

***Supplemental Notes:***

*The Books  
of 1 & 2  
Corinthians*

*compiled  
by  
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## **Acknowledgments**

These notes have been assembled from speaking notes and related materials which had been compiled from a number of classic and contemporary commentaries and other sources detailed in the bibliography, as well as other articles and publications of Koinonia House. While we have attempted to include relevant endnotes and other references, we apologize for any errors or oversights.

The complete recordings of the sessions, as well as supporting diagrams, maps, etc., are also available in various audiovisual formats from the publisher.

# Session Listing

## **Introduction and 1 Corinthians 1**

Background on the city and church at Corinth. Division in the church. Wisdom is God-given.

## **1 Corinthians 2**

Revelation comes from God's Spirit. A look at the "Natural Man" and the "Geometry of Eternity."

## **1 Corinthians 3**

We are laborers together with God. What are YOU building on Christ's foundation?

## **1 Corinthians 4**

The ministry of the Apostles, as well as our own stewardship. The Law vs. Grace. Effects of Pride.

## **1 Corinthians 5 - 6**

Background on Jewish feasts. God's Judgment of Immorality. The Forfeit of the Ungodly. God's Astonishing Grace.

## **1 Corinthians 7**

"Now concerning marriage..." Was Paul married? The mystical basis of marriage. The cost of broken families.

## **1 Corinthians 8**

Food offered to idols. Liberty under Christ vs. love and compassion for the weaker brother.

## **1 Corinthians 9**

The rights of those who preach the Gospel. The responsibility of the Church to care for its ministers.

## **1 Corinthians 10**

Warnings against idolatry. Jesus as "The Rock." Do all to the glory of God.

## **1 Corinthians 11**

Proper decorum necessary for worship. The Lord's Supper; Seven Things to Ingest.

# Session Listing

## **1 Corinthians 12**

The spiritual gifts and our relationship with the Holy Spirit. Are the gifts for today?

## **1 Corinthians 13**

The Love Chapter. Our Most Urgent Essential.

## **1 Corinthians 14**

The gift of tongues. Orderliness and individualism in worship.

## **1 Corinthians 15 - Part 1**

The definition of the Gospel. Death and Resurrection. Christ's Kingdom.

## **1 Corinthians 15 - Part 2**

The physics of immortality. The resurrection body. The Harpazo.

## **1 Corinthians 16**

The collection for the saints. The Tithe. Paul's plans for travel. Final greetings.

## **2 Corinthians 1-2**

Salutation and Thanksgiving. The postponement of Paul's visit. Restoring a sinning saint.

## **2 Corinthians 3-4**

Being triumphant in Christ. Being ministers of the New Covenant. Living by faith. The secret of endurance.

## **2 Corinthians 5-6**

The mystery of reconciliation. The Judgment Seat of Christ. Paul the Evangelist.

## **2 Corinthians 7-9**

Paul the Example. "Be not unequally yoked." The Grace of Giving. Heaven's Law of Supply and Demand. Stewardship.

## **Session Listing**

### **2 Corinthians 10-11**

“Secrets” of the Ministry. How to wage Spiritual Warfare.

### **2 Corinthians 12-13**

Paul’s defense of his ministry. The thorn in the flesh. Final greetings.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 1: Chapter 1

### “1<sup>st</sup> Californians”

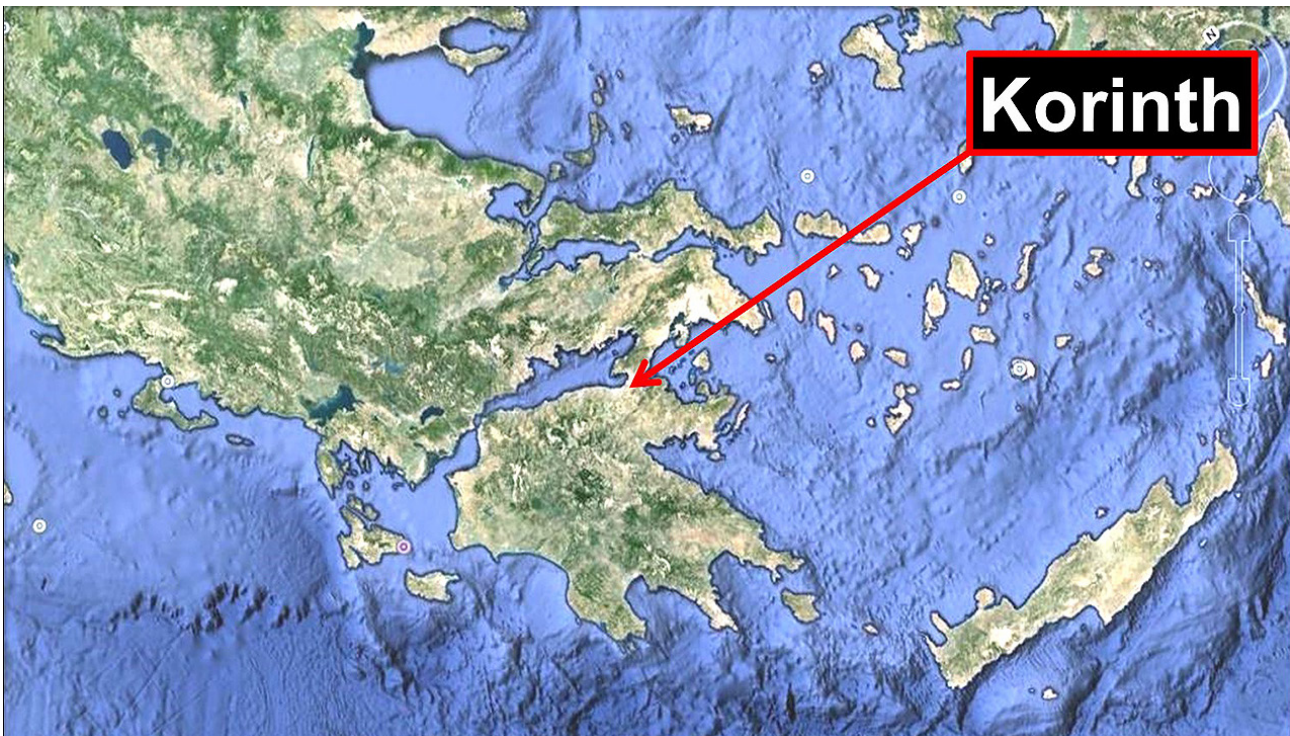
The city of Corinth was a major influence throughout that part of the world...in every respect, including it becoming an idiom for fornication (which, of course, became idiomatic for the entire Gentile culture). When I teach this book in America, I can't resist calling it “1<sup>st</sup> Californians.” Unfortunately, the epithet is justified...)

### Our Agenda

- Geopolitical background
- The occasion of this letter
- Verse-by-verse exposition of Chapter 1:
  - Spiritual Entrepreneurship; our Position vs. our Walk; and, the Ultimate Oxymoron

### Geopolitical Advantage

The city of Corinth enjoyed a strategic geographical position. This guaranteed its commercial prosperity. “A sailor never takes around Malea until he first writes his will.” It was situated on an isthmus, a narrow neck of land between the Corinthian Gulf (Port of Lechaem) and the Saronic Gulf (Port of Cenchrea). Isthmus transit via Corinth avoided the long and risky voyage around the rocky, storm-tossed capes (Cape Malea, now Cape Matapan) at the south of the Peloponnesus (250 miles).



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

## Corinth

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

L. Mummius Achaicus, a Roman, destroyed the city in 146 B.C. Julius Caesar refounded it as a Roman colony a century later and then Corinth regained its former greatness. This new city of Corinth was primarily a Roman colony. Note the Latin names associated with Corinth in NT:

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| • Lucius, Tertius, Gaius, Erastus, Quartus | Rom 16:21-23 |
| • Titius, Justus, Crispus                  | Acts 18:7-8  |
| • Fortunatus and Achaicus                  | 1 Cor 16:17  |

Corinth was highly cosmopolitan: Greeks, Latins, Syrians, Asiatics, Egyptians, and Jews.

Over 1000 prostitutes were connected with the temple of Aphrodite on the Acrocorinth, an acropolis on a 2000-foot-high granite hill overlooking Old Corinth. [Aphrodite Kallipygos, “Aphrodite of the Beautiful Buttocks,” *Athenaeus*, 12.554c; “Patroness of the Harlots.”] Asclepius, Apollo, Poseidon, Athena, Hera, Hermes, and the Egyptian gods Isis and Serapis were all worshipped in Corinth.

Even in the pagan world, this city was known for its moral corruption. Paul lists some of these: fornication (*porneia*, thus, pornography), idolatry, adultery, effeminacy, homosexuality, stealing, covetousness, drunkenness, swindling, etc. (1 Cor 6:9-10). “Corinth” came to imply licentiousness. *Korinthiazesthai*, “Corinthianize” = to live in debauchery; “Go to the devil.”

The city of Corinth was Hollywood, Las Vegas, and New York all rolled into one. It was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia; it was also the most populous and wealthy in Greece. The finest athletes were attracted to the Isthmian Games. (So dominant that they were celebrated even after the city was destroyed.)

Corinth enjoyed fertile soil; grapes and other crops flourished. (“Currant” derives from Corinth.) Corinth was intellectually alert, materially prosperous, but morally corrupt. Its citizens were devoted to the reckless development of the individual. Merchants gained by all and every means.

Men of pleasure, surrendering to every lust; men recognized no superior and no law but their own desires. Horace: “It’s not every man’s lot to get to Corinth” (*Epistles*, I.17.36), referring to the great expense of the self-indulgent life at Corinth (i.e. “California”).

## Paul at Corinth

Paul went to Philippi: He met opposition by fanatical Jews, he then went to Thessalonica and Berea and then on to Athens—with little success. Paul’s 18 months is compressed into 17 verses (Acts 18:1-18).

Paul then went to Corinth “with much trembling” (1 Cor 2:3) ...alone because Silas and Timothy were occupied in Macedonia. He lodged with Aquila and Priscilla, Jews expelled from Rome by a decree of Emperor Claudius (A.D. 49?). Like Paul, they also were “tentmakers” (leatherworkers) by trade.

## Tent Making

Paul’s native province of Cilicia was noted for its good grade of goats’ haircloth, used largely for tents, that it was exported by the designation of Cilician cloth. Paul’s skill in this craft probably consisted of the sewing together of the proper lengths of cloth and the attaching of ropes and loops. Jewish parents taught their children trades, usually one that was pursued in successive generations by the family. (“He that doesn’t teach a trade raises a thief.”)

## Spiritual Entrepreneurship

Paul is a remarkable example...He never took money for himself from those he was ministering to (he only took donations for others). He supported himself by his vocational skills (and diligent management!). *He remained as independent as possible.*

## Paul at Corinth

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

These three are the only Jews mentioned...But most converts were Gentile pagans.

- **Crispus**, ruler of the synagogue, became a believer (Acts 18:8).
- **Sosthenes** may be a synagogue ruler, and he also became a believer! (Acts 18:17).
- **Gaius**: He gave hospitality to Paul and the whole Church (Rom 16:23; written from Corinth).

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

Sometime after Paul left Corinth, **Apollos**, a learned man from Alexandria, arrived. He had been in Ephesus teaching Christianity, but he knew only John’s Baptism. Aquila and Priscilla “explained the way of God more adequately” (Acts 18:26). Apollo then went to Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital. Paul’s preaching, despite his educational background, had a studied simplicity (1 Cor 2:2-4); Apollos was probably highly rhetorical (Acts 18:24, 27-28).

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

## **Occasion of “1 Corinthians”**

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

## **The “Painful Visit”**

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

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

## **The “Severe Letter”**

Paul determined to write another letter, obviously very severe in tone, and it cost him much to write (2 Cor 2:4; 7:8). Had it not been successful it might conceivably have meant a final rupture between Paul and this church he had founded. This letter seems to have been lost (many scholars believe part of it is preserved in 2 Cor 10-13).

This letter was apparently taken by Titus, who was to return via Macedonia and Troas. Paul was impatient to know how it had been received. When he eventually catches up to Titus, he learns that all is well (2 Cor 2:12-17; 7:5-7, 13). Out of his great relief and joy, Paul wrote the letter we call 2 Corinthians. Almost certainly he visited the church soon afterwards.

## **Three Visits & Four Letters**

### **Three Visits:**

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

### **Four Letters:**

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

## **Authorship**

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

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

## Key Topics

Paul addresses the following:

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| – Discipline           | Chapter 5         |
| – Going to Law         | Chapter 6         |
| – Marriage and Divorce | Chapter 7         |
| – Christian Liberty    | Chapters 8, 9, 10 |
| – Lord’s Table         | Chapter 11        |
| – Gift of Tongues      | Chapters 12-14    |
| (A better way)         | Chapter 13        |
| – Resurrection         | Chapter 15        |

## 1 Corinthians 1

- 1] Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

“...called”: The divine origin of his apostolate authority (Rom 1:1; Gal 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1).

“Sosthenes” may be the Jewish “synagogue ruler,” a believer (Acts 18:17).

- 2] Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

“...the church”: *Ekklesia*, assembly: In the Septuagint (LXX), this same term is used for the people of Israel. Note: Church of God... sanctified... saints. Remember this is Corinth, the most carnal, worldly, sectarian church; *yet saved!* This is essential: Distinguish between one’s position and practice; one’s standing and his state. Otherwise, it’s impossible to understand any other part of the New Testament.

“With all...in every place...”: This letter is addressed to each of us who seek to own the Lordship of Christ. [Parallels the OT: call upon the name of YHWH (Joel 2:32) sets the highest possible place to Christ.]

Paul does not threaten them with the loss of salvation, Why? It’s God’s faithfulness, not theirs (re: v.4). Remember the Prodigal son: his relationship did not change; he was still his son! (Luke 15:11-32)

The first nine verses: Paul announces who they (we) are before he addresses their problems...

- 3] Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace, *charis*; Greek greeting, *chairein*, peace: In Hebrew it’s *shalom*. Our Lord Jesus Christ. No one in the Scriptures ever addresses our blessed Savior merely as “Jesus.” This epistle emphasizes His Lordship. If He is not Lord of all, then He is not Lord at all. Number one on a list of one!

- 4] I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;  
5] That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;  
6] Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

“...given by Jesus Christ”: God’s grace is *given!* Not for *their* achievements; not earned, but given.

“...confirmed”: The verb used in *papyri* in the legal sense of guaranteeing.

“He who began a good work...will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil 1:6). It will never be said of God that He saved a man and then couldn’t keep him. The Shepherd keeps the sheep, not the sheep.

7] So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- Charisma. Used in the following ways:

- |                                     |            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| 1) Salvation                        | Rom 5:15   |
| 2) God’s good gifts in general      | Rom 11:29  |
| 3) Special endowments of the Spirit | Rom 12:4ff |

All of God; all of grace. No church was more richly endowed, and yet no church was more carnal. *They became more occupied with the gift rather than the Giver.*

## Lexicographical Subtleties

### ***Parousia*** - Personal Presence

- Used by Paul
- Of the coming of Stephanas 1 Cor 16:17
- Of Titus 2 Cor 7:6,7
- Of Paul to Philippi Phil 1:26
- Of the blessed return of the Lord 1 Cor 15:23; 1 Thess 4:1,4-17
- Of the destruction of the Man of Sin 2 Thess 2:8

### ***Apokalupsis*** – unveiling, revelation; implies perceptibility

- Used of the Lord 2 Thess 1:7; 1 Pet 1:7, 13; 4:13
- Of the sons of God at His return Rom 8:19
- Of the Man of Sin 2 Thess 2:3, 6, 8

### ***Epiphaneia*** – brightness, manifestation

- Used of 1<sup>st</sup> Advent 2 Tim 1:10
- Used of 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent 2 Thess 2:8; 1 Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 4:1,8; Tit 2:13

8] Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9] God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

“...fellowship” = Koinonia; communion, communication.

“Lord Jesus Christ”: Name of the Savior mentioned 10 times in 10 verses. Note: if not translated incorrectly, “day of Christ” is a day of blessing and reward; the “day of the Lord” is connected with judgment (used incorrectly in Isa 2:12; Rev 19:11-21).

## **Position vs. Walk**

Verses 2-9 (in contrast to vv.10-13) illustrate a distinction constantly made in the Epistles between the believer’s standing in Christ Jesus, in the family of God, and his walk, or actual state. Standing in Grace is the result of the work of Christ and is fully entered the moment that Christ is received by faith:

- Standing in Grace (Jn 1:12-13; Rom 8:1,15-17;1 Cor 1:2,30;12:12-13; Gal 3:26, Eph 1:3-14; 2:4 9;1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; 5:9-10).
- The application of the Word to walk and conscience (Jn 17:17; Eph 5:26).
- The divine chastenings (1 Cor 11:32; Heb 12:10).
- The ministry of the Spirit (Eph 4:11-12).
- The difficulties and trials of the daily life (1 Pet 4:12-13).
- The final transformation and appearing of Christ (1 Jn 3:2).

## Divisions: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

- Quibbling, following personalities, wrangling over nonessentials.

## Augustine's Admonition

In *essentials*, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, *agapè*.

10] Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

- “...brethren”: Used 39X in this letter (and in Romans and 1 Thessalonians, 19 times each.)
- “...divisions”: Schisms; tears, rips; thus produces dissensions and cliques. (Not denominations: these divisions are internal, not external).
- Does Christ love His Church? Then, don’t we grieve Him when we attack (a member of) it?
- In the Koinonia Institute, we never comment on any other ministry. We will only compare with the Word of God.

11] For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

“Chloe”: She is not otherwise known.

12] Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13] Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

May not be actual names (cf. 1 Cor 4:6). Paul may simply be using them figuratively. He doesn’t put any one person on the spot. Corinth loved philosophers, and so followed the “teachings” of particular teachers.

14] I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

15] Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

16] And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

“...I baptized also”: Baptism (vv. 14-16): Christ delegated this to His followers. Paul did baptize, but as exceptions. It is appropriate for a new believer to be baptized, but don’t look to the person who baptizes you—look to the Lord!

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

17] For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18] For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

- “Foolishness”: *Moria*, thus moronic. Everyone in the world is presently in one of two classes: saved or lost.
- How do you know? Is the message of Christ foolishness, bizarre, weird?
- The cross: It is, at the same time, both the declaration of man’s utter depravity and the manifestation of God’s infinite Love.
- “Perish?” = lost (2 Cor 4:3).
- Message = *logos*, the word (cf. John 1:1-3). Note that there are two mutually exclusive categories!

19] For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20] Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

- Paul quotes from Isa 29:14, LXX (cf. Ps 33:10; Prov 14:12; 16:25). One-third of Paul’s quotes come from Isaiah.
- Aion, “this age”; *kosmos*, this “ordered universe.” [To bring order out of chaos: cf. “cosmetics.”]
- Philosophy = “love of wisdom.” In Corinth, there were fifty different philosophical movements, each with their favorite philosopher.
- The Christian has no need for human philosophy: where it agrees with Scripture, it is unnecessary. Where it disagrees, it is wrong and therefore misleading. It has nothing reliable to offer (Col 2:8).

21] For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22] For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

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

23] But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24] But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

They didn’t know their own Scriptures (Ps 22, Isa 53, Dan 9). “Wisdom” would have opened the way to salvation only to the intellectually gifted.

25] Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

How can you speak of the “*foolishness of God*”? This has to be the ultimate oxymoron (a self-contradicting phrase)!

## The Foolishness of God

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Noah and his “barge”             | Genesis 6-8              |
| • Samson and the jawbone of an ass | Judges 15                |
| • Elisha and Naaman the leper      | 2 Kings 5                |
| • Moses and the Brazen Serpent     | Numbers 21; John 3:14-16 |
| • Jonah and the Big Fish           | Jonah 2                  |

- The Ultimate Foolishness:
  - A wooden cross in Judea becomes the central fulcrum in the history of the universe (Isaiah 53).

26] For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27] But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

- “...not many noble: Lady Huntington, a friend of Whitfield and the Wesleys, claimed she was saved by an “M”: it didn’t say “any” it said “many”!
- “...are called”: Points to the divine initiative...
- “...God hath chosen”: Again, God chose. This underscores the fact that He has His purposes. [Our intrinsic materialism—carnality—should be eclipsed by the realization that we are subject to a divine calling by God Himself!]
- Eleven disciples were lowly Galileans: They were fishermen, tax collectors; peasants.
- Only one was a “gentleman,” a Judean—his name was Judas.
- Saul of Tarsus was a contrast: He was educated in two cultures and was a leader, powerfully placed. He counted it all for nought. He had to give up his religion in order to go to heaven!

28] And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29] That no flesh should glory in his presence.

Let’s realize God knew what He was doing!

30] But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31] That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

That is, as they say, “The bottom line!” That is a call to humility for us all!

- “In” Christ Jesus: Whole books have been written about this enigmatic phrase. It’s the most intimate, the closest possible connection with our Lord.
- Wisdom includes:
  - Righteousness (no “our” in the Greek). Christ is our righteousness (2 Cor 5:21)
  - Sanctification, Holiness (Rom 6:19; 1 Thess 4:3-7)
  - Redemption (Mark 10:45, et al.)

## Three Tenses of Salvation

- Have been saved from the penalty of sin; righteousness;
- Are being saved from the power of sin; sanctification;
- Shall be saved from the presence of sin; redemption.

## Next Session

- Read the entire epistle of 1st Corinthians. Study carefully Chapters 2-3.
- What are the key lessons for us personally?
- Who is present at the “Bema Seat” of Christ and what is involved? When?

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 2: Chapter 2

Corinth was like a combination of New York, Las Vegas, and Hollywood, all wrapped up in one. And “Corinthian” and “fornicator” became synonymous; thus...1<sup>st</sup> Californians Session 2: Chapter 2

### Review

- Geopolitical Background
- The Occasion of this Letter
- Four Letters & Three Visits

## Four Letters & Three Visits

### • Four letters:

1) When the church was founded

1) The “Previous Letter”

2) “1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians”

2) “The “Painful” visit

3) The “Severe Letter”

4) “2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians.”

3) A visit after 2 Corinthians had been sent.

### Occasion of “1 Corinthians”

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

### The Foolishness of God

- Noah and his “barge” Genesis 6-8
- Samson and the jawbone of an ass Judges 15
- Elisha and Naaman the leper 2 Kings 5
- Moses and the Brazen Serpent Numbers 21; John 3:14-16
- Jonah and the Big Fish Jonah 2
- The Ultimate Foolishness:
  - A wooden cross in Judea becomes the central fulcrum in the history of the universe (Isaiah 53).

Verses 1-5 of Chapter 2 summarizes and completes the “Foolishness” discourse of Chapter 1.

## 1 Corinthians 2

1] And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

- Paul is not making an exception of himself. He learned his lesson in Athens (Acts 17:22-34)
- He had conformed to what he had been saying about the “foolishness” of the gospel.
- Preaching the gospel is not delivering edifying discourses beautifully put together. It is bearing witness to what God has done in Christ for our salvation.

2] For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

“Jesus Christ and Him crucified”: Paul excluded everything but that great central truth: “the Gospel.” What is “*The Gospel?*”

### The Gospel

*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*

1 Corinthians 15:1,2

*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:***

1 Corinthians 15:3,4

- He died in the most documented execution in all history, fulfilling dozens of very precise specifications recorded centuries in advance:
  - Not a bone to be broken (Ex 12:46, Num 9:12, Ps 34:20).
  - A Roman soldier violated his specific orders to maintain this requirement (Jn 19:33-35).
- He was buried, again fulfilling precise requirements
  - Andrew Bonar detailed the Levitical burial requirements 43 years *before* the discovery of the Garden Tomb by General Charles George Gordon in 1883 (Andrew Bonar, *Leviticus*, 1840).
- And He then rose from the dead, again fulfilling numerous specifications that embroider the entire Old Testament.
- This third element is the very capstone of Paul’s definition of the “Gospel.” (This very chapter Paul regards as the most important chapter in the Bible! Cf. 1 Cor 15:13-19. (Of over 500, many were still alive as readers of this letter...))

### “Third Day” (According to the Scriptures)?

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Jonah                 | Matthew 12:40           |
| 2) The <i>Akedah</i>     | Genesis 22              |
| 3) Noah’s New Beginning  | Genesis 8:4             |
| 4) Rahab’s cords         | Josh 2:15-18            |
| 5) The <i>Tolah</i> Worm | Psalm 22:6; Isaiah 1:8; |
- [Cf. Genesis 40:20; Exodus 19:11f; Leviticus 7:17-18; Hosea 6:2]

- Jesus Himself also made repeated predictions in the New Testament:
  - Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19;
  - Mark 9:31; 10:34;
  - Luke 9:22; 13:11, 32; 18:33; 24:7, 21.

## Exclusions

What is also distinctive is what Paul does *not* include in “the Gospel.” He makes no mention of the Lord’s teachings; or His miracles; or His example; etc. Our basic calling is to declare the Gospel, and this differentiates us from the pending social issues of the day. This will not be a popular stance. *But it is his primary calling for us.* The popular label of “good news” is merely a glib cop-out. Paul is definitively specific.

- 2] For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

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

- 3] And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

- “I was with you in weakness”: Paul had much to discourage him before he arrived in Corinth. Even the Lord Himself encouraged him.
- Paul endured physical ailments, punishment and affliction (2 Cor 11:23-28; 12:7):
  - He was ill in Galatia Gal 4:13-14
  - Of small stature 2 Cor 10:10
  - And with poor eyesight Gal 4:15; 6:11
- He was not impressive in appearance: “a man small of stature, with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, with eyebrows meeting and nose somewhat crooked.” [*Acts of Paul and Thecla*, cited from E. Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, vol 2, p. 354, Lutterworth, 1965.]

- 4] And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

- “...enticing”: *πειθός peithos*: persuasive; demonstration, the most rigorous proof.
- Paul’s very defects had afforded the most convincing demonstration of the power of the Spirit (2 Cor 12:9, Rom 15:13; 1 Thess 1:5; Rom 1:16).
- Expository preaching of the Word (2 Tim 4:2, 5).
- “Spirit” appears in this epistle for the first time. The last word is “power,” almost always associated with the Spirit (Act 1:8; Luke 24:49).

- 5] That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Paul’s intention had been to ground his converts in the divine power and to make them independent of human wisdom. Faith that depends upon clever reasoning can be demolished by a more acute argument. Faith produced by the power of God can never be overthrown. The wisdom of Christ is in total opposition to the worldly wisdom so beloved in California (i.e. Corinth).

- 6] Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

“...them that are perfect”: Paul distinguishes between Christians (who have accepted the wisdom of the cross) with outsiders (who have not). Spiritual maturity is the moment-by-moment acceptance of God’s wise provision, even if the world sees it as folly. The NT writers do not envisage “grades” of Christians. All believers should grow to maturity (Heb 6:1).

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

- 7] But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:
- “God ordained before the ages”: The Gospel was not an afterthought. It was planned before time began (Eph 1:4; 3:2-12; Col 1:26).
  - προορίζω *proorizo*, “destined”: Foreordained by God, not man. And for our glory, a supernatural destiny (Rom 8:18).
- 8] Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
- Rulers of this age did not know what they were doing (Acts 3:17; 4:25-28; Jesus Himself says so in Luke 23:34).
  - “...the Lord of Glory”: The loftiest title ever applied—only here (Jas 2:1 is similar). The “Mysteries of God” are hidden from the unsaved world.
- 9] But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
- Isaiah 64:4 (+ Ps 31:20; Isa 52:15; 65:17).
  - The Spirit’s wisdom applies to the believer’s life today.
  - *Kardia*: mind, inner life; heart. [See our briefing package, *Architecture of Man*, or our textbook, *The Way of Agape*.]
- 10] But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.
- Spirit mentioned once so far: In vv. 10-14, 6 more times = 7.
  - “...deep things”: Unfathomable. The only person who can tell us about God is the Spirit of God.
  - “Revealed” takes away all suggestion of superiority. There is no room for pride here. It is God’s initiative and completion.

## The Transfer Process

- In vv.9-15 we have the process by which a truth passes from the mind of God to the mind of His people:
    - Undiscoverable by natural man
    - Spirit-taught words an infallible guide
- 11] For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

- Full Deity is given to the Spirit.
- Analogy from the nature of man (cf. Isa 55:8).

12] Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

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

## The Holy Spirit

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| • Indwells us and makes us His Temple        | 1 Cor 6:19-20  |
| • Baptized us into the Body of Christ        | 1 Cor 12:13    |
| • Seals us                                   | Eph 1:13-14    |
| • And will remain with us                    | John 14:16     |
| • “...freely given to us”: speaks of liberty | 2 Cor 3:17     |
| – not of bondage                             | Rom 8:15, 8:32 |

13] Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

- Bold use of subjective genitive: We are to pass on, not by worldly words, but by those words taught by the Spirit; not based on human thinking, man’s wisdom, et al.
- Paul’s style, vocabulary, diction, and syntax were all vehicles of the truth that the Spirit taught him.
- The Spirit makes all the difference. [Therefore, the flame in our logo, cf. next verse.]

14] But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

- Spiritual things are meaningless, irrelevant, foolish, and have no place in a life that is limited to the present world.
- Unbelievers are unable to judge spiritually because they themselves are dead in trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1).
- After the Spirit: Divine life quickens each page to illuminate the inner meaning shining forth...

This is a key verse! **Before conversion** (re: Scriptures): You can admire the grandeur, feel the charm of the history, wonder at the majesty of the language. But you will miss the intent. **After the Spirit**: Divine life quickens each page to illuminate the inner meaning shining forth...[Secular scientists, humanism, et al. It is ungodly (cf. Ps 1).]

## Special Topics

- The Natural Man
- The Geometry of Eternity
- The Physics of Software

## The Natural Man

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Hebrews 4:2

- The Soul? The Spirit? (Heb 4:12): Only the Word of God can differentiate between the two.
- Psychology is, thus, doomed to frustration.
- The Heart? It can't be "known." (Jer 17:9)

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

Jeremiah 16:9

- Psychology is, thus, doomed to frustration.
- The Heart? (Jer 17:9). It can't be "known." These are software, not hardware problems.
- No matter how much you know about computer *hardware*, *you have* no insight into its *behavior* (*unless a physical problem is present*):
- That's a software issue. No matter how much you know about neurophysiology, you don't have the knowledge to predict behavior.
- In an infinite state "machine," you cannot predict the behavior (or infer the design architecture) from the external operation.
- [That's why a software industry is feasible: you can use it, but not gain its design insights. You can go from high-level compilers to machine code, but not the other way around.]
- This is one of the reasons why the field of psychology is doomed to frustration: They are trying to infer the internal system design while being restricted to its external behavior.
- There is a part of you that is not physical. The real "you" is "software," not "hardware."

## The Geometry of Eternity

Let's rid ourselves of some misconceptions.

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

The "dilation" of time can also be dramatized by considering two hypothetical twin astronauts. One remains on the Earth; the other undertakes a space mission in which the vehicle attains a speed of half the velocity of light, en route to Alpha Centauri and back (about four light years away). When our traveler returns to the Earth, he would be a little more than *two years younger than his twin brother!*

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

## The Physics of Software

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

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

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

Fortunately, our genetic imperfections—inherited from Adam—have been dealt with...*by a love story: A*

*love story written in blood, on a wooden cross, almost 2,000 years ago.* Taking our place, Jesus substituted His eligibility for our own and that eligibility is now available for the asking.

15] But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

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

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

16] For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Isa 40:13 ("the mind of YHWH"): The Mind of Christ is the Wisdom and Power of God. [See our 8-session study, *Be Ye Transformed*.]

- Jesus is a living person who is yearning to take His Throne (John 17:24) and has scheduled an audit of our accounting of His calling for each of us (2 Corinthians 5:10).
- (Oops!) *Aye, there's the rub.*
- Are you ready for 2 Corinthians 5:10?
- Does your church teach (and prepare you for) this *bema* seat event?
- The procedure will be detailed in our next session, 1 Corinthians 3:12-15.
- Be careful: Don't confuse our responsibilities for fruit-bearing with Jesus' completed work at Golgotha.

## Next Session

- Read the entire epistle, then study carefully Chapter 3.
- What are the key lessons for us personally?
- Who is present at the "*Bema Seat*" of Christ and what is involved? When?

## 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians Session 3: Chapter 3

*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

John 10:28,29

- "Shall never" is a double negative in the Greek; it's a form which is especially emphatic.
- "...my hand...my Father's hand: Notice there are two hands involved! I have searched the original texts; I cannot find, "Oops!" Some suggest that we, ourselves, can yet snatch ourselves out of the Father's hand. What kind of security is it that offers no security against our own weaknesses? (Jn 5:24).

## Chapter 3: The Challenges of Carnality

1] And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

“Brothers”: Equals. (OT prophets never addressed their readers, but admonished them from above...)

From Genesis 1 through Revelation 22, there are only two classes of people—believers and unbelievers (Gen 4:1-15; Ps 73:15-28; Hos 2:23; Mt 25:31; Eph 2:11-13; Rev 22:14-15). There is no third class. But within the category of believers, there are two natures: carnal and spiritual.

Carnal: still controlled by the old nature; failure to make progress in spiritual growth; sensual and fleshy. Remember, Paul is speaking to Christians: They are sanctified in Christ (1 Cor 1:2; 2:14); they received the Spirit (1 Cor 2:13); and Paul called them brothers (1 Cor 3:1).

Maturity is an eschatological category, reached at the time of the resurrection of the dead (Phil 3:11-15). Be alive in Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, and seek to glorify God the Father.

## The Paradigm of Salvation

[Misused term: “Salvation” and “being saved” can often refer to other things besides theological redemption.]

“I **have been** saved; I **am being** saved; and I **will be** saved.”

—Earl D. Rachmacher

- **Justification** (Past tense)

The gift from God of everlasting life received by faith alone in Christ alone.

- **Sanctification** (Present tense)

A progressive work that involves the faith and the works of the believer.

- **Glorification** (Future tense)

A result of the previous aspects. All believers will be glorified (resurrected and given a body like Christ), but some will have more glory (i.e. reward) than others.

• <b>Past Tense:</b>	Separation from the <i>Penalty</i> of Sin	<b><i>Justification</i></b>
• <b>Present Tense:</b>	Separation from the <i>Power</i> of Sin	<b><i>Sanctification</i></b>
• <b>Future Tense:</b>	Separation from the <i>Presence</i> of Sin	<b><i>Glorification</i></b>

- Justification is *for* us; Sanctification is *in* us.
- Justification *declares* the sinner righteous; Sanctification *makes* the sinner righteous.
- Justification removes the *guilt* and *penalty* of sin; Sanctification removes the *growth* and the *power* of sin.
- Salvation involves all three Persons of the Godhead (1 Pet 1:2; Eph 1:3-14)
  - The Father’s electing grace;
  - The Son’s loving sacrifice
  - The Spirit’s ministry of conviction & regeneration.

2] I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

- “Babes in Christ”: “Da-da” is cute for one-year-olds; embarrassing for 18-year-olds.
- This language is reminiscent of Heb 5:12-14.
- Is Paul the author of Hebrews? Three epistles form a *trilogy on* Hab 2:4, “*The Just Shall Live by Faith*:”
  - Who are “The Just”
  - How are they “to live”
  - by “Faith”

Romans 1:17
Galatians 3:11
Hebrews 10:38

A Trilogy  
on  
Hab 2:4

3] For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

- “...carnal”: v.1: *sarkinos*, fleshly: essence, or substance of; v.3: *sarkikos*, fleshly: appearance of the characteristics.
- In contrast to: *Psuchikos* “of the senses”; natural Adamic man; *Pneumatikos*, “spiritual,” reborn, Spirit-filled
- “...are ye not carnal?”: Natural, unspiritual.
- “still worldly” (International Standard Version)
- “of the flesh” (New Revised Standard Version)
- “natural inclinations” (New Jerusalem Bible)
- “in a natural condition” (New American Bible)
- “not spiritually-minded” (NT translation, Cassirer)
- “on the merely natural plane” (New English Bible)
- “controlled by your fallen human nature” (The New Translation)
- There is no discernible difference in conduct between them and the unsaved. [Is that *us*?] The world can’t tell that they (*we*) are Christians. Why?
  - 1) They (*we*?) are filled with jealousy and strife (1 Cor 1:11; Rom 13:13; 2 Cor 12:20; Gal 5:20). Devoid of love for one another.
  - 2) They have a “Holier-than-thou” attitude; spiritual pride, separatistic, contentious...

4] For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

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

5] Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

- A pastor is not a minister of a particular church but rather a minister of Christ’s gospel. Pastors are servants, **διάκονος** *diakonos*: table waiters (Deacons).
- Names are mentioned 3X (vv. 4, 5, 22), but always in a different order to de-emphasize any particular one. Focus on the work, not the person.
- A Christian worker is never to be idolized. Only Christ should receive glory and honor. (Cf. Nicolaitans...vs. foot washing...)

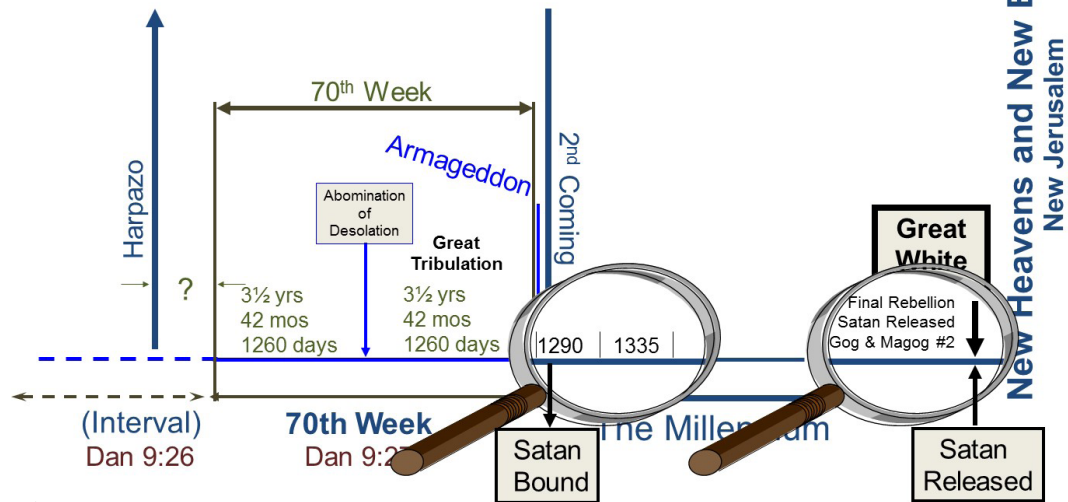
- 6] I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.
- The Greek verbs indicate that the work of Paul and Apollos *was completed (aorist)*, but the work of God *was continuous (imperfect)*.
- 7] So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.
- *Theos (God)* stands last in the Greek structure of this sentence, receiving the emphasis.
- 8] Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.
- Individuality is a factor that God does not overlook.
  - Rewards are the result of faithfulness. They are not the reason for, nor the goal of, the servant's labors.
  - Paul refutes the notion that he and Cephas and Apollos are at variance or rivals (cf. v.22; 1 Cor 16:12).
- 9] For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.
- "Without Him, we can't; without us, He won't." God has chosen to accomplish His work through us!
- 10] According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.
- "Let every man take heed": A solemn warning. We are God's Building. We are only subcontractors.
  - [Find out what your gifts are, then go apply them!]
- 11] For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- The foundation has been laid by Jesus Christ.
  - No theologian or committee can change the gospel without incurring God's wrath.
- 12] Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, [or] wood, hay, stubble;
- Six commodities, in two groups, in descending order of worth.
  - Three are products of a *creative act*, not growth or development.
  - Three are the result of *natural growth and development*. (Old nature?)
  - All building on the same foundation, but with vastly differing results.
  - The first three are permanent. The second three will perish.
  - The largest load of hay or wood may be worth less than the smallest diamond...
  - So you have been saved: what have you done with it?
  - "We must all appear before the bema seat of Christ..." (2 Cor 5:10)

## **Bema Seat**

- Tribunal seat, judicial bench, judgment seat, or throne.
- Herod Agrippa I addressed the people of Tyre and Sidon (Acts 12:21).
- Jesus brought before Pilate (John 19:13; cf. Mt 27:19).
- Paul accused before Proconsul Gallio (A relic still among the ruins in Corinth.) Acts 18:12,16,1.
- Paul brought before Festus at Caesarea (Acts 25:6,10,17).

# The Order of Events

(not to scale)

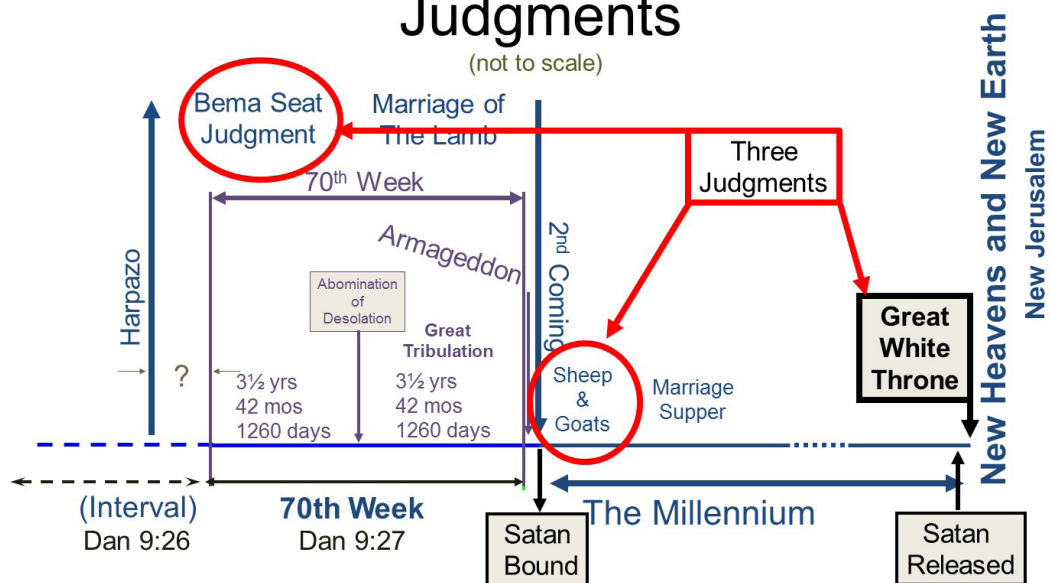


## Judgments

- Bema Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10; 1 Cor 3:11-15)
  - Rewards: crowns, assignments
  - Kingdom Parables: Talents, Virgins, Uninvited...
  - Call of the Bride to the Marriage of Lamb
- “Sheep & Goat” judgment (Mt 25:31-46)
  - On the earth: (3 separate parties involved)
  - Mortals are judged on the basis of “works”
- Great White Throne (Rev 20:11-15)
  - At the end of the Millennium, of the unsaved dead
  - Then: New Heavens, New Earth, New Jerusalem

## Judgments

(not to scale)



## Five Crowns

- |                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1) of righteousness    | 2 Tim 4:8       |
| 2) of glory            | 1 Pet 5:2-4     |
| 3) of life             | Rev 2:10        |
| 4) incorruptible crown | 1 Cor 9:25-27   |
| 5) of rejoicing        | 1 Thess 2:19,20 |

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

- 13] Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
- 14] If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
- 15] If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.
- Permanency. Whatever you have done *for Christ shall remain*.
  - Everything else will burn.

## Rewards Distinguished

- Salvation is invariably presented as a free gift (Jn 4:10; Rom 6:23; Eph 2:8,9).
- Rewards are earned by works; fruit-bearing (Mt 10:42; Lk 19:17; 1 Cor 9:24,25; 2 Tim 4:7,8; Rev 2:10; 22:12).
- Salvation is a present possession (Lk 7:50; Jn 3:36; 5:24; 6:47).
- Rewards are a future attainment given by Him at His Coming (Mt 16:27; 2 Tim 4:8; Rev 22:12).

## Lot as an Example

- Lot was vexed daily (2 Pet 2:8): Abraham was not vexed; he had separated himself from the world.
- God destroyed Sodom but saved Lot, "yet as by fire."
- Everything he had lived for was burned up.
- That which is done for sake of personal gain, popularity, influence, or its impression on the world, will be for nought (Jn 15:16).
- Our greatest Joy: winning souls? and their *sustained growth!* (3 John 4).
- Thus, the *edification ministry of Koinonia Institute*.

- 16] Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

- "Don't you know": Rhetorical question used 10X in this letter as a mild rebuke.

