and Christ second.
 - 3) First came the earthy and then the heavenly. (:47)
 - i. The first Adam (at the Creation, thousands of years before the birth of Christ) was from the earth. (Gen 2:7; 3:19)
 - ii. The second and last Adam (Christ) is from heaven. (Jn 3:13; et al)
 - 4) Each race is like the one that begat them. (I Cor 15:48)

:48 “As is the _____, such are they also that are _____: and as is the _____, such are they also that are _____.”

 - i. The natural man, born of flesh, is like the first Adam, earthy.
 - ii. The spiritual man, born again of the Spirit, is like Christ, the spiritual Adam.
 - 5) The promise of God in the attestations of His Scriptures. (:49)
We have born the natural image of the first Adam; so shall we bear the spiritual image of Christ, the second Adam. (Rom 8:29; II Cor 3:18; Phil 3:21; I Jn 3:2)



C. The resurrection and the living. (I Cor 15:50-57)

In this section Paul answers the question of, “What happens to those of us that are not dead yet when the resurrection takes place?”

- 1. The time of the resurrection is a time of equality for all believers. (:50-51)
 - a. The earthy cannot inherit the Kingdom.
 - 1) Whether we are alive when He comes to get us. (“... flesh and blood ...”

- 2) Or whether we are dead when He comes to get us. (“... corruption ...”)
- b. Therefore, we are equal in the resurrection- (:51 “... we shall ____ be changed.”)
2. The mystery of the resurrection. (I Cor 15:51-57)
- :51 “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall ____ all sleep, but we shall ____ be changed,”
- a. Everyone is included in the event; both the dead and the living. (:51)
- b. The resurrection event sequence. (:52)
- 1) The time frame involved- “... in the twinkling of an eye...”
- 2) The heralding of the event.
“... at the last ____: for the trumpet shall sound...”
- 3) The raising of the dead comes first.
“... the dead shall be ____ incorruptible...”
- 4) Next, the living shall be changed.
“... the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and ____ shall be ____.”
- c. The mechanics of the event. (:53)
- 1) For the corrupt, it will be the putting on of incorruptibility.
“For this corruptible ____ put on incorruption...”
(cf 52 ... incorruptible)
- 2) The mortal will no longer see death.
“... and this mortal ____ put on immortality.”
- d. The result of the event. (:54-56)
- Victory over death.
- 1) A fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy.
:54 “Death is ____ in victory...”
Is 25:8 “He will ____ death in victory ...”
- 2) Death has no sting; the grave has no victory. (I Cor 15:55-57)
- :55 “O death, where is thy ____?
O grave, where is thy ____?”
- :56 “The sting of death is ____; and the strength of sin is the ____.”
- :57 “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the ____ through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- i. There is no longer the sting of death for the living (they are now immortal.)
- ii. There is victory over death for the dead (they are now incorruptible.)
- iii. Another way of looking at this passage is that there is victory for both the dead and the living over death and the grave because of victory over sin and the Law. (:56-57)
And of course that victory is in Jesus Christ alone.
- The sting of death is sin- and that sting is gone because of the resurrection.
 - The strength of sin is the Law- and we have victory over that strength because of the resurrection.
- iv. How did we get the victory? From God, through Christ. (I Cor 15:57)
This is also a prayer of thanksgiving to God.
- e. An exhortation because of the resurrection. (:58)
- :58 “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye ____, ____, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in ____ in the Lord.”
- 1) Hang in there (“... be ye steadfast ...”).
- 2) Don’t let anyone or anything take you out (“... unmoveable ...”).
- 3) And keep on working because your reward and success are guaranteed.
 (“... your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”)



VII. Conclusion. (I Cor 16:1-24)

This section contains information on the mechanics of giving and then goes on to address some personal matters.

:1 “Now concerning the _____ for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.”

A. Giving. (:1-4)

In verse **:1** it is called “... **the collection...**” and in this particular context the Apostle is talking about an offering for poor Christians, specifically those that made up the church at Jerusalem.

We also can apply the rules given here to other forms of giving in the Church.

1. Giving is commanded by God. (:1 “... given order ... so do ye.”)

a. It is required of all churches, not just the one at Corinth.

