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*Commentaries*

**BEET'S COMMENTARY  
— I CORINTHIANS —**

By

*Joseph Agar Beet, D.D.*

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without  
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

**Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World**

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**A**  
**Commentary on . .**  
**St. Paul's Epistles to**  
**the Corinthians . .**

**Volume 1**  
**FIRST CORINTHIANS**

By  
**JOSEPH AGAR BEET, D.D.**

# I CORINTHIANS

## PREFACE

The aim and method of the present volume are similar to those pursued in my *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. I have endeavored, by careful grammatical study of St. Paul's words, to trace the line of thought they were designed to convey; and to look, through his actual thoughts while writing, into his abiding conception of the Gospel and of Christ. The various elements of this conception, thus obtained, I have arranged in order along the course of my exposition; and have compared them, in the concluding dissertations, with the results gained in my volume on Romans. This orderly arrangement and comparison of the practical results of exposition give to this commentary a claim to be, like its predecessor, a contribution to Systematic Theology. And I hold firmly that the method here adopted is the only safe pathway to a correct and comprehensive and connected view of the truths which, through the lips of Christ and through the intelligence and the pen of His Apostles, God has made known to men.

The peculiar subject-matter of the Epistles to the Corinthians makes them to be also a record of St. Paul's movements a reflection of his surroundings, and a revelation of his inmost spiritual life. All these, St. Paul's movements, surroundings, and spiritual life, I have with the utmost care tried to reproduce and combine, in order thus to obtain a view, as full and correct as possible, of the great Apostle and of an apostolic church. Consequently, the present volume claims to be also a contribution to the Biography of St. Paul and to the Early History of the Christian Church.

A conspicuous feature of this volume, as of the last, is its direct reference, unique I believe among commentaries, to the Evidences of Christianity. At great length I have developed the proof that the Epistles to the Romans and to the Corinthians came, practically as we have them now, from the pen of Paul. To those familiar with these epistles and with their literature, this proof may seem superfluous. For they know that no one calls it in question. But for my readers generally I thought it well thus to reveal the absolute strength of this first link in the historic chain which supports the Christian hope. And this example of absolute historic certainty, taking firm and visible hold of unquestionable matters of fact, is of great value as a standard with which to compare other historic evidence. The first great link of evidence here exposed to view receives its practical worth from the succeeding links unveiled in Dissertation I. of my volume on *Romans*, links sustaining our most deeply cherished hopes. To the great arguments there expounded, the argument of this volume is altogether subordinate.

The method I have adopted is the best approach to the credentials of Christianity. Many popular writers on this subject set themselves to prove that the Bible is all true. But whoever attempts this undertakes a task involving immense scholarship and very much which the general reader must take on trust; and exposes himself, and those who follow him, to attack along an extended line and from innumerable points. For every assault upon the historic correctness of a statement in the Bible, unless repelled, shakes his position. But against the line of argument pursued in these volumes such objections have no bearing whatever. For, without assuming or attempting to prove the Divine authority or historic truth of the Bible, and therefore without pledging ourselves to the correctness of all its statements, we have traced the Gospel, which we have stated in plain terms, by evidence

tested according to the principles of ordinary historic credibility, to the lips of Christ; and have discovered reliable evidence that He claimed to be in a unique sense the Son of God, and that in proof of His claim God raised Him from the dead. In other words, the witnesses we have interrogated have led us into the presence of the Great Teacher, to the cross on which He died, and to His empty grave.

This line of investigation is also the best avenue to criticism of the date, authorship, and credibility of all other parts of the Old or New Testaments. For, from the point of view thus gained we can survey securely and calmly and clearly the entire domain of sacred scholarship. By reaching first, under guidance of numerous witnesses comparatively near to us, a firm ground for our faith, we are the better prepared to investigate matters further from our day or not attested by so abundant evidence.

But in every case the investigation must accord with the universal laws of human credibility. To attempt to withdraw the matters of fact stated in the Bible from this supreme court of appeal is as absurd as for a man to claim that because he is a Christian his conduct must not be tried by the laws of human morality. And, just as these laws of morality reveal the grandeur and the divine origin of that Gospel which both reveals a still higher morality and gives us power to realize it in our own lives, so the laws of human credibility reveal the absolute certainty of the Great Facts of Christianity and thus reveal in the drama of human history an historical Person infinitely higher than man.

Amid the infinite variety of opinion, even among professed Christians, about the Bible and its contents, opinions shading imperceptibly one into another along the whole line, two extreme groups are easily distinguished, those who deviate furthest from, and those who cling most tenaciously to, the traditional teaching of the churches. About each of these groups I have something to say.