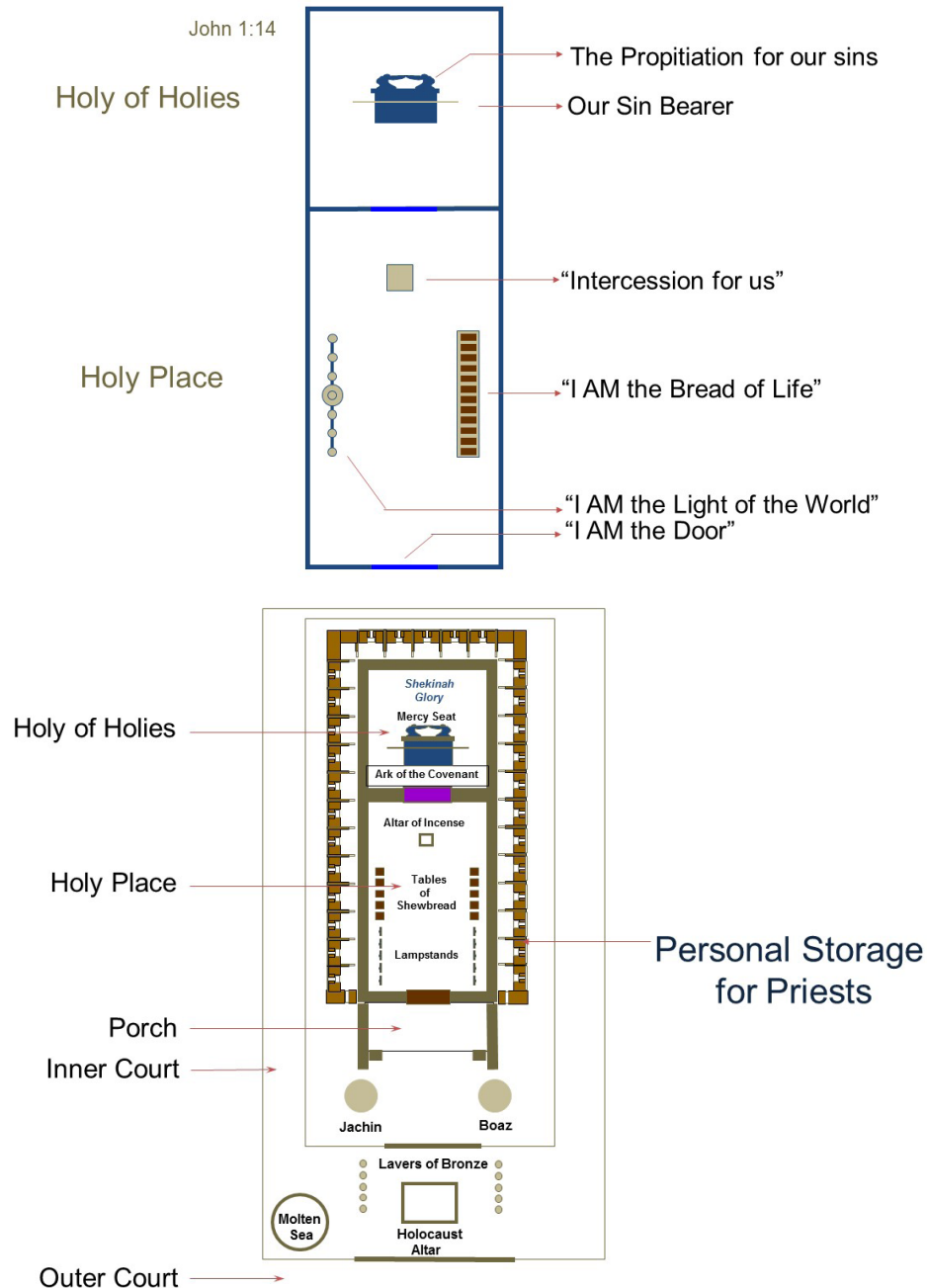
## "Ye are the Temple of God"

- For a detailed study on the Temple of God, see the briefing package, *The Architecture of Man*, and the studies and textbook, *The Way of Agape*.

- 17] If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

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

**"The Word was made flesh and *tabernacled* among us..."**



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

18] Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

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

- *The ultimate barrier to truth is the presumption that you already have it.*
- He who knows, and knows not that he knows, is asleep; wake him.
- He who knows not, and knows that he knows not, is a student; teach him.
- He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool; shun him.
- He who knows, and knows that he knows, is wise; follow him.

*Persian Proverb*

19] For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

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

20] And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

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

21] Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

- “Let no man glory in men...”: Let him who boasts boast in the Lord (Jer 9:24). Paul paraphrases a Stoic proverb (“The Wise man ...is lord over all that comes to him from without”) and relates it to Jesus Christ.
- Everything in the Earth belongs to God (Ps 24:1).
- “All things are yours”: Two words in the Greek. All things are yours in Christ (Phil 1:21).

22] Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

23] And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.

- “World, life, death, the present, the future”: The five ultimate tyrannies of human existence to which people are in *lifelong bondage* as slaves (Rom 8:38).
- Christ made the world, redeemed it, upholds it, and appoints his people to be His stewards in it.

## **Seven Questions (Romans 8:31-37)**

Seven questions which specifically raise the question of the believer’s eternal security in this magnificent conclusion to Romans 8.

### **1, 2) Can opposition defeat the Christian? (Rom 8:31)**

31] What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

“If”: First class conditional = “since.”

Obviously, Satan and his demonic hosts are against believers (cf. Eph 6:11-13; 1 Pet 5:8), but they cannot ultimately prevail and triumph over believers. God is the self-existent One and the sovereign Creator and, since He is for believers, no one can oppose believers successfully.

### 3) Will we have the resources? (Rom 8:32)

- 32] He that [even] spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

(The KJV and RV failed to translate the little Greek particle *ge*, *ge*, “even,” which gives this passage a peculiar emphasis.)

The word “spare” (*e~~f~~eisato*, *epheisato*, from *feidomai*, *pheidomai*) is the same word used in the Septuagint in Genesis 22:12, translated “withheld.” God said to Abraham, “You have not withheld your son.” Then God directed Abraham to spare Isaac and to offer a ram as a substitute (Gen 22:2-14), whereas God offered His own Son, on that very spot, as the Sacrifice for sin (Jn 1:29).

Since God gave the greatest Sacrifice of all, His own Son, He will certainly not hesitate to give believers all other things pertaining to and leading to their ultimate sanctification (cf. 2 Peter 1:3). Answered: Rom 5:6-10. The next two questions are forensic (legal) in nature:

### 4) Will our failures reverse our justification? (Rom 8:33)

- 33] Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

“Charge”: *egkalese*, *enkalesei*, “make a formal accusation in court; press charges” (cf. Acts 19:40; 23:29; 26:2).

Satan is identified as “the accuser” of God’s people (Rev 12:10; cf. Zech 3:1). His accusations are valid, because they are based on the believer’s sinfulness and defilement. But Satan’s accusations will be thrown out of court, because it is God who justifies. The Judge Himself declares the accused person righteous on the basis of his faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:24; 5:1). As a result all accusations are dismissed and no one can bring an accusation that will stand (cf. Rom 8:1!).

### 5) Can anyone condemn us for any reason? (Rom 8:34)

- 34] Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Jesus is God’s appointed Judge (Jn 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31), so Paul answered this question by stating, Christ Jesus. But Jesus is the very One whom the believer has trusted for salvation. Furthermore, He is the One who died—more than that (lit., “but more”), who was raised to life—who is at the right hand of God (cf. Lk 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22) *and is also interceding for us*. The Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the Judge, but He is also the One with whom each believer is identified by faith. Having justified the ungodly (Rom 4:5), God will not and cannot contradict Himself by charging them with evil.

“Who is he that condemneth?” (Rom 8:34). Paul gives four answers, each of which are taught elsewhere in Scripture, but are gathered here to underscore the unconditional security of the believer:

- 1) Christ died
- 2) He is risen
- 3) He advocates
- 4) He intercedes

If God has *already justified* the man who believes in Jesus, how can He lay anything to the charge of His *already justified* one? (Rom 8:26, 30). His justification comes from the imputed righteousness of Christ and *is legally ours!* It is not a subject of merit, and cannot be lost by demerit.

Like a father, God can and does correct His earthly sons, but *they always remain sons* (cf. the Prodigal Son; Lk 15:24).

## 6,7) What kind of assurance can we have of victory? (Rom 8:35)

35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

The apostle suggested **seven things** a believer might experience (Paul experienced all of them; 2 Cor 11:23-28) that some might think could come between a believer and Christ's love:

- **Tribulation** (qliyij *thilpsis*) "pressure or distress"; mentioned frequently by Paul in 2 Corinthians;
- **Distress** (stenocwria *stenochoria*), lit., "narrowness," i.e., being pressed in, hemmed in, crowded;
- **Persecution** (diwgmj *diogmos*) 10X in NT, always in reference to the gospel.
- **Famine** (limj *limos*) 12X in NT; The God of Elijah looks after His own.
- **Nakedness** (gumothj *gumnotes*); 1 Cor 4:11.
- **Peril** [jeopardy, danger] (*kindunoj kindunos*) 8X in one verse, 2 Cor 11:26. Cf. 1 Cor 15:30.
- **Sword**. The world *hates* the saints.

36] As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37] Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

In all these adversities (Rom 8:28, 32, 37), rather than being separated from Christ's love, believers are more than conquerors (present tense, "keep on being conquerors to a greater degree" or "keep on winning a glorious victory") through Him who loved us.

## His Final Guarantee (Rom 8:38-39)

38] For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Angels! Principalities [demons]!
- Powers [of "darkness"! ...What else is there?
- This should really re-prioritize our outlook on everything!
- 16<sup>th</sup> century theologian Zacharias Ursinus:

*What is your only comfort in life and death? That I am not my own, but belong, body and soul, in life and death, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.*

Heidelberg Catechism, Q & A 1  
Cf. Rom 14:8; Gal 3:29

## The Christian's "Bar of Soap"

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

1 John 1:9

## Next Session

Read the entire epistle. Study carefully Chapter 4.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 4: Chapter 4

### Review

- Divisions due to carnality
- Preparations for the Bema Seat – Works (“fruit-bearing”) appraised

*According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, [or] wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

*Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.*

1 Corinthians 3:22,23

## 1 Corinthians 4

1] Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

- “...so account”: Roots the argument in the previous chapter. We are Christ’s servants, therefore we are not in competition with one another.
- “...us”: Plural; apostles, helpers. Christ *loves* His Church: *all* of them!
- “...servants,” *hyperetai* (not *diakonos*): Used only here. Refers to servants under their master; originally slaves who rowed below a ship’s deck; later, a broader meaning. Also used of the attendant who took the scroll of Isaiah from Jesus when He preached in Nazareth (Lk 4:20).
- “...stewards,” *Oikonomoi* Accountable: 1 Cor 4:2; cf. Mt 25:14; Lk 16:2; 19:11-27 = *underlings* for Christ; *overseers* for God.
- “...mysteries of God”: Used 21X in Paul’s epistles; 4X in Rev: 1:20; 10:7; 17:5, 7
- The reason for parables (Mt 13:11; Mk 4:11; Lk 8:10).
- There are 28 occurrences in Greek; 6 “mysteries of God” or “mysteries of Christ” (1 Cor 2:1; 4:1; Eph 3:4; Col 2:2; 4:3; Rev 10:7).

## 12 Kingdom Mysteries

- 1) **Mystery of the Kingdom of God** – Luke 8:10; Mark 4:11;  
– Kept secret: Rom 16:25; Col 1:26; Eph 3:3,5; 1 Cor 4:1; 2 Cor 12:1-5; Gal 1:11-12;

- 2) **Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven** – Matthew 13:11
- 3) **Mystery of Manifestation in the Flesh** – 1 Tim 3:16
- 4) **Mystery of Salvation by Faith** – Eph 3:19; Rom 16:25,26; 1 Tim 3:9
- 5) **Mystery of the Ultimate Unity** – Eph 1:9
- 6) **Mystery of Gentiles in same Body** – Rom 16:25; Eph 3:3
- 7) **Mystery of the Bride of Christ** – Eph 5:10; Eph 2:6; 1 Cor 6:17; cf. Col 1:26,27; 2:2; 4:3
- 8) **The Mystery of the *Harpazo*** – 1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:12-18  
– OT: Isa 26:19-21; Ps 27:5; (Cf. Pavilions: Ps 18:11; 31:20; Jer 43:10);
- 9) **The Mystery of Iniquity** – 2 Thess 2:6-12
- 10) **Mystery of the Seven Churches** – Rev 1:20
- 11) **Mystery of Israel's Blindness** – Luke 19:42-44; Rom 11:25
- 12) **Mystery Babylon (Counterfeit Kingdom)** – Rev 17, 18 (Cf. Gen 10:10, 1<sup>st</sup> mention)  
– [Mysteries Finished: Rev 10:7]

## 12 Kingdom Parables

- |                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1) Sower and the Seed        | Matthew 13:18-23  |
| 2) Tares and Wheat           | Matthew 13:24-30  |
| 3) Mustard Seed              | Matthew 13:31-32  |
| 4) Woman and Leaven          | Matthew 13:33     |
| 5) Treasure in the Field     | Matthew 13:34     |
| 6) Pearl of Great Price      | Matthew 13:45-46  |
| 7) Dragnet                   | Matthew 13:47-50  |
| 8) Forgiveness of Debts      | Matthew 18:23-35  |
| 9) Latecomers equally paid   | Matthew 20:1-16   |
| 10) Guests at Marriage Feast | Matthew 22:1-14*  |
| 11) Ten Virgins              | Matthew 25:1-13   |
| 12) Stewardship of Talents   | Matthew 25:14-30* |
- \* “the darkness outside”?

## The Kingdom of Heaven 12s

- 12 Tribes
- 12 Apostles (ruling over the 12 Tribes); Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30
- 12 Kingdom of Heaven Parables
- 12 Kingdom Mysteries
- 12,000 sealed from each of 12 Tribes; Rev 7
- New Jerusalem: Rev 21 – 12 gates, 12 foundation stones, 12,000 furlongs<sup>3</sup>

2] Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

- ...add to your faith virtue...! (2 Pet 1:5). Primary requirement for a steward is faithfulness. (Singular emphasizes the individual.)
- Every believer must demonstrate fidelity and dedication. Our problem today is the absence of the sanctity of a commitment. Examples include Wall Street; business; marriages; the Church.

3] But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

- “...small”: Superlative form; “judge,” examine, interrogate. They were servants of the Corinthians; but the Corinthians were not their masters. God is their only master.
  - Paul frequently endured harsh judgment: laboring in Corinth; imprisoned in Caesarea; when in Rome 1 Cor 9:3; Acts 24:8; 28:18
  - “I cannot even judge myself”: Not conceit, but objectivity. He leaves this to God, the only impartial judge (speaking of his apostleship, not human deeds).
- 4] For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.
- If Paul had been justified on the basis of his apostolic faithfulness, he would be teaching a righteousness that could be earned (Titus 3:5).
  - Christ’s mediatorial work would have been insufficient or incomplete.
  - “...justify”: Perfect tense; already declared righteous; “justified”: *Dedikaionmai*, a legal word: acquitted.
  - We are even better off! (cf. Certificate of Debt: Col 2:14). He that judges me is the Lord: The Lord has fulfilled the law (Mt 5:17) and is the end of the law (Rom 10:4).
- 5] Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.
- “Judge nothing before the time...”: God is not finished with any of us yet. The tares get pulled up at the end.
  - “...until”: Jesus’ Coming is certain; the timing is unknown.
  - “Darkness”: Can have a sinister meaning (Acts 13:11; Eph 5:11) but here it is neutral: simply referring to matters unknown (Ps 139:12).
  - All secrets will ultimately be exposed (Rom 2:16; Rev 20:11-13).
  - Who receives praise? The regenerate who listens to the Word (Rom 2:29; Rev 22:12; cf. Isa 35:4; 40:10; 62:11; Rev 2:23).

## Pride (1 Corinthians 4:6-8)

- 6] And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.
- “Brethren”: included sisters (1 Cor 12:10,11,26; 2:1; 3:1). Both Paul and Apollos had served the church of Corinth for extended periods of time.
  - *Gegraptai* = “it is written”; frequently introduces quotes from Scriptures. [17 OT quotes in 1 Corinthians; 10 in 2 Corinthians. Special warnings in 1 Cor 10.]
  - “...puffed up”: Leaven is a type of sin. It corrupts by “puffing up.” Warnings against arrogance (Job 40:12; Prov 8:13; Gal 6:3).
- 7] For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?
- Three questions: Who makes you different...? *you*, singular.) Rhetorical of course, no one.
  - What do you have that you did not receive (as a gift)? God has supplied all (Jn 3:27; Jas 1:17). True in a far deeper sense than is usually understood. No one consulted you about your birth. Geography; culture; parents; skills; aptitudes, etc.

- Why do you boast? It is the height of ingratitude not to acknowledge the source. Corinthians prided themselves on the gifts of the Spirit. They were puffed up. They sat in judgment of other believers because they did not possess the same manifestations.

## Law vs. Grace

- The Law is **perfect**; – that is why imperfect men cannot keep it.
  - The Law is **holy**; – that is why sinners are condemned by it.
  - The Law is **just**; – therefore it cannot show mercy to the guilty.
  - The Law **prohibits**; – Grace *invites* and *gives*.
  - The Law **condemns** the sinner; – Grace *redeems* the sinner.
  - The Law **reveals** sin; – Grace *atones* for sin.
  - By the Law is the **knowledge** of sin; – by Grace is *redemption* from sin.
  - The Law was given by Moses; – Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
  - The Law **demand**s obedience; – Grace *bestows and gives power to obey*.
  - The Law says **do and do not**; – Grace says “*it is done.*”
  - The Law says “**continue to be holy**”; – Grace says “*it is finished.*”
  - The Law **curses**; – Grace *blesses*.
  - The Law slays the sinner; – Grace makes the sinner *alive*.
  - The Law **shuts** every mouth before God; – Grace opens the mouth to *praise* God.
  - The Law **condemns** the best man; – Grace *saves* the worst man.
  - The Law says, **pay what you owe**; – Grace says *I freely forgive you all*.
  - The Law says “**the wages of sin is death**”; – Grace says “*the gift of God is eternal life.*”
  - The Law says “**the soul that sinneth it shall die**”; – Grace says *Believe and live*.
  - The Law was **done away** in Christ; – Grace *abides forever*.
  - The Law puts us under **bondage**; – Grace sets us in the *liberty* of the sons of God (Rom 12:1).
- Apart from grace, there is no salvation for anyone. As long as we feel we have something of merit or worth to bring to the table, we are not even a candidate for salvation.
- [Bankruptcy: Chapter 11 requirements are that the protection of the court be dependent upon admission of no alternatives; full submission to the court...]
- When God creates a new thing, He always begins with nothing.
- 8] Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.
- “You have...”: Plural you, the church. [Irony and sarcasm...] “...become rich”: Denotes satiation; a dangerous state (Rev 3:17 vs. Rom 8:17).
  - Corinthians were influenced by the Stoic philosophers, priding themselves on being self-sufficient. They claimed to be kings rather than subjects of the King (cf. Diogenes’ Stoic catch-cry: “I alone am rich; I alone reign as king”). Self-sufficient people delude themselves.
  - “Reigning...” (2 Tim 2:12; Rev 3:21): Paul’s irony highlights that they were getting ahead of themselves, as well as Paul and Apollos.
- 9] For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.
- ...a spectacle”: *Theatron* (later, theatre). The same word occurs 2X in Luke’s account of the riot where Gaius and Aristarchus were dragged into the theater (Acts 19:29,31).

- [Spectacle to angels? (1 Pet 1:12). You always have an audience...]
- 10] We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.
- "...fools": [irony] Fools because of Christ (Acts 14:19; 16:22-25; 17:10; 18:12).
  - Double entendre: They also reflect the truth of the gospel, which is folly in the eyes of the worldly wise.
- 11] Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;
- Beatings, floggings, imprisonments, riots, shipwrecks, sleepless nights, hunger, thirst, cold, mortal perils (2 Cor 4:8-9; 6:4-10; 11:23-27; 12:10; cf. Rom 8:35; Phil 4:12).
  - Paul endured an almost fatal illness in the province of Asia (probably Ephesus). See 2 Cor 1:8-11.
- 12] And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:
- 13] Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.
- Paul earned his own living (1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8; cf. 1 Thess 4:11).
  - Every Jewish boy had to learn a trade, usually from his father. Readiness to work with his hands (Acts 18:3; 20:34; 1 Cor 9:6; 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8).

## Spiritual Entrepreneurship

- Vocational support as a "cover"
  - Financial independence a key asset
  - Contrast with being "a man of the cloth..." The pagan concepts of the "*Nicolaitans*" condemned by Jesus (Rev 2:6 & 2:15).
- 14] I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.
- "My beloved sons": Dear children; the admonitions as from a loving father (cf. 2 Cor 6:13; Gal 4:19; 1 Thess 2:11).
  - Note change of mood: these are real letters...
- 15] For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.
- "...instructors": *Paidagogos* (hence, pedagogue): A household slave or freedman who accompanied a child of well-to-do parents to/from school; tutored the child in proper conduct, guarded him from danger and evil influences, encouraged correct speech, grammar, diction, etc. But he was replaceable; the father always remained in charge.
- 16] Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.
- Cf. 11:1; also Gal 4:12; Phil 3:17; 2 Thess 3:7,9
  - Paul was a "Spiritual Entrepreneur..."

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 remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

- “...ways”: Rabbinical concept of *halakah*, rule based on Scripture.

## Timothy

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

18] Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

- “...puffed up”: Leaven is a type of sin. It corrupts by “puffing up.” Arrogance blinds a person to reality.
- They failed to appreciate Paul’s commitment to their spiritual well- being (1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:3-4; Col 1:3-4; 1 Thess 1:2-3; 2 Thess 1:3).

19] But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

- “...if the Lord wills”: Paul intends, after travelling through Macedonia, to arrive in Corinth and spend some time, perhaps the entire winter (Acts 16:5-7).
- He will leave Ephesus after Shavuot (Pentecost), probably in A.D. 56. Paul is not a free agent (nor are we!) but are subject to the Lord’s direction.

20] For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

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

21] What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

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

## The Entrepreneur

- The role and contributions of the independent entrepreneur in both financial and technological sectors are legendary, and the factors that contribute to his success have been well studied in the management literature.
- Being driven by a vision, his persistence and commitment to his self-appointed goals have embroidered the tapestry of both technological and economic progress throughout the centuries.

## The Spiritual Entrepreneur

- However, the degree to which these characteristics characterized the Apostle Paul in the *spiritual* realm has rarely been adequately recognized in our contemporary missionary perspectives.

## Missionary Support

- Three Methods of Supporting a Minister:
  - 1) Become a Salaried Professional
    - Requires Organizational Positioning (& restrictions)
  - 2) Become a Soliciting Missionary
    - Requires continuing personal support
  - 3) Become a Self-Supported Servant
    - Requires Planning & Perseverance

## A Self-Supported Servant (The Pattern of Paul)

*And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.*

Acts 18:2,3

## Cilicium

- A certain kind of cloth made of goats' hair, called *κιλίκιον*, was manufactured in Paul's native country of Cilicia, a Roman province in south-east Asia Minor.
- A light-weight leather substitute suitable for travel tents.

## Paul's Example

*For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.*

1 Thessalonians 2:9

*Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.*

1 Thessalonians 3:8,9

*Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

Acts 20:34,35

## A Self-Supported Servant (The Pattern of Paul)

*To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labour, **working with our own hands.***

1 Corinthians 4:12a

## Mission Statement of KI

- “Equipping the saints for the work of the Ministry” (Eph 4:12)
  - 1) Education
  - 2) Experience (practicums, etc)
  - 3) Enablement: Financing

## The Principal Problem

- Enablement: Financing
    - On Staff of a Ministry
    - Third party support
    - Individual (self) support: a Parsonage Investment Program (with professional enhancement)
- } **Nicolaitans?**

## Koinonia Missionary Fellowship

- A private invitational fellowship of committed members:
  - Life members of the Koinonia Institute
  - Who have executed a Fiduciary Covenant
- The objective is to establish a threshold of economic independence to networked and trusted members who are *the truly committed*.
- Pre-Gold Phase: Participant’s contributions of Unit Shares in the Koinonia Parsonage Reserve grows at a reasonable interest rate (>7%).
- Post-Gold Phase: After achieving Gold Medallion status, a participant able to draw on his Unit Shares, and to a limit of 7% of his asset account. If the KPR is meeting its 7% goal there is no diminishment of the KPR equity (only the earnings are expensed).
- KPR Growth Sources
  - 1) Additions by KMF Members (Participants)
  - 2) Additions by non-members (Benefactors)
  - 3) Investment returns on invested capital
- The Pledge Strategy: Pledge any amount/month for any number of months. Pledged shares (at the price when pledged) are then held in reserve, allocated as they are purchased. The price advantage can prove very substantial (with a similarity to stock options). The cumulative advantage can have a quite significant effect on the accumulative Account Value. The pledge can be terminated at any time without prejudice. Terminating a pledge simply forfeits the potential opportunity which would have been secured by continuing.

## Caveats

- The Parsonage Account is not part of the Participant’s personal estate;
- These are *donations*; and only for the reimbursement of costs of ministry, as certified by the Participant’s Personal Advisory Board.
- Upon termination (for whatever reason) the underlying equity is then returned to the KPR for subsequent distributions.
- Professional Donor Appeal: Rather than donating to operating budgets, building projects, denominational fiefdoms...one can invest in people who are clearly qualified (**Gold Medallion** Holders); have their own “skin in the game” (...“spiritual entrepreneurs”; they participate *in proportion to their own investment*); are supervised by their own knowledgeable peers; and are spending earnings only; *the residual equity remains in the ministry in perpetuity.*

## Procedure

- 1) Notify the Custodian to gain pledge approval (if so desired);
- 2) Donate through normal deductible channels, designating the KMF; (include your Membership Number for confirmations). [www.KITrust.org/KMF has detailed instructions.]
- 3) A monthly status report will be automatically sent to each KMF Member (and supporting Benefactors).

## Prior to Achieving Gold

- Select and gain agreement from three KMF Members to serve as your Personal Advisory Board
- They should be proximate to testify to your personal walk and practices (and not under your supervision);
- They will approve your Mission Plans and certify your goals and activities to the Custodian annually.

## Summary

- A practical program to field independent “Spiritual Entrepreneurs” who are well trained and grounded in the Word;
- Who are truly committed, and participating in proportion to their own personal commitment;
- Who are supervised by their own peers (not by a remote headquarters with its own agenda...)
- Take a course, at your own pace, on your own schedule;
- Participate in an international study group of serious believers;
- Learn how you can arrange your own enablement as a “Spiritual Entrepreneur”...to prepare for the coming darkness ahead...

## Supporting the Spiritual Entrepreneur

- Four unique appeals to the Donor:
  - Competent: Gold Medallion Holder
  - Committed: In proportion to participation
  - Supervised by peers: Personal Advisory Board
  - Donations remain active in perpetuity: Only earnings at risk

## A Dare by God

*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

Malachi 3:10

## The Personal Challenge

- Are these things relevant to, and prioritizing, your life?
- Shouldn't they be the primary focus of our every hour?
- Make Him known. Have you?
- Pray about it. Make this season a time of fresh commitment.
- Let us help.

## Next Session

Read the entire epistle. Study carefully Chapters 5 and 6.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 5: Chapters 5 & 6

### Review

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

- 1) Private Sin: Incest.
- 2) Public Scandal: The church's failure to respond.

### Paul's Visits and Letters

- **Three Visits:**
  - 1) When church was founded;
  - 2) The "painful" visit;
  - 3) A visit after 2 Corinthians had been sent.
- **Four Letters:**
  - 1) The "Previous Letter";
  - 2) 1 Corinthians;
  - 3) The "Severe Letter";
  - 4) 2 Corinthians.

### 1 Corinthians 5

- 1] It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.
  - "...fornication": *Porneia*: Sexual immorality. Perversion of one of the most sacred things in the human personality: the perversion of sex.
  - The woman is a stepmother ("wife of his father"; not mother). Paul gives the impression that the father is still alive (Gen 35:22; Amos 2:7).
  - Sexual immorality was prohibited by Roman law and the OT (Lev 18:8; 20:11; Deut 22:30; 27:20).
  - In Israel, it was punishable with death by stoning ("A sin unto death"). God takes sex seriously. God uses the marriage to communicate His most precious truths.
- 2] And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.
  - "Tolerance" of some things is an offense to God.
  - Freedom is not a license to do what we want; but the liberty to do what we ought (1 Cor 6:12; 10:23).
  - If a brother sins, we are not to condone it (Mt 18:15-17). Remember Ezra, who mourned over the unfaithfulness of the exiles (Ezra 10:1-6).
  - They risk being placed under divine condemnation (v.13).
  - Paul says more about the church's sin than the individual offender.
  - The church is always injured from *within*—never from without.
  - Judgment must begin at the house of God.

- 3] For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,
- Analogous, perhaps, to Ananias and Sapphira.
- 4] In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- “...gathered together”: Assemble “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ”: Where two or three are gathered (Mt 18:20) ...and confess *their own* failure!
- 5] To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.
- Treat *as* one who is unrepentant or a pagan (Mt 18:17).
  - *Restoration* is always the focus: to seek and to save that which is lost.
  - This did not mean that they considered him unsaved (which is God’s business); cf. 2 Thess 3:6,14,15.
  - Parallel to Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim 1:20).
  - Underlying concept: The sphere outside the church is the sphere of Satan. To be delivered “outside” is to be delivered into the region in which Satan holds sway.
  - Physical consequences of spiritual failings:
    - Communion risk (1 Cor 11:28-32)
    - Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10)
    - Blindness of Elymas (Acts 13:8-11)
    - Paul’s own “thorn in the flesh” as a “messenger of Satan” (2 Cor 12:7)
    - AIDS + sin specific diseases...
  - Believers are safe in the hand of God, from which no one, not even Satan, can snatch them (Jn 10:28-29).
  - Satan can attack only that which God allows (Job 2:4-6; 2 Cor 12:7).
    - Cf. Gomer (Hos 2:7)
    - The Prodigal Son who never lost his sonship! (Lk 15:24, 32)
  - Sexual deliverance: In Jesus alone. Not in psychology, which doesn’t help. It can’t deal with sin; only with the guilt it then attempts to deny.
  - Holiness demands ardent love for Jesus Christ and total obedience to His commands. It is a serious thing to be a Christian.
  - [How spiritual are YOU? How much do you hate sin? *Not the sinner*: sin.]
  - Did this “medicine” work? (2 Cor 2:6-8; 7:11)
  - The man was forgiven and restored. It’s amazing how some Christians are unwilling to accept a brother’s restoration.
- 6] Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?
- “Your glorying is not good”: These days of moral laxity in our arrogant, self-indulgent age makes “The Epistle to the Californians” relevant to each of us.
- 7] Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:
- Paul gives a volume of theology in a short sentence! “Christ our Passover.”
  - Delivery from our bondage to evil: Ex 12:7,13,15,33-34,39; Heb 9:26; Isa 53:5-6; John 1:29.

## Leaven

- A “type” of sin: It corrupts by puffing up (the term is always “evil” in Scripture). OT: Ex 12:15; 13:7; Lev 2:11; 6:17; 10:12. NT type: Mt 16:6,11; Mk 8:15; Lk 12:1; 13:21; 1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:7-9.
  - It inevitably spreads; cf. Woman and the Leaven (Mt 13:33).
- 8] Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.
- “Lord’s Supper”: 1 Cor 11:17-34. Consecrating ourselves to do His Will (Rom 12:1-2; 1 Pet 2:5).
  - Truth: when the Word and the deed become one vs. Evil One (Mt 13:19; Jn 8:44).
- 9] I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:
- [Two missing letters... “Sorrowful Letter” (2 Cor 2:4) and...“The” letter (earlier).]
- 10] Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.
- Don’t get involved with such people (2 Thess 3:14) “...have to leave this world”: Jn 17:14-18.
  - Distinction: We have fellowship in the church; acquaintances in the world.
  - We were never intended to lead a “monastic” existence; but rather a life of testimony...
  - Every greedy person is an idolater (Eph 5:5; Gal 5:20; Col 3:5).
  - (Sexual immorality 4X: vv. 1,9,10,11. v.11 is singular, not generic.)
- 11] But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.
- Jesus often ate with tax collectors, et al. (Mt 11:19; Lk 15:2).
  - What’s the difference? The integrity of the church (Mt 18:17; 2 Pet 2:13; Jude 12).
  - In Eastern society, to eat with one was to “become one with him”—common bread, dish, et al. To not offer food to a relative, friend, or guest could be interpreted as a declaration of war (cf. Lk 11:5-8).
  - Idolater occurs 4X in this epistle 5:10,11; 6:9; 10:7; plus Eph 5:5, Rev 21:8; 22:15 = 7X!
- 12] For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?
- Jewish background: “those who are outside” = unbelievers.
  - Paul was agitated in Athens (Acts 17:16) but lacked the authority to judge *outside* the church.
  - *Persistent sin inside* requires a corporate response. Christ’s good name is at stake
- 13] Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.
- Quote from Deut 17:7. [In Greek, the difference between the present or the future tense of the verb *to judge* depends on an accent mark.] Present? God knows (Gen 18:25, et al.) Future? (1 Cor 6:1-4) Both are valid.
  - “Evil” man: Paul chooses the Greek word that features a play on the Greek word for “fornicator.”

## 1 Corinthians 6

- Paul’s discussion of judging (1 Cor 5:12-13) brings up another related area. The world is attempting to get the Christian community to conform itself to worldly standards. Christian brothers who take their

cases to non-Christians are causing the Church to be a laughingstock in the Gentile world.

- The Jews were forbidden in the Talmud to go to Gentile Judges. They had their own system.
  - Christians ought to settle their disputes within the confines of their own fellowship (Jn 13:35).
  - (Paul divides the world into three groups: Jew, Gentile and the Church.)
  - Greeks were particularly litigious. Athenian law allowed, after a private arbitrator, The Forty. They were public arbitrators consisting of citizens in their 60th year. Jury court: 201 citizens <\$100; (401, over \$100) of citizens over 30.
- 1] Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?
- Principles: Lk 6:27; James 2:8. “Love your neighbor as yourself” is also found in the Book of Leviticus (Lev 19:18).
  - A lawsuit has a life of its own; it is a fight to the death; Winning regardless of the damaging effect on the defendant (and one’s witness).
  - “There is a lawsuit filed every 15 seconds.”
  - Underlying motives in civil lawsuits are often incompatible with one’s Christian profession.
  - John Calvin, who studied law at two French universities before he became a theologian, keenly observed that the parties involved in lawsuits were motivated by greed, impatience, revenge, hostility, and obstinacy.
  - One’s “rights” vs. 1 Thessalonians 4:6. We ought not to give the world an opportunity to ridicule Christ and to divide the Church.
  - Don’t give the enemies of God an opportunity to blaspheme. Jesus settles this in Matthew 18:17.
- 2] Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?
- “Do you know”: 6X this chapter (1 Cor 6:2,3,9,15,16,19; also 3:16; 5:6; 9:13,24.) 10X in this letter of 1 Corinthians.
  - Paul is accusing them of myopia: Saints will sit in judgment of the world (Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30; Jude 14,15; Rev 20:4).
  - Will also reign with Christ (2 Tim 2:12; Phil 11:2).
- 3] Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?
- “...we shall judge angels”: The Fall of the angels (Isa 24:21-22; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6; Rev 20:10).
  - *B’nai Elohim* (Gen 6:1-4); *Nephilim*, fallen ones; LXX: *gigantes*, “earth born.” [See our briefing package, *The Flood of Noah, Return of the Nephilim*, and the book *Alien Encounters*. It’s astonishing to see how many have come to Christ through this strange area of interest.]
- 4] If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.
- Even the least esteemed in the Church are qualified to judge if they adhere to the Scriptures.
  - Judges from among their own? Cf. Jethro’s advice to Moses (Ex 18:17-23; Deut 1:9-15).
  - Also, King Jehosaphat of Judah appointed judges in the fortified cities of the land (2 Chr 19:5). Compare their qualifications with our judges of today!
  - Note: Paul resorted to using his rights under the Roman judicial system several times (Acts 16:37; 22:25; 25:11).
  - At Philippi, he refused to leave without public admission of the mistake!

- God has instituted civil government which includes the judiciary (Rom 13:1-5). The word “God fearing” has left our working vocabulary...
- 5] I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?
- They should have appointed wise and capable men from their own community to mediate cases for fellow Christians; cf. Christian Arbitration Organization(s).
- 6] But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.
- A Christian brother taking a fellow Christian to court is sufficient proof that he has set aside the command to love his neighbor (Jas 2:8).
  - Can a plaintiff in court have the spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial well-being of the Christian brother in mind? Love is the ultimate response that the Lord commands us to take: Chapter 13.
- 7] Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?
- In v.6, a single incident; in v.7, Paul addresses them all. Paul turns it all *upside down*: winning a lawsuit is a *defeat* for the Christian.
  - Court proceedings have a detrimental effect on both the defendant and the witness to the community. [What is the Lord’s view of the proceedings?] The last thing we should ever want is justice! (cf. Mt 5:40; Lk 6:29-30).
  - “...Defrauded?: (1 Pet 2:19-23). Rights? Jesus did not come to get His rights; He came to get our wrongs, and He did. The only man-made things in heaven will be His scars.
- 8] Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.
- A litigious spirit is incompatible with fellowship.
  - Remember, Thou shalt not covet.
  - Excessive litigation is a symptom of the disintegration of a society.
- 9] Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,
- Sinful people are barred from God’s kingdom (cf. 5:9-11). They will not inherit. The use of the future tense is definite: the unrepentant will *never* inherit the kingdom. Will YOU inherit? Only by Grace (Eph 2:8-9).
  - Sexual immorality makes a person unclean (v.11; Mt 15:19-20).

## Glossary

- “Fornicators” includes all forms of illicit intercourse between unmarried persons. Paul uses the following terms:
- **Fornicators** πόρνος  *pornos* : a man who prostitutes his body to another’s lust for hire; a male prostitute; a man who indulges in unlawful sexual intercourse.
- **Idolaters** ειδωλολάτρης *eidololatries*: a worshipper of false gods; used of any one even Christian, participant in any way in the worship of the heathen, esp. one who attends their sacrificial feasts and eats of the remains of offered victims; a covetous man as a worshipper of Mammon .

- **Adulterers, μοιχός *moichos*:** an adulterer; metaph. one who is faithless toward God, ungodly.
- **Effeminate μαλακός *malakos*:** soft, soft to the touch; metaphorically in a bad sense: effeminate; of a catamite: of a boy kept for homosexual relations with a man; of a male who submits his body to unnatural lewdness; of a male prostitute.
- **“abusers of themselves with mankind” ἀρσενικοίτης *arsenokoites*:** one who lies with a male as with a female, sodomite, homosexual; initiators, active partners (cf. Gen 19:1-10; Lev 18:22; 20:13).

10] Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

## Recent Research Results

- The Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., citing dozens of experts and studies, including a study of 5,200 obituaries over 5 years in 16 homosexual newspapers, reported the following revealing results:
- The average age of homosexual men dying with AIDS is 39; of all causes is 41; only 3% lived to over 55; only 1% lived to 65 or older.
- Among homosexuals, the ratio of men murdered is 50 times that of general population; they have 60 times the suicide rate; and 45 times the rate of auto accidents.
- The obituaries in the “gay” press suggest that their “lifestyle” may cut two or three decades off one’s life expectancy. That doesn’t sound very “gay” to me.

11] And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

- Jesus came to call not the righteous but the sinners (Mk 2:17; Lk 5:32; 1 Tim 1:15). He then ate with them in their homes (Mt 11:19).
- “...but ye are washed”: Cleansed with “The Christian’s Bar of Soap” (1 Jn 1:9).
- In the Greek, the strong adversative “however” occurs before each of the three verbs; Paul writes the second person “you” in every verb form; it is acutely personal and emphatic.
- “Sanctified”: NT teaches that everyone that believes in Jesus is sanctified in Him (Jn 17:19; Acts 20:32; 26:18).
- “Justified”: Paul places righteousness before holiness (1 Cor 1:30).
- Justification is a declarative act of God whereby the believer is pronounced righteous in Christ and is coordinated with God’s act of sanctification.
- All three verbs are in the aorist tense, describing a single instantaneous action, once and for all.
- [Note the implied Trinitarianism: Jesus Christ, Spirit, and God.]

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

## God’s Astonishing Grace

- Study Manasseh: He was King of Judah, son of Hezekiah. He did evil in the sight of the Lord:
  - worshipped Baal,
  - built altars to the “hosts of heaven” in the Temple,
  - sacrificed his own son,

- practiced sorcery and divination,
  - placed a carved image in God’s Temple,
  - led astray the people in his kingdom,
  - and shed innocent blood (2 Kgs 21:1-9, 16; 2 Chr 33:1-9)
  - When he came to himself in captivity, he repented and God not only forgave him, but restored him as the king of Judah (2 Chr 33:12-13).
  - [Why not us, too?]
- 12] All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.
- “All things are permissible to me”: Paul uses this phrase 4X in this letter (1 Cor 6:12, 2X; 10:23, 2X).
  - Paul no longer possesses that which possesses him. All appetites are ultimately unsatisfying (Gen 4:7; Rom 6:16).
  - Greeks looked down on the body. “The body is a tomb.” Epictetus: “I am a poor soul shackled to a corpse.” This led either to rigorous asceticism or, as in Corinth, the belief that one could do whatever he felt like.
  - Arrogance of ego. Freedom exchanged for license. Served themselves rather than the Lord (Mt 22:37-40).
  - Selfishness is contrary to the command to love our neighbor as ourselves.
  - “..not profitable.” [Referent omitted: to whom?]
- 13] Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.
- “Food for the body, and the body for food”: That is how God designed His creation. (*Parallel requirements are evidence of design.*)
  - Paul will detail other “food” issues in Chapters 8 & 10.
  - “...the body is...for the Lord, and the Lord for the body”: God created the human body for His glory, not for immorality.
  - The widespread attitudes violated the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:14) the decisions of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:29).
  - God uses the marriage relationship to communicate His highest relationships (see our briefing package, *A More Excellent Way*) and fornication is absolutely contrary to His purpose (1 Thess 4:3-5).
- 14] And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.
- Physical resurrection a future event (Jn 5:28-29; 11:24; Acts 24:15; 1 Thess 4:16-17).
  - The resurrection forbids us to take the body lightly. Paul will detail more on this in Chapter 15.
- 15] Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.
- The physical body of the believer is actually a member of Christ. We are His hands and feet. (1 Cor 12:12,27; Rom 12:5-6).
  - “Prostitute,” *porne*: from *porneia*, fornication, sexual immorality (vv. 13,19).
- 16] What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.
- “The two shall be one flesh”: Citation from LXX (Gen 2:24).
  - There is no such thing as “casual sex.” It’s an oxymoron.

- “Cleave” refers more than just a physical union; it includes a bonding relationship that has spiritual implications. God commanded Israel to cleave to Him (Deut 10:20).
- Solomon erred when he clung to his foreign wives, who induced him to worship other gods (1 Kgs 11:1-8; cf. Mt 19:5; Eph 5:21-33).

17] But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

- Are YOU “glued” to the Lord?
- Contrast the relationship with the prostitute: it’s momentary, without love, devoid of responsibility, mutually destructive, decidedly ego-centric, shamefully immoral, degrading, and damaging to the soul.
- The relationship with the Lord is characterized by permanence, love, trust, edification, obedience, purity and life.
- “But he who is joined to the Lord...”

18] Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

- (Make it your habit to) “flee”: This verb is in the present imperative form, like Joseph in Potiphar’s house (Gen 39:12, 9)!

19] What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

- “Your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit” = singular: applies to the individual believer. “...temple”: *Naos* (not *hieron*, the temple precincts): Holy Place.

20] For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.

- “...bought with a price”: *Tetelestai!* Aorist tense; single decisive action, already taken.
- “Glorify God in your body”: Here’s a physical fitness program for you! “Work out” daily...and chart your progress.
- Remember who you are: The most powerful weapon we have is our true dignity as redeemed children, bought and paid for.
- “We do not belong to ourselves.” God created us, Jesus redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit makes His abode within us. [For a complete study on the Temple model, see the briefing package, *Architecture of Man*, and textbook, *The Way of Agape*.]
- Cf. *Sacral manumission*: a slave would save the price of his freedom, pay it into the temple treasury of a god, and then be purchased by the deity as a slave of that god. To the public, he was now free. “What is the chief end of man? To glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.” (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q & A 1.)

## Questions

- 1) How serious are sexual sins in our society today?
- 2) What is the best way to avoid sins of lust?
- 3) What is the best way to restore one who has stumbled due to sexual sins?
- 4) What is the passage in Romans (1:18-32) really about? Is it about “abandonment wrath”?

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 6: Chapter 7

Corinth was a church of contradictions. The diverse response to the widespread immorality included licentiousness on the one hand, and legalistic asceticism on the other. Sex in itself is never a sin. It is the abuse of this God-given function that makes it immoral (Titus 1:15).

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

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

- 1] Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.
- 2] Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

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

- “Now concerning...” = a key phrase...
  - Marriage 1 Cor 7:1-24, 39-40
  - Celibacy 1 Cor 7:25-38
  - Meat offered to idols 1 Cor 7:1-11:1
  - Spiritual Gifts 1 Cor 12 - 14
  - Collection for Jerusalem Christians 1 Cor 16:1-4
  - Apollos 1 Cor 16:12
- [Also, Resurrection (1 Cor 15), but the key phrase “now concerning” doesn’t appear.]
- Let’s remember the pressures they were under: there was not only widespread immorality (comparable to our own) but for them, becoming a Christian was putting one’s life in jeopardy.
- “...it is good”: Refers to a quote from their letter. Paul could not have advocated celibacy for everyone, for he would be contradicting God’s utterance: “It is not good for man to be alone” (Gen 2:18).
- Paul would thus be against procreation (Gen 1:28), God’s covenant blessings from generation to generation (Gen 17:7) and the growth of the church. He emphasizes a high view of marriage in (Eph 5:22-33).
- A group of believers in Corinth had set themselves against the widespread immorality in the city by advocating celibacy. *Anthropos* (man) vs. *aner* (husband) and *gyne* (woman) are indefinite terms implying non-marital intercourse.
- Paul points out that apostates forbid people to marry (1 Tim 4:3).
- “...his own wife”: It must be kept in mind that the conditions in Corinth were terrible (almost as bad as ours). Polygamy was the common practice.
- Paul effectively rules out polygamy as well as homosexual combinations.