(:1b ... the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. cf Mal 3:8-10)

b. Paul will address this further in **II Corinthians ch. 9.**

2. The collection. (I Cor 16:2)

a. When is the offering to be taken up? “**Upon the _____ day of the week...**”

The first day of the week is Sunday, which is the day of worship for the Christian Church. (cf **Acts 20:7**)

NOTE: Sunday is called “the Lord’s Day,” and is the day of worship taught in the Bible as the day of worship. Jews met on the Sabbath; and, contrary to the beliefs of many who profess to be Christians, the Sabbath was never changed from Saturday to Sunday. To call the Christian day of worship “the Sabbath” rather than “the Lord’s Day,” is neither proper nor scriptural. To do so, as most in the Protestant churches do, is to manifest their true colors as closet Catholics. From at least the sixth century, the Catholic Church declared that “the whole glory of the Jewish Sabbath had been transferred to the Sunday.” (Catholic Encyclopedia) From that Catholic teaching has come the error of calling Sunday “the Sabbath.”

We do not meet on the Sabbath, Saturday, which is the Jewish holy day under the Law, but rather on Sunday in recognition of the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Mt 28:1; Mk 16:9; Jn 20:1, 19, Acts 20:7, I Cor 16:2

Rev 1:10 “... the Lord’s day ...” (This scripture is where we get the term.)

b. How is the offering to be given and taken up? **(I Cor 16:2)**

a. Systematically. “**... first day of the week... as God hath prospered him ...”**

b. Individually. “**... each one of you ...”**

1) It was also a private matter as to how much.

(... every one of you lay by him in store... no gatherings when I come.)”

2) This is talking about giving love offerings; not tithing. Tithing means ten percent. God commands that every believer give both tithes and offerings. (cf. **Mal 3:8-10**)

c. The offering given for a specific purpose can only be used for that purpose. **(:3-4)**

We must guarantee to the giver that it will be delivered to the designated recipient.

B. The travels of Paul, including his upcoming trip to Corinth. (:5-9)

1. He will first pass through Macedonia. **(:5)**

2. Then he planned an extended visit at Corinth. **(I Cor 16:6-7a)**

3. All of his plans were subject to the will of the Lord. **(:7b “... if the Lord permit.”)**

4. First he would remain awhile at Ephesus. **(:8)**

5. Along with open doors of ministry there are always many adversaries. **(:9)**

C. Commendations, exhortations, salutations, warning, and benediction.**1. Commendations. (:10-12)**

In these verses, Paul talks of two fellow labourers in the ministry.

a. Timotheus. (Timothy) **(:10-11)**

Timothy was commended as one who “**... worketh the will of the Lord...**” **(:10)**

b. Apollos. **(:12)**

Apollos is commended as one who will come to them when it is the proper time, in his (Apollos') own estimation. This shows the right of a Christian to decide, for himself or herself, how and when to carry out the work that God is leading them into. Yes, we should take encouragement and direction from others whom God sends to encourage us; but, the final decision must be made by us concerning whether we will do it and when we will do it. God gave us free will and we are allowed by Him to use that freedom. Keep in mind that we will always receive the consequences of our actions, both positive and negative, but we alone can make the decisions concerning what our actions will be.

2. Exhortations. (:13-18)

- a. Personal attitudes and conduct as Christians. (:13)**
- b. Interrelationships as Christians and your motives. (:14)**
- c. Conduct toward those Christians who have given themselves over wholly to the ministry; and an exhortation to acknowledge such ones. (:15-18)**

v: 18 “**acknowledge**” Gk *ep-ig-in-o-ske'-te*, to regard with favor and kindness; to get to know fully, accurately, and well

3. Salutations. (:19-21)

Paul takes the pen from the hand of his scribe in verse **:21**.

4. An exhortation to the Corinthians to put away their divisions and greet one another in Christian love and unity. (The kiss was a custom of that time that showed trust and affection.) :20b “... Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.”

5. A warning. (:22)

“**Anathema**” *a thing accursed*

“**Maranatha**” *the coming of the Lord, or the Lord has come*

Those who love not the Lord Jesus Christ are to be considered cursed at His Coming!

6. The benediction- grace and love in Christ. (:23-24)

- a. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.”**
- b. “My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.”**

All of the rebukes, warnings, and exhortations that Paul has given to those in the Church at Corinth have been given in love. That love extended not only to the stalwart and true but also to the wayward and rebellious.



One of my senior pastors put it this way:
“**I will love you when you are good and I will love you when you are bad.
One thing will never change, I will always love you in the Lord.**”
Oh, if only he and we could live up to and practice that statement.

That pastor also used to say:
“**God loves you just the way you are, but too much to leave you that way.**”

I think those two sayings pretty well sum up the godly attitude and admonitions that Paul was expressing in the last two verses of **I Corinthians**.

I Corinthians 16:23-24

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.

Amen.

Study written by.
Christ's Servant in Utah,
Ogden, UT - Oct 25, 2000 & Taylorsville, UT - Nov 21, 2008

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