To many writers who have denied the Great Facts for which in these volumes I have strenuously contended, Biblical Scholarship and the Church of Christ owe, by the kind Providence of God, an immense debt. Even the spiritual indifference with which some of them have handled sacred subjects has not been without advantage. For then it has left them free from the prejudice which has warped the judgment of so many earnest Christians. And their devotion to the philosophic study of the sacred languages and of the text and narratives and teaching of the Bible, looking at all these from a human point of view, has produced the best results. For, like the Personal Word, the Written Word is thoroughly human as well as divine. But, while cheerfully acknowledging this debt, I notice in many of their followers, of whom not a few are honest and earnest seekers after truth, a wonderful readiness to build up important theories on the scantiest foundation, and to accept with amazing confidence an hypothesis unheard of till yesterday. One is tempted to think that some of them make up for lack of faith by a large share of credulity.

On the other hand, very many who cling firmly to teaching which they and their fathers have proved to be a power of God to salvation betray an overweening satisfaction with even the details of their religious beliefs. All opinions new to them, they meet at once with hostility, and in proportion as these opinions differ from their own. And, to them, sacred scholarship seems to be of value chiefly as a weapon to defend their own views. But, surely, the most infatuated theologian cannot believe that, amid the infinite variety of religious opinions, his own system of doctrine is

absolutely correct and all others in error in proportion as they deviate from it. And if, as we cannot deny, error and imperfection cling to all human conceptions of the divine, and all error conceals some truth and obscures the harmony of related truths and thus lessens the moral power of the Truth in our hearts, it should ever be our aim to correct our own mistakes and to obtain fuller and deeper knowledge. Only those who are willing and eager to be both taught and corrected can correct others. Again, I am compelled to say that many popular theological works on what may be called the conservative side betray, by ignoring important adverse evidence, a very imperfect acquaintance with the facts of the case, at which they seem unwilling or unable to look; and, frequently, an utter absence of original investigation of the matter in hand. The chief aim of some writers seems to be, not to elucidate the subject, but merely to overthrow an opponent's argument. But it should never be forgotten that a reply which to persons unacquainted with the matter seems very clever may yet do nothing to prove the truth of the doctrine attacked; or even to remove objections to it. For, to those familiar with the whole case, many objections, like all good arguments, suggest much more than lies on the surface. Moreover, unless a man has positive teaching to offer he had better not write at all. For mere negations never satisfy.

Our only safeguard amid the Babel of opinions around us is a fuller and more accurate knowledge of Holy Scripture. This alone will enable us to distinguish, in teaching new to us, the true from the false. And it is not too much to hope that such fuller knowledge will not only preserve us from disquietude, but will reveal to us a nearer and clearer view of the Son of God, and thus work in our hearts and lives a richer likeness to Him. And this is the true aim of all Biblical Scholarship.

Throughout this work I have endeavored at every point and as far as possible to give proof of all I say, so as to make the fewest and least possible demands on the implicit confidence of my readers. Of this, my dissertation on the chronology of these epistles is a good example. And I think that this dissertation will prove that even for ordinary readers the details of the historic criticism of the New Testament, when clearly stated, have interest. For similar reasons I have discussed the date of the epistles to the Thessalonians, the authorship of the Book of Acts, and that of the Epistle of Clement. Necessarily, the validity of my proofs depends on the correctness of my quotations. But almost all these the English reader may test for himself in Clark's *Ante-Nicene Library*. And by so doing he will gain an intelligent conviction such as can never be derived from mere quotations.

I have also endeavored to distinguish the different degrees of confidence which different proofs warrant. Sometimes we have evidence which outweighs all that can be said on the other side but is not such as to remove doubt. And again, there may be evidence which justifies a confidence hardly to be distinguished from certainty and yet is inferior to other evidence open to no question whatever. Of this last, the proof that St. Paul wrote these epistles is a specimen. Upon evidence of this kind rest all the Great Facts of the Gospel. A grade lower is the evidence that the Fourth Gospel is from the pen of the Apostle John. This various worth and importance of various evidence I have kept in view throughout the reasoning of these volumes.

All quotations have been carefully verified. Except two, where the source is mentioned, all have been taken from the original works. A few errors which unfortunately have crept into my pages are noted below.

Like most modern commentators, I have given a table of contents of each epistle. These are of great value as affording a connected view of the whole epistle and of the mutual relation of its parts. A special feature of this work is that the titles of my Sections, read consecutively, form an outline of the epistles: the titles of the Divisions form another and still shorter outline. These outlines, the student will do well to keep constantly before him.