- 3] Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.
- 4] The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

- The elegant paradox: Equality and mutuality.

5] Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

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

## Was Paul Married?

- Early church tradition was that he was not.
  - Tertullian (de Monogam, 3); Jerome (Ep. 22); Origen is doubtful.
  - Methodius (Conviv. 45), as well as Clemens Alex and Ps. Ignatius believed he was a widower (Farrer, p.78-82).
- I happen to believe that Paul was either a widower or possibly that his wife left him after his conversion.
- He claimed to have failed in none of the duties which Jewish law and tradition laid down.
  - Orthodox belief laid down the obligation of marriage (Mishna, Yeb. 6:6; Talmud, Yebamoth 62, 63; Kiddushin 29, 30).
  - If a man did not marry and have children, he was said to have “slain his posterity,” and “to have lessened the image of God in the World.”
  - To “be fruitful and multiply” was viewed as a positive commandment of God (Gen 1:28; Prov 2:17; 5:18).
  - It was the first of the 613 Talmudic precepts.
- He must have been a member of the Sanhedrin for he says that he gave his vote against the Christians (Acts 26:10) and it was required that members of the Sanhedrin be married, as it was held that married men were more merciful(!?).
- His enablement to be alone was the result of a spiritual gift.

6] But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.

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

7] For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

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

8] I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

9] But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

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

10] And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

- “Let not the wife depart from her husband”: The Lord’s Command (Gen 1:27; 2:24; Mk 8-12).
- God hates divorce (Mal 2:14-16).
- Matthew (Mt 19:9) wrote for a Jewish audience, in which the husband could dismiss his wife for any reason. Mark wrote in a Roman context, in which a woman could take the initiative.

11] But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

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

## Appendix: The Cost of Broken Families

- Scientific evidence demonstrates that children in disrupted families do worse than those of intact families:
  - They are 6X more likely to be poor;
  - 22% of one-parent families will experience poverty during childhood for 7 years or more, vs. 2% of children in two-parent families.
  - Teen suicide rate has tripled; juvenile crime has increased and become more violent; school performance has continued to decline.
- According to the National Center for Health Statistics:
  - Children of single-parent families are 3X as likely to have emotional and behavioural problems; they are more likely to drop out of high school, get pregnant as teenagers, abuse drugs, and be in trouble with the law.
  - They also have a higher risk for physical or sexual abuse, and are less likely to be successful as adults, especially in love and in work.
  - They have a harder time achieving intimacy in a relationship, forming a stable marriage, or even holding a steady job.

## The “Me” Generation

- Fewer than half of all adult Americans today regard the idea of sacrifice for others as a positive moral value.
- The adult quest for freedom, independence, and choice in family relationships conflicts with a child’s developmental needs for stability, constancy, harmony, and permanence in family life.
- Welfare dependency tends to be passed on from one generation to the next:
- Daughters of single parents are
  - 53% more likely to marry as teenagers;
  - 111% more likely to have children as teenagers;
  - 164% more likely to have premarital birth;
  - 92% more likely to dissolve their own marriages.
  - Each divorce is the death of a small civilization. It inflicts wounds that never heal.

[Excerpted: Barbara Dafoe Whitehead,  
“Dan Quayle was Right,” *Atlantic Monthly* (April 93).]

## The Lack of Love in America

- The love of many will grow cold (Mt 24:12). The most basic form of love is found in the family. The family serves as the seedbed for virtues. Heterosexuals reproduce; homosexuals recruit.
- This is the first generation in the nation’s history to do worse psychologically, socially, and economically than its parents.

## Children and Divorce Statistics

- 1) Half of all American children will witness the breakup of a parent's marriage. Of these, close to half will also see the breakup of a parent's second marriage.  
Furstenberg, Peterson, Nord, and Zill, "*Life Course*"
- 2) Among the millions of children who have seen their parents divorce, one of every 10 will also live through three or more parental marriage breakups.  
*The Abolition of Marriage*, Gallagher
- 3) 40% of children growing up in America today are being raised without their fathers.  
Wade, Horn and Busy, "Fathers, Marriage and Welfare Reform" *Hudson Institute Executive Brief*
- 4) Of all children born to married parents this year, 50% will experience the divorce of their parents before they reach their 18th birthday.  
Fagan, Fitzgerald, Rector, "*The Effects of Divorce On America*"

## The Emotionally Damaging Children and Divorce Statistics

- 5) Children in repeat divorces earned lower grades and their peers rated them as less pleasant to be around.  
Andrew J. Cherlin, *Divorce, Remarriage* –Harvard University Press
- 6) Teenagers in single-parent families and in blended families are 3 times more likely to need psychological help within a given year.  
Peter Hill, *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*
- 7) Compared to children from homes disrupted by death, children from divorced homes have *more* psychological problems.  
Robert E. Emery, "*Marriage, Divorce and Children's Adjustment*" Sage Publications

## Physically Damaging Children and Divorce

- 8) Children of divorce are at a greater risk to experience injury, asthma, headaches and speech defects than children whose parents have remained married.  
Dawson, "Family Structure and Children's Health and Well Being"  
*National Health Interview Survey on Child Health, Journal of Marriage and the Family*
- 9) Following divorce, children are 50% more likely to develop health problems than two parent families.  
Angel, Worobey, "*Single Motherhood and Children's Health*"
- 10) Children living with both biological parents are 20 to 35% more physically healthy than children from broken homes.  
Dawson, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*
- 11) Most victims of child molestation come from single-parent households or are the children of drug ring members.  
*Los Angeles Times*, "The Garbage Generation"
- 12) A child in a female-headed home is 10 times more likely to be beaten or murdered.  
*The Legal Beagle*, "The Garbage Generation"

## Long Term Effects of Divorce On Children

- 13) A study of children six years after a parental marriage breakup revealed that even after all that time, these children tended to be “lonely, unhappy, anxious and insecure.

Wallerstein “The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children”  
*Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*

- 14) 70% of long-term prison inmates grew up in broken homes.

Horn, Bush, “*Fathers, Marriage and Welfare Reform*”

## Problems Relating to Peers

- 15) Children of divorce are four times more likely to report problems with peers and friends than children whose parents have kept their marriages intact.

Tysse, Burnett, “Moral Dilemmas of Early Adolescents of Divorced and Intact Families.” *Journal of Early Adolescence*

- 16) Children of divorce, particularly boys, tend to be more aggressive toward others than those children whose parents did not divorce.

Emery, “*Marriage, Divorce and Children’s Adjustment*”

## Suicide Children and Divorce Statistics

- 17) People who come from broken homes are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide than those who do not come from broken homes.

Velez-Cohen, “Suicidal Behavior and Ideation”  
*Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*

## High School Drop-Out Statistics

- 18) Children of divorced parents are roughly two times more likely to drop out of high school than their peers who benefit from living with parents who did not divorce.

McLanahan, Sandefur, “Growing Up With a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps”  
*Harvard University Press*

- Our national policies contribute to family instability and breakup.
- Divorce is the public acknowledgment of failure.
  - Problems seem to have increased since the 1960s, when the Supreme Court outlawed mentioning God in schools:
  - Hollywood celebrates divorce and unwed motherhood.
  - U.S. Federal policy celebrates social and sexual variance.

- 12] But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

- Paul is speaking to “mixed marriages,” believers married to non-believers. In the OT, God forbade His people to marry Gentiles. Paul tells the Corinthians to marry only in the Lord (v.39; 2 Cor 6:14-18).
- “If you are a child of God, and you marry a child of the devil, you are sure to have trouble with your father-in-law.” (Puritan proverb)
- Marrying a Christian isn’t all: Let your marriage be “in the Lord.”

13] And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

- “...let her not leave him”: In the Greco-Roman world, the wife had the right to divorce her husband.

14] For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

- An opportunity to win the partner for Christ.

## **“Sanctified”**

- 1) Set aside for sacred functions (Ex 39:23-7,44). The Temple sanctified the gold connected with it, or the altar the gift laid upon (Mt 23:17,19 ).
- 2) To consecrate people by baptism (1 Cor 6:11) Christian marriage (1 Cor 7:14) or atonement for sin (Heb 9:13)
- 3) To reverence people, names, or things (1 Pet 3:15); to place in a position of special privilege (as here).
- 4) To purify someone from evil (Cf. Acts 16:31). Statistics reveal the tremendous importance of a united home.

## **Are Children Saved?**

- The child of a believing parent is regarded as Christian:
  - David’s response to the loss of his son (2 Sam 12:23) and Paul’s position (Rom 7:14).
  - Job’s “doubling” (Job 1:2,18-19 vs 42:10, 13).

15] But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

- If an unbeliever decides to dismiss his wife, he, not his marriage partner, takes the full responsibility for the divorce.
- “...God hath called us to peace”: Rom 12:18; 14:19; 1 Cor 14:33; 2 Tim 2:22; Heb 12:14; 1 Pet 3:11.

16] For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

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

17] But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.

- Paul digresses to lay down a rule three times: “Bloom where you are planted” (v. 17, 20, 24).
- In whatever situation a person becomes a Christian, he or she must remain there (until He makes it really clear that a move is in His Will). God calls the believer: vv. 15, 17, 18 (2X), 20, 21, 22 (2X), 24.

18] Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised.

- 19] Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.
- Distinctions disappear in Christ (Rom 2:25-26; Gal 3:28; 5:6; 6:15)
  - Circumcision was of paramount importance, especially after the Maccabean struggle.
- 20] Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.
- Paul does not address the issue of slavery. He is not interested in disturbing the existing structure of society.
- 21] Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.
- 22] For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.
- 23] Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.
- They are slaves in bondage to Christ, much as Israelites were to be in bondage to God (cf. Lev 25:55).
- 24] Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.
- The Christian must remember that God is always with him and will never forsake him (cf. Deut 31:6; Josh 1:5; Heb 1:5).
  - "Man" is used in a generic sense: Mr. & Mrs. Man.
  - "...abide with God": Set your mind on heavenly things, not earthly (Phil 3:19-20; Col 3:2).
- 25] Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.
- "Now concerning...": This is in regards to their letter.
- 26] I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.
- "...the present distress": A crisis? A misfortune? A famine? (1 Cor 11:21,34?).
  - The Greek word for distress occurs in Epictetus 3.26.7 in respect to starvation (cf. 3 Macc 3:16, when Ptolemy entered the Temple in Jerusalem).
  - Some associate it with the famine in the time of Claudius (Acts 11:28).
  - In any case, being a Christian in those days was to put one's life in jeopardy. When high seas are raging, it is no time for changing ships.
- 27] Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.
- God intended that husband and wife remain together. This can also apply to betrothal vows, which in a Jewish context were tantamount to marriage (cf. Deut 22:23-24; Mt 1:18).
- 28] But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.
- Paul addresses the hardships of the day for the Christian, and not the matter of sin.
  - *Parthenos*, "virgin": Mentioned 7X in the second half of this chapter (vv. 25,28,34 (2X), 36,37,38).
- 29] But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

- 30] And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;
- 31] And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

## The Eternal Perspective

- These are poetic lines emphasizing that we should be living as if we might leave this world at any moment. Earthly things should not be our ultimate objectives; we should not be absorbed by them.
  - The time is short. [How many “weekends” do YOU have left?]
  - This world is passing away: so is the America we once knew.
  - Instabilities are the order of the day. Family life: desertion, divorce, etc. Disease, famine, and poverty cause untold misery, grief, and death. Bankruptcies of individuals and companies will be accompanied by cities, states, and countries.
  - Most of all, this is engineered by those who have an agenda.
  - Christ’s followers are not of this world (Jn 17:14,16).
    - They are laughed to scorn when they suggest chastity to prevent immorality or sin-specific diseases (Eph 5:3-5).
    - or integrity in the workplace to prevent greed (Prov 11:1).
    - or contentment with basics to prevent envy (1 Tim 6:6).
  - Our citizenship is heaven (Phil 3:20).
- 32] But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:
- “I would have you without care”: Paul’s intention is that they be “worry free” (cf. Mt 6:25-34; Phil 4:11; 1 Pet 5:7).
  - Verb “care for” occurs 7X: 5X in 1 Corinthians; 2X in Philipians
- 33] But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.
- Care is used in a positive sense.
  - “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Tim 5:8).
- 34] There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.
- [Textual problems in this verse.] An unmarried woman is able to give herself fully to the work of the Lord (cf. Rom 16:12; Phil 4:2-3).
- 35] And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.
- “...cast a snare”: “I do not put a noose on you.” (only here.) A leash, so to speak.
- 36] But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.
- There’s a lack of clarity of expression: “man” = ? Father? Guardians? Fiancées? Customs?...

- 37] Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.
- 38] So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.
- He praises marriage and exalts celibacy (as a special calling; not for everyone). This passage is a likely response to specific cases inquired of in their previous letter.
- 39] The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.
- 40] But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.
- “...bound by the law” (Mt 19:6). Young widows urged to marry again: (1 Tim 5:14). Some chose not to (Lk 2:36-37).

## The Mystical Basis of Marriage - Ephesians 5:22-32

- 1) Biological Basis: procreation, etc.
  - 2) Psychological Basis: a union to meet life's challenges, joys, sorrows, etc.
  - 3) Sociological Basis: the family unit as the primary element of the tribe, community, nation, etc.
  - 4) Supernatural/Spiritual Basis: God's ordained unit through which He communicates His most significant truths. – The marriage relationship was established to communicate the relationship between: 1) YHWH and Israel and 2) Christ and His Church.
- Preeminence: Christ is the Head of the Church: Eph 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col 1:18; 2:19.
  - Preciousness of the His People: “Apple of His Eye” (Deut 32:10); Crown of Glory (Isa 62:3); Stones of crown, ensign (Zech 9:16); Jewels (Mal 3:17).
  - Love for the Church: Eph 5:25; Eph 1:15; Phil 4:1; 1 Thess 2:8; 1 Pet 1:22; 1 Jn 5:2.
  - Church = “Bride”: Isa 62:5; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev. 21:2; 22:17.

## Marriage as “Prophetic Types”

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

## Adam as a Type of Christ?

- Adam was not deceived (1 Tim 2:14).
- Adam loved Eve so much as to knowingly choose to share her destiny! Without which there would have been no redeemer, no “Seed of the Woman.” Do you love your wife that much?

## Gentile Brides as Types

- |    |        |         |
|----|--------|---------|
| 1) | Adam   | Eve     |
| 2) | Isaac  | Rebekah |
| 3) | Joseph | Asenath |

- |    |        |          |
|----|--------|----------|
| 4) | Moses  | Zipporah |
| 5) | Salmon | Rahab    |
| 6) | Boaz   | Ruth     |

How many? ...don't overlook the 7<sup>th</sup>! [*These Gentile "Brides" have no death recorded!*]

## Our "Marriage Proposal"

Written in blood... On a wooden cross... Erected in Judea...Almost 2000 years ago.

## Ancient Jewish Marriage

- *Shiddukhin* (engagement) ...arranged by the father!
- *Ketubah* (the agreement) ...bridegroom absent to build the house (Jn 14:2,3).  
Bride "snatched" in the night...then the marriage!
- *Huppah* (wedding ceremony); seven day celebration.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 7: Chapter 8

## Review: Three Visits & Four Letters

### Three Visits:

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

### Four Letters:

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

## Key Topics

Paul addresses the following:

- |                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| – Discipline               | Chapter 5                |
| – Going to Law             | Chapter 6                |
| – Marriage and Divorce     | Chapter 7                |
| – <b>Christian Liberty</b> | <b>Chapters 8, 9, 10</b> |
| – Lord's Table             | Chapter 11               |
| – Gift of Tongues          | Chapters 12-14           |
| (A better way)             | Chapter 13               |
| – Resurrection             | Chapter 15               |

## Food Offered to Idols

- Paul spends *three chapters* dealing with “things offered to idols...” It also brings into clearer view the whole question of the influence of this young church on the great pagan city of Corinth.
- What are *our* idols? Ours are not as local as those in Corinth, nor as ancient as Paul’s day:
  - Movies?
  - Television?
  - Social drinking?
  - Table wines?
- The beautiful thing about being a Christian is the fellowship we enter into among those who love the Savior: it crosses boundaries of race, class, and background.
- It draws us together as ONE in Christ.
- What a tragedy it is when we reveal our low level of Christian experience by allowing a divergence of opinion to break fellowship, or letting our example cause a brother to stumble (cf. Jn 13:35).
- Or from the other angle: “I must have no fellowship at all with anyone who does not think exactly as I do...”

## Corinthians 8

- 1] Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.
  - “Now Concerning...” Paul turns to the next question in the letter he had received from the Corinthians.
  - Meat, idols: Part and parcel of formal etiquette in their society.
  - Reminder of Jerusalem Council: Acts 15:29; 21:25; Rev 2:14,20.
  - Meat divided into three parts: A token part for public sacrifice (and by the state): The remainder was sold to shops and markets...One was never sure what one was purchasing.
  - “We all have knowledge”: Some scholars agree that the last part of the sentence is a quote from the letter the Corinthians had sent to Paul.
  - “Knowledge puffs up; love builds up”: Knowledge leads to arrogance; love is never arrogant! (1 Cor 13:4).
  - God has revealed them to babes and hid them from the wise and prudent (& PhDs... = “Piled higher and Deeper? Phenomenally Dumb?...”).
- 2] And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.
  - “To know”: Perfect tense; the person imagines that he knows everything. Haughty attitude, “If any of you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise” (1 Cor 3:18; Gal 6:3).
  - “He does not yet know”: Aorist inceptive; he has not even begun true knowledge...
  - Emphasis on “suppose”: Knowledge passes away (13:8-10) because it is incomplete and imperfect. Always limited in scope, extent, and depth.
- 3] But if any man love God, the same is known of him.
  - “Knowledge is proud that it has learnt so much. Wisdom is humble that it knows not more.”
  - All knowledge is derivative: it comes from God through Christ (Col 2:3).
  - Knowledge is a bestowment, not an achievement (cf. Ex 33:12,17; Gal 4:9; 1 Jn 4:19). Early years: Apostle’s Creed; Lord’s Prayer...Instruction to the 16<sup>th</sup> century church occurred primarily within the family circle.

## The Reformation

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

On the one hand it met a need, but on the other hand that also had a subtle effect of making it “head knowledge”; learning the Catechisms instead of the Bible. Today we suffer widespread Biblical illiteracy, even within the church.

- 4] As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.
- “As concerning...”: Paul again quotes from the letter from Corinth.
  - “An idol is nothing” (Isa 44:12-20; Ps 115:4-8; 135:15-18; cf. Jer 10:3-5).
  - There *are* spiritual beings behind the idols, but not the ones the worshippers thought (1 Cor 10:20).
  - What complicated matters was that, in his age, people believed strongly and fearfully in demons and devils. They believed that the air was full of them and they were constantly lurking to gain entrance into a man. One of the ways was to enter through his food. One of the ways to prevent this was to dedicate the meat to some good god whose presence would put up a barrier against the evil spirit.

## “Spirits” in Entertainment?

- *Star Wars; Dark Crystal; Death Becomes Her; Hello Again... Twilight...* et al... What should our response be?
  - The Sh'ma: Deut 6:4-5; cf. Ps 86:10; Isa 44:8; 45:5; Mt 22:37-39.
- 5] For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)
- “So-called gods” (Ps 82:1,6; 95:3; 96:4; 97:9; 136:2; 138:1).
  - Devoid of authenticity. Even Satan himself is not divine (Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).
- 6] But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.
- Appears to be a creedal statement by Paul (also on resurrection: 15:12-18, 42-44).
  - Jesus teaches us to address God as Father (Mt 6:9; Acts 1:4,7). There was only one time Jesus didn't call Him “Father”: when He hung on the cross...
  - We are His offspring. This corresponds to Paul's Areopagus speech (Acts 17:28; cf. Acts 14:15; 17:24-31; Rom 11:36).
  - “...all things”: Col 1:16; John 1:1-3; Heb 1:3.
  - “Through whom we live”: Doctrines known to the Corinthians...
- 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 weak is defiled.
- “Howbeit”: A strong adversative. Not every believer (but some) in Corinth had full knowledge of the doctrines of God, Christ, and the creation Paul just alluded to.

- (Note the reference to the “weaker” brother...)
  - The customs of the day were integrally tied to an idol (just as ours: names of days, months, Christmas tree, Easter...). These are all vestiges from Babylon. [See Hisslop, et al; *Mystery of Babylon* briefing package.]
  - Link with Jerusalem Council, Acts 15:29; 1 Cor 10:27-28. Our conscience must be well informed to function properly.
- 8] But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.
- This seems to be from the Corinthians themselves; Paul’s response is v.9; (cf. 6:13).
  - Food itself has no religious significance (Rom 14:17).
  - Paul agrees with their view of religious liberty, but takes issue with them for their lack of love and compassion for their weaker brothers and sisters.
  - [Cain offered God a plate of vegetables, and He turned it down...He instructed Peter to “kill and eat...”]
- 9] But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.
- “This liberty of yours”: Reflects Paul’s dislike of their apparent haughtiness (cf. Lk 15:30).
  - Knowledge itself results in arrogance.
  - Knowledge without love produces pride; freedom without love generates arrogance.
  - *Exousia*, authority vs. *proskomma*, a stumbling block.
- 10] For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;
- Common occurrence. Erastus, city’s director of public works and member of the local church, might attend such functions (Rom 16:23).
  - You are always “on parade.”
- 11] And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?
- Weaker brother is torn down rather than built up.
  - The verb “perish”—“to destroy”—is in present tense: action already occurring; being destroyed (cf. Rom 14:15). There is a contrast between the death of Christ and the callousness of the “strong” Christians. There are few decisions that you make that do not involve someone else. “Victimless crimes?” Only if you disregard those in whose love you live.
  - TV, movies, et al. are part of your soul’s “diet”: You are what you eat...
  - Are you putting a stumbling block across the path of a brother in Christ?
    - Are you cutting off fellowship from the man who does not agree theologically with you in everything you say?
    - You owe him a ministry that only a Spirit-filled Christian can bring: the love of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - What kind of example are you setting among your immediate circle of friends?
- 12] But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.
- Verb “to sin” is in present tense: in process. To sin against the brethren is to sin against Christ. Remember the Damascus Road: “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting” (Acts 9:4ff; 22:8; 26:15).
  - Jesus and his brethren are one. Jesus loves His church. We injure Him when we injure it...you never know when people are watching...

13] Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

- βρῶμα *broma*: Paul uses the general word “food” instead of the term “sacrificial meat,” which was at the center of the discussion (vv. 1, 4, 7, 10).
- Cf. Paul scolding Peter and Barnabas for their refusal to eat with Gentile Christians in Antioch (Gal 2:11-14).
- He and his associates delivered the letter of the Jerusalem Council to the Gentile Christians (Acts 1:29).
- “...offend”: *Skandalizo*; to set off a trap; “cause to fall.”
- “Brother”: Paul used this word 4X in the last 3 verses...
- In the next chapter (1 Cor 9:22), Paul is willing to forego eating certain foods so that he might advance the cause of Christ and the growth of the church (Mt 22:37-39).
- Paul seems lax in Chapter 8 (1 Cor 8:10); and strict in Chapter 10 (1 Cor 10:18-22); in Chapter 8, Paul addresses the strong; in Chapter 10, the weak.
- However, whenever a Christian becomes a *participant* in idolatry (1 Cor 10:18,20), he would be forging a spiritual association with an idol.
- God is a jealous god (Ex 20:4; Deut 5:8; Jas 4:4).
- Society winks at sin, esp. sexual immorality (it’s not “sin”; it’s a “character weakness,” etc.) In the Greco-Roman world, sin was simply an inconvenient frustration. It was compared to an archer who misses the mark; a lack of skill that training could overcome.
- In the Scriptures, however, sin is a personal affront to God (Ps 51).
- Christian fellowship carries a great responsibility: to lay down your own life for your friends (Jn 15:13). Forfeiting things you consider perfectly legitimate in order that your friends may find the way to Jesus more easily.
- What is “safe” for one may be unsafe for another. What is hidden in *their* storerooms? See *The Way of Agape* book or the 8-session study series.
- No one has the right to indulge in a pleasure—or demand a liberty—that may be the ruination of someone else. Some will say you are “too narrow.” Others will insist that you are compromising points of doctrine. Abstention should not be based upon a legalistic argument that only serves to create a vacuum in the life of the one submitting to it, but rather upon the love to the Lord Jesus Christ which involves total consecration of time, money, and everything I am to Him, and upon the consequent concern for my brethren in Christ, especially the young convert, before whom I should ever seek to be an example for His sake. But I must also not appear so strict as to frighten them off...keep a Spirit-filled balance.

## Appendix: Gnosticism

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

## Sources

First, there are the Gnostic texts, which are known as the New Testament Apocrypha. These texts are not recognized as Scripture because they contain teachings which differ from those in the Bible. Then, there are the refutations of the Gnostics by the early church fathers.

Some of the more important ones are Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*; Hippolytus, *Refutations of All Heresies*; Epiphanius, *Panarion*; and Tertullian, *Against Marcion*.

The principal source on Gnosticism is the New Testament itself: Many Gnostic teachings were condemned by the writers of the New Testament. Paul emphasized a wisdom and knowledge that comes from God and does not concern itself with idle speculations, fables, and moral laxity (Col 2:8-23; 1 Tim 1:4; 2 Tim 2:16-19; Titus 1:10-16). John, both in his gospel and in the epistles, countered heretical teaching which, in a broad sense, can be considered Gnostic.

## Teachings of the Gnostics

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

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

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

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

## Ethical Behavior

Ethical behavior among the Gnostics varied considerably. Some sought to separate themselves from all evil matter in order to avoid contamination. Paul may be opposing such a view in 1 Timothy 4:1-5.

For other Gnostics, ethical life took the form of libertinism. For them, knowledge meant freedom to participate in all sorts of indulgences. Many reasoned that since they had received divine knowledge and were truly informed as to their divine nature, it didn't matter how they lived. Such an attitude is a misunderstanding of the Gospel.

Paul, on a number of occasions, reminded his readers that they were saved from sin to holiness. They were not to have an attitude of indifference toward the law. They had died to sin in their baptism into Christ (Rom 6:1-11) and so were to walk "in newness of life." John reminded the Christians that once they had been saved they were not to continue living in sin (1 Jn 3:4-10).

These Gnostic teachings also had a disruptive effect on fellowship in the church. Those who were "enlightened" thought of themselves as being superior to those who did not have such knowledge. Divisions arose between the spiritual and the fleshly.

This attitude of superiority is severely condemned in the New Testament. Christians are “one body” (1 Cor 12) who should love one another (1 Cor 13; 1 John). Spiritual gifts are for the Christian community rather than individual use; they should promote humility rather than pride (1 Cor 12-14; Eph 4:11-16).

## Damaged Texts?

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

## The Last 12 Verses of Mark: Added or Expurgated?

- There are some scholars who believe the last 12 verses of Mark were not in the original and “were added later.” This has become a dispute among many. See our Expository Commentary on Mark for details...
- (Many Bibles have a footnote to that effect (excessively relying on the Alexandrian codices 4th century) and the writings of Westcott and Hort, et al.)
- Yet it is now becoming increasingly understood that these 12 verses were expurgated from the Alexandrian codices and were in the original.
- Irenaeus, in 150 A.D., quotes them in his commentary, as does Hypolytus in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.)
- Syriac: the *Peshitto* (2<sup>nd</sup> century) and the *Curetonian Syriac* (3rd century)—older than any of the Greek manuscripts, both contain these 12 verses.
- Latin versions: Jerome (382 A.D.), who had access to Greek versions no longer available includes these 12 verses. The *Vulgate* was only a revision of the *Vetus Itala* (2nd century) and contains these 12 verses.
- The *Gothic Version* (350 A.D.) contains them. The Egyptian Versions: the *Memphitic* (or Lower Egyptian) or “*Coptic*,” belongs to 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century, contains them; as does the “*Thebaic*” (or Upper Egyptian), or “*Sahidic*” (3<sup>rd</sup> century).
- The Armenian (5<sup>th</sup> century), the Ethiopic (4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century), and the Georgian (6<sup>th</sup> century) contains these.

## The Church Fathers’ Quotations

- Papias (~A.D. 100), v.18, Eusebius, *Hist. Ecc.* iii, 39.
- Justin Martyr (A.D. 151), v. 20, *Apol.* I.c.45.
- Irenaeus (A.D. 180), v.19, *Adv. Hoer.* Lib.iii.c.x.
- Hippolytus (A.D. 190-227) vv.17-19, Lagarde’s ed., 1858, p.74.
- Vincentius (A.D. 256), at Seventh Council of Carthage, held under Cyprian.
- Acta Pilati (2<sup>nd</sup> cent), quotes vv.15-18, Tischendorf’s ed., 1853, pp.242, 351.
- Apostolical Constitutions (3rd or 4th century) quotes vv.16-18.
- Eusebius (A.D. 325) discusses these verses, quoted by Marinus from a lost part of his History.
- Aphraates (A.D. 337) a Syrian bishop, quoted vv.16-18 in his first *Homily*, Dr. Wright’s ed., 1869, i., 21.
- Ambrose (A.D. 374-397), Archbishop of Milan, freely quotes vv.15 4 times, 16, 17, 18 3 times, and v.20 once.
- Chrysostom (A.D. 400) refers to v.9; states that vv.19, 20 are “the end of the Gospel.”
- Jerome (b.331, d.420) includes these 12 verses in his Latin translation, besides quoting vv.9 and 14 in his other writings.
- Augustine (A.D. 395-430) attributes them to Mark, and indicates that they are freely read in the churches.

- Nestorius (4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century) quotes v.20; and Cyril of Alexandria (A.D. 430) accepts the quotation.
- Victor of Antioch (A.D. 425) confirms the opinion of Eusebius by referring personally to the very many MSS which he has seen with the 12 verses in them.

## Heptadic (Sevenfold) Structure

A security monitor that watches over every letter, and never wears out; a “fingerprint” of the Author... an uncompromisable design.

## The Last 12 Verses of Mark

Words	175	(7 x 25)
Vocabulary	98	(7 x 7 x 2)
Letters	553	(7 x 79)
– Vowels	294	(7 x 42)
– Consonants	259	(7 x 37)

## Vocabulary

Total Vocabulary	98	(7 x 14)
Found before in Mark	84	(7 x 12)
Only here	14	(7 x 2)
Used in Lord’s address	42	(7 x 6)
Not part of His vocabulary	56	(7 x 8)

## Chances of Multiples of 7?

For 2	$7^2 = (7 \times 7)$	49
For 3	$7^3 = (7 \times 7 \times 7)$	343
For 4	$7^4 = (7 \times 7 \times 7 \times 7)$ etc.	2,401
For 5	$7^5$	16,807
For 6	$7^6$	117,649
For 7	$7^7$	823,543
For 8	$7^8$	5,764,801
For 9	$7^9$	40,353,607

- Would you like to try this?
- $7^9$  chances = 40,353,607 attempts
- 8 hrs/day, 40 hrs/wk, 50 weeks/year = 2000 hrs/year, or 120,000 min/year @ average of 10 minutes attempt = 403,536,070 minutes or 3,362 years! *(It gets worse...)*

## Numerical (Gematrical) Values (see chart on the next page)

• Total	106,663	(7 x 14,809)
– vv.9-11	17,213	(7 x 2,459)
– v.9	11,795	(7 x 1,685)
– v.10	5,418	(7 x 774)
– 1 <sup>st</sup> word	98	(7 x 14)
– Middle	4,529	(7 x 647)

## Greek Alphanumerics

α	1	ι	10	ρ	100
β	2	κ	20	σ ς	200
γ	3	λ	30	τ	300
δ	4	μ	40	υ	400
ε	5	ν	50	φ	500
ς*	6	ξ	60	χ	600
ζ	7	ο	70	ψ	700
η	8	π	80	ω	800
θ	9	Ϟ*	90	Ϡ*	900

\**Vau* (6), *koppa* (90), and *samsi* (900), later became extinct.

– Last word	791	(7 x 113)
– v.11	11,795	(7 x 1,685)
– vv.12-20	86,450	(7 x 12,350)

## Vocabulary

• Total	98	(7 x 14)
• Not before in Mark	14	(7 x 2)
• Found later in NT	7	(7 x 1)
• Occurrences	35	(7 x 5)
• Numeric value	8,246	(7 x 1,178)
• v.20 vocabulary	14	(7 x 2)
• found previously	7	(7 x 1)
• found only here	7	(7 x 1)

## Word Forms

• Total Forms	133	(7 x 19)
– Value of total	89,663	(7 x 12,809)
• Occur once	112	(7 x 16)
• Occurring more than once	21	(7 x 3)
– Occurring 63 times	63	(7 x 9)
• Total Occurrences	112 + 63 = 175	(7 x 25)
– Total Value	103,663	(7 x 14,809)

## Deadly (in Greek)

- (Not found elsewhere in New Testament) has a numeric value of 581 (7 x 83)
- It is preceded in the vocabulary by 42 (7 x 6) words; in the passage itself by 126 (7 x 18) words

## Chances of Multiples of 7

For 2	$7^2 = (7 \times 7)$	49
For 3	$7^3 = (7 \times 7 \times 7)$	343
For 4	$7^4 = (7 \times 7 \times 7 \times 7)$ etc.	2,401
For 5	$7^5$	16,807
For 6	$7^6$	117,649
For 7	$7^7$	823,543
For 8	$7^8$	5,764,801
For 9	$7^9$	40,353,607
For 10	$7^{10}$	282,475,249
For 11	$7^{11}$	1,977,326,743
For 12	$7^{12}$	13,841,287,201
For 13	$7^{13}$	96,889,010,047
For 14	$7^{14}$	678,223,072,849
For 15	$7^{15}$	4,747,561,509,943
For 16	$7^{16}$	33,232,930,569,601
For 17	$7^{17}$	232,630,513,987,207
For 18	$7^{18}$	1,628,413,597,910,449
For 19	$7^{19}$	11,398,895,185,373,143
For 20	$7^{20}$	79,792,266,297,612,001
For 21	$7^{21}$	558,545,864,083,284,007
For 22	$7^{22}$	3,909,821,048,582,988,049
For 23	$7^{23}$	27,368,747,340,080,916,343
For 24	$7^{24}$	191,581,231,380,566,414,401
For 25	$7^{25}$	1,341,068,619,663,964,900,807
For 26	$7^{26}$	9,387,480,337,647,754,305,649
For 27	$7^{27}$	65,712,362,363,534,280,139,543
For 28	$7^{28}$	459,986,536,544,739,960,976,801
For 29	$7^{29}$	3,219,905,755,813,179,726,837,607
For 30	$7^{30}$	22,539,340,290,692,258,087,863,249
For 31	$7^{31}$	157,775,382,034,845,806,615,042,743
For 32	$7^{32}$	1,104,427,674,243,920,646,305,299,201
For 33	$7^{33}$	7,730,993,719,707,444,524,137,094,407
For 34	$7^{34}$	54,116,956,037,952,111,668,959,660,849

- Want to try?
- $7^{34} = \sim 5.4 \times 10^{28}$  tries would be needed. There are  $\sim 3.15 \times 10^7$  sec/yr;
- Computer: 400 million tries per second? At  $4 \times 10^8$  tries/sec, it would take about  $4.3 \times 10^{12}$  computer years = 1,000,000 supercomputers 4,300,000 years?
- *And that's with only 34 distinctive features of sevens; Panin has identified 75!*

## Next Time

1 Corinthians chapter 9; and, introducing the “Spiritual Entrepreneur”—the Biblical Exemplar and the implications for today.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 8: Chapter 9

### Key Topics

“Foolishness of God”	Chapter 1
Bema Seat	Chapter 3
Discipline	Chapter 5
Going to Law	Chapter 6
Marriage and Divorce	Chapter 7
<b>Christian Liberty</b>	<b>Chapters 8, 9, 10</b>
Lord’s Table	Chapter 11
Gift of Tongues	Chapters 12-14
(A better way:)	Chapter 13
Resurrection	Chapter 15

### Issues

- Stewardship and Accountability
- Remuneration of the Shepherd
- Living off the Gospel
- Hindrances to ministry...
- The threat of Nicolaitans

### Corinthians 9

- 1] Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord?
- “Am I not...?”: Four questions (that demand affirmative answers).
  - “Am I not an apostle?”: Paul was called an apostle. (Matthias was the successor to Judas.) Although not numbered among the 12, he had been called (Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:16-18).
  - “Am I not free?”: They had to acknowledge his freedom; he had been eating and drinking with them! (Gal 2:11-16)
  - “Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?”: Paul had *seen* the Lord on Damascus Road (1 Cor 15:8; Gal 1:12, 15-16; note Ananias words “...to see...” in Acts 22:14; cf. 26:16).
  - When Paul uses the single name, Jesus, he depicts the earthly Jesus (1 Cor 12:3; 2 Cor 4:10-14; Eph 4:21; Phil 2:10; 1 Thess 4:14). Paul does not say, I know what I have believed, but whom (1 Tim 1:12). [Remember the old saying in business: it’s not what you know, but who you know!]
- 2] If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.
- As a former persecutor of the church, they *would* question his apostleship (2 Cor 10:1-11; 12:11-21; 13:1-10; Gal 1:1, 22-23).
  - “..the seal”: authentication; mark of ownership (cf., sealed by the Holy Spirit).
- 3] Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,

- The Gentile Christians in Corinth were fully acquainted with the Jewish customs and considered him bound to the Mosaic food laws.
- They were also aware of the Jewish tradition of tithing (Lev 27:30-33; Num 18:21,24,26-29; Deut 12:17-19; 14:22-29; 26:12-15).
- In Jesus' day, the practice was strictly observed (Mt 23:23; Mk 12:41-44).
- Jesus also instructed them that a worker was worth his pay (Mt 10:5-9; Mk 6:7-11; Lk 9:3-5; 10:7).
- When God instituted the priesthood in Israel, He also instituted tithing. The Levites, not receiving an inheritance in the Land, depended upon fellow Israelites for support.

4] Have we not power to eat and to drink?

- He defends his freedom to not exercise his rights to further the cause of the gospel (vv. 4,5,12).
- According to the Lord's command, a worker deserves his wages (Lk 10:7; 1 Tim 5:18).
- With respect to the preaching of the gospel, however, Paul unequivocally informed the Corinthians that he offered his services free of charge (v.18).
- The Corinthians who received Paul's teachings were obligated to support him financially. But when Paul resided in Corinth at the home of Aquila and Priscilla, he plied his tentmaking trade to support himself (Acts 18:2-3).

5] Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

- "...lead about a sister": Literal Greek, "a sister (in the Lord) is a wife." The celibacy of the clergy, so-called, was unknown in those days. Paul argues that he had the right to travel with a believing wife.
- Although we know nothing of the others from Scripture (tradition indicates that Thomas journeyed as far as India), Paul implies that they were well informed about the travels and family circumstances of the others.
- We assume that he is referring to the 12, and not the broader circle which included Barnabas, Andronicus and Junias (Acts 14:3,14; Rom 16:7; 1 Thess 2:6).
- "Brothers of the Lord" mentioned by Matthew and Mark: James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3).
  - These were his half-brothers who did not believe until after Jesus' earthly ministry (Jn 7:5).
  - Jesus appeared to James after His resurrection (1 Cor 15:7).
  - On the day of the ascension, his brothers with their mother, Mary, and the other women met with the eleven apostles in the upper room (Acts 1:14).
  - The Books of James and Jude are the only other evidences.
- Cephas was the Aramaic name for Peter (Jn 1:42).
  - Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law in Capernaum (Mt 8:14-15; Mk 1:29-31; Lk 4:38-39)
  - Now we learn that Peter took his wife along on missionary journeys.
  - Since Paul mentions him repeatedly in this letter (1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5), we assume that Peter had visited the church in Corinth.

6] Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

- Paul's breach with Barnabas seems to have been healed (Acts 15:39-40).
- Barnabas as a Levite, and Paul as a Pharisee, had each learned a trade. (We don't know what Barnabas' was.)
- Their vocational support will be a key observation as we continue...

- 7] Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?
- Soldier, Farmer, Shepherd. God's people are often portrayed as an army, a vine, and a flock.
  - Also, each exists on a different economic basis: soldier was salaried; owner obtains proceeds out of own yield; shepherd was usually a slave.
- 8] Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?
- "Saith not the law...?: "For it is written...": Paul repeatedly leans on the Scriptures in this epistle (1 Cor 1:19,31; 2:9,16; 3:19,10; 5:13; 6:16; 9:9; 10:7,26; 14:21; 15:27,32,45,54,55).
- 9] For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?
- Cf. Deut 25:4; 1 Tim 5:18.
  - If a Jew muzzled the ox, he would run the risk of a scourging in the local synagogue. The Creator upholds, from moment to moment, all that he has made (Col 1:16; Ps 104:14,21; 147:9).
  - Also, "pay him his wages each day before sunset" (Deut 24:15).
- 10] Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.
- God stipulates that man must care for the ox because it belongs to God's creation (Prov 12:10; 27:23).
  - Thus, the church should care for its ministers.
- 11] If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?
- Note "we"; Paul and his fellow workers.
- 12] If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.
- Neither Apollos or Peter founded the church in Corinth; Paul did. He was their spiritual father (4:15).
  - "We have not used this right": Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla and earned his own keep by tent-making with them so as not to become a burden (Acts 18:2-3; cf. Acts 20:34-35; 2 Cor 12:13; 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8).
  - Paul and his associates strove to assure that their lifestyle would never become a hindrance to the Corinthians. [*Hindrance* was a military term that connotes breaking up a road to impede the advance of a pursuing enemy; an interruption to a course of action.]
  - Paul knew he could never "win": if he refused his right to support, his critics would charge him with being aloof. If he accepted support, they would call him greedy.
  - When Silas and Timothy eventually arrived, they brought gifts from the churches in Macedonia, and Paul became a full-time preacher (Acts 18:5; 2 Cor 11:9).
  - The church in Philippi supplied him again and again to aid him in his work (Phil 4:14-16).
  - Paul now highlights the similarity between God's command for the support of the priests and Levites and the Lord's directive concerning compensation for the messengers of the Gospel.
- 13] Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

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

## OT Offerings

- The Burnt-offering (hides, for trade);
- Sin-offering (only fat burned, rest was available);
- Trespass-offering (only fat burned; rest was available);
- Meat-offering (wine & oil, only token burned);
- Peace-offering (fat & entrails burned; priest received breast and right shoulder; rest returned to worshipper.)
- Also, priests were offered “first fruits” of seven kinds:
  - wheat, barley, the vine, the fig-tree, the pomegranate, the olive and honey.
- The *Terumah*, choicest fruits of every growing thing; 1/50 of any crop went to the priests.
- The *Tithe*. The tithe belonged to the Levites; the priests received a tithe of the that which the Levites received.
- The *Challah*, an offering of kneaded dough. If wheat, barley, spelt, oats or rye, a private individual gave 1/24<sup>th</sup> part; a public baker, 1/48<sup>th</sup>.
- (The priests’ rapacity was well known; used their religion to grow fat.)

14] Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

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

15] But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.

- “For I would rather die than...”: Overcome with emotion, Paul often breaks off mid-sentence (Rom 3:25; 5:12; 8:32; 1 Cor 6:9; 10:32). Despite the KJV attempt at smoothness, the force of Paul’s emotions resulted in a rupture of the syntax.
- Paul *supported himself by his own trade* during the three missionary journeys (1 Thess 2:9; Acts 18:3; 20:34; 2 Cor 12:14).
- Gifts from the church in Philippi were not “remuneration for services rendered,” but rather tokens of love for Paul (Phil 4:14-18).

## The Spiritual Entrepreneur

- Driven by a vision, not self-interest. He used his personal independence as a key credential in ministering without being a burden to his target audiences...
- An overlooked aspect of Paul as an exemplar of a “Spiritual Entrepreneur.”

## Nicolaitans

- A similar, but offensive, aspect of “professional Christianity”: becoming “a man of the cloth”: The rule of the clergy over the laity was distained by the Lord.
  - The deeds of the Nicolaitans (Rev 2:6).

- The doctrine of the Nicolaitans (Rev 2:15).
  - His example was the washing of the feet (Jn 13:5-14).
- 16] For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!
- On the road to Damascus, Jesus told him to preach to the Gentiles and the people of Israel (Acts 9:15; 26:15-18).
  - OT examples: Jeremiah (Jer 20:9); Amos (Amos 3:8).
  - NT: Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:20).
  - Paul is a bonds slave of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:1; Gal 1:10; Tit 1:10; cf. Luke 17:10). *Doulos*, bonds slave [cf. Coeur d'Alene].
- 17] For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.
- 18] What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.
- No one could ever lay a claim on Paul because of some monetary accountability (2 Cor 11:7).
  - Paul refuses to avail himself of his apostolic right and calls his preference to preach without pay his “boast” (v.15).
  - In this freedom, Paul could actively proclaim the good news to everyone.
  - Paul so chose, but nowhere does he abrogate the command Jesus gave to the workers in His kingdom.
- 19] For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.
- “...be free”: Paul returns to the discussion on freedom that began at v.1
  - He was proud of his Roman citizenship; however, by not accepting compensation from the church at Corinth, he was free from any hindrance that could obstruct his preaching.
  - “Man is most free when controlled by God alone” —Augustine; cf. Mt 20:25-27
- 20] And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;
- “First to the Jew and then to the Gentile”: Mt 10:5-6; Acts 13:46; Rom 1:16; 2:9.
  - Although born a Jew (Phil 3:5 ), Paul implies he is a new creation (2 Cor 5:17) and *is no longer a Jew or a Greek*.
  - Christ is the end of the law (Rom 10:4) the believer is “not under the law but under grace” (Rom 6:14).
  - When preaching to the Jews, he adapted himself to Jewish customs:
    - Timothy’s circumcision (Acts 16:3);
    - Nazarite vow (Acts 18:18);
    - Purification rites (Acts 21:23-24,26).
    - Paul wished to demonstrate that he had no objections to obeying the law of Moses, having been accused of not teaching the law to Jewish people (Acts 21:20-21).
  - He asked the Jews not so much to give up the practice of the law as their confidence in it (Phil 3:3ff); their trust must be in the person of Jesus Christ.
  - While submitting to the obedience of the Mosaic law to win Jews, he is also the champion of Christian liberty (Gal 2:4; 5:13).

- Although appointed an apostle primarily to the Gentiles (Gal 2:7-9), he preached to both Jews and Greeks (Acts 20:21).
- 21] To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.
- Whenever Paul spent time with Gentiles, he did not observe Jewish food laws, circumcision, New Moon and Sabbath celebrations (Gal 2:11-14; Col 2:11,16).
  - I am free from all men (v.19 ); I myself am not under the law (v.20); I am not without the law of God but under the law of Christ (v.21).
  - Law of Christ? (Gal 6:2) He no longer seeks salvation from the law but wants to keep the law to show his gratitude to Christ.
  - “Freedom is not license to do what I want, but liberation to do what I ought.”—William P. Welty, Ph.D.
  - Although the ceremonial and civil laws have been abolished, God’s moral commands remain.
- 22] To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.
- God has chosen the weak and insignificant things to shame the strong (1 Cor 1:26-28).
- 23] And this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.
- Paul will go to any length, descend to any level...Discrimination was unknown to Paul (Gal 3:28); all people everywhere (Acts 20:24; Phil 3:7-14).
  - As Christ did. Paul would even be willing to visit Illyricum (Albania and Yugoslavia) and Spain (Rom 15:19,24).
  - He was a *co-partner* in the blessings which converts receive.
- 24] Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.
- The Isthmian Games of Corinth were second only to the Olympic Games (located 10 miles from Corinth, every other year, with athletes from all over the world). Paul was in Corinth AD 50-52; games held in spring of AD 51.
  - “So run, that ye may obtain”: The verb *agonizomai* means “I fight, struggle”; (thus, to *agonize*). Not half-hearted.
  - Winning is more than simply starting a race. We should apply our diligence as if in a race: only our best will do.
- 25] And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.
- “Temperate”: Self-control (2 Tim 2:5).
  - An athlete wins by denying himself many “lawful” pleasures. Winning is focusing on one goal: the winning of the prize.
  - Victory is not the result of *one thing*; it’s the result of many small “edges.”
- 26] I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

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

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

- “...keep under”: *Hypopiazō*, a verb from boxing: “I give my body a black eye.”
- “Disqualified.” What was Paul fearful of?
- *Adokimos*, disqualified from the games, for the prize. Not of salvation, but a reward for service (1 Cor 3:15). It is about inheritance (for obedience) and rewards.
- Paul does not allow his lifestyle to contradict his message.

## The Encroaching Darkness

- “Political incorrectness”: the plight of the Christian (vs: Jew in Germany).
- Lessons from *The Pilgrim Church*, E.H. Broadbent.
- The unique role of the Spiritual Entrepreneur...

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 9: Chapter 10

## Key Topics

“Foolishness of God”	Chapter 1
Bema Seat	Chapter 3
Discipline	Chapter 5
Going to Law	Chapter 6
Marriage and Divorce	Chapter 7
<b>Christian Liberty</b>	<b>Chapters 8, 9, 10</b>
Lord’s Table	Chapter 11
Gift of Tongues	Chapters 12-14
(A better way:)	Chapter 13
Resurrection	Chapter 15

## Warnings from History

- The history of the people of God demonstrated that the enjoyment of high privilege does not guarantee final blessing.
  - Despite the incredible blessings and privileges—Shekinah (Ex 13,14); Manna (Ex 16); Water from the rock (Num 20)—they blew it due to their unbelief...
  - Why did the Israelites perish in the wilderness?
    - Idols (Amos 5:6)
    - Golden Calf (Ex 32:1-6)
- ...Despite the miracles, they lacked faith in God.**

## Corinthians 10

- 1] Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;
- “Moreover...”: Connects with Chapter 9. “I would not that ye should be ignorant” (5X): Rom 1:13; 11:25; 1 Cor 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; 1 Thess 4:13.
  - *Shekinah*: Ex 14:24; Num 12:5; Deut 31:15; Ps 99:7.
  - “...all our fathers”: Jewish and Gentile Christians “...passed through the sea” (Ex 14).
- 2] And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;
- Paul’s reference links the past and present. He projects the meaning of baptism into Christ (Rom 6:3; Gal 3:27) onto Moses and the exodus (Ex 14:31).
  - Israelites, “baptized into Moses” signified their covenant relationship (Ex 24:4-8).
  - Moses was the mediator of the first covenant which became obsolete; Christ is the mediator of the new covenant (Heb 7:22; 8:6: 9:15).
  - The cloud and the sea both served to separate God’s people from the hostile forces.
- 3] And did all eat the same spiritual meat;
- Five times in five consecutive clauses: “All.”
  - “Spiritual”: 3X in verses 3 and 4 used as a figurative, typical meaning, pointing to Christ (cf. 1 Cor 10:11).
  - *Manna*: “What is it?” (Ex 16:15). It’s interesting that God never called it manna; He called it “bread.” There is plenty of symbolism here linking it to God’s Word.
  - Water: At Horeb, Rephidim (Ex 17:1-7) and at Kadesh, Meribah (Num 20:2-11). Also, Num 21:16; Neh 9:15; Ps 78:15-20; Isa 48:21.
- 4] And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

## Jesus as “Rock”

- Jacob declares Him “the Rock of Israel” (Gen 49:24).
  - Moses portrays Him as a rock (Deut 32:4,15,18,30,31).
  - Psalmists call Him a rock (Ps 18:31; 62:2; 78:35; 89:26; 95:1).
  - The word is often applied directly to Christ’s redemptive work: Salvation (Deut 32:15; Ps 62:2; 95:1); Savior (Ps 89:26); Redeemer (Ps 78:35); and, Begetter (Deut 32:18).
- 5] But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.
- Why was God not pleased? The Israelites longed to return to Egypt (Lk 9:62) and they carried idols with them (Amos 5:25-26; Acts 7:42-43).
  - The classic understatement of the Bible: Of all who came out of Egypt, all but two adults perished! (Caleb and Joshua!) The bodies of the rest of them were (*katastronnyimi*) scattered over the desert (Num 14:16). Thousands perished (Num 16:40; 25:9). [Taking men over 20 yrs (603,550; cf. Num 1:46) and adding an equal number of women, a total of 1,207,000, and dividing by 38 (the number of years spent in the wilderness after the curse) suggests about 90 deaths per day!]
  - Although recipients of God’s daily provision, they still perished—because of unbelief!
  - They rebelled against Him ten times! (Num 14:22).

- 6] Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.
- “...these things” = *typoi*, types (Hos 12:10; cf. 1 Cor 10:11).
  - They complained about the food (Num 11:4-6); they tried God (Ps 106:14,15).
  - Quail sent, but they were buried in *Kibroth Hattaavah* (“graves of craving”) with meat still between their teeth (Num 11:31-34).
  - What is *your* favorite “whine”?
  - The capstone of the Decalogue: Thou shalt not covet (Ex 20:17; Deut 5:21).
  - Greed is idolatry (Col 3:5).
  - Covetousness gives rise to all other sins (Jas 1:14-15).
  - Five historical examples: These are here for *our* learning! 1) Coveting food (Num 11:4); 2) Engaging in idolatry (Ex 32:4,6,19); 3) Committing immorality (Num 25:1-9); 4) Testing the Lord (Num 21:5); 5) Grumbling (Num 14:2,36; 16:1-35)
  - More than just history: the Corinthians were to see their own reflection in the mirror of these historical events. Do we?
- 7] Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.
- “As it is written”: A direct quote from LXX (Ex 32:6 ). Aaron and the Golden Calf (Ex 32:1-20; cf. Ex 20:4-5; Deut 5:8-9). They substituted play time for prayer time; indulgence for reality.
  - “To play”: *Paizein*, can mean debauchery, to sin sexually.
- 8] Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.
- At the instigation of Balaam, the Israelites worshiped Baal-Peor, observed Canaanite fertility rites, and indulged in sexually immoral practices (Num 25:1-9; 31:16; cf. Deut 4:3; Ps 106:28-29; Hos 9:10; Rev 2:14).

## The Tribe of Simeon

- Zimri, the son of Salu, of the tribe of Simeon, is mentioned by name. He brought a Midianite woman into his tent and was killed by Phinehas, a grandson of Aaron (Num 25:6-8, 14).
  - God struck Israel with a plague as punishment for their faithlessness. Immediately after the plague, God instructed Moses and Eleazar, son of Aaron, to conduct the second census (Num 26:1-2) the first census took place 38 years earlier (Num 1:1-3).
  - The tribe of Simeon dropped from 59,300 to 22,200. It seems that most of the men killed in the plague were from Zimri’s tribe (Num 1:22; 26:14).
  - [Paul quotes 23,000; Moses 24,000. The LXX, Philo, and rabbinical sources support 24,000. This “apparent” discrepancy is variously ascribed to Paul’s memory, use of round numbers in Numbers and 1 Corinthians; variant readings, etc. Paul may have had access to information that we don’t have.\ Note: Paul restricts the 23,000 to those who died in one day. Numbers records the total. He also may have made some allowance for those slain by the judges (Num 25:5).]
- 9] Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.
- Overconfident after the defeat of the king of Arad, the people were unwilling to travel around the

kingdom of Edom. They displayed impatience and blasphemed God, denounced Moses, loathed manna, and clamored for water. God sent a plague of poisonous snakes into the camp. The people repented, Moses prayed, and the brazen serpent was the result (Num 21; Jn 3:14-15). Of those deserving to die, only *some* did; others were spared...

10] Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

- “...neither murmur ye”: Grumbling was a frequent sin (Ex 14:11-2; 15:24; 16:2-3, 8; 17:3; Num 11:1; 14:2-4; 16:11,41; Deut 1:27; 9:28; Josh 9:18; Ps 106:25; 14,700 died in one instance (Num 16:1-35).
- Destroying Angel (Ex 12:23; cf. Heb 11:28; 2 Sam 24:16; cf. 2 Chr 21:15).
- Rabbinical views were toward one specific destroying angel (Ps 105:23 LXX; Ps 106:23 in Hebrew).
- Paul focuses on the lessons of history to instill a respect for spiritual leaders (cf. Heb 13:7, 17, 24).

11] Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

- “Now all these things happened unto them for examples...” God is a God of history. He includes these as instructive lessons to warn His people.
- The God of the OT is the God of the NT. He changes not. He hates sin, yet loves the sinner.
- Egypt = world; Pharaoh = Satan, the Prince of this World, holding them in bondage. *But what does the wilderness,” “Jordan,” and “Canaan” represent?*
- Their carcasses fell in the wilderness, not in Egypt. They were out of Egypt, and still under the blood, but short of Canaan. They fell short of victory; short of God’s best.
- The Jordan does not represent death. It is rather a picture of leaving behind the wilderness of doubt, defeat, and failures.
- Canaan does not represent Heaven: There are battles and enemies to subdue. It represents victory. Few ever reached this “Victory”: only two, Joshua and Caleb.
- We see a similar three levels [Egypt, Wilderness, Land] in the phases of Lazarus:
  - Dead: then raised, but still bound.
  - Defeated: alive, but bound by his grave clothes.
  - Dangerous: freed and a threat to the Lord’s enemies.
- “Ends of the ages” have now begun (Heb 9:26; 1 Jn 2:18).

## Joshua vs. Revelation

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

12] Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

- Avoid misplaced self-reliance and inordinate pride.
- Church of Sardis was warned to be “on watch” (Rev 3:3).
- The Acropolis of Sardis was built on a jutting spur of rock that was held to be impregnable. When Cyrus was besieging it, he offered a special reward to any who could find a way in. Hyeroeades, a soldier, watched as a Sardian soldier accidentally dropped his helmet over the battlements, and marked

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

13] There hath no temptation 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 bear it.

- What a promise!
- “*The* way of escape”: Definite article in Greek. *Ebasis*, a way out of a defile, a mountain pass.
- Temptation will come, and it is not unique.
- What a relief it is to know that God has set limits.
- Temptations come from Satan; trials are from God. God does not tempt anyone (Jas 1:13; cf. Mt 6:13. Also see Job 1, 2, 42).
- A faithful shepherd rescues his wandering sheep; cf. Lot (Gen 19; 2; Pet 2:7).
- God is not simply a spectator of the affairs of life: he is concerned and active.
- God’s faithfulness to His people is perfect, even though man’s faithfulness to him is imperfect (1 Cor 1:9; 2 Cor 1:18; 1 Thess 5:24; 2 Thess 3:3; Heb 10:23; 11:11; 1 John 1:9; Rev 1:5; cf. Deut 7:9; Ps 145:13).
- Faith is a spiritual gift. It diminishes when not exercised; increases when tried (Rom 14:1; 2 Cor 10:15).
- Withstanding the attacks of Satan is an enduring struggle of faith (Eph 6:10-18; Phil 4:12-14).

14] Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

- “Flee idolatry”: (cf. “flee fornication” 1 Cor 6:18).
- An idol is inanimate, but its setting implies worship (Ex 20:4-6; Deut 5:8-10; cf. 2 Jn 5:21).

15] I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

- Earlier Paul ridiculed the wisdom of the Corinthians, but not now (*phonimos*, sensible, not *sophos*, as in 1:20ff).
- No one can serve two masters (Mt 6:24; Lk 16:13).

16] The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

- New covenant prophesied (Jer 31:31).
- In Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-24: first broke bread, then poured wine. In Luke, He gives the cup, then the bread (Lk 22:17-20).

### 3 of 4 Cups

- Four cups involved (see *Feasts of Israel*). Paul received the formula for the Lord’s Supper from Jesus (1 Cor 11:23-26).
  - 1st cup: “Bring Out”
  - 2nd cup: “Delivering”
  - 3rd cup: “Cup of Blessing.” (“I give thanks.”)
  - 4th cup: “Taking Out” (!) [*Meal to be completed at the Marriage Supper?* Mt 26:29]
- *Koinonia* means participation, fellowship, communion, or communication.
- Lord’s Supper: (next) Chapter 11.

- Our covenant relationship:
  - His Blood (1 Cor 10:16; 11:25; Lk 22:20).
  - His Body (1 Cor 10:16; 11:24; Lk 22:19).

17] For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

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

18] Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

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

19] What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

- An idol is vain and vacuous (cf. 1 Cor 8:4).
- Implied worship is something else again....

20] But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

- The word “demons” occurs 2X in this verse and 2X in the next.
- For the Greek every spring, every grove, every mountain, every tree, every stream, every pool, every rock, every place had its demon. For the Jew they were the *shedim*.
- The definite article “the” is in the Greek (omitted in the English for stylistic reasons). It denotes demons as an entire class. Paul called them “principalities and powers.”
- An allusion to the Song of Moses (Deut 32; cf. Deut 32:15-18. Note “Rock” twice).

*But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.*

Deuteronomy 32:15-18

- Jeshurun = “upright one”: a poetic designation for Israel, in the ideal; here, a reproach for having failed the ideal...
- It would seem that Paul’s allusion to the Song of Moses implies that the Corinthians probably had memorized it and sang it in their services. Paul’s allusion would be a synecdoche for the entire wilderness experiences.
- The LXX, used by the Corinthians, clearly describes unfaithful Israel worshipping demons [LXX of Deut 32:17; Isa 65:11; Ps 95:5 (96:5 in Hebrew); Ps 105:36-37 (106:36-37); Bar 4:7; and cf. Rev 9:20.]

21] Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils.

- At the Lord’s Table, we are one with Christ. As Jesus said on two occasions (Mt 6:24; Lk 16:13). “You cannot serve both God and Mammon.” They (and we) must choose.

22] Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

- God is a Jealous God (Ex 20:5; Deut 5:9; cf. Deut 32:16).
  - He who criticizes the law places himself above the Lawgiver and Judge (1 Cor 4:11-12).
- 23] All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.
- 4X. Rejoinders: “..not profitable”; “..do not edify.” (1 Cor 8:1; Rom 14:19).
  - This is the basic ground rule: *does it edify?*
- 24] Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth.
- Koinonia = “fiduciary” (cf. Eph 6:6-8). Christians are fiduciaries of their employers...(!)
  - “Let no man seek his own...”: (cf. Rom 15:2; Phil 2:4; Mt 22:39; Rom 13:10).
- 25] Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake:
- The meat market in ancient Corinth was known as the *makellon*. Some scholars believe that the ordinary citizen in Corinth bought meat products that often had no connection with idolatry.
  - The problem of *eidolothyta* (food sacrificed to an idol) probably would never have come up had not the Cephas group of Jewish Christians not raised it.
  - No questions: Paul believes that when sacrificial meat is sold to the public, it lost its religious significance.
- 26] For the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.
- “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (Ps 24:1; 50:12; 89:11).
  - Citation used at mealtime (*Berakhoth* 35a-b).
  - Everything comes ultimately from God. Echoes Acts 10:9-16.
- 27] If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.
- The scene now is in a home, not a temple. Conscience is burdened not by things but by individuals (v.28).
- 28] But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof:
- *Hierothyton*, meat that had been slaughtered in a pagan rite.
- 29] Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man’s conscience?
- 30] For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?
- No one should give someone else a reason to slander (or blaspheme) the Christian religion.
- 31] Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
- Col 3:17 (cf. 1 Pet 4:11).
- 32] Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:
- Three categories: Jew, Gentile, or Church of God.

33] Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

- This verse is a tie to Chapter 11:1.
- Be an imitator of Paul, as he is of Christ (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17; 4:9; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 3:7,9).

## Summary: Rules of the Road

- 1) Live sacrificially for other people. “Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth” (1 Cor 10:24). You are on the King’s business, and He grants no vacations.
- 2) Separation unto God. Maintain your testimony, living in separation but not in isolation (1 Cor 10:16-17). No monasteries; no hermetic living. Our fellowship is at Calvary but our contact must be with the world. Paul distinguishes between our contacts and our communion.
- 3) Singleminded focus on His Glory. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31).

## Three Questions

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

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 10: Chapter 11

## 1 Corinthians 11

1] Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

- The next four chapters deal with worship...[This verse is really part of the previous chapter.]

2] Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

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

3] But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

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

## ***Kephale* (Head)**

- Paul uses the term 17 times: 7 literal (1 Cor 11:4 (2X), 5 (2X), 7, 10; 12:21) and 10 figurative (1 Cor 11:3 (3X); Eph 1:22; 4:15; 5:23 (2X); Col 1:18; 2:10, 19).
  - LXX usage (for Heb. *rosh*): chief or ruler (2 Sam 22:44; Isa 7:8,9)
  - Jewish perspective = authority) or Hellenistic = (source).
    - Source: Col 1:18; 2:19; Eph 4:15.
    - Authority (parallels remain true): Gen 3:10; Eph 5:23.
- 4] Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.
- Dress codes vary from culture to culture and age to age. Paul was objecting to the blurring of genders, desiring to demonstrate the clear distinction between men and women. (!)
  - [Gift of prophecy evident (1 Cor 14:1,39).] From Chapter 14, it seems that the women had assumed certain privileges and positions of dominance. Remember, Joel said, “your sons and daughters shall prophesy...” (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17).
  - κατὰ κεφαλῆς *Kata kephale* = “having (something) hanging down from the head.”
    - Same words as Greek author Plutarch (born 46 A.D., 40 miles from Corinth).
    - In their native land and in their colonies, Romans covered their heads during private and public devotions. Offering sacrifices or praying, they would pull their toga forward over their heads.
    - Praying uncovered fits the context of shunning the worship of idols
    - [Some scholars view the term as referring to an “unmasculine hairdo,” a possible reference to homosexuality.]
- 5] But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.
- In OT, it was the man who received the sign of the covenant (Gen 17), and who served as representative for the woman.
  - In NT, male and female are one on Christ (Gal 3:28).
  - The Corinthian woman, putting aside her head covering (*yashmak*, veil) in public, was a form of rebellion, renouncing her subordination to her husband, going against the structure of creation.
- 6] For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.
- Shaving a woman’s head was a form of humiliation for an adulterous woman (Num 5:18).
  - Although the gospel sets people free from the Jewish civil and ceremonial laws, it does not abrogate the distinctive roles of each gender, and the husband-wife relationship.
- 7] For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.
- Re: the creation account (Gen 1:26-27; 2:18-24).
    - Image (not likeness) suggests an exact representation.
    - Glory (rather than “likeness”) as in Psalm 8:5.
  - Why should a woman bring glory to her husband? See the next two verses...
- 8] For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.

- 9] Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.
- The husband takes primary responsibility for his headship, with a nonreversible orientation of the woman towards the man as the reference point in her life (cf. 1 Tim 2:13-14).
- 10] For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.
- “For” tightly connects this verse to vv. 7-9.
  - “...because of the angels”: An obscure phrase with many views. It *does* seem that holy angels are present when saints remember the Lord (1 Pet 1:12).
  - [Rabbinical views (Qumran): “An unveiled woman in a sacred assembly is like a bodily defect which should be excluded.” Some also link with Gen 6:1-4.]
- 11] Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.
- “...in the Lord”: Christianity has been, and remains, a force that liberates women from oppression and servitude.
  - Even in ancient Israel, a female was secondary to any male; women were not considered worthy of studying the Scriptures and were denied an education. They were not even counted in the number required for a synagogue (10). In many other religions, women are owned by their fathers and husbands, and treated as chattel, or property. (In a line of an 18-petition prayer, a man renders thanks to God for making him neither a slave, a Gentile, or a woman).
  - In the NT, there is frequent edifying and mention of women, and their equality is noted in many ways (Gal 3:28; Rom 16:1-15).
- 12] For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.
- Attendance at, and participation in, a service dedicated to worshipping God requires proper decorum. The angels covered their faces in God’s presence (Isa 6:2-3)
  - In that day, women wore veils as marked distinction from men. God created a distinct difference between men and women and he desires that His people mark this dissimilarity with appropriate dress. Not abiding by these dress codes negates the differentiation which God has designed.
  - [Paul is not attempting to enforce first century styles on the church; in contrast to Islam which enforces the customs of 7<sup>th</sup> century Arabia on its followers.]
- 13] Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?
- 14] Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?
- Preserve the natural order of the creation, and avoid confusion.
  - Even the Stoic, Epictetus, who taught in the second half of the first century, speaks of the need to preserve the signs which God has given to avoid confusion in this regard.
  - Jewish men cut their hair, except during a stipulated period associated with a vow (Acts 18:18; 21:24).
  - Greco-Roman practice also favored trimmed hair (except for notable exceptions as the Spartans on the Peloponesian peninsula.) To have long hair was considered shameful to them.
  - The cultural pattern in Israel was that a woman would not unloose her hair in public (except to identify herself as a prostitute). [Simon the Pharisee was horrified when a prostitute entered his home and wiped Jesus’ feet with her hair (Lk 7:36-50).]
  - “Covering” here alludes to an article of clothing, such as a veil. Paul wants a woman to be distinctively feminine and thus fulfill the role that God has intended since creation. “The unique beauty of a woman

is gloriously manifest in the distinctive femininity portrayed by her hair and her attendance to feminine customs.” (MacArthur)

15] But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.

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

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

## The Lord’s Supper

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

17] Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

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

18] For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

- [“First place...” As elsewhere (Rom 3:2), but he never lists a single one after his “first of all.”]
- Worship services generally held in private homes. *As we need to do more, and may increasingly have to!*
- During these gatherings, they read Paul’s letters (Col 4:16; 1 Thess 5:27; Rev 1:3) *and were given canonical status equivalent to OT Scriptures* (2 Pet 3:15-16).
- Factions:
  - Different cultural, social, economic backgrounds; Jews, Greeks, Romans, et al; merchants, government officials, professionals living in spacious homes, as well as laborers and dock workers living in rented quarters.
  - Early translations of the NT Scriptures were in Latin, Coptic, and Syriac, reflecting the different linguistic and geographic developments.

19] For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

- True believers, tested by spiritual warfare, should cut themselves off from societies inimical to the gospel (2 Cor 6:14-18). Walter Martin used this verse to justify why no one is correct on all issues...

20] When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper.

21] For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

- (Sunday) “Agape feasts” (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7,11) were the hallmark of the early church. However, they quickly degenerated into discriminatory unsavory demonstrations (Jude 12; 2 Pet 2:13).
- The rich, arriving earlier, finished the best (if not all), often satiated and drunk, with the slaves and laborers arriving late and going hungry.

22] What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

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

23] For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

- Received *from the Lord*. (!) Jesus communicated to Paul directly on a number of occasions: on the road to Damascus, in Arabia, and three years in Tarsus before Barnabas had him come to Antioch (Acts 18:9f; 22:18; 23:11; 27:23-25; Gal 1:12; 2:2).
- “...while being betrayed”: Greek verb is in the imperfect tense; the deed was in progress at that time; on the very threshold of His coming ordeal...

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 in remembrance of me.

- The accounts of Luke 22:19, Matthew 26:26 and Mark 14:22 essentially the same. [This epistle may be the earliest!]
- “...when He had given thanks”: His pattern (Mt 14:19; Mk 6:41; Lk 9:16; Jn 6:11).
- “This is my body”: This (*touto*) is neuter, not masculine as it should be if it referred to the bread.
- **Transubstantiation**: Dogma in the Roman Catholic and some Christian churches; the view that the bread and wine change in substance (though not in appearance) into His body and blood.
  - First called transubstantiation in the 12th century; elaborated by theologians from the 13th-15th century, and incorporated in documents at the Council of Trent (1545-63).
- **Consubstantiation**: A variant view in which Christ’s body and blood substantially coexist with the consecrated bread and wine. Often associated with Lutheran doctrine.
- He was still in His body as He instituted the sacrament “...given for you”: speaking prophetically (Rom 5:7-8).

## Seven Things to Ingest

### 1. A Divine Command

- A solemn obligation: To assemble with the people of God for celebration of the memorial of the death of Christ in the Lord’s Supper. To neglect to do so is to be disobedient to the Lord’s direct wish.
- If you raise the objection that you are not worthy, I suggest that the only ones who have a right to come are those who really believe and confess that they are unworthy.

## 2. A Blessed Privilege

- The Table is the Lord's. Jesus Christ is the Host.
- We, who murdered Him, who reviled Him, and by our sin spit upon Him, and drove the cruel nails through His blessed hands—we are invited to come and sit at His Table with Him as our Host and feast with Him by His grace. What a privilege! And what an insult if we refuse that invitation.
- The Table is for His people and not for the world. This chapter, especially, applies to believers only.

## 3. A Necessary Memorial

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

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, in remembrance of me.

- The third cup. This cup is the new covenant in my blood (not the blood itself).
- *עַל* = “in,” or “at the cost or price of,” especially when translating the preposition Hebrew *be*: The blood is the life (Deut 12:23). Blood provided life (Lev 17:11; Mt 26:27,28).
- *Mishna*: Wine mixed with warm water? [*Mishna*, Pes. VII 13; Jn 19:34]
- Passover Lamb = “His Body”; *Haggadah* = “showing forth” (Ex 13:8).
- Application: His blood on the doorposts of our heart (1 Jn 1:7; 1 Cor 15:51-57; Eph 2:13; Jn 5:24).
- The uncircumcised could not participate; of the heart (Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4; Gal 3:26; Phil 3:3; Rom 2:28-29; Gal 6:15; 2 Cor 5:17).
- Jesus “made sin for us” (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Jn 3:5).
- “I Am the Bread of Life” (Jn 6:32-35, 47-51).
- “God arrives to be consumed” ? (Prov 30:1-4).
- Manna. Frees from the old life, bondage.
- A call to separation (Eph 4:22).

## The Chain of Bread & Wine

- Melchizedek (Gen 14; Ps 110; Heb 5-7).
- Joseph's interpretations in prison (Gen 40). Joseph: Baker (broken); Wine Steward (redeemed) each in 3 days? ...
- 4<sup>th</sup> cup... closing a parenthesis?

## 4. A Willing Testimony

- Consecrating ourselves to do His will (Rom 12:1-2; 1 Pet 2:5).
- The one loaf of bread signifies that all who participate partake of the one Body of Christ and form a covenant community. We are His covenant partners (1 Cor 10:17).
- When Moses confirmed the first covenant at Mt. Sinai, he sprinkled blood on the people and said “This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you (Ex 24:8; Zech 9:11).
  - Animal blood was sprinkled for the first covenant;
  - Jesus' blood for the new covenant.
- The new covenant made the first obsolete (Heb 8:13).
- He ratified this new covenant with Christ's blood shed once for all (Heb 9:26; 10:10).
- God appointed Jesus as the mediator of this covenant (Heb 7:22; 8:6; Rom 3:25).

## 5. A Humbling Confession

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, in remembrance of me.

- “...do ye...in remembrance of me”: It is a memorial only for imperfect people. Perfect people would have no need of this memorial.
- Our identification with Him also involves our humbling confession of our own helplessness and unworthiness as well. Away go all excuses and all my own “good” works. The death of Christ is the death of all man’s righteousness. I hereby declare myself to be completely unfit in myself.

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

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

## 6. An Act of Faith

*“Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid’st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.”*

26] For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.

- This is eschatological: Our personal relationship and destiny with Him.
- The Lord’s Table is found in only 4 books in the NT.
  - The Second Coming is in 23 books of the 27. (Of the four in which there is no reference to His Second Coming, three of them have only one chapter; the other is Galatians.)
- The Lord’s Supper looks not only backward to the Cross, but forward to the Crown as well.
- It is a memorial only for the time of His absence. When He comes, this supper will be supplanted by the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.
- When the Lord Jesus left the Last Supper with His disciples, He went out to die for them. The disciples went out, one to betray Him, others to be prayerless and forgetful, all to desert Him.
- Often we have broken this bread together around the Lord’s Table, and then we have gone out to do *just what those disciples did*—we have denied Him.

## 7. A Solemn Warning

27] Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

- The sentence is clear in Greek, but not in English. It means that the nonchalant (profaning) partaker of the Lord’s Supper is guilty of murdering Jesus. Note: *unworthily* is an adverb, not an adjective as *unworthy*.

- Christians should never regard the celebration as a mere ritual. Not frivolous and careless, but focused and committed.
- Those who profane the elements are guilty of the body and blood of our Lord, putting the Son of God to open shame and treat Him with insolence (cf. Acts 7:52; Heb 6:6; 10:29).

28] But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

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

29] For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

- Failure to submit to self-examination results in God's subsequent judgment (Ps 15:1)
- The guest at the Lord's table must be blameless, righteous, truthful, morally upright, and obedient to God's law. Prepared: washed with the Christian's "bar of soap" (1 John 1:9).
- There is a stress on the corporate nature of the service and the responsibility of each to all. One loaf = one Body.

30] For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

- Spiritual ills can have physical results.
  - [Divine healing, not "faith" healing. It is *His* sovereignty, not our initiatives.] James 5 is often misconstrued. It applies to those particular cases of sickness which are due to unconfessed and unjudged sin (Jas 5:14-16).
- Ignorance of the will of God causes much sorrow in the life of the believer. Hosea: "My people are destroyed because of the lack of knowledge" (Hos 4:6).

31] For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

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

32] But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

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

33] Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

- Spiritual rather than physical nourishment.

34] And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

## Summary: Seven Things to Ingest

Organize them with your own words:

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

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 11: Chapter 12

### Spiritual Gifts

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

### Plurality

- *Elohim* = plural (as in *cherubim*, *seraphim*, et al.). [Plural vowelizing of the word *Adonai* also.] In Genesis 1:1, *Elohim* is plural, but used with a singular verb *bara*.
- *This is also used* by Paul as a grammatical solecism in 1 Thess 3:11 (in the Greek).
- Every place where *Elohim* is written in the Bible it is a grammatical error—the noun doesn't agree with the verb. We are given a subtle clue of “more than one within the one.”

*And God said, Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

Genesis 1:26

*And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:*

Genesis 3:22

- [This cannot be associated with just angels because they were not associated with God in the creation.]

*Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.*

Genesis 11:7

### The Vision of the Throne of God

- In the famous vision of the throne of God in Isaiah 6, we have the scene in the “holy place of the holy ones,” celebrated by the seraphim who veiled their faces before them: “Holy, Holy, Holy. Is the Lord of Hosts.” (Note: There are three declarations. This is reconfirmed in the similar scene in Revelation 4:8.)
- In Isaiah 6:8 we again see the hint of the plural: “Who shall go for *us*?”
- Who is the “Lord of Hosts”? All sources acknowledge its applicability to the Father.
- Yet it is provocative to notice that:
  - John attributes this passage to Christ (Jn 12:41).
  - Paul attributes it to the Holy Spirit (Acts 28:25).
  - Thus, all three persons are included.

### The Works of God

- Each is declared to be wrought wholly, and independently, by each person of the Godhead.

## **1) Creation of the Universe**

- Father: Psalm 102:25
- Son: Colossians 1:16; John 1:1-3
- Spirit: Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13
- [All three gathered into *Elohim*, Gen 1:1. Elohim is plural. In Hebrew a plural is three or more.]

## **2) Creation of Man**

- Father: Genesis 2:7
- Son: Colossians 1:16
- Spirit: Job 33:4
- [Plurals: Ecclesiastes 12:1; Isaiah 54:5]

## **3) The Incarnation**

- Father: Hebrews 10:5
- Son: Philippians 2:7
- Spirit: Luke 1:35
- Spirit generates the Son, but in such a manner that the Son ever addresses the First Person as “Father”; (Except on the cross: “My God”).

## **4) The Life and Ministry of Christ**

- The Son always did the will of the Father, and to this end the Spirit was given to the Son without measure.

## **5) The Death of Christ**

- Father: Psalm 22:15; Romans 8:32; John 3:16
- Son: John 10:18; Galatians 2:20
- Spirit: Hebrews 9:14

## **6) The Atonement**

- Father: Isaiah 53:6, 10
- Son: Ephesians 5:2
- Spirit: Hebrews 9:14

## **7) The Resurrection of Christ**

- Father: Acts 2:24; Romans 6:4
- Son: John 10:17, 18; John 2:19
- Spirit: 1 Peter 3:18; Romans 8:11

## **8) The Resurrection of All Mankind**

- Father: John 5:21
- Son: John 5:21
- Spirit: Romans 8:11

## 9) The Inspiration of the Scriptures

- Father: 2 Timothy 3:16
- Son: 1 Peter 1:10,11
- Spirit: 2 Peter 1:21

## 10) Minister's Authority

- Father: 2 Corinthians 3:5-6
- Son: 1 Timothy 1:12
- Spirit: Acts 20:28

## 11) The Indwelling Presence

- Father: Ephesians 4:6
- Son: Colossians 1:27
- Spirit: 1 Corinthians 6:19

## 12) The Work of Sanctification

- Father: Jude 1:1
- Son: Hebrews 2:11
- Spirit: 1 Corinthians 6:11

## 13) The Believer's Safekeeping

- Father: John 10:29
- Son: John 10:28; Romans 8:34 (4 ways!)
- Spirit: Ephesians 4:30

## 14) Others

- Wisdom: cf. 1 Corinthians 1:24 with Psalm 8, Logos of John 1:1-18...et al.

## The Attributes of God

- All attributes are ascribed to each of the three.

### Eternal Existence

- Father: Psalm 90:2
- Son: Alpha and Omega, First and Last, etc.; Rev 1:8, 17; John 1:2; Micah 5:2; cf. Zech 12:10 (Hebrew); Gen 1:1, Isa 41:4, et al.
- Spirit: Hebrews 9:14

### Infinite Power

- Father: 1 Peter 1:5
- Son: 2 Corinthians 12:9
- Spirit: Romans 15:19

## Omniscience

- Father: Jeremiah 17:10
- Son: Revelation 2:23
- Spirit: 1 Corinthians 2:11

## Omnipresence

- Father: Jeremiah 23:24
- Son: Matthew 18:20
- Spirit: Psalm 139:7

## Holiness

- Father: Revelation 15:4
- Son: Acts 3:14
- Spirit: (everywhere: “Holy Spirit”)
- Thus, “Holy, Holy, Holy”: Isaiah 6:3

## Truth

- Father: John 7:28
- Son: Revelation 3:7
- Spirit: 1 John 5:6

## Benevolence

- Father: Romans 2:4
- Son: Ephesians 5:25
- Spirit: Nehemiah 9:20

## Disposition for Communion

- Father: 1 John 1:3
- Son: 1 John 1:3
- Spirit: 2 Corinthians 13:14

*The fact that each person possesses all the divine characteristics and so completely that it would seem that no other need to possess them, speaks of the distinction between the Persons as such. On the other hand, the fact that they all manifest these characteristics in identically the same ways and to the same measure, speaks of the unity from which their mode of existence springs.”*

— Lewis Sperry Chafer, Vol 1, p. 305

## Individual Distinctives

- Equal in nature.
- Separate in person.
- Subservient in duties.
- There is no intimation that any one person of the Godhead sustains these attributes in respect to the other two persons; or that they are held in partnership; each is predicated of each as though no others existed;

- The Holy Spirit is a person, repeatedly referred to as “He.” (The neuter word *pneuma* proves important when unraveling the “restrainer” in 2 Thess 2.) Yet, He never speaks of Himself (Jn 16:12). Always represented by an “unnamed servant” (Gen 24:2; Ruth 2:5,6).

## Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

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

## Our Relationship with Him

- Three Greek prepositions are used to describe our relationship with the Holy Spirit.
  - *Para*, “with”: The Holy Spirit works *with* us to convict us of sin and lead us to Jesus Christ.
  - *En*, “in”: Once we’ve accepted Christ, the Holy Spirit dwell *in* us (Jn 14:17).
  - *Epi*, “upon you”: There are some events where the Holy Spirit comes *upon* us (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:8; 10:44; 19:6).
- He is Living Water: a yearning (Ps 42:1,2).
- He is our Spiritual source within our bodies (Jn 7:37).
- “Without me you can do *nothing*” (Jn 15:5).

## 1 Corinthians 12

1] Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

- “Now concerning...”: Familiar introductory words responding to issues raised in their earlier letter, such as marriage, virgins, food offered to idols, and others.
- “Brothers”: A term Paul uses when entering a sensitive topic (cf. 1:10).
- “Spiritual gifts”: *Pneumatikon*, gifts from the Holy Spirit, synonymous with *charisma*, gift of grace. In this chapter, *charisma* points to activities of the Holy Spirit.
- “I do not want you to be ignorant...”: Cf. Rom 1:13; 11:25; 1 Cor 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; 1 Thess 4:13. All key passages!
- Ignorant of what? The proper use of spiritual gifts. Paul will spend the next three chapters on how to evaluate and use spiritual gifts. These are to be used for the benefit of fellow believers, not as badges of superiority.
  - They are given to unite, not divide, the Body.
  - Two common errors having to do with spiritual gifts: Ignoring them or overemphasizing one gift over another.

2] Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

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

- 3] Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.
- “Accursed...”: Some suggest that Paul is opposing Gnostic teachers who taught a dualism of the material and spiritual.
  - However, the Holy Spirit is the issue, which occurs twice. One blaspheming Jesus’ name will not be uttering a curse through the God’s Spirit. A person—Jew or Gentile— confessing Jesus as Lord does so by the Holy Spirit
  - Paul may be recalling his own past history. He forced many to blaspheme (Acts 26:11).
  - Paul is stressing the absence or the presence of the Holy Spirit by how people speak of Jesus. Paraphrase: “No man speaking by the Spirit of God is *indifferent* to the Lord Jesus Christ.”
  - The confession “Jesus is Lord” is one of the oldest creeds in Christendom (Jn 13:13; Phil 2:11).
  - *Kurios* is a tremendous word; it was the official title of the Roman Emperor. On the day of Pentecost, the Jewish converts received Jesus as both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).
  - Converted Gentiles forsook their pagan past and pledged allegiance to Jesus as both their Lord and Savior (Acts 16:31; Rom 10:9).
  - Christians received Jesus as ruler of the world, as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim 6:15; Rev 17:14; 19:16).
  - Some will call Jesus “Lord,” and even perform valuable tasks in His service, but if they are not filled with God’s Spirit and therefore fail to do the Father’s will, Jesus will dismiss them by saying “I never knew you” (Mt 7:23).
  - Jesus exercises His sovereign will in this world. He recognizes only those people who, led by the Holy Spirit, acknowledge His true identity and obediently bow to His authority. [That’s why we wrote the book, *I, Jesus: An Autobiography*.]
- 4] Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
- In verses 4-6, note the three pairings: gifts, administrations, operations; Spirit, Lord (Jesus), God (Father). The Trinity at work (Eph 4:8).
  - Every believer has some gift or gifts, but never all of them Unity but not uniformity in its parts (1 Pet 4:10).
  - Paul lists nine *charismata* in this chapter: wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, faith, healings, miracles, spiritual discernment, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues.
- 5] And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.
- There are at least 21 in the NT: Some would count administration and apostleship from this chapter, along with serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing, leadership, showing mercy (Rom 12:6-8), celibacy (1 Cor 7:7), evangelism, pastoring (Eph 4:11), and public service (Acts 6:2-4).
- 6] And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.
- I do not believe that any of the “lists” are intended to be complete, only representative.
  - No one should boast of having received a greater gift. No servant is greater than his master (Jn 13:15-16).
- 7] But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.
- God’s kingdom is without borders. There is no distinction between sacred and secular. He wants His people to minister to a hurting world that needs help physically, emotionally, spiritually, and materi-

ally. Nor is there a limitation of only one gift. Paul had received the gift of continence and of speaking in tongues (1 Cor 7:7; 14:18).

- The gift is for the common good of the entire community and the edification of the Body (Eph 4:12).
- Paul will deal with this in Ch. 14.

8] For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

- “...to another”: Diverse gifts, this is just a representative list.
- Wisdom first; tongues last. (!)

## Spiritual Gifts

- **Wisdom** (*sophia*):
  - Divine wisdom, contrasted with human wisdom (1 Cor 1:17,20,25).
  - One of the “Seven Spirits” of Isa 11:1,2; fulfilled in Christ (Lk 2:52).
  - Given to Steven (Acts 6:10; 7) and available to us all (Jas 1:5).
- **Knowledge** (*gnosis*):
  - It depends not on intellect, but on love; an intimate personal relationship. Both of these discussed earlier (1 Cor 2:6-16).
  - Contrast Peter’s rhetorical performance *prior* to Pentecost with his two sermons *after*! (Acts 2 & 3).

9] To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

- **Faith:**
  - Not “saving faith,” but an unshakable trust that God will perform miracles.
  - Peter and John in opposing the Sanhedrin, preaching the gospel, healing the cripple (Acts 3:1-4:2).
  - Paul’s call to Rome (Acts 23:11); his behavior during the storm on the Mediterranean Sea (Acts 27:23-26, 34 etc.; Hebrews 11, et al.).
  - Even Elijah was “a man like us.” (Jas 5:17-18).
- **Healing**
  - Cf. Jas 5:14-15 Not a permanent gift, but a sovereign manifestation of the Spirit.
  - Even Paul’s own “thorn in the flesh” went unhealed (2 Cor 12:9). Furthermore, he indirectly admits that he lacked the ability to heal either Epaphroditus (Phil 2:27), Timothy (1 Tim 5:23), or Trophimus (2 Tim 4:20). We should not cease asking (Heb 4:16; Jas 5:16).

10] To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

- **Miracles**
  - More miracles took place during Jesus’ ministry than at any other time in Biblical history.
  - The supreme one being the resurrection which will be the subject of Chapter 15.
  - Miracles were the distinctive mark of an apostle (2 Cor 12:12). They were used to confirm the message of the gospel (Acts 6:8; 8:7; 13:6-12; Heb 2:4).
- **Prophecy:**
  - “Forthtelling,” a key element at Corinth (as seen in Chapter 11).
  - Sometimes predictions: Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:11) or to interpret God’s Will to the church (Eph 4:11).