In addition to the tables of contents, I have frequently and from various points taken a retrospect of the ground already passed over, and have summarized the results gained. This may expose me to the charge of repetition. And my deep conviction of the immense importance, for intelligent and thorough comprehension, of going again and again over the same ground, has made me the less reluctant to look back at the same objects from different points of view.

The extracts from the Epistle of Clement afford a most instructive comparison and contrast with the Epistles of Paul. The references to the words of Christ, and the quotations from the Old Testament, are specially interesting, as revealing the form in which these were current in the first century. The influence of St. Paul's epistles, and the inferiority of the work of Clement, are conspicuous throughout.

Appendix B supplements Introd. iii. It marks out almost the whole area still open to doubt and of practical importance in these epistles; and will give the reader some idea of the frequent contradiction of the best documents and of the difficult task before the Textual Critic.

In addition to the commentaries mentioned in the preface to my volume on *Romans*, the work on these Epistles by the late lamented Dean Stanley has frequently and in various ways been useful to me. Of German writers, I have the able commentary of Osiander, and the very good and more recent one published by Kloepper. Of recent popular commentaries, the contribution of Dean Plumptre to Bishop Ellicot's *Commentary for English Readers* is, like everything from his pen, excellent. Canon Evans' work upon the First Epistle in the *Speaker's Commentary* is of great value, especially in its frequent renderings of St. Paul's words and in its first rate Greek scholarship. Occasionally, even in matters of grammar, I have ventured to dissent from the writer; but never without respectful consideration. I am also under obligations to Canon Evans' papers in *The Expositor*, vol. iii. new series, on the Revised Version. Also very good is Mr. Waite's contribution on the Second Epistle.

Of biographies of St. Paul, I have for many years owed much to the able and attractive work of Conybeare and Howson, which is by no means superseded now. Of equal value, especially for its abundant and well-chosen quotations from all sources and for its beautiful engravings, is the second edition of Lewin's *St. Paul*. His *Fasti Sacri* has also been, as a collection of facts, of great use to me. But he frequently builds up conclusions on very insufficient data and bases arguments (e.g. on **#Ac 18:21** in F. S. p. lxiv. f; in p. lxxiii. on **#Ac 27:16**) on readings indisputably spurious. Consequently, while his laborious collection of facts lays us under heavy obligation, his deductions from these facts must be received with great caution. These works, of which the value is chiefly in details, are supplemented by the living picture of the great Apostle, moving and speaking before us as a man among men, skilfully and beautifully painted in the great work of Canon Farrar. Of Neander's *Planting of the Christian Church* I have spoken in my former volume.

Quite different from the above, and written from an altogether different point of view, a point of view far removed from my own, the more valuable perhaps because of this difference, are F. C. Baur's scholarly and thoughtful work on *Paul the Apostle* and Renan's attractive volumes. These and others of the same school I have had constantly in mind, especially while writing Dissertations I. and II., and Dissertation I. of my *Romans*; and have endeavored to disprove their chief conclusions. But it was needless to quote them.

A few words now about the remainder of this series, I purpose to publish next a small volume on the Epistle to the Galatians; thus completing the Epistles written during St. Paul's third missionary journey. Then, if life and strength and opportunity be granted me will follow a volume on Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon; and another volume on Thessalonians, Timothy, and Titus. These I hope to supplement by a volume discussing St. Paul's teaching as a whole, and its relation to that of the other New Testament writers. These are my purposes. Their accomplishment is with God.

WARRINGTON,

*1st September, 1882.*

# I CORINTHIANS

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# I CORINTHIANS

## NOTES AND REPLIES

(See. . . Intro to SEC. III. ARE OUR COPIES . . . CORRECT? ¶ 9.)

On page 22. My translation has been objected to by some critics for its uncouth literality. Now every translator, while endeavoring to combine faithfulness to the full sense and force of the original Greek with good idiomatic English, finds himself frequently compelled, owing to the difference of the languages, to sacrifice the one or the other. In versions designed for ordinary use the genius of the English language must be respected at all costs. But in a translation designed to be used only as a companion to others, I was justified in sacrificing everything to a fuller reproduction of the sense and force of the original. To what extent I have in each case succeeded, Greek scholars must judge.

### #1Co 15:28

On page 233. My exposition of #1Co 15:28 is, like all I have seen, very imperfect. Will someone attempt a better? Canon Evans' suggestion that "the term God may denote the Tripersonal Deity" cannot, in view of Paul's constant use (e.g. #1Co 3:23; 11:3) of the word God to distinguish the Father from the Son, be accepted. This final subjection of the Son to the Father needs, I think, further study than it has yet received.