- Prophetic utterances are always to be judged by Scripture (Acts 17:11).
- God’s Word is always the standard.

- **Discerning of Spirits:**

- Satan, often as an Angel of Light (2 Cor 11:14) communicates false information and deceit, as with Eve (Gen 2:16-17; 3:1, 4-5).
- The prophet Micah revealed to the kings of Israel and Judah that a lying spirit spoke through the mouths of all the prophets of Israel (1 Kgs 22:21-23; 2 Chr 18:20-22).
- Jesus discerned the voice of Satan in Peter (Mt 16:23).
- Paul recognized Bar-Jesus as the son of the devil (Acts 13:10) and the fortune-telling of the slave girl (Acts 16:18).
- John instructed us to test the spirits (1 Jn 4:1-3).
- In the end times, Satan and his cohorts will work miracles (2 Thess 2:9-10; Mt 24:24; Rev 13:11-14).
- There will be false teachers also (Jude 4; 2 Pet 2:1-2; 1 Tim 4:1). You protect yourself from counterfeits by carefully studying the genuine.

- **Tongues:**

- Speaking in unknown tongues is often accompanied the *epe* relationship (Acts 2, 10,19).
- The exercise of this gift also generated so many problems that an entire chapter (14) will be devoted to them.

11] But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

- “...as He wills”: No one received all the gifts and no one is without a gift. The Spirit neglects no one and all is the result of His divine prerogative. We each can have all of the “graces” but we cannot have all of the “gifts” (Gal 5:22-23).
- Throughout this passage, Paul speaks in the present passive indicative (“is being given”) to convey that God continues to give these special gifts to His people.

12] For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

- “One spirit”: Having looked at the “trees,” Paul now turns to the “forest.” Jesus taught that He and His people are one (Mt 10:40; 25:45; Acts 9:4).

13] For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

- “Baptized”: Jesus baptizes his followers with the Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8).
- “All of us were baptized” in the metaphorical sense. James and John were challenged whether they were able to be baptized as He was (Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50; Acts 1:5; 1 Cor 10:2).
- Words extend to a circle enclosing *all believers*.
- “One Body”: Paul is stressing the unity of the Church in its diverse forms.
- [Some view the text as referring to the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The Greek verb tense calls for a single occurrence of drinking, which is incongruent with the repeated observance of the Lord’s Supper. The sacraments are not Paul’s focus, but the internal transformation by the Holy Spirit bringing people into a living relationship with Christ.]
- “All were made to drink”: This seems to rule out any interpretation which requires a later rite for the impartation of the Spirit (cf. Gal 3:27-28).

- Greek verb, *potizo*, “I give to drink” (Mt 25:35) or “I irrigate” (1 Cor 3:6-8 ) as in “living water” (Jn 4:10; 7:38-39 ) yielding the harvest of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).
- 14] For the body is not one member, but many.
- 15] If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?
- 16] And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?
- “For the body is not one member, but many”: Varied, but coordinated parts.
  - The intention here is to eradicate all envy with respect to a particular spiritual gift that a member has not received.
- 17] If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?
- Paul is stressing our mutual dependence and one another and the absurdity of nurturing jealousy because of spiritual gifts. I need you to have your gift; you need me to have mine.
- 18] But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.
- God is the subject of this verse. Gifts are given in accordance with His design.
  - [Bezalel, Oholiab, and other craftsmen building the tabernacle; Ex 31:1-6.]
- 19] And if they were all one member, where were the body?
- Compare with the discovery of interdisciplinary groups for “operations research” et al.
- 20] But now are they many members, yet but one body.
- [Example of musical harmony...]
- 21] And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.
- Absurdity of independence. Self-sufficiency flies in the face of servanthood (1 Cor 9:19; 2 Cor 4:5; Gal 5:13).
- 22] Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:
- Jesus Himself told Paul: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor 12:9).
- 23] And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.
- Our unrespectable parts are treated with even more respect.
- 24] For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:
- 25] That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.
- Unity is the principal purpose. No one should ever be neglected within the church. “Love thy neighbor as thyself” (Lev 19:18; Mt 22:39).

- Any gift which does not provoke love, tolerance, and forbearance toward other believers is not a gift from the Lord. Love is the final and acid test.
- 26] And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.
- An organism, not a society; a communion, not a guild; a fellowship (*koinonia*), not an association.
- 27] Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.
- “You are the Body of Christ”: Despite their quarrels, divisions, failure to expel an immoral brother, bringing lawsuits against fellow brothers, criticizing apostles, not properly observing the Lord’s Supper, etc.
  - One entity without division. Christ loves His church. To injure or insult it is to injure or insult Him. You can’t join it—you must be “born” into it.
- 28] And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.
- Apostles beyond the 12: Paul and Barnabas (Rom 1:1; Acts 14:14)
  - They were accorded the authority of the OT prophets.
  - The church has predictive prophets, as Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:10; Barnabas, Simeon Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, in Antioch; in Caesarea, the four daughters of Philip (Acts 21:8-9) in Jerusalem, Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32).
  - Do not treat prophecies with contempt (1 Thess 5:20).
- 29] Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?
- 30] Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?
- Paul asks seven rhetorical questions: No one gift is universal. How strange it is that the gifts were to facilitate the unity of the church. And yet some insist that a single gift is essential, and thus divide the body. Others deny the validity of the gifts, and they, too, divide the body.
- 31] But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.
- Desire the greater (higher) gifts. (Chapter 14 will relegate tongues to the last on the list; extolling prophesying—forthtelling the gospel.)
  - Yet I will show you a more excellent way...An intro to Chapter 13.... Love is not a “spiritual gift” but rather a complete way of life (Gal 5:22-23).

## Are the Spiritual Gifts for Today?

- 1) The Holy Spirit is immutable.
- 2) Where does it say they are to terminate? Cf. Joel: They began in Acts; and continue to the end times!

## Peter’s Declaration

*But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:*

Acts 2:16-18

- 3) If the gifts are not, what about teaching, et al?
- 4) Until the “close of the canon?”
  - vs. the Upper Room confirmations;
  - vs. the 1 Cor 13:8-10 view; Rev 10: Do the seven thunders leave the *canon incomplete*?

## Next Session

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 13.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 12: Chapter 13

## Our Most Urgent Essential

- We look for love in the wrong places (horizontally rather than vertically).
  - We love “if”: a conditional, manipulative love.
  - We love “because” (you’re beautiful, talented, smart, rich...position); leads to bondage, fear, and insecurity.
- This chapter introduces us to a totally different kind of Love: *Agapè*
- (God’s unconditional Love); Romans 8.
- *Caritas* (Latin Vulgate): Wycliffe; “charity.” The use of “love” is ambiguous (Jn 3:16, et al. 1 Jn 4:10; Mt 22:37-39; Deut 6:4,5).
- *Eros*: After the god of love in Greek mythology, son of Aphrodite; thus, sensual love between the sexes, etc. Appears nowhere in NT (OT: Proverbs, Hosea, Ezekiel.)
- *Phileo*: Friendship among friends; kind feelings toward one another; natural affection.
- *Storge*: Filial love within the family.
- *Agapao* (v.): This is not “divine love.” (cf. John 3:19; Luke 11:43...) It means “to be totally given over to”; or to “agonize over.”
- *Agapè* (n.): This is a coined word in NT; (20X in LXX; 116 X in NT, 75 in Paul).
  - It is a love lavished on others without a thought whether they are worthy or not. It proceeds from the nature of the lover, not from any attractiveness in the beloved. It is a commitment, not a feeling (cf. use of *agapè* and *phileo* in Jn 21:15-17).
  - Peter couldn’t get himself to use *agapè* until receiving the fullness of the Spirit at Pentecost.

## 1 Corinthians 13

- 1] Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not agapè, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
- 2] And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not agapè, I am nothing.
- 3] And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not agapè, it profiteth me nothing.
- 4] Agapè suffereth long, and is kind; agapè envieth not; agapè vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,
- 5] Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;
- 6] Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

- 7] Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.
- 8] Agapè never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.
- 9] For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.
- 10] But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.
- 11] When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
- 12] For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.
- 13] And now abideth faith, hope, agapè, these three; but the greatest of these is agapè.
- Paul gave us a love letter without equal (except for the one written in blood on wooden cross erected in Judea almost 2000 years ago!)...and a lifetime is inadequate to unveil its full meaning.
  - The Corinthians “came behind in no gift” (1 Cor 1:7).
  - Twelve chapters of pain bring us to this pinnacle. Paul’s remedy:
    - First correction, Chapters 1-11; Then instruction, Chapters 12-14
    - It is interesting that it was Paul the theologian, not John the disciple of love, who brought us this passage.
- 1] Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not agapè, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
- From the first verse, Love must be sovereign in the heart. The power of your tongue is not the extent of your vocabulary but the depth of your heart.
  - Placement of the Greek verb *to speak* (between the words of men and angels) is meant to stress the reference to angelic speech. A unique construction, used only here in Greek NT.
  - Gongs and cymbals were familiar at Corinth from their use by devotees of Dionysius or Cybele. Bronze vases were used as resonators in some theaters.
- 2] And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not agapè, I am nothing.
- Love must be sovereign in our intellect:
  - Prophecy is the power to ...declare the things of God, bring the word of heaven to bear upon the earth, and bring eternity into time (14:1-5; vs. tongues).

## The Gift of Prophecy

- Is it possible to have the gift of prophecy and have not love?
  - Balaam (Num 23 & 24): “The people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations” (Num 23:9). True for 3500 years.
  - (Caiaphas, the High Priest, prophesied in John 11:49-50).
- Some take “knowing all mysteries and all knowledge” as amplifying “prophecies.”

## Doctrine of Mysteries

- Doctrine of mysteries: God’s secrets. Prophecies and mysteries are linked (Rev 10:7).
- A true prophet receives insight into God’s mysteries and explains them to the people.
- Paul speaks God’s wisdom in a mystery (1 Cor 2:7) for he and his coworkers “are stewards of god’s mysteries” (1 Cor 4:1).

- Faith is God's gift to man, a gift which the recipient must constantly exercise, strengthen, and amplify (1 Cor 12:9).
- 3] And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not agapè, it profiteth me nothing.
- Love must be sovereign in a man's will. First century people commonly saw great merit in deeds of charity and in suffering.
    - Paul devalues spectacular sacrifice without love. It can be easier to die for Christ than to live for Him. Contrast the Church at Ephesus, who left its first love (Rev 2:2-4).
    - One without love is without God.
  - In this chapter there are two contrasting images:
    - First: lots of gifts, no love (vv. 1-3).
    - Second: love, no reference to gifts! (vv. 4-7). The second is a "portrait" of Jesus Christ.
  - (Sin and Satan have robbed us of all likeness to God's character).

## Fourteen Ingredients of Love

4] Agapè suffereth long, and is kind; agapè envieth not; agapè vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

### 1) "...suffereth long":

- Although wronged, God's Love is still patient and silent. Patience is often used of God (Lk 18:7; 2 Pet 3:9; Rom 2:4; 9:22, etc.).
- (Contrast with Allah: capricious; thus, untrustworthy.)
- Jesus: when reviled, reviled not again. How about us?

### 2) "...is kind":

- Not a triumph of obstinacy but a triumph of grace.
- Going out of your way.
- (Note Jesus' treatment of even Judas.)

### 3) "...envieth not":

- Jealousy is disastrous:
  - Murder, Cain and Abel (Gen 4:3-8)
  - Slavery, Jacob's sons & Joseph (Gen 37:11,28)
  - High priest, jails apostles (Acts 5:17-18)
  - Paul and Barnabas, expelled from Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:45-50)
- Love desires the best for others; how can it envy?

### 4) "...vaunteth not itself":

- It never brags. (The Greek implies a "wind-bag.") It "makes no parade."
- Jesus never showed off. His greatness is often revealed in what He suppressed.

### 5) "...is not puffed up":

- God's Love is "not arrogant": "Gives no airs."
- Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up (1 Cor 8:1).
- Arrogance is inflated selfishness; love is genuine humility. Arrogance and love are mutually exclusive.
- *Pride is absent in the last two verbs.*

5] Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6) **“Doth not behave itself unseemly”:**

- It is never boorish.
- Never rude, inconsiderate, inattentive. It avoids the whole range of unseemliness. No uncouth religion, no blundering goodness, no unlovely witness, etc.
- The right way at the right time, always.

7) **“...seeketh not her own”:**

- God’s Love does not grasp for its own “rights.”
- This rules out selfish love: love “if”; love “because”; etc.
  - Paul was an example: He served as their pastor for 1 1/2 years without financial support from them (1 Cor 9:18).
  - Repeatedly instructed them to seek the welfare of others, not their own (1 Cor 10:24,33; cf. Prov 3:29; Zech 8:17).
  - Our greatest discovery is the joy we receive in serving others. Jesus came entirely for us (Phil 2:5-8).

8) **“...is not easily provoked”:**

- Is not [easily?] provoked: (modifier absent in the Greek!)
- “Does not become irritated”; “is not touchy.” Even Moses, a very humble person (Num 12:3) lost his temper when people quarreled with him over lack of water (Num 20:2-11).
- Jesus was never angry at wrongs done to Himself. Never vindictive; never retaliated. There’s no excuse for a bad temper...or even grumbling!

9) **“...thinketh no evil”:**

- “Does not keep a record of wrongs.” *Logizeshthai*, means “keeping of accounts”; it’s a bookkeeping term.
- Jesus came to blot out transgressions and remember them no more. The Book of Remembrance (Mal 3:16).
- Our memory should be devoted to kindnesses, not suspicions.

6] Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

10) **“Rejoiceth not in iniquity...rejoiceth in the truth”:**

- Love is never glad when others go wrong; it does not delight in exposing the weaknesses of other people.
- No gloating or gossip here (no “investigative reporters” here.)
  - Example: Jesus and the woman taken in adultery (John 8)
- Love is gladdened by goodness (Cf. Phil 4:8)

7] Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

11) **“Beareth all things”:**

- God’s Love is always active, never passive. It always protects; never retaliates. It’s inexhaustible. Jesus: “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”
- *Stego*, to endure, to cover. Covers “a multitude of sins” (1 Pet 4:8; cf. Prov 10:12; 17:9).

12) **“...believeth all things”:**

- God’s Love always gives the benefit of the doubt.

- It is not gullible, but charitable. There's no suspicion or cynicism here.
- Faith of commitment: *loyalty*.

**13) "...hopeth all things";**

- Introduces hope (in the triad of v.13). Paul uses 19 of its 31 occurrences in NT.
- It never takes failure as final. It never despairs of anybody; even ingratitude.
- It is based on truth, not vague dreams.

**14) "...endureth all things":**

- God's Love cannot be conquered.
- *Hupomenein*, to bear or endure; not just passively, but in bearing them it can conquer and transmute them.
- Perseverance: Key to all success (vs. intellect, education, etc.).
  - Paul: If we endure with Christ, we will also reign with Him (2 Tim 2:12).
  - Peter urges slaves to endure the pain of unjust suffering for the Lord's sake (1 Pet 2:19-20).
  - John on Patmos endured exile for God's Word (Rev 1:9).
  - Ultimate test: A wooden cross, erected in Judea almost 2,000 years ago (1 Jn 3:16).
- Now, its Permanence:

8] Agapè never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

- "Agape never faileth": Never is a long time.
- Gifts have only a finite duration. Love is eternal since it is one of God's attributes (1 Jn 4:8, 16).
- Love never fails; the very talented people in Corinth *did* fail (their luxury, lack of discipline, cleverness, and philosophy was to no avail):
- *Katargein*: (4X in vv.8,10,11) to set aside, or pass away, or cease. The word means "never faileth," as a flower; it never falls to the ground.
- Jesus "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them *unto the end*." (Jn 13:1).
- "...they shall fail": The verb *to cease* is a synonym and a variant of the verb *to set aside*; there is virtually no distinction between the two Greek verbs that describe the termination of both prophecies and tongues.
- "Prophecies" use passive voice, the believer is implied;
- "Tongues" use active voice; the difference is stylistic, nothing more.
- Indulgence breeds selfishness;
- Lack of discipline breeds shallowness;
- Worldliness breeds compromise;
- Materialism breeds spiritual atrophy and laziness.
- Paul describes the temporary character of the spiritual gifts: vv. 8-10 contrasts them with love, and then gives three illustrations: a child, reflection, and knowledge (vv. 11-12).

9] For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

- Our knowledge and prophesying is incomplete, and will remain so until we are with Him. The more we know, the more we realize that we do not know.
- Paul uses the personal *we* in the general sense. The present tense of the verbs does not appear to be limited to his own time.

10] But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

- When perfection comes, the partial will be set aside.
  - A study of the verb *to prophesy* in the Greek text of 1 Corinthians shows that this particular verb always appears in the present tense. Whether it is in the indicative or the subjunctive mood, whether it is a participle or an infinitive, the verb conveys *present continuous* action (1 Cor 11:4-5; 13:9; 14:1,3,4,5,24,31,39).
  - Up until 1906 scholars viewed “perfect is come” as the Second Coming of Christ. The “completion of the canon” concept developed as a rebuttal to the Pentecostal movement.
    - We can hardly expect the Corinthians in A.D. 55 to link perfection to the closing of the canon in the last decade of the first century.
  - Proof of enduring *until He comes*:
    - Joel’s (2:28-32) quote in Acts (2:17-21) continues until the Day of the Lord.
    - Also, the Seven Thunders of Revelation (Rev 10:3-4) inhibit any doctrine based on “canon completeness.”
  - Our knowledge remains partial until we personally see Christ face to face.
  - Our perfection cannot be complete until Christ’s return, the resurrection (Chapter 15), and the final consummation (1 Cor 2:6; 14:20; Eph 4:13; Phil 3:15; Col 1:28; 4:12).
- 11] When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
- The tense is perfect, which shows that he put away childish things with decision and finality (contrasting an infant vs. immature man).
  - Make heaven your goal; maturity your aim; Christ your object.
- 12] For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.
- The city of Corinth was known for its mirrors (polished bronze). The state-of-the-art, however, was far short of mirrored glass (only available since the 13th century).
  - We see *en ainigmati*: indistinctly (n., enigma, or riddle), in puzzling, baffling reflections...
  - “...then face to face”: God uses this expression when he tells Aaron and Miriam that he addresses Moses *personally* (cf. Num 12:8; Ex 33:11; Deut 5:4; 34:10).
  - “...I know...I am known”: The first “know” in this verse is *ginosko*; second usage, *epiginosko* (“I am known”). *Epi* = directed; full and complete knowledge. “I am known” is in the aorist tense which implies the same.
  - The knowledge God has of Paul is not something that is growing or becoming more and more perfect. God’s knowledge is perfect and complete (1 Jn 3:2).
  - It’s a mistake to think of eternity as finality.
  - Rather, it is the continual communication of God whose beauty and glory and majesty are inexhaustible.
  - In a resurrected body with a redeemed spirit, brought to live in His very presence with a progressive, increasing capacity to receive more and more of His glory...
- 13] And now abideth faith, hope, agapè, these three; but the greatest of these is agapè.
- These three are set apart. This triad occurs frequently (Rom 5:2-5; Gal 5:5-6; Eph 1:15-18; 4:2-5; Col 1:4-5; 1 Thess 1:3; 5:8; Heb 6:10-12; 10:22-24; 1 Pet 1:3-8, 21-22).
  - **Faith:** Trust that leads to action. The foundation of our relationship with God; the only way we become His children (Jn 1:12; Heb 11:6).
  - **Hope:** One of the essential abiding realities. Our God is the God of hope (Rom 15:13). Hope is our confidence in the future. Not a vague guess, but an absolute, confident assurance based on Him and His truth.

- Faith possesses the past; hope claims the future. When a tripod loses one of its legs, its fall is inevitable.
- **Love:** Greater than hope (v. 7) and faith (v. 2); It contains them both! Love is foundational; God's eternal love for his Son and, through him, expresses His love for His people (Eph 1:5-6).
- God is love (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 4:7-8, 16).

## Two Comparisons

- 1) Put Christ in the place of "love." It fits. How can you receive this kind of love? Confess your need and receive it.
  - 2) Put your own name in the place of "love." What is the degree of difference?! [*As many of you know, I'm married to one who comes remarkably close...*]
- With soiled and dirty hands, coupled with an engineer's clumsy frustration at communicating, I have attempted to handle a thing of exquisite beauty and holiness. No exposition can be adequate to this theme.
  - Yet I cannot excuse myself from the opportunity to try to make plain what these words have come to mean in my life...and no Christian can excuse himself from the duty of trying to show *in his life* what these words have come to mean for him.

*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Galatians 2:20

- That day will come when you and I will be able to say:
  - I suffer long and am kind.
  - I envy not;
  - I vaunt not myself, am not puffed up;
  - I do not behave myself unseemly;
  - I seek not my own;
  - I am not easily provoked;
  - I think no evil.
  - I rejoice not in iniquity, but rejoice in truth.
  - I bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things.
- Follow after love. God is love.
- Love, appropriately, is the last word in this chapter.
- Love is the last word in more ways than one.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

### Session 13: Chapter 14

## Spiritual Gifts

- 1 Corinthians 12:1-13 reveals more about the work of the Holy Spirit than does any other passage in this book.
- Yet Paul uses an entire chapter, 14, to focus on the confusion and divisions over His role and gifts.

## **Works of *Elohim*: Review**

### **The Atonement**

- Father: Isaiah 53:6, 10
- Son: Ephesians 5:2
- Spirit: Hebrews 9:14

### **The Death of Christ**

- Father: Psalm 22:15; Romans 8:32; John 3:16
- Son: John 10:18; Galatians 2:20
- Spirit: Hebrews 9:14

### **The Resurrection of Christ**

- Father: Acts 2:24; Romans 6:4
- Son: John 10:17, 18; John 2:19
- Spirit: 1 Peter 3:18; Romans 8:11

### **Creation of the Universe**

- Father: Psalm 102:25
- Son: Colossians 1:16; John 1:1-3
- Spirit: Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13

### **Creation of Man**

- Father: Genesis 2:7
- Son: Colossians 1:16
- Spirit: Job 33:4

### **The Incarnation**

- Father: Hebrews 10:5
- Son: Philippians 2:7
- Spirit: Luke 1:35

### **The Indwelling Presence**

- Father: Ephesians 4:6
- Son: Colossians 1:27
- Spirit: 1 Corinthians 6:19

### **The Work of Sanctification**

- Father: Jude 1:1
- Son: Hebrews 2:11
- Spirit: 1 Corinthians 6:11

## The Believer's Safekeeping

- Father: John 10:29
- Son: John 10:28; Romans 8:34 (4 ways!)
- Spirit: Ephesians 4:30

## The Resurrection of All Mankind

- Father: John 5:21
- Son: John 5:21
- Spirit: Romans 8:11

## The Inspiration of the Scriptures

- Father: 2 Timothy 3:16
- Son: 1 Peter 1:10,11
- Spirit: 2 Peter 1:21

## Minister's Authority

- Father: 2 Corinthians 3:5-6
- Son: 1 Timothy 1:12
- Spirit: Acts 20:28

## Individual Distinctives

- Equal in nature.
- Separate in person.
- Subservient in duties.
- There is no intimation that any one person of the Godhead sustains these attributes in respect to the other two persons; or that they are held in partnership.
- Each is predicated of each as though no others existed.

## Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

- Begin with Creation (Gen 1:2; Ps 104:30).
- He is the source of knowledge (1 Cor 2:10,11); He has a mind (Rom 8:27); He has a will (1 Cor 12:11).
- He loves us; only those who love can truly “grieve” (Eph 4:30).
- He was given a special assignment during our Lord’s absence (Jn 16:7-14).
- He abides with us forever (Jn 14:16).
- ...yet there remains confusion and divisions over all this...
- The Holy Spirit is a person, repeatedly referred to as “He.” (The neuter word *pneuma* proves important when unraveling the “restrainer” in 2 Thess 2.)
- [He never speaks of Himself...!]

## Our Relationship with Him

- Three Greek prepositions are used to describe our relationship with the Holy Spirit.
  - *Para*, “with”: The Holy Spirit works *with* us to convict us of sin and lead us to Jesus Christ.

- *En*, “in”: Once we’ve excepted Christ, the Holy Spirit dwell *in* us (Jn 14:17).
- *Epi*, “upon you”: There are some events where the Holy Spirit comes *upon* us (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:8; 10:44; 19:6).
- He is Living Water: a yearning (Ps 42:1,2). He is our Spiritual source within our bodies (Jn 7:37).
- “Without me you can do *nothing*” (Jn 15:5).

## 1 Corinthians 14

- ...Sequel to Chapter 12.

## The Gift of Tongues

- There are two common errors concerning the gifts of the Spirit:
  - the denial that they are for today; and the other extreme,
  - the over-emphasis of both the gift and the experience, which substitutes aspiration for inspiration.
- The goal of this study is healing, not exhortation. Let’s set aside our preconceptions
- Let’s first listen to Paul (not Chuck Missler, or whoever).
- Test everything by the Word of God, not some book you’ve read or tape you’ve heard!
- And pray for discernment.

## The Gift of Tongues in the NT

- 1) At Pentecost (Acts Chapter 2).
- 2) When the Lord Jesus was saying farewell to His disciples, “these signs shall follow them that believe.. they shall speak with new tongues” (Mk 16:17).
- 3) Following Peter’s address in the house of Cornelius, the Holy Spirit fell upon those assembled there and they spoke with tongues (Acts 10:45-46).
- 4) When Paul came to Ephesus he found a few believers who were unrecognizable as Christians. He asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit and they said they had never heard of it. They then received the Holy Spirit and we are told that they spoke with tongues (Acts 19:6). That’s it...and in 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14.

- 1] Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

- Paul gives three directives:
  - First, pursue love (in many ways this concludes Chapter 13);
  - Second, desire (strive eagerly) spiritual gifts;
  - Third, especially that you prophecy.
- Prophecy is preferred, repeatedly:
  - It seems that the church at Corinth had become extremely preoccupied with the gift of tongues.
- The fruit of the Spirit, love (Gal 5:22-23), is more important than gifts. (I believe we do better to be “fruit inspectors” rather than “gift inspectors.”)
- “Strive eagerly for the spiritual gifts”: God’s sovereignty does not cancel man’s responsibility. It’s interesting that there appears to be a commitment on our part. We must ask (Lk 11:13; Jn 16:24).
- [Paul uses the word “pursue” eight times in his letters (Rom 9:30; 12:13; 14:19; Phil 3:12; 1 Thess 5:15; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22). *The verb requires intensity and determination.*]

- 2] For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

- Paul does not deny that the gift of tongues exists.
- Tongues are deemed for private worship directed to God (v.4); in personal prayer.

3] But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

- For the NT prophet, the task of predicting the Messiah's coming had been completed and that of proclaiming the gospel had begun.

## Predictive Prophecy in the New Testament

- Agabus: Prophesied a severe famine in the entire Roman world during the reign of Emperor Claudius; also, Paul's arrest (Acts 11:28; 21:11).
- Paul: Prophesied aboard the storm at sea that the lives all 276 people would be saved despite the shipwreck (Acts 27:23-26).
- John: His prophecies on Patmos (Rev 1:3; 22:9).
- Prophecies for preaching and teaching (1 Cor 12:28-29; 14:3; Acts 13:1; 15:32).
- The Holy Spirit promised to speak through them (Mt 10:19-20; Acts 4:8-12, 19-20; 5:29-32; 6:5; 7:2-53).

4] He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

- "Edify, edification": This Greek word occurs seven times; three times as the verb (1 Cor 14:4 (2X), 17); four times as the noun (1 Cor 14:3, 5, 12, 26).
- Paul is speaking positively (note v.5).
- Edification was the goal. (How is your gift helping other people?)

5] I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

- Not everyone receives the same spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:30).
- *The view that the gift of tongues is the only evidence of the fullness of the Spirit has no basis whatever in the Word of God.*
- Cf. Moses, when he was told that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp of Israel and Joshua perceived a threat to Moses' leadership, asked: "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit on them!" (Num 11:29).

## The Key Tests

- How do you validate the reality of God the Holy Spirit in a Christian's life?
  - 1) The Holy Spirit is concerned with character and not with gifts (1 Cor 13:4-7; Gal 5:22-23).
  - 2) The Holy Spirit comes to us to glorify the Lord Jesus, not Himself (Jn 16:13, 14). The Holy Spirit is always shown in the role of the "unnamed servant" (Gen 24; Ruth 2). [He does manifest Himself in some dramatic ways. More on this later...]
  - 3) The Holy Spirit has come to equip us for Christian ministry and testimony (Acts 1:8).

6] Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

- "...brethren": Parlance of the day—included sisters, too.
- A lack of communication signifies a lack of love.

- If comprehension is lacking, people turn away and leave the church.
- 7] And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?
- Flute playing was common at both funerals and weddings (Mt 9:23; 11:17). Probably a term for wind instruments in general.
  - Psalmists mention the harp (*kithara*, from which we get “guitar”) frequently (Ps 33:2; 137:2; 149:3; 150:3), implying use in worship services, etc.
- 8] For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?
- The trumpet was a warning call to every able person to prepare for battle, etc. Bugle calls traditionally signify various collective instructions: advance, retreat, etc.
- 9] So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.
- “Distinct” as the converse of the adjective “indistinct” (v.8).
- 10] There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.
- Meaningless speech is considered an oxymoron.
- 11] Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.
- *Barbaros*: One who did not understand Greek (hence, a “barbarian”).
- 12] Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.
- Compare with verse 1; Paul has come full circle (cf. Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 3:13).
- 13] Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.
- Paul was multilingual, but did not understand the Lycaonian dialect of the people in Lystra (Acts 14:11-14). Public worship is here in view.
  - Concerning the spoken word, unless it’s lucid and instructive, the speaker is to remain silent.
  - Paul questions the usefulness of religious activity that is devoid of edification.
- 14] For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.
- Unless the spirit and mind stay engaged, the result is without benefit to the church. Paul ignores other possible purposes.
  - [“Spirit” vs. “mind”? See *The Architecture of Man*, by Chuck Missler, or *The Way of Agape* by Nancy Missler.]
- 15] What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.
- “...pray...sing...”: Both prayer (and petitions) and praise (joyous response to blessings received) in view.

- 17<sup>th</sup> century English bishop Tomas Ken, the Doxology: “Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”
  - Sing (*psallo*) means sing to the accompaniment of a musical instrument; here its use is more general.
  - Songs in NT (Lk 1:46-55, 68-79; 2:14; Rom 11:33-36; Eph 5:14; Phil 2:6-11; Col 1:15-20; 1 Tim 3:16; 2 Tim 2:11-13; cf. Eph 5:19; Col 3:16).
- 16] Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?
- *Idiotes*, “uninformed,” “inquirer” (also vv. 23).
  - Possibly one in between a believer and unbeliever; the singular implies a Hebrew idiom that actually means to play a part, or fill a role. [Josephus, *Wars* 5.2.5 [88]; Epictetus Diss. 2.4.5.]
- 17] For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.
- *Amen*: A transliteration from the Greek, of what was already a transliteration of a Hebrew term: the participle of the verb “to confirm” used adverbially as “truly” or “So let it be” (Ps 106:48; 1 Chr 16:36; Neh 5:13; 8:6).
  - The effect in public worship in view.
  - How can you say “Amen” when you don’t know what was said?
- 18] I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:
- No sour grapes here. He’s not disparaging something he doesn’t have.
  - Peter and Paul at times fell into a trance (Acts 10:10; 22:17; 2 Cor 12:1-6).
- 19] Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.
- “I teach”: *Katecheo*, thus, catechism. It is better to be useful than brilliant.
  - “In church” meant in “an assembly”; there were no Christian buildings during this period.
  - “...five words”: Some view “5” as a symbol of grace. Example of five words, “Christ died and rose again” [cf. Gospel of Chapter 15!]
- 20] Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.
- “Brothers” (includes sisters): Again, Paul uses this term to introduce a sensitive topic and to soften the rebuke. They demonstrated their immaturity by flaunting their gift of tongues and demeaning others who lacked this gift.
  - They seem more interested in amusement than usefulness; entertainment rather than education (cf. Jer 4:22).
  - Paul parallels Jesus’ remarks in Mt 10:16: “Therefore be as shrewd as serpents and as harmless as doves.”
- 1] In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.
- There are 17 quotes from OT in 1 Corinthians; six are from Isaiah: 1 Cor 1:19 (Isa 29:14); 2:9 (Isa 64:4); 2:16 (Isa 40:13); 14:21 (Isa 28:11-12); 15:32 (Isa 22:13); 15:54 (Isa 25:8).

- “Law” is more than the Torah.
- This particular one from Isaiah isn’t from Hebrew nor LXX; similar to the translation of Aquila:

*Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people, to whom he said, “This is the resting place, let the weary rest”; and “This is the place of repose” —but they would not listen.*

Isaiah 28:11-12

- Isaiah is being ridiculed by intoxicated priests and prophets who mock him by asking whether he is trying to explain his message to small children.
  - “Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule.” (Isa 28:10,13)
- In Hebrew these lines sound like baby talk: *sav lasav sav lasav, kav lakav kav lakav*. Their simplicity approaches meaninglessness.
- The Israelites scorned Isaiah, who came to them with God’s word expressed in simple and clear Hebrew.
- Now God would come to them with Assyrian armed forces, whose soldiers would speak to them in a foreign language (cf., where Assyrian officials addressed the people of Jerusalem in the Hebrew tongue); cf. 2 Kgs 18:26.
- Because of their unbelief, they would be exiled to Assyria, where they would hear unintelligible speech (cf. Deut 28:49; Isa 33:19; Jer 5:15).

22] Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

- Problematic...? Many differing ways of treating the text: rhetorical question et al.

23] If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

24] But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

- Unbelievers who reject the gospel with hardened heart and blinded mind are like the Jews who in unbelief mocked the prophetic word of Isaiah (Isa 28:11).
- Many of his contemporaries were unbelievers for whom his message proved to be unproductive.

25] And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

- Quote of Isa 45:14 (cf. Zech 8:23).
- Alcibiades, the spoiled darling of Athens, was the friend of Socrates and sometimes said to him, “Socrates, I hate you, for every time I meet you, you make me see what I am.”
- Under conviction, the prostrate depicts his unworthiness when God Himself is present (cf. 1 Kgs 18:39).
- A broken and contrite heart, under conviction of sin, is an essential prerequisite to salvation and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Examples:
  - David, preached by Nathan (2 Sam 12:7; Ps 51:17)
  - The woman of Samaria said, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did” (Jn 4:29).
  - Paul, preached by Jesus (Acts 9:4).
- There are none so blind as those who will not see.
- No agony more severe than our full awareness of our sin.

## Orderliness and Individualism in Worship

26] How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

- “Brothers”: Another sensitive topic...

27] If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

- Cf. vv. 27, 28...

28] But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

- Five constraints for tongues in worship:
  - 1) Numbers: two or three at the most.
  - 2) Orderliness: each in turn.
  - 3) Interpretation: essential for edification.
  - 4) Silence: in absence of interpretation.
  - 5) Devotions: speaking to God in private has nothing to do with church at worship.

29] Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30] If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31] For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

- Orderliness and decency.
- Prophets in OT at risk (cf. Deut 13:1-5).
- The standard for discernment is The Word of God.

32] And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33] For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

- “The spirits of the prophets are subjects to the prophets”: Every person is in full control of his or her senses.
- The key insight: God does not cause confusion.

34] Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

35] And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

- Widely misunderstood. Paul is saying “observe the customs.” Not to needlessly flout the accepted ideas of the day.
  - Among the Greeks, women were discouraged from saying anything in public.
  - Plutarch says that the virtuous woman “ought to be modest and guarded about saying anything in the hearing of outsiders [*Advice to Bride and Groom*, 31].
- First century women were generally uneducated and illiterate.
- The Greek verb *laleo* (300X in NT) means “talk, question, argue, chatter. It has nothing to do with praying, prophesying, or singing. *It is not about public speaking.*

- Synagogue pattern: Women and men were on opposite sides of the center aisle. Questions of their husbands created a distraction during the service.
- “Keep silent”: to restrain women from passing judgment on men. Pattern from Genesis 2:18-24 (cf. 1 Cor 11:8,9; 1 Tim 2:11-14).

## Women in Christian Ministry

- What would the mission fields have done without women?
- What would the Christian church have done without the ministry of women from the very beginning?
- What about the woman of Samaria who preached to a whole city?
- What about Philip’s four daughters who prophesied?
- What about Mary Magdalene who spread the news of the risen Lord?
- What about Priscilla, who straightened out the great professor Apollos with points of doctrine?

36] What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

37] If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

- Paul commissioned by Christ (Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:15-18).
- Paul instructs them to look beyond Paul to the Lord Jesus Christ as the speaker.

38] But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39] Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

40] Let all things be done decently and in order.

- “But if any man think himself ignorant, let him be ignorant” (cf. Mt 10:33; 2 Tim 2:12).
- This warning is the severest Paul has pronounced thus far in his epistle to Corinth.
- Three clauses in the imperative mood. Repeats verse one almost verbatim: Be eager to prophesy. Do not forbid people to speak in tongues.
- He spoke in tongues himself (v.18) and wished everyone would have it (v.5).
- To prohibit it would grieve the Spirit of God (Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19).

## Limitations for Tongues in Worship

- 1) Only if interpreted;
  - 2) Only if it’s beneficial for the hearers;
  - 3) Only if it is thus intelligible;
  - 4) Only if done orderly;
  - 5) Only if given in the context of love.
- We get an interesting glimpse of the early church: there was spontaneous involvement.
  - Many church members today think far more of what the church can do for them than of what they can do for the church...other than criticize.

## Are Tongues for Today?

- “The canon is complete?”: Dallas Theological Seminary position. The view that the phrase “that which is perfect” refers to the canon came about in 1906...exalted, but wrong.
- **Paul:** When Paul wrote in 55 A.D., could the “completion of the canon” have been anticipated by the Corinthians readers?

- **Peter:** In Acts 2:17-21, Peter's quote of Joel 2:28-32 clearly continues to the Great Tribulation.
- **Jesus:** In the Upper Room, limitations of the gifts of the Spirit (or their temporariness) are absent in Jesus' announcement of the gifts.
- **John:** In Rev 10, John is instructed not to record what the Seven Thunders said. Their utterances are still missing from the canon. Thus, the canon is not complete.
- Knowledge will also vanish when "that which is perfect comes." Has it? Teaching? Miracles?
- One valid case destroys a doctrine limiting the Holy Spirit. He is sovereign still.
- Let's not lose sight of the primary focus: the unity and purpose of the church (Eph 4:3-7, 12-13).
- No one individual believer ever comes to the fullness of the stature of Christ by himself.
- You cannot live as a Christian in isolation.
- Not all are affected the same way by the Holy Spirit.
- Don't impute one person's experience to another.
- He is sovereign and not limited to formulas.
- Christ loves His church.
- Don't injure or insult Him by your attitudes toward those who have a different view or style.

## Next Session

I believe the most important chapter in the entire Bible is 1 Corinthians Chapter 15. Why?

## 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians Session 14: Chapter 15 - Part 1

This is the most important chapter in the Bible (and the longest in this epistle). It deals with the ultimate enemy of mankind: death. This chapter is regarded by many as the *Centerpiece of Christianity* and the climax of Paul's message.

### Summary: 1 Corinthians 15

- |                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| • The Definition of the Gospel | 15:1-12  |
| • Death and Resurrection       | 15:13-25 |
| • Christ's Kingdom             | 15:25-35 |
| • The Physics of Immortality   | 15:36-40 |
| • The Resurrection Body        | 15:41-50 |
| • The <i>Harpazo</i>           | 15:51-58 |

### 1 Corinthians 15

- 1] Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;
- "...the Gospel": What is the Gospel? Paul gives it to us in a nutshell. We must learn precisely what the gospel is.
  - Paul had already preached it (Acts 13:30; Gal 1:1).
  - After his Damascus conversion, Peter and James spent time with Paul in Jerusalem to fill in the details (Gal 1:18-19).

- After 14 years passed, he returned to Jerusalem to confirm with the apostles whether his preaching was in harmony with the gospel they proclaimed (Gal 2:1).
  - “...received”: This is in the aorist tense, which points to a decisive act.
- 2] By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.
- “You are (being) saved”: This term is in the present continuous tense.

### Three “Tenses” of Salvation

- **Saved:** *Past tense.* Regenerated by the Spirit. Aorist: once and for all. Spiritually linked to Jesus. The Shepherd keeps the sheep.
  - **Being Saved:** *Present tense.* Growing as an instrument of His Grace. We need to apply our salvation to our lives. You may be saved, but what have you done since? It is possible to believe in vain. It is not just an “insurance policy” against going to hell.
  - **Will be Saved:** *Future tense.* The resurrection.
- 3] For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;
- “...Christ died”: First of all, Jesus died. He did not just disappear. The authorities (both Jewish and Roman) made sure that his death was undeniable! The authorities outwitted themselves when they took so many precautions to make sure Jesus was dead and remained in the grave! Their promoting the story that the body was stolen was an admission that the sepulchre was indeed vacant.
  - Paul says twice in three verses “according to the Scriptures (OT).” Jesus’ death and resurrection was not an afterthought. This was planned before the foundations of the world (and hidden in the genealogy of Noah); cf. Gen Chapter 5.

### Definition of the Gospel

- 1) He died for our sins (not just died);
  - 2) He was buried;
  - 3) He was raised on the third day;
  - 4) He appeared...
- If you take any piece away, you do not the gospel. (It is interesting that Paul does not mention a word about the life of Jesus; his teachings, the Sermon on the Mount).
  - “...first of all”: First in importance, not chronology.
  - “Christ” (not “Jesus”): Paul uses his official title of the Messiah, our *goel*, the Kinsman-Redeemer.
  - “According to the Scriptures” (Isa 53:5-6, 8-9; Ps 22:16; cf. Mt 26:28; 1 Pet 3:18).
  - “For our sins” (Rom 5:8; 8:32; Gal 1:4; Eph 5:2; Titus 2:14).
  - In these passages the Greek preposition *hyper* (“for”) expresses the idea of Jesus being both our representative and our substitute.
  - The phrase “Christ died for our sins” is the doctrinal summary of the atonement:
    - 1) As our **Substitute**, Christ died to appease God and meet the demands of the law (Rom 3:25-26; 5:9-19).
    - 2) As our **Advocate**, He effected reconciliation and made us righteous before God (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Jn 2:1-2).

- 3) As our **Mediator**, he established a new covenant and accepted us as partners (Lk 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25).
- 4) As our **Savior**, he grants us eternal life through faith in Him (Jn 3:16).

4] And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

- Only Paul mentions the burial. It points backward to the reality of death and forward to the character of the resurrection.
- Paul identifies the believer's baptism with Christ's burial (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12).
- It is also a pattern: Something in us must die when we become Christians. And it must be buried. Nothing that hasn't died can be resurrected. (That's why the cherubim guarded the way to the Tree of Life in Genesis 3.)
- "...He rose again": The Resurrection. Translations fail to exploit the differences in Greek verb tenses between vv.3, 4: The Greek uses the past tense to describe a single action in the past for Jesus' death and burial. But for the verb "to be raised" the Greek has the perfect tense to indicate an action that occurred in the past but has lasting relevance for the present (vv. 12,13,14,16,17,20; cf. 2 Tim 2:8).
- Jesus was raised from the dead and continues His life in the resurrected state (Rev 5:6).
- The passive voice denotes the implied agent, God (Acts 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 37).
- If the Roman or Jewish authorities could have produced the body of Jesus, all the rumors would have quickly stopped, and it all would have ended. But they could not.
- The empty tomb emphasizes that Jesus' resurrection was physical! (Emphasized in all four gospels that the body was missing): Mt 28:5-6; Mk 16:5-6; Lk 24:3-4; Jn 20:6-8.
- "Third Day": Jesus taught that He would be killed and raised the third day (Mt 16:21).
- "Third day according to (what) Scriptures"? Jonah 1:17, linked with Mt 12:40. Also, Ps 16:8-11 with Ps 110:1; some also point to Hos 6:2.
- Genesis 22 is perhaps the most dramatic example: Abraham's offering of Isaac. Isaac was "dead" to Abraham for three days (Heb 11:19).

## Other "Three Days" Examples

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1) Third day of Creation: Double Blessing      | Gen 1:9-13                   |
| 2) Akedah: Abraham's Offering of Isaac         | Gen 22; Heb 11:19            |
| 3) Joseph Interprets Two Dreams                | Gen 40:8-22                  |
| – Baker (bread)                                | Dies - Third Day             |
| – Cupbearer (wine)                             | Freed - Third Day            |
| 4) Crossing of the Red Sea:                    | The Third Day after Passover |
| 5) Departed from Mt Sinai                      | Num 10:33                    |
| 6) Spies En Route From Jericho                 | Jos 2:16                     |
| 7) Jonah in the Great Fish                     | Jon 1:17                     |
| 8) Esther Fasts Three Days                     | Esther 4:16                  |
| 9) Wedding in Cana on the Third Day            | John 3:1                     |
| 10) Christ Was Three Days in the Tomb          | Luke 24:21                   |
| 11) Saul's Blindness in Damascus               | Acts 9:9                     |
| 12) Hosea: Israel's Petition for Lord's Return | Hos 5:15-6:3                 |
- After His resurrection, Jesus' physical body:
    - could be touched (John 20:27);
    - could be recognized...with difficulty (John 20:14-15; 21:4,7);

- could come and go through locked doors (John 20:19, 26);
- could eat and drink with them (Luke 24:42-43; Acts 1:4; 10:41);
- Jesus’ resurrection body was transformed to transcend time and space (1 John 3:2).

5] And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

- “...He was seen”: Appearances of Jesus: On that Sunday, Jesus appeared to the women, Mary Magdalene, two men on the road to Emmaus, Peter, and the 10 disciples in the upper room (Mark 16:11; Luke 24:13-43).
- Paul first mentions Peter, whom he usually calls Cephas (1 Cor 1:12) the Aramaic name for Peter (John 1:42).
- (Paul does not list the appearances to women; his Jewish background is showing. Women were not eligible as witnesses under Jewish law.)
- Sunday evening, the disciples in the upper room told the men from Emmaus that He appeared to Simon (Luke 24:34).
- That morning the angel instructed the women to tell the disciples “and Peter” to go to Galilee where Jesus would meet them (Mark 16:7).
- There Jesus forgave Peter and reinstated him (John 21:15-19).
- The book of Acts reveals that immediately after Jesus’ ascension Peter became the undisputed leader in the Jerusalem church.
- Next, Paul lists the “Twelve,” the common collective term for the disciples. Would you believe that JFK was shot with an arrow? Why not? Witnesses are still alive who know better! So, also, during the first century with respect to Jesus Christ.

6] After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

- “Five hundred brethren at once”: Nothing in the Gospels or Acts clearly corroborates the figure of 500 brothers. Some associate this with the closing words of Matthew’s Gospel and the great commission. (A crowd would not be surprising since He announced this appearance through the women earlier.)
- (In a Jewish court of law, the presence of two or three witnesses was mandatory to prove the veracity of an event.)
- “...remain unto this present”: Most of the 500 were still living at the time Paul wrote this epistle (about 25 years after the crucifixion).
- Apparently both Paul and the Corinthians were acquainted with many of them.

7] After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

- Half a year before Jesus’ death, his brothers, including James, still did not believe on him (John 7:5). But immediately after Jesus’ ascension, his brothers believed and were with the apostles in the upper room (Acts 1:13-14; 1 Cor 9:5).
- James listened to Paul when the former persecutor returned to Jerusalem as a believer (Gal 1:19).
- James filled Peter’s place when the apostle fled Jerusalem after his release from prison (Acts 12:17).
- After his third missionary tour, Paul reported to James and the elders in Jerusalem (Acts 21:18-19).

## “Apostles”

- In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the word signifies the Twelve (Mt 10:2; Mk 3:14; Lk 6:13).

- By contrast, in Acts Luke uses the term to include Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:14).
- Andronicus and Junias, according to Paul were outstanding among the apostles (Rom 16:7).
- In this context, we assume it refers to the Twelve.

8] And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

- “Last of all”: Paul places himself, on the basis of the Damascus Road, last.
- If any had a basis before God, Paul did (Phil 3:4,6,7). But he saw, on the Damascus Road, what a wretched, arrogant, independent, selfish creature he was.
- We need to come to the same place. Unless there is, in your own life, a true recognition of sin, “self” in all its ugliness, you are not saved.
- You can speak of salvation only as the blind speak of color...
- *Ektromati*, “before the due time.” Paul thinks of himself here as an Israelite whose time to be born again had not come, nationally (Mt 23:39).
- His conversion by the appearing of the Lord in glory (Acts 9:3-6) was an illustration before the time, of the future national conversion of Israel (Ezek 20:35-38; Hos 2:14-1; Zec 12:10-13:6; Rom 11:23-27).
- Appointed from his mother’s womb to be an apostle (Gal 1:15).
- Jesus stepped down from the throne to the cross, devoid of the guilt of sin, and attacked death itself. As Peter said on the Day of Pentecost, “because it was not possible that he should be holden of it” (Acts 2:24).
- As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, “by one man’s obedience many are made righteous” (Rom 5:19).
- This does not happen gradually by growth as the years go by, but it results from the crisis of certain moment in your life.
- Have you picked up your passport to life?

9] For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

- Paul’s initial acceptance was junior to them. After 14 years, he returned to Jerusalem to confirm the harmony of his gospel with them (Gal 2:1-2).
- The apostles recognized Paul’s special ministry and later placed him on an equal footing with them (Gal 2:9-19).
- He always presents himself as the least among the apostles (cf. Eph 3:8; 1 Tim 1:15).
- He continually reminded himself that he persecuted the church of God (Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:9, 14; Gal 1:13).

10] But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

- “...the grace...was not in vain”: Grace is used 3X in this verse. “Vain”: not reaching his goal. Notice what he accomplished in only two decades (2 Cor 4:8-11; 6:4-10; 11:23-29):
  - He toiled as a tentmaker in Ephesus (Acts 20:34);
  - Instructor in the rented hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9);
  - Preached house to house (Acts 20:20 etc.).

11] Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

12] Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

- “...rose from the dead...”: To raise, perfect tense. By conquering death, Jesus Christ never has to face death again.
- With Philetus, Hymenaeus denied the doctrine of a bodily resurrection and destroyed the faith of some (2 Tim 2:17-18). Paul handed him over to Satan (1 Tim 1:19-20).

13] But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

- A Gospel without the tenet of the resurrection has no message of redemption.
- Paul highlights six history-changing facts that would have followed if Jesus had not risen from the dead:

14] And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

- To deny the resurrection is to go against all the pertinent evidence that was available in the early church.

15] Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

- Can you imagine Paul testifying falsely of God? Paul was a Pharisee: the penalty in OT for being a false prophet was death (Deut 18:20-22); in the NT (1 John 5:10; 2 John 10; cf. Job 19:25).

16] For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17] And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

- Step by step, Paul reveals to them the spiritual implications of denial.
- The justification of believers rests squarely on the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

18] Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

- “...they also which are fallen asleep”: A NT euphemism for those who have died. Greek of Mt 27:52; Jn 11:11-12; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor 7:39; 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess 4:13-15; 2 Pet 3:4.
- Thus, Paul can speak of death as “gain” (Phil 1:21, 23).
- A denial of the resurrection would mean that all have perished, including Jesus. It makes the believer a martyr to an illusion.
- Death is unable to break the bond that exists between Christ and believers in this earthly life. That bond continues into the life hereafter and lasts eternally (cf. Rom 6:11).
- After writing seven conditional statements to demonstrate the effect of denying the resurrection, Paul returns to the consistent doctrine of the Christian church: Christ’s resurrection.

19] If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

20] But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

- While unbelievers continue to scoff, Christians do not need further proof than the empty tomb and the appearances in vv. 3-8.
- The firstfruits indicates that the first sheaf of the forthcoming grain harvest will be followed by the rest of the sheaves. Christ is the guarantee for all those who belong to him that they also will share in the resurrection (v. 23; 2 Cor 1:22).

## Firstfruits

- “Firstfruits” (Lev 23:9-11; Mt 27:52,53).
- Counting of the Omer (49 days); Lev 23:15-17; Deut 26:1-11 (see also *The Feasts of Israel* briefing pack).

- A century later, Israel was called the firstfruits (Jer 2:3).
- Paul applied the term to the first converts in western Asia Minor and in southern Greece (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:15 NASB).
- The 144,000 redeemed from the earth are offered as the firstfruits to God (Rev 14:3; cf. Jas 1:18; Rom 8:23; 2 Thess 2:13, NRSV).
- (The sons of the widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite, the daughter of Jairus, the young man of Nain, and Lazarus, all died later. They were raised, but not resurrected into a resurrection body.)

21] For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

- Semitic parallelism. The Bible is the story of two men: Adam and Christ, “the last Adam.”
- The Greek has the preposition *dia* (by) to show that man is the agent responsible for death. We have a genetic defect; penalty of death (Gal 2:17; 3:19).
- “Before the fall, Adam was able to sin or not to sin; after the fall, he was not able not to sin.” — Augustine
- Christ alone lived without sin and conquered death for all His people. Death, having been caused by a human being, can be made ineffective only by a human being (Rom 5:12, 18. Rev 5:3,4); thus, the *Goel*, the kinsman-redeemer, as typified by Boaz in the Book of Ruth.
- There are only two spheres: Adam and Christ. You are either in one or the other. In Adam, all die. The marks of death are upon each of us today.
- [We did not even have the ability to choose without the intervention of His Spirit. Factor that marvelous insight into your view on “eternal security”!]
- Sin is the decaying fruit of self-life. We need to be born a second time. We need to be rescued from the domain of Satan. We were helpless slaves to the enemy.
- You had nothing to do with your first birth, but you are involved in its sin. You have nothing to do with your second birth, but you are involved in its deliverance and implicated in the purity of God.
- The pursuit of the present immorality is a denial of the resurrection.

## Goal of Transhumanism

- The announced goal of “Transhumanism” is the transfer of one’s “consciousness” (software) to a more functional (artificial) environment.
- The increasingly rapid developments in genetics, robotics, nanotechnology, and artificial intelligence is leading the race in this emerging field...

22] For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

- “All” = Christ’s. Not universalism (Jn 5:21; 6:63; Rom 4:17; 8:11; 1 Cor 15:45).

23] But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.

- Study the Feast of Firstfruits and Feast of Shavuot (Weeks, Pentecost).
- “First”... “then” (1 Thess 4:16-17). Notice that Christ says nothing about the resurrection of unbelievers.
- The dead who die out of Christ are not left in disintegration and corruption (Rev 20:12).
  - Unbelievers will also ultimately be resurrected, to shame and everlasting contempt (Dan 12:2; Jn 5:29).
  - [You have never met a mere mortal!]
  - Are you personally involved in the program of God?

24] Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

- “...put down all rule”: Abolish, *kartargeo*, making all ruling powers ineffective, terminating and setting them aside.
- “Rule,” “authority” and “power”: Jewish terms designating demons (Rom 8:38; Eph 1:21; 3:10; 612; Col 1:16; 2:10,15).
- Note that Jesus reigns now. He is in control now. What a reassurance that is!

25] Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

- “...the kingdom”: What “Kingdom” is this? Most churches have no idea what this is referring to...

25] For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

- Quote from Ps 110:1. Quoted by Christ in Matthew 22:44. At Christ’s ascension, “angels, authorities and powers were placed in submission to Him” (1 Pet 3:22).
- “...must”: An imperative. His reign is a reign of conquest. There can be no maverick molecules in the universe. You cannot go into glory except under the sovereignty of the One who has won the right for you to enter.

26] The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

- Christ holds the keys of death and the grave (Rev 1:18). When Christ destroys the last enemy, death, He will already have delivered His kingdom to the Father.
- If there is a resurrection of all believers, the power of death ends once and for all. Both death and Hades will be thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death (Rev 20:14).
- In the renewal of Heaven and Earth, death will be no more (Rev 21:4).

27] For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

- Quote from Ps 110:1, broadened to include everything (similar to Ps 8:7). This passage has been noted by scholars as having an interesting “inversion” that takes place in verses 24-28, with parallel passages are noted:

## Chiasmic Structure

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| A) | Then comes the end,  | v.24 |
| B) | when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father   |      |
| C) | after he has abolished all rule, and all authority and power.  |      |
| D) | For he must rule until he has put all his enemies under his feet.  | v.25 |
| E) | The last enemy that will be abolished is death.  | v.26 |
| D) | For he has put all things under his feet.  | v.27 |
| C) | And when he says, “All things are put under him,” it is clear that the one who subjected all things to him is excepted.            |      |
| B) | And when all things are subjected to him, then even the Son himself shall be subjected to the one who subjected all things to him. | v.28 |
| A) | so that God may be all in all.   |      |

- The purpose of Psalm 8 is to reveal Adam's sinlessness before the fall. The stark reality of sin undermined man's authority (Heb 2:8-10).
- God has put all things under Christ's feet (Eph 1:22), through whom He created the universe (Jn 1:3; Col 1:16; Heb 1:20).
- When all things are eventually subject to Christ, then he delivers the kingdom to the Father, making the end of his mediatorial work: interceding for them (Rom 8:34) and preparing a place for them (Jn 14:3).

28] And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

- The verb "to subject" occurs here three times in three different Greek forms; 6X in two verses.
- Even the wind and waves of the Sea of Galilee obeyed him (Mt 8:27).
- The demons submitted to him (Mt 8:28-34) and Satan himself fell from heaven (Lk 10:18).
- The Son proceeds eternally from the Father (Ps 2:7) and confesses that He can do nothing of Himself, only those things which he sees the Father doing (Jn 5:19).
- "...all in all": This echoes Zech 14:9, Deut 6:4, and Isa 43:11.
  - "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen" (Rom 11:36).
- He invites His people to sit with Him as judges (Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30; Rev 3:21; 4:4; 20:4).

29] Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

- "...baptized for the dead": (Throughout the centuries, the explanations for this verse have been numerous and varied.)
- The teachings of Christ and the apostles never included uttering prayers for the dead.
- Paul states the fact as untrue. If Jesus Christ is not alive, why be baptized in the name of a dead savior?

30] And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

- If Christ is dead, why stand we in jeopardy every hour?
- Paul's next letter catalogs the perils and adversities he has borne (2 Cor 4:8-11; 11:23-29).

31] I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

- "Daily I die": Paul was never out of peril.

32] If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

- Paul spent three years in Ephesus during his third journey, but the only account of this interval is in Acts 19:1-20:1.
- Paul relates that God raised him from the dead as it were (2 Cor 1:8-10).
- He quotes from Isaiah 22:13. Also, Jesus echoes this proverb (Luke 12:19-20).
- "...beasts at Ephesus"? "Wild animals"? Could Paul have been exposed to wild animals in the arena at Ephesus?
  - He was delivered from "the lion's mouth" (2 Tim 4:17), but Roman laws would restrict local authorities from throwing Paul, a Roman citizen, to the lions.

- When imprisoned in Caesarea, he appealed to Caesar on the basis of that citizenship (Acts 25:11).
- Figuratively? Demetrius and his associates behaved “like wild beasts” (Acts 19:23-41).

33] Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

- Paul quotes a proverb from *Thais* of the Greek poet *Menander*. “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” This is the second time Paul warns the Corinthians not be deceived by their own society (1 Cor 6:9; cf. Gal 6:7; Jas 1:16; 1 Cor 3:18).
- Paul realizes the ease with which people accept perverted principles and lifestyles as normative.
- “Speech” or “company”: Gr. *homiliai* (as “homily”). Our speech reveals our inner self.

34] Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

- “Awake to righteousness”: Be alert to the spiritual dangers which surrounds you.
- *Eknepsate*, “come back to your senses.”
- [Does this fit us?]
- “...sin not”: “Stop sinning”—present tense, imperative mood.

35] But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

- Greek philosophers taught the immortality of the soul but denied the immortality of the body. At the end of his Areopagus address, the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens scorned Paul over this point (Acts 17:31-32).

## Summary: 1 Corinthians 15

- The Definition of the Gospel 15:1-12
- Death and Resurrection 15:13-25
- Christ’s Kingdom 15:25-35

## Next Session

- The Physics of Immortality 15:36-40
- The Resurrection Body 15:41-50
- The *Harpazo* 15:51-58

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

## Session 15: Chapter 15 – Part 2

This is the most important chapter in the Bible (and the longest in this epistle). It deals with the ultimate enemy of mankind: death. This chapter is regarded by many as the *Centerpiece of Christianity* and the climax of Paul’s message.

## This Session

- The Physics of Immortality 15:36-40
- The Resurrection Body 15:41-50
- The *Harpazo* 15:51-58

## 1 Corinthians 15

35] But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

- Greek philosophers taught the immortality of the soul but denied the immortality of the body. At the end of his Areopagus address, the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens scorned Paul over this point (Acts 17:31-32).

*For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.*

Job 19:25-27

- The Jewish rabbis believed that God created man as a body and spirit.

## The Physics of Immortality

- Frank J. Tipler, Professor of Mathematical Physics at Tulane University, is a major theoretician in the field of global general relativity, that rarefied branch of physics created by Stephen Hawking and Roger Penrose.
- In devising a mathematical model of the end of the universe, Tipler (a professed atheist) came to a stunning conclusion: Using the most advanced and sophisticated methods of modern physics, relying solely on the rigorous procedures of logic that science demands, he has created a proof of the existence of God.
- Furthermore, he believes that every human being who ever lived will be resurrected from the dead.
- He claims that he arrived at his proofs of God and immortality “in exactly the same way physicists calculate the properties of an electron.”
- His book explains why he now believes that the central claims of Judeo-Christian theology are in fact true, and that these claims are straight-forward deductions of the laws of physics as we now understand them.

36] Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

- “Thou fool...”: (from v.34). Paul introduces the analogy of a seed (Jn 12:24).
- “...that which thou sowest”: It is no more difficult to believe in the resurrection than it is to believe in a harvest!
- The Greek passive voice conveys the sense that God alone is the agent who creates life.

37] And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

- Jesus’ physical body was placed in the tomb. On the third day a new glorified body came forth, no longer subject to time and space (Jn 20:19, 26; Lk 24:31).
- What emerges from a seed that “dies” is incomparably more glorious than what was planted.
- Examples: bulbs vs. gladiolas, et al. A butterfly...

38] But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

- Plants (and people) do not rise of their own volition, nor by chance. Only by the decisive (aorist) action of God.

39] All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

- Order reversed from creation account (Gen 1:20-27).
- ...overwhelming variation that is complimentary through its nonconformity.
  - DNA: 3 out of 4 error-correcting code, using the same for all. Digitally different but by a common architect.

## Six Is the Number of Man

- At the cellular level, an intact human immune system will virtually always recognize and reject a nonhuman transplant as foreign. What is the underlying characteristic within humanity that speaks of our uniqueness?
- On virtually every nucleated cell in a person are small markers (lipoproteins to be precise) called antigens. Their official designation is “histocompatibility antigen” or “human leukocyte antigen (HLA).”
- These certain antigens are the same in every human and are only found in humans, although given individuals may have different arrangements and collections of these molecules. (For example, these antigens are responsible for the different ABO and Rh systems important in blood transfusions.)
- The irony is that in every person, on virtually every cell, this marker of mankind is a product of one certain chromosome: Chromosome #6.

## Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA)

- This system is the locus of genes that encode for proteins on the surface of cells that are responsible for regulation of the immune system in humans.
- This group of genes encodes cell-surface antigen-presenting proteins and has many other functions, and it resides on chromosome 6.

40] There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

- Geometric means; see our *Beyond Coincidence* briefing pack.

41] There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

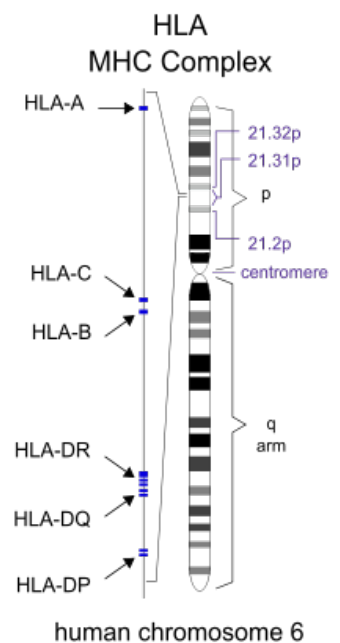
- No two are alike. Even without a spectrograph.
- Even the moons of Jupiter are each unique.
- There are 100,000 million stars in the Milky Way alone; (at 1/sec, it would take 2500 years to count them).
- And yet God knows them all by name. Can't God do the same for us? To ask the question is to answer it.

42] So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

- Here we find four lines of recurring verbs and contrasting nouns (in anticipation of the Holy Spirit?).

43] It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

- “Dishonor”: *Atimia*, loss of the rights of citizenship. A corpse has no rights. It is “unclean” (Num 19:11).



- “Sown in corruption”: Entropy? The entire creation is subject to the “bondage of decay” (cf. Rom 8:19-21). Entropy began in Genesis 3; decay of *c*? etc. See our *Beyond Time and Space* briefing pack.
- Burials are vivid and constant reminders of the curse of death pronounced in Genesis. The dissolution of the human body in the grave is the ultimate humiliation to we who were originally crowned with glory and honor to rule God’s creation (Ps 8:5b; Heb 2:7b, 9).
- Burial is a figurative sowing in anticipation of the future harvest at the time of the resurrection. A believer has received eternal life already (Jn 17:3; 1 Jn 5:11-13).

## Jesus’ Resurrection Body

- Could appear and disappear at will: Luke 24:31; John 20:19.
- Could move through solid walls: John 20:19,26.
- Could be seen and felt; palpable: Matthew 28:9; Luke 24:36-42.
- He could eat food, although it wasn’t apparently necessary: Luke 24:41-43.
- Though glorified, He could be recognized: Luke 24:30-31.
- No more experience of death, aging, crying, mourning, sorrow, or pain: Rev 21:4.
- All believers will be given new bodies like the glorious body of the Lord: Phil 3:21; 1 John 3:2.

44] It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

- Our new body has a different dimensionality (1 John 3:2). [See our *Beyond Perception* briefing pack.]
- “...raised a spiritual body”: Our new, natural bodies will be “spiritual,” completely Spirit-filled and Spirit-governed. Our bodies have become temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19, et al.).

45] And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

- Jesus emphasized that His new body is material (“flesh and bone,” Luke 24:39), but with the Holy Spirit thoroughly filling and governing this body. Note: the Holy Spirit’s role in the Creation (Gen 1:2).
- Note the intended parallelism between Adam and Christ.
- Our physical bodies will be like His own (2 Cor 4:14; Col 1:18; Phil 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2; Rev 1:5). After His resurrection, immortality for His people became a certainty. I have never seen you; the real you. You have never seen the real me.

## What Is the “Body of Christ”?

- The Church is a living organism called “The Body of Christ” (Eph 1:22-23).
- It is not just a “figure of speech” but an actual organic reality. Every believer is mystically joined into a living union with Jesus Christ (and each other! 1 Cor 12:12-28; Gal 3:27-28).
- *Ekklesia* first mentioned by Jesus Christ in Matthew 16:18.
  - The Confession was the foundation, not Peter: the *Petros*, masculine, does not agree with “rock,” *petra*, neuter, as it must do.
- It is in this confession of faith in Jesus that one enters into the one true “church,” the body of Christ.
- “I will be in you...and you in me...”: John 14:16,17,20. “In Christ” = This phrase is used 165 X in the epistles. “A Mystery”: Col 1:26,27; 2:12; 1 Cor 12:12,13; Gal 3:27,28
- In the Church period, there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile (1 Cor 10:32, 12:13; Rom 10:12; Gal 3:27-28; Col 3:11).
- However, Israel is distinct (cf. Dan 9:27, and Rev 6-18) until the New Jerusalem which combines both.

- The Gentile is judged in Matthew 25:31-46; Israel in Ezek 20:34-44;
  - The Church in 1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:10; 2 Tim 4:8; cf. Rom 8:31-34.
  - The Bride returns with Him, already adorned (Rev 19:7-9,11,14).
- 46] Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.
- 47] The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.
- Confirming, again, the Creation record: not from primates, etc.; a unique creation.
- 48] As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.
- Adam was the pattern, we are his copies. In Christ, He is the pattern (we are His copies, re: 1 Cor 13).  
– You have been designed for this environment: the Earth. [cf. Space suits, diving gear, et al.]
  - Just as a caterpillar enjoys a new dimensionality when it transforms into a butterfly, you and I will also enjoy a new dimensionality in our resurrection bodies.
  - We, too, are headed for an “upgrade.”
- 49] And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.
- Seth was born in Adam’s likeness and image (Gen 5:3). Children born of their parents bear not only the external image, but also the talents, traits, and characteristics. [We don’t have to teach them to sin.]
  - We are “born again” in Him.
- 50] Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.
- “Flesh and blood” and “corrupt” are identical in meaning (John 3:5,6f).
  - Note: “flesh and bone” (Luke 24:39); His blood has been shed (Lev 17:11; Heb 9:22).
  - There will be a generation that will not die.
- 51] Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,
- “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed”: (They called their burial places *koimeteria*, “dormitories,” from which we get the word “cemeteries.”)
- 52] In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.
- “...in a moment”: *Atmos*, an “indivisible” unit.
  - In quantum physics, an indivisible quanta of time is  $10^{-43}$  seconds;

## The *Harpazo* of the Body of Christ

- The doctrine of the rapture is one of ecclesiology as much as eschatology!  
– NT: 1 Corinthians 15:50, 51; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17  
– OT: Isaiah 26:19-21; Zephaniah 2:3; Psalm 27:5

*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven*

*with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

- “...caught up”: **ar̄pazw** Harpazo: seize; carry off by force.

*deinde nos qui vivimus qui relinquimur simul rapiemur cum illis in nubibus obviam Domino in aera et sic semper cum Domino erimus.*

1 Thessalonians 4:17 (Latin Vulgate)

- *Rapiemur* is the proper tense of *rapio*: Our English words “rapt” and “rapture” come from the past participle of *rapio*.

## Thessalonian Epistles

- (This Corinth reference, in a sense, was the opposite of the 1 Thessalonian problem: there they were worried about those who preceded them! In 2 Thessalonians, as here, it was for the those living...)
- The rapture is introduced in John 14: Before the millennial kingdom, He would leave and go to heaven, He would prepare a place for them in heaven, and He would come back to receive them unto Himself. He would take them to glory before he set up his kingdom on the earth.
- Note: Promise to the Church
  - Holy Spirit to take up residence in them;
  - Specific place reserved for them;
  - [Separate from return to the Earth: Zech 12, 14:4-9, etc.]
- (We will also be taking this up in 2 Corinthians...)

52] In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

- “...the last trump”: For some, this means the *Teki’ah Gedolah*, the “great blowing” of the series which make up the Feast of Trumpets (see the Feast of Trumpets in *The Feasts of Israel* briefing pack).
- To others, it is simply the final trumpet on earth for the redeemed!
- This is not really the “last” trump in the Bible: another trump calls the elect (Mat 24:31); there will be others in the Millennium, etc.
- Even the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Judgment of Revelation isn’t the last: they “assemble” no one; they are not symbols of salvation; they are not symbols of deliverance; they are symbols of judgments on a Christ-rejecting world.
- It is called the “Trumpet of God” in 1 Thess 4:16, used only there and in Ex 19 at Mt. Sinai.
- Paul is not saying anything about timing. No one but the Father knows the day and the hour (Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7).

53] For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

- “This mortal must put on immortality...”
- We cannot dress ourselves. God does it all. We are disconnected from our past (and even time itself).

54] So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55] O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

- Quotes from OT (Isa 25:8; Hos 13:14).
- Death's days are numbered.

56] The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

- Here in a single verse, Paul expresses the doctrine of sin, the law, and death.
- Two years later, Paul expanded the complete doctrine in his Epistle to the Romans (Rom 6:23; 7:9 11,13).

57] But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- The key word is victory, echoing vv.54-55 (cf. 1 Jn 5:4; Rev 1:18 ).
- It is in the present tense; He keeps on giving us victory.
- *Do you have your passport for the transit that's coming?*

58] Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

- "Therefore": How then shall we live?
- Out of gratitude for our salvation provided through the Son (Heb 6:10).

The Bible is not a textbook, nor a book of theory. It is the compass, the chart, the guide for your whole life. Not applying it is the ultimate sin. We are to prepare for the victory that is ours, and not let anyone or anything rob us of that confidence. Don't allow yourself to be moved away from the hope of the gospel. Never be satisfied with anything less than giving yourself wholly to it. Here's a moving example:

In 1980 a young man from Rwanda was forced by his tribe to either renounce Christ or face certain death. He refused to renounce Christ and he was killed on the spot. The night before he had written the following commitment which was found in his room.

—Dr. Bob Moorehead, *The Way of the Master*

*I'm part of the fellowship of the unashamed. I have Holy Spirit power. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made.*

*I'm a disciple of His. I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still.*

*My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, my future is secure.*

*I'm finished with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colourless dreams, tamed visions, mundane talking, cheap living, and dwarfed goals.*

*I no longer need pre-eminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity.*

*I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded, or rewarded.*

*I now live by faith, lean on His presence, walk by patience, lift by prayer, and labour by power.*

*My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way rough, my companions few, my guide reliable, my mission clear:*

*I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded or delayed.*

*I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of the adversary, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.*

*I won't give up, shut up, or let up, until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, and preached up for the cause of Christ.*

*I am a disciple of Jesus. I must go till He comes, give till I drop, preach till all know, and work till He stops me.*

*And when He comes for His own, He will have no problems recognizing me — my banner will be clear!*

—by an Anonymous African Pastor  
nailed to his wall the eve before his martyrdom

## Next Session

- 1 Corinthians 16 – Conclusion. Stewardship. The Spiritual Entrepreneur. Concluding Instructions.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians Session 16: Chapter 16

### 1 Corinthians 16

- 1] Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.
- “Now concerning”: *Peri de*, Paul’s formula introducing topics mentioned in the letter from Corinth.
  - Collection for poor (persecuted) Christians in Jerusalem (1 Thess 2:24ff) and also for famines (Acts 11:28-30 ). Paul and the entire Gentile mission were suspect by some of the more conservative elements in the Jerusalem church.
- 2] Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.
- “First day of the week”: John 10:19,26; Acts 20:7; Rev 1:10.
  - The day of the Resurrection! “Each one,” every believer. “Set aside,” separate from personal funds. “As God has prospered...”; in direct proportion.

*Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

Malachi 3:8,10

## Tithing

- God’s direct challenge (Mal 3:8,10) and instituted *before* the Law (Gen 14:20).
- Four reasons for the Tithe:
  - 1) It acknowledges the Creator’s rights. The Tenth of all is His.
  - 2) It is the antidote for greed and covetousness.

- 3) It is a test of our faith.
- 4) *It is the ultimate solution to every financial problem.*
- OT Pattern: Gen 28:19-22; Lev 27:30-32; 2 Chr 31:4-6; Neh 10:34-37; Mal 3:7-10.
- NT Confirmation: Christ does not set aside the tithe in Matthew 23:23; also implied in the “even so” of 1 Cor 9:13-14; the “lay by him in store” in 1 Cor 16:1,2 alludes to Mal 3:10; 2 Cor 8:14; Heb 7:5,6, etc.
- The tithe is even more binding on us since our privileges are greater: “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required” (Luke 12:48).
- A tenth of all is His: be strict, be careful, be systematic. Separate His funds upon arrival (a separate box, checking account, whatever). Keep records; your “giving” only comes after the return of His tenth.
- (You *can* “take it with you”: Luke 16:1-13)
- Use the Portfolio Concept: “Need” is not the criteria—evidence that the Lord is in the action, *is*.

## A Provocative Alternative

- There are many alternatives for your tithe:
  - Your local church (should gain your primary focus);
  - Various missionary outreaches that the Lord places on your heart;
  - Where the Lord is clearly “in the work”...the “Portfolio Concept”: invest where He is blessing...
  - The “Spiritual Entrepreneur”: the productive independent, operating “undercover”...

## A Road Less Travelled

- The performance of an “entrepreneur” in both the financial and technological arenas is well recognized...
- How about a “spiritual entrepreneur”—an independent visionary armed with persistence and commitment?
- Paul was *the exemplar*!

## The Spiritual Entrepreneur

- He receives no compensation for his personal ministry.
- He relies on his vocational skills (his “tentmaking”) for his living expenses.
- He does not solicit donations for himself: only occasionally, for other ministries.
- He relies on his participation in the Koinonia Parsonage Reserve (“KPR”) for partial reimbursement of his out-of-pocket ministry expenses: travel, communication (Internet), and study materials.
- He is not a novice (1 Tim 3:6): he has achieved the highest honours in the Koinonia Institute: the Gold Medallion.
- He is supervised by a select Board of his peers—not as a pawn of a denominational fiefdom.
  - This Board certifies that he is conforming to his Fiduciary Covenant, his Statement of Faith, and that any funds thus provided are specifically for partial reimbursement of his out-of-pocket expenses for ministry.
- The unit values of the Parsonage Reserve increase due to three separate factors:
  - 1) Additions of value by KPR members (Participants);
  - 2) Additions of value by non-members (Benefactors);
  - 3) Investment returns from the invested capital assets.
- (Although these factors are individually unpredictable, the subsequent unit values can grow substantially in excess of their original cost.)

- This is a pooled reserve to reimburse out-of-pocket ministry expenses (only *earnings* are at risk: donations remain in the ministry *in perpetuity*.)
  - The “Spiritual Entrepreneur” is part of a “covert ops” group operating “under cover” in our world of encroaching darkness.
  - He appears to be the most effective strategist in a world in which a Bible-believing Christian is becoming increasingly “politically incorrect.”
  - [This is also a rebuttal to the concept of “Nicolaitans” which the Lord Jesus (twice) declared he *hated* (Rev 2:6, 15).]
- 3] And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberty unto Jerusalem.
- Paul supported himself by his vocational skills (tentmaking);
  - He gathered contributions for the needs of others.
- 4] And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.
- “And if it be...”: Paul’s plans were uncertain. Indicated earlier that, despite skepticism of some, he would come (1 Cor 4:18,19).
- 5] Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia.
- 6] And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.
- He ultimately went from Ephesus to Macedonia, then to Greece where he stayed three months (Acts 10:1-3).
  - Paul’s travel plans even included Illyricum (Albania and Yugoslavia) and Spain (Rom 15:19, 24, 28).
  - God’s people should always have their plans subject to God’s Will (Acts 18:21; Rom 1:10; 15:32; 1 Cor 4:19; Heb 6:3; Jas 4:13-15).
  - When you’re walking with the Lord, it is important to “hang loose” (Jas 4:13-15).
- 7] For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.
- 8] But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.
- Pentecost: In late May or early June.
- 9] For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.
- Great work is never unhindered. Great opportunities also have serious difficulties. Acts 19 describes how great were Paul’s adversaries at Ephesus.
  - (He will review some of these in his subsequent letter.)
  - Paul always heads for “ground zero.”
- 10] Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.
- Paul spoke earlier (1 Cor 4:17) of sending Timothy to Corinth.
  - Timothy, accompanied by Erastus, went first to Macedonia (Acts 19:22).
  - Paul points to Timothy’s timid disposition (2 Tim 1:7) and his youth (1 Tim 4:12).

- 11] Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.
- 12] As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.
- Last occurrence of *peri de* formula (Introducing topics mentioned in the letter *from* Corinth.) Apollos was highly esteemed in Corinth.
- 13] Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.
- “Watch ye”: Like a drill sergeant, Paul gives short orders in rapid succession, with expectancy of obedience. All verbs in these two verses are present imperative: not momentary, but of continuing states.
  - “Be on your guard”: *Gregoreite*, implies a determined effort at wakefulness. As of the Second Coming (Mt 24:42f; 25:13; Mk 13:34ff; 1 Thess 5:6; Rev 3:3; 16:15).
  - “Acquit yourselves like men”: *Andrizeithe*, no place for cowards or weaklings.
  - “Be strong”: passive; derived from God (cf. Ps 31:24).
- 14] Let all your things be done with charity.
- Cf. Chapter 13.
- 15] I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)
- A good example is always helpful. Paul had baptized him and his household (1 Cor 1:16).
- 16] That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.
- “Submit yourselves”: The tendency of the Corinthians to do the reverse.
  - Work and toil are not quite synonyms: working implies being productive; toiling implies working long and hard in the interest of attaining a goal.
  - Many work, a few toil.
- 17] I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.
- This is the third time Paul mentions Stephanas (1 Cor 1:16; 16:15, 17).
- 18] For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.
- The deserving should be recognized.
  - Stephanas: Greek, “the one who wears a crown.”
- 19] The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.
- “Asia” is the Roman province of that name; Asia Minor.
  - Aquila was a Jew, originally from Pontus on the southern shores of the Black Sea, but settled in Rome.
  - When Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome (49 AD), he and his wife Prisca (Luke, “Priscilla”) settled in Corinth as tentmakers.

- When Paul first came to that city he lodged and worked with them (Acts 18:1-3). They were courageous, risking their life for Paul.
- At Ephesus they also corrected the understanding of Apollos (Acts 18:26). [In 4 of the 6 places they are mentioned, Priscilla's name comes first.]
- Students of Paul became founding pastors in the western part of Asia Minor:
  - Epaphras: Colosse, Laodicea, & Hierapolis (Col 4:12-13).
  - Tychicus: Colosse & Ephesus (Acts 20:4; Col 4:7; Eph 6:21).
  - Philemon & Archippus: Colosse (Philemon 1-2).
  - Trophimus: Ephesus.

20] All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

- Paul frequently suggested a holy kiss (Rom 16:16; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; cf. 1 Pet 5:14).
- A warm greeting should dissolve cliquishness.

21] The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.

- Paul learned a lesson from the forgery he responded to in 2 Thess 3:17. See also Gal 6:11; Col 4:18.
- Last three verses: 1) A curse; 2) A petition for the Lord's return; 3) A benediction.

22] If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema. Maranatha.

- *Anathema*: A solemn curse.
- *Maranatha*; Aramaic, not Greek; origin in early days of the Church in Judea. *Man*, Lord; *an*, *ana*, "our"; *atha*, "to come." (Probably an imperative, similar to Rev 22:20.)
- Other Jewish vocabulary:
  - *Abba* Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6
  - *Hallelujah* Rev 19:1, 3, 4, 6
  - *Amen* 1 Cor 14:16; 16:24; 2 Cor 1:20
  - *Hosanna* Mt 21:9, 15; Mk 11:9-10; Jn 12:13

23] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

24] My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. <The first epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi by Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus and Timotheus.>

- Paul's last sentiment is love; his last word is Jesus.

\* \* \*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians

### Session 1: Chapters 1 & 2

#### Introduction

There seems to be very little "system" in this letter: "Second Corinthians" may possibly be an amalgam of several of Paul's letters to Corinth. Sometime after Paul first left Corinth, he wrote a letter to the Corinthian church, a letter which apparently perished (1 Cor 5:9; some believe it is preserved as 2 Cor 6:14 - 7:1). This letter had been misunderstood (1 Cor 5:9-10) and Paul mentions it to clear up a misconception. [Remember: The chapters were not divided up until the 13<sup>th</sup> century; the verses not until the 16<sup>th</sup>.]

## Occasion of “1 Corinthians”

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

## The “Painful Visit”

The situation worsened. Paul felt it necessary to leave his work in Ephesus and pay a hurried visit in an attempt to set things right. This visit is implied in passages in 2 Corinthians, which speak of Paul as being ready to pay a third visit to Corinth (2 Cor 12:14; 13:1); his second visit was past (13:2). His references to “coming again in sorrow” indicate that this visit had been an unpleasant one (2 Cor 2:1). It failed to clear up the situation and Paul went away profoundly disturbed.

## The “Severe Letter”

Paul determined to write another letter, obviously very severe in tone, and it cost him much to write (2 Cor 2:4; 7:8). Had it not been successful it might conceivably have meant a final rupture between Paul and this church he had founded. This letter seems to have been lost (many scholars believe part of it is preserved in 2 Cor 10-13).

This letter was apparently taken by Titus, who was to return via Macedonia and Troas. In anxiety over the possible effect of this drastic letter and impatient over Titus’ delay in returning, Paul traveled north from Ephesus to Macedonia. There, Titus met him and to Paul’s relief and joy reported that the Corinthians had punished the ringleader of the opposition and repented (2 Cor 2:5-17; 7:5-7, 13).

Paul then wrote a fourth letter (“2 Corinthians”), recounting his former anxiety and expressing his joy over the reform in Corinth. Almost certainly he visited the church soon afterwards.

## Four Letters & Three Visits

- **Four letters:**

- 1) When the church was founded

- 1) The “Previous Letter”

- 2) “1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians”

- 2) “The “Painful” visit

- 3) The “Severe Letter”

- 4) “2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians.”

- 3) A visit after 2 Corinthians had been sent.

## Style & Content (Summary)

- First Corinthians is unique among Paul’s letters because of the variety of its practical concerns.
- Second Corinthians is one of Paul’s most personal letters, containing a wealth of insights into the heart of Paul the pastor.

- The Corinthian correspondence draws us into a world much like our own. Paul, the anxious pastor, wrote to young believers who were concerned with the problems involved in living the Christian life in a highly pagan environment.
- Both letters reveal the degree to which Paul identified with his churches, suffering in their shortcomings and celebrating in their victories.
- First Corinthians focuses on a church which is being corrected and instructed; Second Corinthians includes the account of man being disciplined and matured.
- Nowhere else does Paul open his heart to his readers so completely as he does in this second letter, relating God's dealings with him in his inner life. By revealing the price he has paid, his ministry is vindicated and his authority recognized.
- News has reached Paul from Titus (2 Cor 7:7) of the mixed reception of his first letter. A majority had genuinely repented of sin, but a minority challenged his authority, suspected his motives, and questioned the validity of his ministry.
- The letter begins with reference to a painful experience of rejection at Corinth (Paul's "painful visit").
- Paul gave thanks that the Corinthians were now reconciled to him, Chapter 1; but he recalled his torment over their stubbornness, Chapter 2. Chapters 3 and 4 are theological reflections on ministry, and Chapters 5 and 6 are on reconciliation. [2 Cor 6:14 - 7:1 = "Previous Letter"?]
- Here, then, is an unusual accumulation of words expressing suffering of mind, heart, and body:
 

– "Affliction"	– "Persecutions"
– "Anguish"	– "Sorrow"
– "Beating"	– "Stripes"
– "Distresses"	– "Sufferings"
– "Fasting"	– "Tears"
– "Fightings"	– "Tumults"
– "Labors"	– "Weak"
– "Perils"	– "Weaknesses"
- In Chapter 7, Paul shares his joy at the church's repentance. Paul changes perspective in Chapters 8 and 9 by turning to the matter of the collection for the church in Jerusalem.
- The tone of 2 Corinthians changes in Chapters 10-13. These are thought by some to be portions of the "Severe Letter." These chapters are laced with warnings to the Corinthians and Paul's opponents, defenses of his apostleship, and a rehearsal of Paul's sufferings as an apostle.
- If Chapters 1-9 reveal Paul's joy and relief, Chapters 10-13 let us see the wounds, both physical and emotional, which he bore as an apostle.
- The letter closes with the only trinitarian benediction in the Bible (2 Cor 13:14).

## 2 Corinthians 1

- 1] Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:
  - "...in all Achaia": Achaia was the name of the district; Corinth was its chief city.
  - "An apostle...": No greater authority than that!
- 2] Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - "Grace be to you and peace from God": Not the grace that saves: the grace that sustains (Heb 4:16).
  - Peace *from* God (not peace *with* God; that's already theirs, Rom 5:1): Isa 26:3.

## Thanksgiving (1:3-7)

- Paul establishes the values of experience, then the experience itself.
  - If they grasp the values, they will be surprised at the relevance of the experience (us too).
- 3] Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;
- “...the God of all comfort”: Comfort (v 18X; n 11X) “to come alongside to help”; (L. *com* with strength; *fortis*, with strength); Gr. *paraklesis*, called alongside to help. Jesus: will send Another to “disannul your orphanage”!)
  - Praise because He is God: Eph 1:3, for what He did in the *past*; 1 Pet 1:3 for *future* blessings; Here: the *present* accomplishments.
  - Because He’s the Father (John 17:26; Rom 1:7; Eph 1:6) of mercies (vs. grace) (Ps 23:6), which are manifold (Neh 9:19); tender (Ps 25:6); and inexhaustible (Ps 5:7; 51:1; 69:13, 16; 106:7,45; Lam 3:22, 32).
- 4] Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.
- “Who comforteth us in all our tribulation”: 10 Greek words for suffering; five of them in this letter. Most frequent, *thlipsis*, “narrow, confined, under pressure,” translated “affliction” (2:4; 4:17), “tribulation” (1:4) and “trouble” (1:4, 8).
  - *Your* life is a ministry. You don’t have to look far to find broken hearts, broken lives, and broken homes. Is your life a sacrifice? a fulfillment? or both! (Mat 20:25-28).
  - Ministry = “the supernatural life of God at work in my/your life in such a way as to bring growth and spiritual fruit in the lives of others.” (It must have its source beyond our fallen nature.)
- 5] For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.
- In vv. 5, 6: *Pathema*, “suffering,” also used of the sufferings of our Savior (1 Pet 1:11; 5:1). Christ is still suffering in the world through His Body!
  - ...never by accident! God is in control. (Do we trust Him?) Suffering occurs sometimes because of our own sin and rebellion (Jonah); sometimes to keep us from sinning (Paul, 2 Cor 12:7). It should perfect our character (Rom 5:1-5), helping us to share the character of God (Heb 12:1-11).
  - Also, to help us minister to others; to prepare us for something He was yet to do. A training program for all of us.
  - God can do more with a broken man than with one who seems strong in his own strength and power. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:3).
  - He has to work *in* us before He can work *through* us. It is easier to grow in knowledge than to grow in grace (2 Pet 3:18).
  - “Don’t let the tyranny of self-sufficiency rob you of the miraculous!” His grace is invested into our lives as godly character (Rom 5:1-5); it is intended to yield dividends.

## Bankruptcy Model

- It’s a procedure to avoid total destruction; all assets must be declared insufficient;
- Must put oneself under complete subjection to the court.
- Spiritual and emotional anguish is greater than the physical (financial)!