### #1Co 15:45

On page 245, line 19 from below. Schoettgen, in his *Horae Hebraicae*, quotes under #1Co 15:45 a Rabbinical book, *N'veh Shalom* or *Abode of Peace* (cp. #Isa 32:18) f. 160. 2: "Just as the First Adam was One in sin, so Messiah will be the Last, in order to bear away sins completely."

# **I CORINTHIANS**

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS**

### *SECTION I.*

#### *RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT*

1. In a former volume I attempted to show that we have abundant proof that the Epistle to the Romans came from the pen of Paul; and that it is fairly reproduced in the Authorized English Version and still more correctly in the Revised Version. We learned, by study of the epistle itself, that its entire argument rests upon five unproved but confident assertions or assumptions, viz: that God in undeserved favor accepts as righteous all who believe the Gospel; by means of the death of His Son; that He designs believers to be, by union with Christ, sharers of the life of Christ, a life devoted to God; that this design is accomplished in all who believe the gospel promises, so far as they believe. by the agency of the Holy Spirit. It was evident to us that Paul accepted these doctrines because they were taught by Jesus, that he accepted the authority of Jesus as decisive because he believed Him to be in a unique sense the Son of God, and that he believed this because he had what he thought sufficient proof that Jesus rose from the dead. We found also that in each of these matters Paul's belief was shared by the many and various writers of the New Testament; of which nearly the whole was before A.D. 200 accepted as authentic by the entire Christian Church. For this unanimous belief of the early disciples of Jesus, and for its effect upon them, and through them upon the world, we could conceive no explanation or sufficient cause except that Jesus actually rose from the dead, actually claimed to be Son of God, and actually taught these great doctrines.

Throughout our inquiry we did not ascribe to any part of the Bible an infallible or special authority. We merely accepted the Epistle to the Romans as written by an honest and intelligent man. And, although we referred to other writings of the New Testament, we did not assume even their historical correctness; but simply accepted their unanimous testimony as proof that the above-mentioned belief of Paul was shared by other early Christian teachers. Owing to the number and variety of these witnesses, their testimony would remain unshaken even if it were proved that some of their statements contradict each other or contradict reliable contemporary history. For their unanimity can be explained only by the truth of that in which they agree.

2. In our study of the Epistles to the Corinthians we will adopt the same method. We shall find equally valid for them the documentary evidence already quoted for the genuineness of the Epistle to the Romans and for the correctness of our copies. And our study of the Epistles now before us and comparison of them with that to the Romans will afford internal evidence removing to an infinite distance from all possibility of doubt the genuineness of all three Epistles.

3. At the close of the former volume I pointed to a line of argument which if followed would lead, I confidently believe, to a full conviction that the extant writings of Paul are the authoritative voice of God. But this I do not wish to assume in the present volume. For the Epistles to the Corinthians

contain in themselves so strong a confirmation of the reality and the truth of the facts and the teaching of the Gospel that I prefer, in order to feel the strength of this confirmation, to study them for the present without reference to their apostolic authority. We have no need to bring to Holy Scripture any opinion about its divine authority. This we shall learn best from the Scriptures themselves.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION II.

### ARE THE EPISTLES GENUINE?

1. The facts and arguments adduced to prove the genuineness of the Epistle to the Romans are equally valid for those to the Corinthians.

2. Both Epistles are found in all Greek MSS. of Paul's Epistles; and in the Latin, Syriac, Egyptian, Gothic, Armenian, and Ethiopic Versions.