- “Don’t let the lessons be wasted.”
    - ...growth to maturity... self-pity leads to isolation instead of involvement; we need bridges, not walls.
    - Remember what God does for you, so that He can work *through you*.
- 6] And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.
- Preparation for the ministry cannot be gained from a degree or diploma—or learned in a college, seminary, etc. Faith and obedience, not “knowledge” alone.
  - Our sorrows, indeed, become our credentials.
- 7] And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.
- “...as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation”: Be a channel, not a cistern.
  - “Thorn in the flesh”...no matter what your “thorn” may be, His Grace is sufficient...
- 8] For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:
- “We were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life”: Paul did not deny his emotions (2 Cor 7:5) Even his “Sentence of Death...”
  - Under pressure beyond our ability to endure (but not His!). Even despaired of life...discouragement is no respecter of persons. But death is not the end.
- 9] But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:
- “But we had the sentence of death in ourselves...”: God can’t begin until we end...what really motivates us? (Jer 17:9)
- 10] Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;
- “...we trust that he will yet deliver us”: God delivers.
  - The church’s most dangerous jeopardy is when it is enjoying the patronage of the world.
  - When the wintry blasts of trouble and persecution break out, then the church wraps itself all the more tightly in its garment of salvation.
- 11] Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.
- God is glorified through our trials. Paul is never ashamed to ask for prayer (in seven of his letters): Rom 15:30-32; Eph 6:18-19; Phil 1:19; Col 4:3; 1 Thess 5:25; 2 Thess 3:1; Phil 2:2.
  - K-House is built upon prayer. Yours.
- 12] For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

- 13] For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end;
- 14] As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.
- 15] And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit;
- 16] And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.
- 17] When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?
- 18] But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.
- “When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness?”: Detractors implied he was insincere (1 Cor 16).
  - False accusations are painfully destructive.
  - “But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay”: With no frivolous promises with fickle intentions.
- 19] For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.
- 20] For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.
- “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” [His “Yea”; our “Amen”!]

### **Plot of the Bible (Cf. *A Walk Thru the Bible* briefing pack)**

- God made mankind in His own image to love Him and to enjoy Him. Mankind chose to rebel and disobey God and was driven from the garden. This loss included both alienation from God and physical death. There in the garden the Creator promised that He would redeem them and restore paradise and that the redemption would come from the Seed of the Woman.
  - The focus of mankind’s hope through the centuries has rested on that promise. The incarnation stands as the pivotal event of history. Christ Himself is the “yes” to all of God’s promises. (Truth = when the Word and the Deed become one.)
  - The climax was at Easter, not Christmas! The resurrection of Christ from the tomb was the exclamation point of God’s revelation!
  - Have you said “Amen” — in the depths of your heart and soul?
- 21] Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;
- “...he which stablisheth us with you in Christ”: sanctification, setting apart (1 Cor 6:11).
  - Regeneration: “born again” (1 Pet 1:23). John 3:5: “born of the water and the Spirit...”
  - Whatever it means in John 3, it is the same in John 4, and it isn’t baptism: we keep our lips closed when we are immersed. Water of Life (Rev 22:17).
  - Anointed. OT anointed with oil: Prophets, Priests, and Kings. [King, Father, Shepherd = all clearly assume God’s responsibility to lead His people and to assure their security...]
- 22] Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.
- “Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts”: When we give Him our “Amen,” God sends His Holy Spirit to seal His ownership and to complete what He has begun (Phil 1:6).

- Sealing: Evidence of Divine Ownership! Can He lose that which is His? (Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13; 4:30; Phil 1:6). “Abide with you forever” (John 14:16).
- “Amen”: Rom 8:28. Three most important words, “And we know...”

23] Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

24] Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

- “Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy; for by faith ye stand”:
- Two kinds in this audience: Those that have no roots, swept by every wind; unstable. Christians of convenience. No real “Amen” here.
- Those that are rooted soundly, whose branches are yielding fruit. “I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved” (Ps 16:8).

## 2 Corinthians 2

1] But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.

- Having shown the reason why he came not to them, he requires them:
  - to forgive and comfort that excommunicated person (v.6),
  - even as himself also upon his true repentance had forgiven him (v.10),
  - declaring withal why he departed from Troas to Macedonia (v.12),
  - and the happy success which God gave to his preaching in all places (v.14).

2] For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

- He didn’t want to come in sorrow, with tears in his eyes...

3] And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

- He preferred to come in joy, having word from them that they had corrected those things he had written them about.

4] For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

- “For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you...”: [The severe letter...?]
- If Paul grieved over them, how much more Christ?! (Zech 13:6).

5] But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

6] Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

- “Sufficient to such a man [is] this punishment, which [was inflicted] of many”: Now they should forgive him.

7] So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

- Not to forgive the repentant is as wrong as it is to tolerate the sin in the first place. What is heaven but a home for repentant sinners.
- Forgiveness is the medicine that helps to heal broken hearts (Gal 6:1).

- 8] Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.
- 9] For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.
- 10] To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;
- 11] Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.
- Satan accuses believers to believe that their case is hopeless.
  - What are his devices? Deceit, deception, deviation from truth, unforgiveness, self-vindication, self focus of any kind, prejudice, emotions, confusion...
  - Balance is difficult: Satan pushes us one way or the other...Remember, we are all capable of any sin—yes, it's in our genes!
- 12] Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,
- When I came to Troas to [preach] Christ's gospel...": He had been very near to them, just across the water. He wasn't fickle; he was being *faithful* to the opportunity which God had provided him.
- 13] I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.
- Anxious, Paul went over to Philippi in Macedonia to receive Titus' report.
- 14] Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

## The Roman Triumph, A Model

- If the commander-in-chief won a complete victory on foreign soil, killed at least 5,000 enemy soldiers, gained new territory for the Emperor (not just a disaster repelled, or a civil war), then he was entitled to a Roman Triumph.
- A public holiday was declared to honor the returning (victorious) general. All the people thronged—all day and most of the night—to view the triumph. Josephus writes about the procession as follows:
- First came the state officials and the senate, then the trumpeters. Then were carried the spoils taken from the conquered land (i.e., when Titus conquered Jerusalem, the menorah, the golden table of shewbread, and the golden trumpets were carried through the streets of Rome).
- Then came a long line of captive princes, leaders in chains; then the lictors bearing their rods, followed by the musicians with their lyres; then priests swinging their censers with the sweet smelling incense burning in them.
- Then the general, following in a golden chariot drawn by four horses; he was clad in a purple tunic embroidered with golden palm leaves, and over it a purple toga marked with golden stars. In his hand he held an ivory sceptre with the Roman eagle at its top, and over his head a slave held the crown of Jupiter. After him rode his family, then the army with full decorations; then another long line of captives, with more Roman priests bearing censers. The procession would follow a special route through the city and would end at the Circus Maximus.
- There were two groups of captives: Those in front were to be set at liberty, and the fragrant incense is the odor of life to them. Those behind are condemned to die, and are going to the arena; they are to be thrown to the beasts or put to death in some other manner. The fragrant incense that arises from their censers was the savor of death.

- 15] For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:
- 16] To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?
- Two classes (1 Cor 1:18; Lk 11:14-22; Col 2:15; Eph 4:8). Christ has the victory! Every knee must bow to him, every tongue shall confess!
  - Is there any greater joy than to have people discover the Messiah?
- 17] For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.
- “Corrupt”: a Greek word used for small trading; suggests the thought of what we call “grifting” or “huckstering.”

## Next Session

- Read 2 Corinthians chapters 3 and 4.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians Session 2: Chapters 3 & 4

- First Corinthians focuses on a church which is being corrected and instructed; Second Corinthians includes the account of man being disciplined and matured.
- Nowhere else does Paul open his heart to his readers so completely as he does in this second letter relating God’s dealings with him in his inner life. By revealing the price he has paid, his ministry is vindicated and his authority recognized.
- In Chapter 1 Paul gave thanks that the Corinthians were now reconciled to him; but he recalled his torment over their stubbornness in Chapter 2.
- Chapters 3 and 4 are theological reflections on ministry, and Chapters 5 and 6 are on reconciliation.

## 2 Corinthians 3

- 1] Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?
- [Romans 16 is an example of a letter of commendation written to introduce Phoebe, a member of the church at Cenchrea, to the church at Rome.]
  - One of the greatest trials that Paul had to meet was the opposition of false brethren; those who professed to be Christians but who were in reality Jewish legalists who had never apprehended the freedom and the liberty of the gospel.

## What Is a “Legalist”?

- One who believes righteousness can be obtained through his own effort.
  - Genesis 3: Aprons of fig leaves replaced by skins of animals. God taught them that by the shedding of innocent blood they would be covered.
  - Genesis 4: Cain and Abel. Works vs. faith.

- Pharisees... Nicodemus example (John 3): The New Covenant was not invented by Paul: Nicodemus was chided for not knowing it (Jer 31:27-34; Ezek 11:14-21).

2] Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

- Paul had been with them for a year and a half, and his life had been an “open book.”
- They themselves constituted his letter of recommendation.
- ...We are Christ’s “letter.”

## The Requirements of a Letter

- **Legibility:** one should be able to read it.
  - **Clarity:** clear, definite statements; understandable.
  - **Authenticity:** it should reveal the personality of the one who writes it.
  - How do people read you?
  - Has *grace* changed *your* life?
- 3] Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.
- Are you “an epistle of Christ”?
- 4] And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:
- Trust—the proof of the pudding is in the eating (cf. Ps 34:8).
- 5] Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;
- “... our sufficiency [is] of God”: Renunciation of all self-confidence (Rom 8:28).
  - Paul: “For when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Cor 12:10).
  - The Christian life is not the natural life lived on a higher plane; it is a divine life manifested in the energy of the Holy Spirit.
  - You can’t live a Christian life until you have a Christian life to live [Nicodemus himself had to be “born again...”]
  - John 1:11-14: not of blood... of the spirit (John 3:6); not of the will of man; not by his own will.
  - You can’t do it; He must! (1 Pet 1:23,25; Phil 2:12-16).
- 6] Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.
- “New” (not *neos*, new in point of time and that alone) but *kainos*, new in quality.

## Contrasts Between the Old and New Covenants

- The Old Covenant based on a written document (Ex 24:1-8).
  - The Mosaic Law never gave life. Moses himself could not be saved by the law!
  - Why? He himself was a murderer!
- Did the representatives of Judaism go out into all the world to proclaim the glories of the Old Covenant? Not at all (cf. Rom 3:19).

## Parenthesis: 2 Corinthians 3:7-16; cf. 5, 6-7

- Contrast of the fading glory of the old covenant with the unchanging, unending glory of the new covenant of grace.
- 7] But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:
- That glory was to be done away.
- 8] How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?
- 9] For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.
- Note the contrast of the two ministries: of death and of the spirit.
  - “The ministration of righteousness” is the righteousness which we have in Christ Jesus.
- 10] For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.
- 11] For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.
- “That which is done away”: The Law.
  - The glorious gospel of the blessed (happy) God. Why? Because He Himself has found a way whereby His love can go out to guilty sinners and make them fit for His presence.
  - God is a lover of mankind.
    - He delighteth in mercy (Micah 7:18).
    - He hath “no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his wicked way and live” (Ezek 33:11).
- 12] Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:
- 13] And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:
- This reference is to the *second* giving of the Law.
  - When Moses came down from the Mount the 1<sup>st</sup> time, they had already broken the First commandment (Ex 20:3-5).
  - Moses broke the two tablets, came down empty handed, and became their intercessor.
  - He went up the mount a second time for forty days, and this time God gave the law tempered with mercy, providing a system of sacrifices whereby the penitent could draw nigh to God with that which typified His Blessed Son. The Law tempered by grace.
  - Moses’ face was beaming from his association with God (Ex 34:30, 33).
  - Moses put a veil over his face until he was done speaking with them, and when he went before the Lord again he took it off. Paul tells us why he did that.
  - He knew that the glory was fading and passing, and he did not want the people to see the glory disappear. The glory of that covenant could not last because too much depended upon sinful men.
  - “Veils:” Prejudice, wishful thinking, disobedience, an unteachable spirit.
- 14] But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

- Blindness definitive (and temporary!) Luke 19:42 to Romans 11:25.
- [Gentiles blinded too; cf. Chapter 4.]

15] But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.

- Acts 10:43.
- Yet, David raised questions; Job was bewildered; and Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and wept when he faced death.
- We have greater assurance than they had.

16] Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.

- “It” = their heart. Man’s trouble is heart trouble.

17] Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

- “Now the Lord is that Spirit”: Jesus is the Spirit of the OT.

## Quo Vadis, America?

- Is there liberty in America?
- It is because of the Lord.
- Will it continue during the continuing denial and rejection of Him?

18] But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the *(unveiled face of the)* Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, [even] as by the Spirit of the Lord.”
- Changed = “*transfigured*” in the gospels.

## We Become Like the Gods We Worship

- On a trip to Egypt, I was amazed at the preoccupation with death (Cairo Museum, etc.). Their god was the scarab = the dung beetle. Touring the absolutely filthy countryside... it was more than poverty ...this wasn’t a “poor” nation: they once ruled the world! But now they are now living on a dung hill! Cf. Psalm 115:8 and 135:18.
- Is the world hard? cruel? unforgiving?
  - If you worship the world, you will become cruel, hard, unforgiving...
- The most insulting “god” of all: Randomness. Thus, emptiness...

## 2 Corinthians 4

- Paul may well have been the greatest intellect in the history of the Western world, and who, perhaps, has influenced our civilization more than any other.
- [What better way to explore the inner life of another person than to read his or her mail!]
  - Each of us has a ministry; our life is no longer a self-seeking, aimless, purposeless existence.
  - But a ministry received is a ministry to be communicated...

1] Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

- “...we faint not”: “We do not lose heart!”
  - Paul, instead of complaining about what he *didn't* have, rejoiced in what he *did* have. You and I can do the same thing! The way you look at your ministry helps to determine how you will fulfill it.
  - “This kind of” ministry brings men life, salvation, and righteousness; one that transforms lives (1 Tim 1:12-17).
  - The church is the only organization in the world which exists entirely for the sake of those who are not members of it!
  - Would God have entrusted this ministry to him so that he might fail?
  - With divine calling came the divine enabling... God finishes what He begins.
    - [Great tasks can inspire great achievements: Handel wrote *The Messiah* in 22 days!]
- 2] But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.
- Paul's attitude kept him from being a deceiver. False teachers handle God's Word in deceptive ways.
  - Satan, in his “temptations” of Christ, quoted Scripture deceitfully (Mt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13).
  - This should remind us that in watching for Satan's ministers, don't overlook the pulpits!
- 3] But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:
- “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost”: Revealed only by the Spirit of God; not by “apologetics.”
  - Are the unsaved *able* to receive without the intervention of the Holy Spirit? (no).
- 4] In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.
- The “god of this age” and the “prince of this world” are not casual titles: they are accurate (3X: Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).
  - Lord's Prayer: “Deliver us from the Evil One”; cf. Mt 6:13.
  - This is not a theological concept, but a fact of experience. Satan is real. He is incredibly powerful. He has targeted you. The world is *his* turf; it is hostile to your interests. His principal weapon is deceit and deception.
  - Even Persian Zoroastrianism saw the whole universe as a battleground between the god of the light and the god of the dark, between Ormuzd and Ahriman.
  - Characteristic examples: Evolution (biogenesis); humanism; deification of man—despite his visible decline morally, physically, and mentally!
  - [Species evolve? Why then are we so concerned by the extinction of species? Why isn't there more “evolving”?]
  - Why are we so concerned about subtle changes in the ozone layer, etc.? If there is such a delicate balance in nature, who originally balanced it? Balance implies design; design implies a designer; a designer implies an ultimate purpose...and responsibility to the designer! [See *The E.T. Scenario*, *Beyond Time and Space*, and *Beyond Coincidence* briefing packs.]
  - Isn't it fascinating what people adopt after rejecting the truth?! Watch the bizarre views of the pantheism of the “New Age,” or the paranormal assumptions which replace the Biblical truth, etc.
    - The Bible has been designed to anticipate hostile jamming: The Message is spread on the available bandwidth.

- Methods of “blinding”: religious pride, legalism, intellectual pride. The presumption that the mind of man is the highest intelligence in the universe leads to the belief that one’s own rationality is the final appeal to truth and authority. It follows that anything outside the limited sphere of man’s rationality is unreal and impossible.

*If the mind of man is the highest intelligence in the universe, then our minds have come into being without a Creator, a result of cause and effect in the processes of nature. It follows then that the mind is only a chemical process having evolved out of inorganic materials. If this be true, then I have no reason to trust my thoughts as being valid. There is no reason to believe that the chemical process going on in my mind and causing these thoughts has any meaning or correlation to reality (if there is such a thing). When I think a profound thought it may only be a chemical reaction from having too much pepperoni on the pizza.*

[Source: C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (p.14-15, MacMillan, NY, 1962.)]

- *And what reason is there to believe that the thought that there is no God has validity either?*
- Many cannot see God’s glory in Christ because their rational presuppositions rule it out.
  - [Pre-trib, pre-millennialism derives from a literal presupposition towards the Word of God; vs allegorization, skepticism, etc.]
- Some people talk endlessly about the search for truth, yet have no interest in talking with anyone who claims to have found it! Searching for truth appeals to one’s sense of pride, but finding the truth demands submitting to it.
- How do we communicate with people who are blinded by pride? Humbly. [Technology operates in a world of largely unanswered questions.]

5] For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.

- “For we preach not ourselves...”: There is no room for “promoters” here.

6] For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- Initially formless and empty, hopeless (from a precedent judgment?) until the light of the Spirit causes a “new creation” (2 Cor 5:17). “He who has seen me has seen the Father” (Jn 14:9).
- His Word, and initiative, “Let there be light,” makes everything new. “His Face” (2 Chr 7:14 “...seek His face...”?)
- Why do so many Christians behave like spoiled kindergarten kids? Because they have not seen His face! [See *Genesis and the Big Bang* briefing pack.]

## Why Was His Face So Difficult to Recognize?

- Mary in the garden...John 20:11-18
- On the Emmaus Road...Luke 24:13-32
- In the Upper Room...Luke 24:36-43
- On the Galilean seashore in the morning... John 21:12
- Fulfillment...Isa 50:6; Rev 5:6. (The only man-made thing in heaven will be His scars.)
- Paul received a unique ministry—and so have you. Unique, because nobody else is capable of doing it.
- There is a life to be revealed—not a system of theology; a character which despises things that the world holds very close. “He will guide you to all truth.”
- Do you have the leisureliness (quietness of heart, calm readiness) of Christ; the authority to say “no” to the world and “Amen” to the Lord?

- 7] But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
- Earthen vessels = mud pots. We must focus on the treasure not the vessel. It is the treasure *within* the vessel that gives it its value. Example: Fine china, elegant place settings, but without nourishing food for the hungry, desperate to be fed...Isa 42:8: God will not give His glory to another.
  - God has made us the way we are so that we can do the work He wants us to do (Acts 9:15).
  - A vessel must be clean, empty and available for service (2 Tim 2:21).
  - The real characteristic of man is not his power but his weakness. Our very genetic structure (despite its defects inherited from Adam) is in the hands of God (Ps 139:13-16)
  - The following is one of three sections in 2 Corinthians listing Paul's sufferings (also 2 Cor 6:1-10 and 2 Cor 11:16 - 12:10):
- 8] We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;
- 9] Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;
- 10] Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.
- At our wit's end but never at our hope's end. "No pain, no gain?" "No Cross, no crown!" The storm is the measure of the sailor.
- 11] For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.
- 12] So then death worketh in us, but life in you.
- Paul knew his lifestyle was dangerous, by choice. [Is your lifestyle as dangerous?]
- 13] We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;
- Believing is seeing (not the other way around!)
  - Of what was Paul so confident? Four basics (remember these, especially when gripped with fear and doubt):
    - 1) Of ultimate victory;
    - 2) That God *will* be glorified;
    - 3) That his trials were working for him, not against him;
    - 4) That the invisible world was real.

## **The Secret of Endurance**

### **1) Of ultimate victory:**

- 14] Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.
- 1 Corinthians 15 emphasizes this point and is considered by some to be the most important chapter in the Bible!
  - Five promises to the believer:
    - 1) We shall be with Christ;
    - 2) We shall be like Him;

- 3) We shall have God's glory;
- 4) We shall be fulfilled;
- 5) We shall reign with Christ.

— C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

- A.W. Tozer: “On the whole our problem is not that we desire too much but rather are satisfied with too little.”

2) That God will be glorified:

15] For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

- Romans 8:28 (is not for everybody!)

**3) That his trials were working for him, not against him:**

16] For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

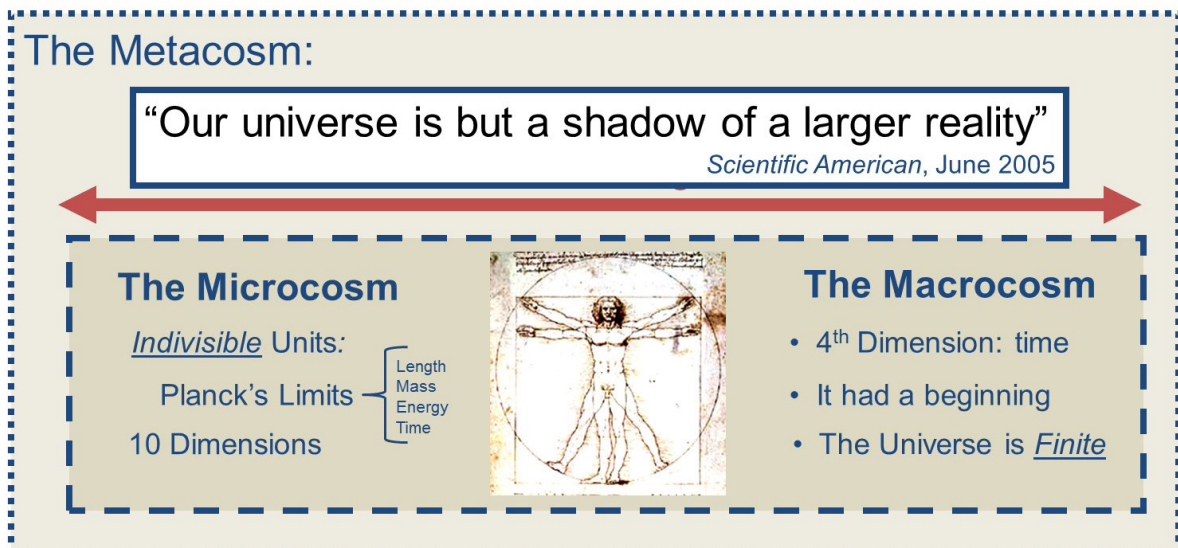
17] For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

- His trials were actually working for him (Rom 8:18).
- Note contrasts: affliction, glory; light affliction, weight of glory; light affliction but for a moment, weight of glory that is eternal.
- Our troubles are:
  - 1) Light (Rom 8:18);
  - 2) Momentary;
  - 3) Are God's tools to shape us for an eternal glory.

**4) That the invisible world was real:**

18] While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

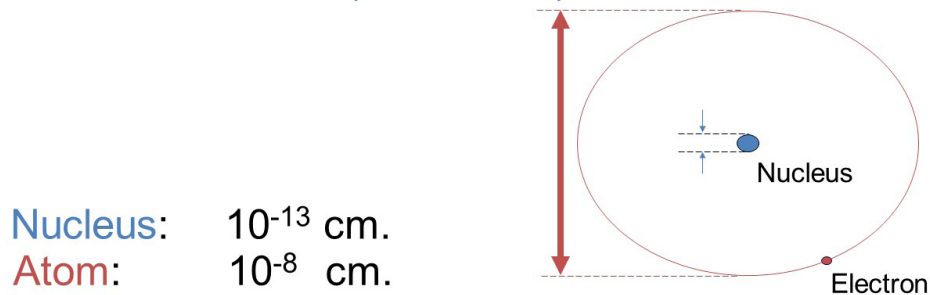
## The Boundaries of “Reality”



- “Look” is not a casual glance but an intense examination, a constant scrutiny, a steady gaze after clear focus... gripped by the reality...
- DaVinci’s “Vitruvian Man” representing our “Anthropic Reach”...
- Also: the “constants” of physics are changing! Therefore, “our universe is but a shadow of a larger reality” (*Scientific American*, June 2005).
- The nucleus is 100,000 times smaller than atom: a pinhead vs. 100 meters: a pinhead in a football field!
- Golf ball vs. 55 football fields: over a mile (2 in. vs. 5500 yards).
- Volumetrically: Mostly empty space.

## Model of the Atom

(Not to scale!)



Nucleus:  $10^{-13}$  cm.

Atom:  $10^{-8}$  cm.

Linear Ratio:  $10^{-8} / 10^{-13} = 10^5$

Volumetric Ratio:  $(10^5)^3 = 10^{15}$

~ One second / 30 million years!

## Next Session

- Read the entire Epistle. Study Chapters 5 & 6.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians Session 3: Chapters 5 & 6

### 2 Corinthians 5

- 1] For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.
  - “For we know”: How do we know? (John 14:19). We are software, residing in temporary “hardware.”
  - Good news! We’re just “renting” (cf. John 14:2).
  - We are heading for an upgrade!
  - Dinosaur DNA in Jurassic Park: Creature was reborn from his codes. Immortality is an information sciences issue, not a biological one.
  - Note “if”: It is possible that Paul felt he may never die... “imminent” return...

2] For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

- οἰκητήριον *oiketerion*: “house”; a dwelling place, habitation; of the body as a dwelling place for the spirit.
- Only twice in the Bible:
  - 1) Alluding to the heavenly body with which the believer longs to be “clothed” (2 Cor 5:2).
  - 2) From which the angels had “disrobed (Jude 6,7).

## Fallen Angels “Disrobed”

*And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.*

Jude 6,7

- “...habitation”: οἰκητήριον *oiketerion*.

## New Testament Confirmations

*For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to Tartarus, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood of the world upon the ungodly;*

2 Peter 2:4,5

## Tartarus

- Tartarus: only use in the NT (2 Pet 2:4).
- Greek term for dark abode of woe.
- Pit of darkness in the unseen world.
- Homer’s *Iliad*: “...as far below hades as the earth is below heaven...”

3] If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

- “...naked”: God is said to be clothed in light (Ps 104:2).
- Some scholars surmise that Adam and Eve were originally also clothed with light prior to their fall. That their “nakedness” was a reference to their loss of that original covering of light.
- God taught them that by the death of innocent animals they would be covered (Gen 3:21).
- [Adam and Eve, and their offspring, were probably taught far more than we realize: Abel’s offering was in accordance to God’s specification; Cain offered the fruits of a cursed ground. Noah knew the distinction between “clean” and “unclean,” although we associate those distinctions from Leviticus.]
- Currently, their “righteousness is as used menstrual cloths” (Isa 64:6).

## The Mysteries of Light (Tutorial Sidebar)

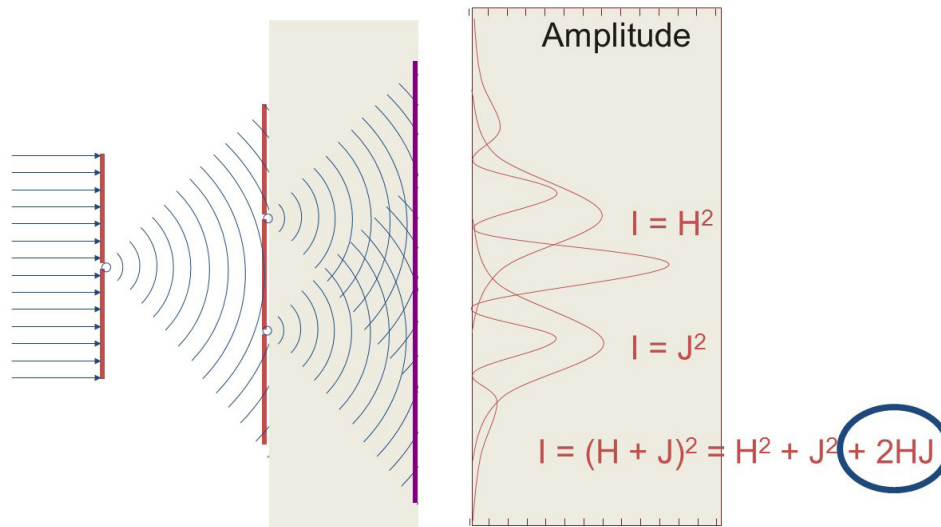
### The Central Paradox

- Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) viewed light as a stream of particles: “corpuscular theory.”
- Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695) developed the wave theory of light: refraction and reflection of light.
- Leonard Euler and Ben Franklin both ignored until two developments in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Wave Discoveries

- Thomas Young (1773-1829) conducted a two-slit experiment demonstrating wave-like interference of light (see graphic, below).
- Augustin Fresnel's (1788-1827) experiments were more complete: concluded wave-like actions.
- (Newton was knighted in 1705; died in 1727. Still too early to dethrone the idol.)

## Two-Slit Experiment



## 19<sup>th</sup> Century Reversal

- Leon Foucault (1819-1868) established that the speed of light was less in water than in air – no surprise for wave theory; makes no sense in a corpuscular theory of light.
- James Clerk Maxwell (1839-1879) discovered (among many things), that light is an electromagnetic wave.
- Heinrich Hertz (1857-1894) established electromagnetic transmission/reception. Hertz clarified and expanded the electromagnetic theory of light that had been put forth by the British physicist James Clerk Maxwell in 1873. Hertz proved that electricity can be transmitted in electromagnetic waves, which travel at the speed of light and which possess many other properties of light.

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century Reversal

- 1900: Max Planck's desperate misapplication of Boltzmann's equations *worked* (revealing non-continuity). Developing his quantum theory further, he discovered a universal constant of nature, which came to be known as Planck's constant:  
 $E = hf$  where  $h = 6.626 \times 10^{-34}$  joule-second in the meter-kilogram-second system.
- Albert Einstein publishes on Planck in 1904: leads to a revival of the corpuscular theory of light.
- Energy is not continuous: only in *quanta*.
- Opens the door to the paradoxical world of "Quantum Physics."

## The Wave/Particle Duality

- 1906: J. J. Thomson, Nobel Prize for proving electrons were particles.
- 1937: His son was awarded the Nobel Prize for proving electrons were waves.

- *The wave/particle duality remains as a central paradox in quantum physics.*
- There is now compelling evidence that quanta only manifest as particles when we are looking at them!
- (...now back to 2 Corinthians 5...)

3] If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

- Where can you find proper “clothing” acceptable for the eyes of God? (Cf. Rev 3:17; Isa 61:10).
- Wedding Garment (Mt 22:11-14).
- Bride adorned by the Bridegroom (Isa 61:10).

*I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath **clothed me** with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride **adorneth herself** with her jewels.*

Isaiah 61:10

- “...adorneth herself”? Rev 19:7,8 “his wife hath made herself ready”?

4] For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

- All will be resurrected (Acts 25:15; Jn 5:29).
- Resurrection *is not a blessing* for the unsaved.

5] Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

- “...ernest,” *arrabon*: a first installment, a down payment, a deposit, a pledge which obligates the contracting party to complete the transaction.
  - Sealing: 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13-14.
- Eleazer gave the bride gifts to assure the transaction (Gen 24:1-67).
  - [Why did Eleazer take *ten* camels with him?] Cf. Mt 25:1-13.

6] Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7] (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

- None of God’s people are in the grave: they are either on earth or in heaven (Eph 3:15).
- This is our confidence (2 Tim 1:12).
- Sight is wholly inadequate.

8] We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

- Indeed!
- Note: There is no intermediary state: There is no concept of purgatory in the Bible.

9] Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

- What we *believe* and how we *behave* must always go together.
- “Christianity knows no truth which is not the child of love and the parent of duty.”— Philip Brooks
- “...wherefore we labor” = “are ambitious.”
- Heaven was not simply a destination for Paul: it was a motivation. God has made us “accepted in the Beloved” (Eph 1:6).

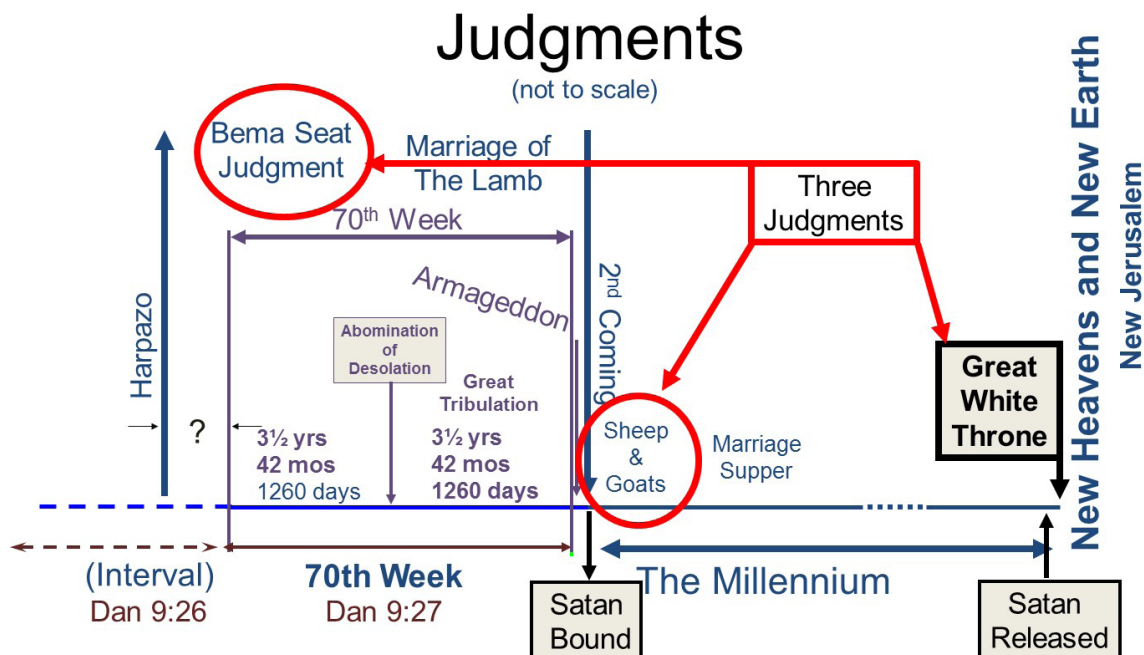
- “Accepted” = well-pleasing. How?
  - By presenting our bodies as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1);
  - By living for others (Rom 14:18);
  - By separating ourselves from evil (Eph 5:10);
  - Bringing our offerings to Him (Phil 4:18);
  - Children submitting to parents (Col 3:20);
  - Permitting Jesus to work out His perfect will in our lives (Heb 13:20-21);
  - By seeking—in every one of our decisions—to please Him!
- Why? There will be a *Final Exam*!

10] For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

- Is there any other verse in the New Testament that challenges *the believer* as this one does?
- [Unbelievers are dealt with at the Great White Throne in Revelation 20.]

## Judgments

- **Bema Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10; 1 Cor 3:11-15)**
  - Rewards: crowns, assignments
  - Kingdom Parables: Talents, Virgins, Uninvited...
  - Call of the Bride to the Marriage of Lamb
- **“Sheep & Goat” Judgment (Mt 25:31-46)**
  - On the earth: (3 separate parties involved)
  - Mortals are judged on the basis of “works”
- **Great White Throne (Rev 20:11-15)**
  - At the end of the Millennium, of the unsaved dead
  - Then: New Heavens, New Earth, New Jerusalem



## Bema Seat

- Tribunal seat, judicial bench, judgment seat, or throne. Here:
- Herod Agrippa I addressed the people of Tyre and Sidon (Acts 12:21);
- Jesus brought before Pilate (Jn 19:13; Mt 27:19);
- Paul accused before Proconsul Gallio (Acts 18:12,16,17);
  - (A relic still among the ruins in Corinth.)
- Paul brought before Festus at Caesarea (Acts 25:6,10,17).

## Procedure (Review)

*Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, [or] wood, hay, stubble;*

1 Corinthians 3:12

- Six commodities, in descending order of worth.
- Three are products of a *creative act*, not growth or development.
- Three are the result of *natural growth and development*.
- All building on the same foundation, but with vastly differing results.
- The first three are permanent. The second three will perish.
  - The largest load of hay or wood may be worth less than the smallest diamond...
- So you have been saved: *what have you done with it?*
- “We must all appear before the bema seat of Christ...” (2 Cor 5:10)

*Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

1 Corinthians 3:13-15

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

## Rewards Distinguished

- Salvation is invariably presented as a free gift (Jn 4:10; Rom 6:23; Eph 2:8,9).
- Rewards are earned by works/fruit-bearing (Mt 10:42; Lk 19:17; 1 Cor 9:24,25; 2 Tim 4:7,8; Rev 2:10; 22:12).
- Salvation is a present possession (Lk 7:50; Jn 3:36; 5:24; 6:47).
- Rewards are a future attainment given by Him at His Coming (Mt 16:27; 2 Tim 4:8; Rev 22:12).

## Five Crowns

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

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

- All will ultimately be revealed (Lk 12:2-3).
- Paul already warned us that our lives will be subjected to careful examination (1 Cor 3:14-15).
- Jesus continually exhorted His fellows to full discipleship by reminding them that one day they would face an accounting for their stewardship: (Mt 10:26-42; 16:27; 24:45-51; Mk 8:38; Lk 12:42-48).
- He challenged them to pursue rewards (Mt 5:11, 46; 6:1-6, 16-18) and treasure in heaven (Mt 6:19-21; 19:21; Mk 4:24-25; Lk 12:13-21; 16:1-13).
- Prominent NT theme (Jas 3:1; 1 Pet 4:17; 1 Jn 4:17).
  - Rewards (Rev 22:12; 1 Cor 3:8, 24. Lk 6:23, 35; Mt 6:1, 6; 10:41-42).
  - Rewards are a legitimate motive (Mt 6:1; 1 Cor 9:24; 1 Pet 1:17; Jas 1:12; 2 Jn 8; Heb 12:2).
- Both the character of our service (1 Cor 3:10-15) and the motivations *that impelled us* (1 Cor 4:1-6) will be revealed.
  - Jeremiah to Baruch: “Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not” (Jer 45:5).
- It will be a time of reckoning (Rom 14:8-13).
- Now is the time to prepare! How do we prepare for our “final exam”?
  - With a clear conscience (v.11) and ignoring the praise (v.12) and criticisms of men (v.13; cf. 1 Cor 11:31).

## Criteria

- 1) **Our Deeds:** 1 Cor 3:13; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 2:23
    - Must be according to Scripture (1 Cor 9:24; 2 Tim 2:5).
    - Must emerge from motivation to bring honor to God (Rev 2:23; 1 Cor 4:5; Mt 6:1-4; Heb 4:12-13; Col 3:22-25; 1 Cor 10:31).
  - 2) **Our Faithfulness:** Mt 24:45; 25:23; Lk 16:10; 1 Cor 4:2; Rev 2:10
  - 3) **Our Words:** Mt 12:36-37; Lk 12:2-3
    - Sin, if it is to be forgiven, must be forsaken.
    - Any other doctrine of forgiveness is a fallacy.
- We need: passion in our prayers, sacrifice in our service, and real dedication in our daily living!
  - The judgment seat of Christ is not a possibility, but a certainty! You and I have a definite appointment on the calendar of God. Are you ready?
  - Paul’s reaction to verse 10 is recorded in verse 11:
- 11] Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.
- “...the terror of the Lord”: “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb 10:31; cf. 1 Pet 4:17,18).
  - Yet, “The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lk 19:10).
  - It is interesting that Paul’s fear is not of hell; it is fear of *heaven*.
  - We will be accountable for what He has given us.
  - The issue is not whether we are saved, but what have we done with our salvation? (1 Pet 4:17-18).
- 12] For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.
- God uses imperfect instruments:
    - Peter denied his Lord.
    - John and James evidenced ambition to sit on His right and left hand.

- Paul insisted upon going up to Jerusalem against the voice of the Spirit.
  - Your effectiveness with others will derive from your own readiness for the Bema Seat.
- 13] For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.
- We care not for man's approval: only dependence upon the Holy Spirit.
    - To glorify Christ and to seek to save the lost.
    - That's what it's *all* about.
- 14] For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:
- "Love" is the third of three impelling motives:
    - 1) Realization that we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ;
    - 2) Recognition that all men are lost without Him;
    - 3) The love of Christ...
- 15] And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.
- This is all a stewardship issue: Who *owns* you? (A steward manages what someone else owns.)
  - Christ created you; and redeemed you. The *owner* sets the priorities. Remember the "gospel": vicarious death, burial, and resurrection (1 Cor 15:1-4).
  - Adam deliberately, knowingly (2 Tim 2:14) disobeyed God and fell—and the entire human race fell with him. All mankind is now under penalty of death.
  - However, "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:6).
  - Last Adam (1 Cor 15:45; cf. Rom 5:12-21).
- 16] Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.
- It is not the Christ of the manger, with whom we are linked, but the resurrected Christ! We interpret the manger by the throne!
- 17] Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
- Paul's definition of a Christian—a totally new person (Jn 5:24).
- 18] And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;
- Even more than justification. Justification is the sentence of the judge in favor of the prisoner: "not guilty" (Rom 5:1).
  - Reconciliation goes a step further: He receives us into His Forever Family.
- 19] To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.
- "...imputing": Imputation (banking term) "to put to one's account." (Cf. Philemon 17,18).
    - Paul paid the bill for Onesimus and Philemon to be reconciled.

- This permits justification: a not-guilty verdict can be now rendered since the demands of the law have been met (Rom 4:1-8; Ps 32:1-2).
- He came not to condemn, but to save (Jn 3:17. Cf. Jn 8:3-11; also Jer 17:13).

20] Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

- Ambassadors to a bankrupt world...enslaved to the Ruler of this world...

21] For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

- "Made sin"? What can that possibly mean? He had nothing to gain by stooping from the throne to the manger. His love took Him to the cross. Our sins put Him on the cross.
- The nails couldn't have held Him there. It was the strength of His love for us! [He was crucified on a cross of wood...yet He made the hill on which it stood.]
- Summary: it behooves us to examine our own lives regularly in light of the coming "final exam."
- *We can exempt issues from the Final by taking them to the Throne beforehand!*
- We no longer look at life the way we used to. It's time to stop "playing at" Christianity, and start taking it seriously...

## 2 Corinthians 6

- These two chapters bring a heartfelt conclusion to Paul's explanation of his ministry.

vv:

1, 2	a triumphant ministry,
3	a glorious ministry,
4	a sincere ministry,
5, 6	based on faith in God.

- In 2 Corinthians, you get the impression that the church did not really appreciate Paul and the work he had done among them.

1] We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

- Is it possible to receive God's grace in vain?!
- What have you done with your salvation? The law of God made heavy demands. *The grace of God makes even bigger demands.*
- Has God invited you into the arena? Are you watching for your risen Lord to invade your circumstances and invite you to be a fellow worker with Him?

2] (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

- Good news: it's not too late; it's also not too early...
- Would you be willing to postpone your salvation one year? Six months? Three weeks? Then, why not receive it NOW? God's time is always today. *Going to undertake something heroic for the Lord? Do it now.*
- Isaiah 49:8. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found" (Isa 55:6).

- 3] Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:
- One of the greatest obstacles to the progress of the Gospel is the bad example of people who profess to be Christians.
  - Paul was careful never to be a stumbling block (Rom 14).
  - Keep your pathways uncluttered.
- 4] But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,
- 5] In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;
- Here are ten conditions of testing:
    - 1) “Patience,” *hupomonee* (32X in NT) = endurance; an active response to circumstances (Jas 1:2-4).
    - 2) Afflictions = trials under pressure,
    - 3) Necessities = everyday hardships,
    - 4) Distresses = experiences that pushes us into corners where there seems to be no escape (Greek: “narrow place”). Our mistakes are our lessons; our sorrows are our credentials.
    - 5) In stripes,
    - 6) In imprisonments,
    - 7) In tumults,
    - 8) In labors,
    - 9) In watchings,
    - 10) In fastings.
  - No “health and wealth” Gospel here... *Now, nine characteristics of the man of God:*
- 6] By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,
- 7] By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,
- ..which leads to nine paradoxes (contrasts):
- 8] By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;
- 9] As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;
- 10] As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.
- He became poor that they might become rich (1 Cor 1:5; 2 Cor 8:9).
    - What a price Paul paid to be faithful in his ministry!
    - [Too many churches are prone to take for granted the sacrificial ministry of pastors, missionaries, and faithful church officers.]
  - “Count it all joy...” (James 1:2-4).
  - Mid-course Exam: Is your spiritual life advancing? What has your Bible study been like this week? Are you progressing toward consistency?
- 11] O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.
- 12] Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.
- “...enlarged” = growth.
  - “... straitened”: στενοχωρέω *stenochoreo* {sten-okh-o-reh'-o} to be in a narrow place; to straiten, compress, cramp, reduce to straits; to be sorely straitened in spirit .

*We have spoken frankly to you, Corinthians. Our hearts are wide open. We have not cut you off, but you have cut off your own feelings toward us. Do us a favor—I ask you as my children—and open wide your hearts.*

2 Corinthians 6:11-13 (ISV)

13] Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged.

## **“The Previous Letter”? (2 Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1)**

*Three Visits:*

**Four Letters:**

(1) *When church was founded;*

**1) The “Previous Letter”** 1 Cor 5:9-10  
= 2 Cor 6:14 - 7:1?

**2) 1st Corinthians**

(2) *The “painful” visit:* 2 Cor 12:14; 13:1,2

**3) The “Severe Letter”** 2 Cor 2:4; 7:8  
= 2 Cor 10-13?

**4) 2nd Corinthians**

(3) *A visit after 2 Corinthians had been sent*

14] Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

- **Unequal yoke** : “Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.” (Deut 22:10).  
– The ox was a clean animal to the Jews; the ass was not (Deut 14:1-8).
- The yoke was an instrument so that they would walk the same path. Thus, a yoke is any intimate relationship that necessitates the adopting of like values and goals.
- Complete your consecration: “Be ye separate.”
- To be joined to Christ and be wholly His, one must be cut off from whatever is incongruous with His character and holiness. Your spiritual state will be reflected in your lifestyle.

## **Why Separation?**

**Three Reasons:**

- 1) **The nature of the believer.** He should want to associate himself only with that which pleases the Lord.
- 2) **Because of His promise:** He had declared His intent to come and dwell among them.
- 3) **The command of Scripture:** Elements from Leviticus, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea (Isa 52:11, with echoes of Ezek 20:34, 41).
  - God’s command of separation is found throughout the Scriptures; Israel is warned not to mingle with pagan nations in the land of Canaan (Num 33:50-56), then was punished upon disobedience.
  - The church must separate itself from those who reject the doctrine given by Christ and the apostles (Rom 12:1-2; 16:17-20; Col 3:1-2; 1 Tim 6:10-11; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 4:3-6; 1 Jn 4:6; Rev 2:14-16, 20-24; 18:4ff).

15] And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16] And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

- 17] Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,
- 18] And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

- “...come out” = definite act required.
- “...touch not” = a warning against defilement (R-rated movies? et al.).
- “And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty”: God’s love is possessive (Jer 3:14; Isa 54:5; Hos 2:14, 20; 2 Cor 11:2,3).
- Friendship with the world is enmity with God (James 4:4).
- Think about exchanging a thousand petty loyalties for one life-uniting passion for God. Think about never being alone again.
- Unfortunately the *doctrine of separation* is widely misunderstood and abused by some. Some sincerely zealous Christians have turned separation into isolation until their fellowship has become so narrow they have difficulty even getting along with themselves. Self-made saints are often inflexible, critical and joyless individuals.
- In contrast to this extreme position, others have torn down the walls and will fellowship with anybody, regardless of what they believe or how they live.
- We are not called to monasticism, but *to be a witness*.
- You are narrowing your life by worldliness.
- Principles rather than rules:
  - Is it to the glory of God? (1 Cor 10:31)
  - Has it the appearance of evil? (2 Thess 5:22)
  - Is it a stumbling block to a weaker Christian?

## Next Session

- Read the entire Epistle. Study Chapters 7 - 9

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians

### Session 4: Chapters 7 – 9

## 2 Corinthians 7

- 1] Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
- How? Refusing to hide our failures and rebellion.
    - See the “Inner Court Ritual” below (see also *The Way of Agape* books and tapes; *The Architecture of Man* briefing pack).
    - Also, the Christian’s “Bar of Soap” (1 Jn 1:6-9).

## “The Inner Court Ritual”

- 1) **Recognize, acknowledge and experience** the negative emotions, desires or actions that have just occurred. Don’t vent these feelings and don’t stuff them. Learn to give them to God. Get alone with

Him and experience your emotions. Name how you are feeling. Ask Him to *expose the real root cause of your emotions* (the pride, the unbelief, the fears, the insecurities, etc.)

- 2) **Confess your responsibility** in holding on to these negative emotions. They have separated you from God and they are sin. **Choose to repent of them**—i.e., change your mind about holding on to them and choose to follow what God is telling you to do. Be sure to **unconditionally forgive others**. God will then also forgive your sins.
- 3) **Give over to God all that He has shown you**, not only the negative emotions, but their root causes. *God then will purge your sin and reconcile you to Himself.*
- 4) **Immerse in God's Word**. Be sure to replace the lies with the truth. God then will cleanse and heal your soul with “the washing of the water of the Word.” At this point, by faith—whether you feel like it or not—you have been emptied of self life and filled with God's Life: His Love, His Thoughts and His Power to perform. You have totally given yourself over to God and loved Him, so for this time you are a cleansed vessel. Others should be able to see Jesus in you and you can say, like Paul “*For me to live is Christ.*” (Phil 1:21).

## Our Spiritual Bankruptcy

- Chapter XI Court Analogy:
    - It requires admission that our obligations cannot be met;
    - The court stands between debtor and his creditors;
    - Ultimate discharge fully satisfies all demands of the future on the past.
    - *Tetelestai!*
- 2] Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.
  - 3] I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.
  - 4] Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.
  - 5] For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

## Review

- In Paul's first epistle to them he wrote a very sharp letter. He called them “babes” and “carnal”; he highlighted gross immorality among them, and commanded them to deal with it. And they did.
  - When Titus arrived in Philippi to join Paul, he brought the news that the church in Corinth had dealt with the situation and that the guilty man had repented of his gross immorality.
  - So Paul wrote in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of this 2<sup>nd</sup> epistle that now they should forgive him and comfort him so that he wouldn't be overwhelmed in sorrow. He is to be taken back into the fellowship.
  - After Paul had left Ephesus, he had waited in Troas, but Titus didn't come.
  - Then he began to rebuke himself: *Maybe I shouldn't have written such a sharp letter to them after all. Or maybe I should have gone to them directly; etc.*
  - Paul went on to Philippi, and there Titus met him and brought him word from Corinth.
- 6] Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;
  - 7] And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

- 8] For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.
- “Repent” is a missing word in our language. (Two Greek words for “repent”: here, regret; in v.10, “to be regretted.”)
  - [vs. *Metanoia*: A radical change of heart which turns a person (as in the Prodigal Son), and heads him back to the Father.]
- 9] Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.
- 10] For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.
- Wounds from a friend can be trusted (Prov 27:6a)
  - Blessed is the man whom God corrects, so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. For He wounds, but He also binds up; He injures, but His hands also heal” (Job 5:17-18).
- 11] For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.
- We may remain correct and proper in doctrine, yet lose a sense of passion for God and love of the brethren.
- 12] Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.
- Love is the basis. [The Letter to Ephesus (Rev 2:4-5) which lost its first love. See *Letters to Seven Churches* briefing pack.]
- 13] Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.
- 14] For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth.
- 15] And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.
- 16] I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.
- “I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all [things]”: What a contrast to 1 Corinthians!  
 – strife, envyings, divisions (1 Cor 3:3)  
 – some puffed up (1 Cor 4:18)  
 – doing wrong, defrauding brethren (1 Cor 6:8)
  - Now: “...confidence in you in all things!”
  - Revival through repentance. One of the most difficult things to do is to rebuild a shattered relationship...
  - We must face problems honestly; deal with problems Biblically and lovingly; and seek God’s involvement.

## 2 Corinthians 8: The Grace of Giving

- Paul was taking up a special “relief offering” for the poor Christians in Judea (Acts 11:27-30).
- Paul has *chutzpah*: Having been accused of being “in it for the money,” he was bold enough to press

for an offering for the saints in Jerusalem. “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Where did the Lord say this? Only in Acts 20:35.)

- Paul saw the Gentiles as “debtors” to the Jews (Rom 15:25-28).

1] Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

- Paul uses nine different words to refer to the offering; the word *grace* most often (7 times in these two chapters). Also, ministry, fellowship, debt (Rom 15:27), fruit (Rom 15:28).

2] How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

- Their difficulties could be traced directly to their Christian faith. They may have lost their jobs or been excluded from the trade guilds because they refused to have anything to do with idolatry.
- No computer can analyze this formula: Great affliction and deep poverty + *grace* = Abundant joy and abounding liberality! (cf. 2 Cor 6:10)
- Also, it reminds us of the generous offering taken at the building of the tabernacle (Ex 35:5-6 ) and the temple (1 Chr 29:6-9).
- We should be challenged to break out of our self-centered posture and trust God. Enthusiastically and Sacrificially.

3] For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

4] Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

- The Macedonian churches needed no prompting; they were not only willing to share, *they begged to be included!*

5] And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

- Renouncing all self- life—self-esteem, self-importance, self-righteousness, pride, arrogance.
- He who knows he does not own himself will never again say that he owns his money.

6] Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

- A common myopia. Salvation is more than simply dodging hell; it is that we should be filled with the fullness of God...

7] Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

- The Corinthians were so wrapped up in the *gifts* of the Spirit that they had neglected the *graces* of the Spirit (1 Cor 4 - 5).
- To claim to have *experienced* the grace of God in forgiveness, yet fail to *display* the grace of God in action is a total contradiction.

8] I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

- Generosity is essential to spiritual development. It is the nature of God to be generous. It is impossible to love God and ignore the needs of your neighbor (2 Cor 5:15).

9] For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

- Cf. Gal 1:4; 2:20. Jesus is always the ultimate example: in service, suffering, or sacrifice.
- How can we measure the gap between the throne and the cross?

He was born of a woman

so that *we* could be born of God;

He humbled Himself

so that *we* could be lifted up;

He became a servant

so that *we* could be made co-heirs;

He suffered rejection

so that *we* could become His friends;

He denied Himself

so that *we* could freely receive all things;

He gave Himself

so that He could bless us in every way.

10] And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.

- There can be a great difference between promise and performance.
- Promises were made but not kept, and an entire year had been wasted. The delay was due to the spiritual condition of the church: when a church is not spiritual it is not generous.
- [Also, the Judaizers probably siphoned off as much money as they could (2 Cor 11:7-12, 20; 12:14).]

11] Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.

12] For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

- Our motive for giving is God's spiritual blessing in our lives; our measure for giving is God's material blessing.
- "Let every one of you lay by him store, as God hath prospered him" (1 Cor 16:2).

13] For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:

- Direct statement against communism. The communal sharing of the early church was voluntary (Acts 2:44-47, 4:32-37).
- Socialism is a form of plunder or theft.

14] But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:

- Paul uses the miracle of the manna as an illustration of the principle (Ex 16:16-18).
- Paul recognizes that the (composite) church is one.

15] As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.

- We are not to squander, nor to hoard (Ex 16:22-26; Jas 5:1-6).
- “Give us this day our daily bread” (Mt 6:11).

## **Qualifications to Handle Money**

- Competent delegation is crucial.
  - Three were appointed (vv. 16, 18, 22). Titus and two others (traditionally, Luke and Apollos).
  - Titus had previously visited Corinth and was known to them. He later became the bishop of the church of Crete.

- |                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 1) A God-given desire to serve | v.16      |
| 2) A burden for lost souls     | v.18      |
| 3) A desire to honor God       | v.19      |
| 4) A reputation for honesty    | vv.21, 22 |
| 5) A cooperative spirit        | vv.23, 24 |

### **1) A God-given Desire to Serve**

16] But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17] For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

- Paul didn’t “draft” him.

### **2) A Burden for Lost Souls**

18] And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches;

- This keeps the priorities straight.

### **3) A Desire to Honor God**

19] And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:

- There is no such thing as “secular and sacred” or “business and ministry.” The most spiritual thing a ministry can do is to use its money wisely for the Lord’s ministry.

### **4) A Reputation for Honesty**

20] Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

21] Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

- Perception as well as fact...

22] And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.

- Diligence is always a key requirement.

## 5) A Cooperative Spirit

23] Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.

- ...a good team member, an honor to Christ.

24] Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

- The adventure of grace giving.

## 2 Corinthians 9

- Heaven's Law of Supply and Demand:
- Why do we need to give even though God does not need our gifts? Five encouragements:
  - 1) Your giving will provoke others vv.2-5
  - 2) Your giving will bless you vv.6-11
  - 3) Your giving will meet needs v.12
  - 4) Your giving will glorify God v.13
  - 5) Your giving will unite God's people v.14

1] For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2] For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

- Paul had used the promises of the Corinthians to challenge the Macedonians; now he uses the performance of the Macedonians to challenge the Corinthians! (Heb 10:24).
- Generosity is contagious.

3] Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4] Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

- It should be planned. Paul had written before on procedures (1 Cor 16:1-4).

5] Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6] But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

- Cf. Luke 6:38; Prov 11:24; Rom 8:32; Gal 6:8. You can ignore God's laws but you cannot escape them.
- Your gift is an *investment* in the kingdom.
- Incidentally, you can "take it with you."
  - *By sending it on ahead* (cf. Luke 16).

## Two Seas

- There are two seas, each fed by the same source.
    - One is characterized by life.
    - The other one: nothing but barrenness and death.
  - What is the difference between the two? *There is no difference in the source of supply, the same river supplies both.*
    - In the one, the Galilee, what it receives it passes on. It takes in; it gives out. All around it is life, fruit, abundance.
    - The other jealously hoards its resources and refuses to let out a single drop. It keeps everything it takes in. Its name is the Dead Sea.
- 7] Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
- Cheerful = Greek: *hilaros*, hilarious!
- 8] And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:
- 9] (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.
- “... all sufficiency”: *All* is not an exaggeration.
  - (“As it is written”: Isaiah 55:10-11)
  - This letter opened with abundant suffering matched by:
    - abundant comfort (2 Cor 1:5);
    - abundant grace (2 Cor 4:15);
    - abundant joy (2 Cor 8:2);
    - and liberty allows us to abound in every good work (Luke 6:38).
- 10] Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)
- 11] Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.
- You cannot outgive God.
  - We are trusting in His sufficiency. God is able.
  - We are enriched, and we enrich others. He enriches us so that we may give even more bountifully.
- 12] For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;
- Priestly service—spiritual “sacrifices” (if given in the name of Jesus: 1 Pet 2:5; Heb 13:15-16; Phil 4:10-20).
  - Grace never looks for a reason; it only looks for an opportunity.
- 13] Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;
- 14] And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.
- 15] Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

- Without Him we can't. Without us, He won't.

## Stewardship

- Learn the *supernatural* elements of stewardship. This is the solution to *all* financial problems.
- (Man's) Purposes for Money:
  - 1) provide for security
  - 2) establish independence
  - 3) create power and influence

	<u><b>Man's Way</b></u>	<u><b>God's Way</b></u>
<b>Focus:</b>	Power and position	Submission
<b>Emphasis:</b>	Rights and freedom	Personal responsibility
<b>Desire:</b>	Gain for self	Meet the needs of others
<b>Concern:</b>	Immediate achievement	Lasting fulfillment
<b>Yearning:</b>	Praise of men	Approval of God
<b>Aspiration:</b>	To be served	To serve others
<b>Need:</b>	To push ahead	For patience
<b>Striving:</b>	To lead men	To follow God
<b>Interest:</b>	Competition	Cooperation
<b>Motivation:</b>	Self-glorification	God's Glory

## Financial Freedom

- Realizing that true prosperity comes only from God (Deut 8:18) and
- Committing ourselves to God's purposes for money (Mt 6:30).

## God's Purposes for Money

### 1) To Provide Basic Needs

- Cf. Mt 6:26, 28-30; 1 Tim 6:8.
- To establish daily dependence on Him (Mt 6:11).
- To deepen our love for the Lord (Col 2:10; Jn 15:5) – (vs. Israel in wilderness)
- To develop a spirit of gratefulness.
- To teach us to live within our means (1 Tim 6:6).
- To help us enjoy our possessions (Heb 13:5) – (vs. discontent)

### 2) To Confirm Direction

- Cf. Ps 37:7.
- To build our faith and vision.
- To determine who is the Lord of our life (1 Tim 6:17).
- To protect us from harmful items (1 Tim 6:9).
- To teach us patience (Rom 5:3; Jas 1:3-4).
- To concentrate on true riches (Phil 3:7-8).

### 3) To Give to Christians

- Cf. Rom 12:3.
- To unite Christians (2 Cor 8:14).
- To demonstrate the mark of a Christian (Titus 2:14; 2 Cor 9:8).
- To initiate spontaneous thanksgiving (2 Cor 9:11).
- To multiply the potential for giving (2 Cor 9:6).

### 4) To Illustrate God's Power

- To cause Christians to trust Him (1 Kgs 18:21-40).
- To mock the false gods of our age
- To purify our lives and motives (Ps 66:18).
- To bring non-Christians to salvation (Acts 5:12-14).
- To glorify God (Ps 50:15).

### Tithing

- God's direct challenge (Mal 3:8,10).
- Tithe instituted *before* the Law (Gen 14:20).
- OT Pattern (Gen 28:19-22; Lev 27:30-32; 2 Chr 31:4-6; Neh 10:34-37; Mal 3:7-10).
- NT Confirmation:
  - Christ does *not* set aside the tithe in Matthew 23:23.
  - It is also implied in the “Even so” of 1 Cor 9:13,14; the “lay by him in store” in 1 Cor 16:1,2, which alludes to Mal 3:10; 2 Cor 8:14; Heb 7:5,6, etc.

### Four Reasons for the Tithe

- 1) It acknowledges the Creator's rights. The Tenth of all is His.
- 2) It is the antidote for greed and covetousness.
- 3) It is a test of our faith.
- 4) It is the solution to every financial problem.
  - Even more binding on us since our privileges are greater: “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required” (Lk 12:48).

### Practical Suggestions

- A tenth of all is His. Be strict. Be Careful. Be systematic.
- Separate His funds upon arrival: a separate box, checking account, whatever.
- Keep records; your “giving” only comes *after* the return of *His* tenth.
- You *can* take it with you (Lk 16:1-13).

### The Portfolio Concept

- Your giving is a “portfolio.” Portfolio managers are measured at the end of the reporting period, in retrospect.
- “Need” is not the criteria; evidence that the Lord is in the action, is the key.
- Validation before commitment...

## The Spiritual Entrepreneur

- He is self-supporting in his mission field, relying on his vocational skills;
- He is accountable to a Board of his peers;
- His out-of-pocket ministry expenses can be matched by Benefactors who choose to assist;
- He may be a unique response to the encroaching darkness prevailing everywhere...

## Next Session

- Read the entire Epistle. Study Chapters 10 & 11.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians Session 5: Chapters 10 & 11

### Rebels Challenged

- Paul was writing to a divided church, resisting his authority and being seduced by false teachers (1 Cor 1:11ff).
- First he explained his ministry and challenged them to participate in the offering, etc.
- Now, in this section, we find him challenging the rebels in the church (cf. Jude, et al.).
- Paul challenges them directly (2 Cor 10:7, 10-12; 11:4, 20-23).
- He does not equivocate: they are the ministers of Satan (2 Cor 11:12-15).
- “Boast or glory”: 20X. Paul was not defending himself personally, but his ministry and apostolic authority.
- Paul “gloried in Jesus Christ” and not in himself or his own achievements (Rom 5:11; Gal 6:14; Phil 3:3).
- He emphasized his sufferings, not his successes.
- He boasted to others about the Corinthians, but now it seemed that his boasting might have been in vain.

### How to Wage Spiritual Warfare (2 Cor 10:1-6).

- Spiritual “mysteries” are usually contrary to our fallen human nature...
- The rebels—the Judaizers—said Paul was courageous when writing letters from a distance, but was timid and weak when present (cf. vv. 9-11).

## 2 Corinthians 10

- 1] Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:
  - 2] But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.
- The rebels—the Judaizers—said Paul was courageous when writing letters from a distance, but was timid and weak when present (cf. vv.9-11).

- Christians usually grow after the manner in which they are born.
    - If in an atmosphere of dictatorial leadership, they grow up depending upon man’s wisdom and strength.
    - If in an atmosphere of humility and love, they learn to depend upon the Lord.
  - Paul’s purpose was to exalt Christ and not himself so he played down his own authority and ability (1 Cor 2:1-5).
    - They failed to perceive that true spiritual power is in “meekness and gentleness.” [“Paul” means “little.”]
  - Jesus also exhibited meekness and gentleness (Mt 11:29, et al.).
  - Jesus could also be stern and angry when occasion demanded (Mt 15:1-2; 23:13-33; Mk 11:15-17; Jn 2:13-16).
- 3] For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:
- Many do not realize that the church is continually engaged in warfare. Those who do understand the seriousness of the Christian battle do not always know how to fight the battle. Human methods are doomed to failure. You cannot fight spiritual battles with weapons of the flesh (Eph 6:10ff)
  - [The failure of psychology...cf. Heb 4:12...]
- 4] (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)
- “Warfare” (Greek, *strateia*) = “campaign”; not just a skirmish. The powers of darkness are *still* trying to destroy the work of God (Mt 16:18).
  - Walls of resistance: reasonings opposed to the truth of God’s Word; pride of intellectualism, exalting itself in arrogance (Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 1:18ff et al.).
  - Humility is one of the strongest spiritual weapons; pride plays right into the hands of Satan. Humility is not self-denigration, lack of confidence, or inability to accept affirmation. It is *a realistic view of oneself from God’s perspective*.
  - Its manifestation is meekness: a resourceful inner strength that enables one to respond with gentleness and steadfastness in the midst of opposition, criticism, or rejection. It grows out of being able to see oneself as God sees.
  - Other weapons:
    - The Sword of the Spirit: Word of God.
    - Love: the power of the Spirit at work in his life.
    - Prayer: the heavy artillery—even from a distance. Spiritual warfare is usually won on our knees!
  - He did *not* depend upon personality, human abilities, or even his authority as an apostle.
- 5] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;
- *Taking every thought captive*. Catching every thought and bringing it into obedience to Christ. This is one of the failings of “psychology”: re-mulling previous hurts without bringing them into obedience to Christ.
  - [Mind, *dianoia*: *dia*, “channel”; *noia*, “mind”: willpower; correlative to the Porch of the Temple Model. See *The Way of Agape* workbook and textbook.]
- 6] And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

- “Revenge” = Greek: *ekdikeo*. It means 1) to vindicate one’s right, do one justice 1a) to protect, defend, one person from another; 2) to avenge a thing 2a) to punish a person for a thing.
- 7] Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ’s, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ’s, even so are we Christ’s.
- Position and power are no evidence of authority (cf. Mk 10:35-45).
- 8] For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:
- 9] That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.
- Paul’s objective was to build them up, not tear them down. It takes more skill to build than to destroy.
  - Conversely, how many churches treat their pastors shamefully?
- 10] For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.
- Paul’s physical appearance was weak and unimpressive.
  - We all have heard impressively expressed sermons, but “the Lord was not in the wind” (1 Kgs 19:11)
- 11] Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present.
- In other words, “Better get ready because if it is necessary I will show you how powerful I can be....”
  - Their criticism backfires: if Paul was not an apostle, he was a counterfeit. If so, the church he founded at Corinth was not a true church. If he was a deceiver, then the Corinthians were the deceived!
  - It is always a “no win” situation:
    - If he was a true apostle he would show it by using his authority.
    - If he “threw his weight around” they would have found fault with that. “Wisdom is justified of her children” (Mt 11:19).

## How To Measure Spiritual Ministry

- 12] For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.
- How do you measure ministries? How do you measure a miracle?
  - Quantity is no guarantee of quality. [The early church did take note of numbers: Acts 2:41; 4:4.]
  - External activities are easier to measure than internal transformation. Sometimes those that are growing the most feel like they are less than the least.
  - Cf. Seven Letters to Seven Churches (Rev 2 & 3). The Lord measured them far differently than they measured themselves. [Key study: *Letters to Seven Churches* briefing package.]
- 13] But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.
- Sanctified sarcasm: The area Paul was assigned included even the Corinthians!

## Three Key Questions

- 1) Am I where God wants me to be? v.14
- 2) Is God glorified by my ministry? v.17
- 3) Can the Lord commend my work? v.18

14] For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ:

- It was not the Judaizers who had come to Corinth with the gospel. Like the cultists today, they are parasites feeding on another's ministry (Rom 15:15-22).

15] Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16] To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

17] But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

- Paul quotes Jer 9:24, as in 1 Cor 1:31
- They were prone to glory in men.

18] For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

- No PhD's (or H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>'s) welcome here! (The Judaizers came with impressive credentials.)
- Paul's resume would not impress most review committees:
  - a "rap sheet" a mile long, with most of his time spent "in the can";
  - always the center of riots and civil disturbances, often left for dead;
  - always the center of controversy, etc.
  - Hardly the type fellow welcome in most of our churches.
- Nor can statistics reveal the true measures:
  - External measures rarely reveal inner transformations.

## Strange Resumés

- Moses was 80 years old and wanted for murder;
- Jacob was a schemer and con-artist;
- Elijah and Jeremiah both suffered from depression;
- Hosea couldn't keep his marriage together;
- Amos also was a farmer with no ministry training;
- Peter tried to kill a man with his sword;
- John Mark was a quitter;
- Paul couldn't get along with his partner Barnabas, and couldn't stay out of prison.

## An Army of Nobodies: A Battle Cry for Ordinary Followers of Christ

- Under persecution or celebrated on talk shows
- Under unspeakable difficulties or walking on red carpets
- Despised or adored;
- Ridiculed or consulted;

- Cheated or honored;
- Scorned or quoted;
- Tortured or pampered;
- With frequent flyer cards or walking barefoot;
- Known or unknown...
- Spiritual Entrepreneurs:
  - Risking everything for that which they cannot lose;
  - Without significant remuneration, but
  - With a “retirement plan” that is out of this world!

## 2 Corinthians 11

- If you were a pastor, how would you go about convincing the people in your congregation that you really loved them?
  - If Paul reminded the people of what he did for them, they would simply accuse him of bragging. If he said nothing, they would point to that as he had not accomplished anything.
- Seeing the church being seduced by false teachers, and then having himself unfavorably compared to them had to be more than painful for Paul.
- Paul faced this problem by developing the image of the “spiritual father” caring for his family. Disciplining as necessary but wanting the very best for them (1 Cor 4:14-21).
- He pointed out three things: his jealousy; his generosity; and, his anxiety with respect to them.

- 1] Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.
  - 2] For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.
- Don’t confuse jealousy with envy.
  - True love is never envious, but it has a right to be jealous over those who are loved. It seeks the best for the one loved
    - A husband rightfully resents and resists any rivalry that threatens their love for each other.
    - A true patriot has every right to be jealous over his freedom and will fight to protect it.
    - A parent is jealous over his children and seeks to protect them from anything that will harm them.
    - The model that Paul lays out is that of a loving father with a daughter engaged to be married. His desire is to keep her pure: He sees the church as a bride (Eph 5:22ff; Rom 7:4; Rev 19:1-9).
    - The idiom “the Body of Christ” for the church also speaks of the marital intimacy (Gen 2:24).
    - The mystery of the “Rapture” of the church is more one of ecclesiology than eschatology!
- 3] But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.
- “Simplicity” = sincerity, singleness of devotion. A divided heart leads to a defiled life and a destroyed relationship (cf. Jer 2:2; Rev 2:4).

## Satan: The Person Behind the Peril

- He can **burden** the consciences of believer who have sinned (vv.10-11).
- He **blinds** the minds of unbelievers (2 Cor 4:4).
- He **beguiles** the minds of believers (v.3).
- He **buffets** the bodies of God’s ministers (2 Cor 12:7).

- Here, the focus is on Satan as a liar, as in Gen 3:
    - 1) He questioned God's Word: "Yea, hath God said...?"
    - 2) He denied God's Word: "Ye shall not surely die!"
    - 3) He substituted his own lie: "Ye shall be as gods..."
  - Satan is the master of the counterfeit: counterfeit ministers (vv.13-15).
  - Preaching a counterfeit gospel (Gal 1:6-12).
  - Three times Paul uses the word "transform" referring to their work (vv.13,14,15).
    - The Greek word *metaschematizo* means "to disguise, to masquerade."
    - They can be cloaked in appealing costumes: world peace, environmentalism or social issues.
- 4] For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.
- Many preach "another Jesus" (Gal 1:6-8).
  - *But consider carefully the exhortation in 2 John 1:5-11* [Realizing that this is a letter to Mary, the mother of Jesus!]
- 5] For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chieftest apostles.
- 6] But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things.
- 7] Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?
- "Freely": without charge; for nothing.
- 8] I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.
- Irony: Yes, he had been a "robber." He "robbed" other churches so that he would not have had to "rob" them! (Now the Judaizers were actually robbing them!)
  - Paul had labored as a tentmaker (Acts 18:1-3) and even received gifts from other churches so that he might evangelize Corinth. It had cost them nothing.
    - "Those that have free seats at the play hiss first."
- Ancient Chinese proverb
- 9] And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.
- Paul's policy was explained in 1 Cor 9:
    - He had given up his financial rights for the Gospel's sake; and for the sake of lost who might stumble over anything that gave the impression of being in a "religious business."
    - No person could accuse him of covetousness or selfishness (Acts 20:33-35).
  - "Be burdensome, be chargeable": *katanarkao* from *narkao* (to be numb);
    - 1) to cause to grow numb or torpid;
    - 2) to be torpid, inactive, to be to the detriment of one;
    - 3) to weigh heavily upon, be burdensome to.
  - [From the image of an electric eel numbing its victim with its shock. The numbed part of the body would be a burden to the victim.]

- 10] As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.  
 11] Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.  
 12] But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.  
 13] For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.  
 14] And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.  
 15] Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

- When watching for the ministers of Satan, don't overlook the pulpit.

- 16] I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.  
 17] That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.  
 18] Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

- "Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also": Since "boasting" seems to be the "in thing," Paul plays along.

- 19] For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

- Cf. Prov 16:22; 26:4 vs. 5: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit" (Prov 26:4-5).

## A Summary of the Methods of the Judaizers

- 20] For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

- "...bondage" = legalism is contrary to grace.
- "...devour": exploited privileges, support.
- "...take of you": "Take you in," fool you; baited.  
 – (Greek, *lambano*.) As a bird caught in a snare, or a fish with hook.
- "...exalt": Exalted themselves, not the Lord Jesus Christ.  
 – (This is always a useful badge they wear!)
- "...smite you": Slap in the face; public embarrassment.

- 21] I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

- Irony again. "In shame I admit that we were too weak for that." (NIV)
- The Corinthians confused meekness for weakness; arrogance for power (a common mistake).

- 22] Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

- 23] Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

- Paul speaks satirically. He had surrendered his "credentials" on a road leading to Damascus.

- 24] Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

- 25] Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;
- (Only one of the three shipwrecks are recorded in Acts 27.)
  - How many of his precious personal possessions were lost?
  - All of these because of his ministry. He knew it would happen (Acts 9:15-16; 20:23).
- 26] In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;
- Although these were “natural” hardships, they probably were caused by the enemy to hinder the work of the Lord. Paul was a marked man.
- 27] In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.
- 28] Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.
- [Even with the conveniences of modern travel, even it is wearisome... How much more for him. All because of the burden—not around him, but within him. Why?]
  - “...care” (Greek, *merimna*) = pressure, stress, anxiety. Key verse. Other experiences were external (“without”) and occasional. His burden for the churches was internal and constant.
- 29] Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?
- Whatever happened to his children touched his own heart... our children never understand our pains until they become parents.
- 30] If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.
- 31] The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.
- In contrast to the vainglory of the Judaizers, Paul recounts, on himself, his humiliation at Damascus.
- 32] In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:
- 33] And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.
- A faithful missionary couple returned on the same ship that brought Teddy Roosevelt home from a safari in Africa.
  - Crowds and reporters clamored to see Roosevelt; no one was on hand to welcome the missionaries.
  - In reviewing their arrival, the husband was somewhat bitter: “It isn’t fair. Roosevelt comes home from a hunting trip and the entire country comes out to meet him. We get home after years of service and nobody was here to meet us.”
  - His wife had the right answer: “Honey, we aren’t home yet.”
- Dr. W.A. Criswell Illustration
- May we never take for granted the sacrifices—the commitments—that others have made so that we might enjoy the blessings of the Gospel today!

## Final Session

- Read the entire Epistle. Study the final chapters, 12 & 13.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians Session 6: Chapters 12 & 13

### 2 Corinthians 12

1] It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

- The Judaizers had boasted of honors and “their letters of recommendation” (2 Cor 3:2ff).
- Paul did not look for honor from men; he let God honor him.

### God had honored Paul with Visions and Revelations

- 1) Paul saw the glorified Christ on the very day he was converted (Acts 9:3; 22:6).
  - 2) He saw a vision of Ananias coming to minister to him (Acts 9:12).
  - 3) He had a vision from God when he was called to minister to the Gentiles (Acts 22:17).
  - 4) He had a vision of God when he was called to Macedonia (Luke?) (Acts 16:9).
  - 5) When his ministry was difficult in Corinth, God encouraged him by a vision (Acts 18:9-10).
  - 6) After his arrest in Jerusalem Paul was encouraged by a vision (Acts 23:11).
  - 7) In the midst of the storm at sea an angel appeared to him and assured him that he and the passengers would be saved (Acts 27:33).
- Along with these special visions related to his call, spiritual revelations of divine mysteries were also communicated to Paul: the mystery of the church itself (Eph 3:1-6).
  - God also honored Paul by taking him to heaven 14 years earlier (AD 43?),
    - between his departure for Tarsus (Acts 9:30) and his visit from Barnabas (Acts 11:25-26).
  - Jewish rabbis were accustomed to speaking about themselves in the third person and Paul adopted that style in sharing this experience with his friends (and enemies) in Corinth.
- 2] I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.
- “...caught up”: ἀρπάζω *harpazo*, to seize, carry off by force; to seize on, claim for one’s self eagerly; to snatch out or away.
  - The “first” heaven was the sky: the clouds, etc.
  - The “second” heaven, outer space; stars etc.
  - The “third heaven,” paradise where God dwells in glory.
  - [Note the contrast between the close of the previous chapter—“let down” in a basket and being “caught up” to the “third” heaven!]

*I must boast, although it does not do any good. Let’s talk about visions and revelations from the Lord. I know a man who belongs to the Messiah. Fourteen years ago—whether in his body or outside of his body, I do not know, but God knows—that man was snatched away to the third heaven.*

2 Corinthians 12:1,2 (ISV)

- “...snatched”: ἀρπάζω *harpazo*, to seize, carry off by force; to seize on, claim for one’s self eagerly; to snatch out or away.

3] And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

- So overwhelmed, Paul seems unsure whether this was bodily or whether his spirit left his body (cf. v7).

4] How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

*I know that this man—whether in his body or outside of his body, I do not know, but God knows—was snatched away to Paradise and heard things that cannot be expressed in words, things that no human being has a right even to mention.*

2 Corinthians 12:3,4 (ISV)

- “...things that cannot be expressed in words”: Non-linguistic thought transmittal?
- (No “right” or ability...? Or only on a “need to know basis”?)

*For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

1 Corinthians 13:12

- Non-linguistic thought transmittal...

5] Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

- We are a culture which has become obsessed with personal peace and comfort. We almost view it as a right. This presumption not only sets the stage for disappointment but also blinds us to the powerful role that discomfort and pain can play in our spiritual growth.

6] For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

- How could Paul, after such an experience, remain humble?
- Because of his *second* experience:

## The Stake in the Flesh

- The Lord knows how to balance our lives.
- The mystery of human suffering is the topic of the oldest record in the possession of Man: the Book of Job. His critical “friends” felt that if he just had more faith... or if... etc.
- What makes this speculation dangerous is that there is some (occasional) truth in it.
- Sometimes we suffer because we are foolish and disobedient. Sometimes for chastening (Heb 12:3ff).  
– Cf. David, because of his sin (2 Sam 12:1-22 ). God forgives us, but we must reap what we sow.
- Sometimes we suffer to build our character (Rom 5:1-5).  
– Along the shore you can see rocks that are sharp in the quiet coves; but polished in those places where waves beat against them. God can use the “waves and billows” of life to polish us, if we let Him.

7] And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

- This verse reveals the actual identity of the “transported one...”
- “...thorn”: in the Greek, *skolops*: a pointed piece of wood, a pale, a sharp stake, splinter; a sharp stake used for torturing or impaling someone (cf. Gal 4:12-16).
- Thus: something agonizing; (“stake in the flesh”) mysterious “messenger of Satan”?
- “...buffet”: Greek, *kolaphizo*; to strike with the fist, give one a blow with the fist; to maltreat, treat with violence and contumely.
  - The verb is aorist active indicative (plural!) tense, implying it was either constant or recurring.

## Speculations

- Note: the (intended) ambiguity of the precise nature of Paul’s “stake in the flesh” allows us to more easily apply it to our own “stake...”
  - 1) Something of a spiritual nature?
  - 2) Some form of carnal temptations? (Roman Catholic writers: Aquinas, Gregory, et al.).
  - 3) Physical malady (Chrysostom, Greek fathers, Augustine, et al.).
  - 4) Epilepsy?
    - Humiliating; repellent to those witnessing it; regarded as having supernatural implications...
  - 5) Acute ophthalmia. Physically blinded on the Damascus Road (Damascus was notorious for the prevalence of the disease); next to lepers, most repugnant of illnesses in the Middle East.
    - [Galatians: “would have dug out their eyes...”]
    - Note Paul “signs in a large hand...” (Gal 6:11; also, 2 Thess 3:17).
    - Paul apologizes for not recognizing the High Priest (Acts 23:5).
    - Paul required travelling companions, and preferred not be left alone (1 Thess 3:1; 2 Tim 4:16, et al.)

8] For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9] And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

- “rest” = *episkenoō*, tabernacle upon me.
- “I besought the Lord thrice”: He appealed 3X, just as Jesus did in Gethsemane.
- There are those who believe that an afflicted Christian is a disgrace to God. If Paul had access to “instant healing” why didn’t make use of it for himself, or for others such as Epaphroditus? (Phil 2:25ff).

## God’s Riches Available at Christ’s Expense

- Sufficient Grace: there is never a shortage of Grace.
  - It is sufficient for our spiritual ministries (2 Cor 3:4-6).
  - and our material needs (2 Cor 9:8).
  - as well as our physical needs (2 Cor 12:9).
- Strengthening Grace:
  - My power is being made perfect in your weakness.
- He does not remove the affliction, but He gives us grace so that the affliction works for us and not against us.
- Paul learned that his “stake” was a gift from God. His suffering was not a tyrant that controlled him, but a servant that worked for him (Ps 106:15).

## Summary

- “Thorns” may be divinely permitted for three reasons:

- 1) to cause us to be humble; v.7.
- 2) to caution us against presumption in prayer; v.8.
- 3) to exhibit the all-sufficiency of God’s grace; v.9.

10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

- Paul had moved beyond acceptance to praise and gratitude.
- Have you ever visited a potter’s shop? (Jeremiah did; cf. Jer 18).
  - You can watch the wet mud shaped into a proper vessel and then placed in a kiln—a heated oven.
  - You ask the potter how he would know when to remove it.
  - “I just open the oven and flick the vessel with my finger; if it sings I know it is ready to come out of the heat.”
- Our greatest enemy is pride. Bitterness, self-pity, an accusing, complaining spirit are all symptoms of a heart struggling with rebellion... and pride.
- That’s why usually fail in our *strongest* suit, not our “weakest.”
  - Cf. bold Peter denying his Lord...
  - “Save us from the strength that harms...” —*The Everlasting Arms*, A.B. Simpson

## Practical Lessons

- 1) The spiritual is far more important than the physical.
- 2) God knows how to balance the burdens and blessings, sufferings and glory.
- 3) Not all sickness is caused by sin. Job’s comforters were incorrect. God often permits these things to accomplish greater things in (through) our lives.
- 4) Sin is worse than sickness; and the worst is pride. Afflictions can keep us humble.
- 5) Physical affliction need not be a barrier to effective Christian service.
- 6) We can always rest in God’s Word. Whenever you are going through suffering, spend extra time in the Word of God... We do not live on explanations; we live on promises.

11] I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

12] Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

13] For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

- “Forgive me for not charging you!”
- One of the dangers of the Christian life is that of getting accustomed to our blessings. (Especially in America! The pagan left there is aiming to all repair that...)

14] Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

- It is a tragic thing when children do not appreciate what their parents do for them...

15] And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

- No limit to his (our?) expendability. No extraneous motives.

16] But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

17] Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

18] I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?

19] Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

- Lack of appreciation = lack of consecration.

20] For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

- Quarreling, anger, intrigues, plots, disorder...

21] And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

- In addition to the sins of the spirit (2 Cor 7:1) there were also sins of the flesh (1 Cor 5, 6).

## 2 Corinthians 13

1] This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

- "...the third time": Deut 19:15; Num 35:30; Mt 18:16; Jn 8:17; 1 Tim 5:19; cf. Rev 11:3-7.
- They didn't follow Matthew 18:15-20.

## Four letters (1-4) and Three Visits (A, B, C)

### A) When the church was founded

- 1) The "Previous Letter" (Household of Chloe visit Paul with a letter *from* Corinth)
- 2) "First Corinthians"

### B) The "Painful" visit

- 3) The "Severe Letter" ...(Titus' report)
- 4) "Second Corinthians"

### C) Third visit

2] I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

3] Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

4] For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5] Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

- Heed any warning of self-deceit. Plato warned that the unexamined life is not worth living.
- However, self-examination is something that we cannot do ourselves.
- Remember “The heart is deceitful above all things and incurable. Who can understand it?” (Jer 17:9).

## **Are You Really “Born Again”?**

- Do you have the witness of the Holy Spirit in your heart? (Rom 8:9, 16).
- Do you love the brethren? (1 John 3:14).
- Do you practice righteousness? (1 John 2:29; 3:9).
- Have you overcome the world? Are you living a life of godly separation? (1 John 5:4)

## **A Series of Questions from John Wesley and the Puritans of 200 Years Ago:**

- 1) Am I consciously (or unconsciously) creating the impression that I am better than I really am?  
Am I a hypocrite?
  - 2) Am I honest in all my acts or words, or do I exaggerate?
  - 3) Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?
  - 4) Can I be trusted?
  - 5) Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
  - 6) Am I self-conscious, self-pitying or self-justifying? Do I grumble or complain constantly?
  - 7) Did the Bible live for me today? Do I give it time to speak to me every day?
  - 8) Am I enjoying prayer?
  - 9) When did I last speak to someone else with the object of trying to win that person for Christ?
  - 10) Am I making contacts with other people and using them for the Master’s glory?
  - 11) Do I pray about the money I spend?
  - 12) Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
  - 13) Do I disobey God in anything?
  - 14) Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
  - 15) Am I defeated in any part of my life? Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, distrustful?
  - 16) How do I spend my spare time?
  - 17) Am I proud?
  - 18) Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
  - 19) Is there anybody who I fear, dislike, disown, criticize? If so, what am I doing about it?
  - 20) Is Christ real to me?
- This is not something that we can do ourselves:
    - “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts... And see if [there be any] wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Ps 139:23,24).
  - The focus of our examination is not our sin, but Christ! Is he living in you now? Although awakened to new longings for Christ, our spiritual desires have been buried and distracted with trivial pursuits.
  - People are more important than projects.
  - Yet we can see right away that we are not yet where we ought to be, but by God’s grace we are not where we once were. God is not through with any of us yet. God has called every believer to the ministry.

- 6] But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.
- *Dokimos* = reprobate, counterfeit:
    - 1) Not standing the test, not approved; properly used of metals and coins;
    - 2) That which does not prove itself such as it ought; unfit for, unproved, spurious, reprobate.
  - “...know”: Know for sure (1 Jn 5:11-13).
- 7] Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.
- 8] For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.
- There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord (Prov 21:30).
- 9] For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection.
- “...wish” = *euchomai*, pray.
  - “...perfection” = spiritual maturity. *Katartisis*, “to be fitted out; to be equipped. Medical: to set a broken bone; adjust a twisted limb. Outfit a ship for a voyage; equip an army to battle. “mending nets” (Mt 4:21). The Lord has a ministry of perfecting His people (Heb 13:20,21).
  - He uses the Word of God (2 Tim 3:16-17) and the fellowship of the local church (Eph 4:11-16).
  - Christian growth is impossible in isolation: you can no more raise one Christian than you can raise one bee. Sheep flock together.
- 10] Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.
- Corinth was famous for wisdom and wealth; its luxury and its license. Equivalent to the cities of our world; (not only California...).
  - Paul’s first epistle was organized, deliberate, practical. His second Epistle to the Corinthians defies analysis; it is an outpouring of his heart. It is like an electrocardiogram: it shows us the condition of Paul’s heartbeats. Honest and vulnerable, he gives us insight into our own.
  - These last four chapters seem to differ from the first nine, which had sense of warmth, comfort, and thanksgiving. These last four seem to be written to the critical minority, and are sad and severe.
  - (This is why some believe they may be a fragment of his “fourth” letter.)
- 11] Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.
- “...farewell” = *chairo*.
    - 1) to rejoice, be glad.
    - 2) to rejoice exceedingly.
    - 3) to be well, thrive.
    - 4) in salutations, hail!
    - 5) at the beginning of letters: to give one greeting, salute.
  - “Be perfect” relates to Paul’s prayer in v.9: be mature, “fitted for life.”
  - “Be of good comfort” means “be encouraged.”
- 12] Greet one another with an holy kiss.
- 13] All the saints salute you.

14] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

- The NT benediction. The manger... the cross... Pentecost...The ultimate antidote to the divisions, the competition, the problems in the Corinthian (or any) church...
- The church is a miracle: only depending upon the grace of God, walking in the love of God, participating in the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit can make us a benediction to others...

<The second epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, a city of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas.>

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