3. Tertullian (*Against Heretics* ch. 33) says: "Paul in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians speaks of those who deny or doubt the resurrection." So *On Modesty* ch. 13: "For they suppose that the Apostle Paul in the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians forgave the same fornicator whom in the 1st Epistle he commanded to be given to Satan for destruction of the flesh;" and then quotes in full **#2Co 2:5-11**. In chs. 13-16 he quotes expressly as Paul's **#1Co 1:14, 15; 2:2; 3:16, 17; 4:3, 4, 7-9, 13, 18, 21; #1Co 5:1, 2, 5, 6; 6:8, 9-11, 13, 14, 15-20; #1Co 7:1-3, 7-9, 26-28, 29, 31, 32-34, 40; 8:2; 9:1, 4, 5, 15; #1Co 10:12; 11:16; 16:22; #2Co 2:6; 4:1, 2; 6:14-7:1; 12:7, 9, 21**. In his work *Against Marcion*, bk. v. 5-12, he quotes as admitted by Marcion, whose teaching was nevertheless utterly opposed to that of these Epistles, **#1Co 1:18-22, 25, 27-29, 31; 2:6-8; #1Co 3:10, 13, 16-22; 4:5, 9; 5:1, 5, 7, 13; 6:13-15, 20; #1Co 7:10, 11, 29, 39; 8:4-6; 9:9, 10; 10:4, 11; 11:3, 7, 10; #1Co 12:8-10; 14:34; 15:12, 21, 22, 25, 29, 35-57; #2Co 3:13-18; 4:4, 7, 10, 16; 5:1-4, 8, 10, 17; 7:1; 11:4, 14; #2Co 12:7-9**. These quotations are complete proof, not merely that both by Tertullian and Marcion the Epistles were accepted as genuine, but that in the main they existed then in the form we now possess.

So CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Pedagogue* bk. i. 6: Most clearly the blessed Paul has relieved us from the inquiry, writing in such a way as this in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, *Brothers, be not children in understanding, etc.* " So elsewhere abundantly.

So IRENÆUS in bk. iv. 27. 3: "That the Apostle showed this very clearly, saying in the Epistle to the Corinthians, *I do not wish you to be ignorant, brothers, etc.*," quoting **#1Co 10:1-11**. This seems to be a quotation from the teacher referred to on p. 6 of my *Romans*. In ch. 27 he also quotes, as written by the Apostle, **#1Co 5:6, 11; 6:9, 10**; and, in ch.26, **#1Co 12:28; #2Co 2:17; 7:2**.

Innumerable quotations make us quite certain that the above writers were unconscious of any doubt about the genuineness of these Epistles.

The FRAGMENT OF MURATORI says: "The Epistles of Paul, from whatever place and for whatever cause they were drawn up, themselves declare to those who wish to understand. First of all to the Corinthians forbidding the division of sect, etc."

In the Latin version which is all that remains of the latter part of POLYCARP'S letter to the Philippians (referred to in Irenaeus bk. iii. 3. 4) we read, "Do you not know that the saints will judge

the world, as Paul teaches?" IGNATIUS refers evidently, in ch. 2 of his Epistle to the Ephesians, to **#1Co 1:10**; and less clearly, in ch. 18 to **#1Co 1:20**.

Still more valuable proof of the genuineness of Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians is found in the letter of CLEMENT of ROME to the Corinthian church, of which I have given extracts in Appendix A. The express mention, in ch. 47, of the Epistle as Paul's, and the clear reference to its subject matter, prove conclusively that about A.D. 100 it was accepted by the churches of Rome and Corinth as written by Paul.

We find, therefore, that the Epistles to the Corinthians, like that to the Romans, were well known and were accepted without a shadow of doubt both by friends and foes before A.D. 200 in places so far apart as Carthage, Egypt, and Gaul; and that the First Epistle was referred to by three writers born before A.D. 100, and was appealed to within the lifetime probably of some who had seen the Apostle in a public letter from the church at Rome to that at Corinth as having been written to the latter church by Paul. We have thus external evidence for the Second Epistle equal to, for the First Epistle much stronger than, that adduced for the Epistle to the Romans.

4. For the genuineness of the Epistles to the Corinthians, we have moreover other evidence peculiar and irresistible. Their contents are such as no forger would dare to write; and such as would certainly prevent their acceptance by the church at Corinth except on evidence which forbade all doubt. Each letter abounds in severest condemnation. Self-conceited men (**#1Co 4:18**) evidently resisted the Apostle: and (**#1Co 5:2**) the whole church, inflated with pride, tolerated a crime not found even among the heathen. Church-members insulted the church (**#1Co 6:1**) by going to law against each other. Intercourse with harlots (**#1Co 6:18**) needed to be seriously warned against; and connivance (**#1Co 10:14ff**) at idolatry. The Lord's Supper (**#1Co 11:21**) was shamefully desecrated. And some church-members maintained a denial logically subversive of the whole Gospel. Bad men doing Satan's work (**#2Co 11:13ff**) and bitterly hostile to the Apostle were tolerated (**#2Co 11:20**) by the church. In spite of reproof (**#2Co 12:21-13:2**) some church-members persisted in gross sensuality. And the Apostle was accused (**#2Co 1:17**) of vacillation and weakness. Even if we suppose these descriptions of the church to have been true, no contemporary forger would dare to record them in a letter for which he sought acceptance as written by Paul: nor would any church accept, with careful scrutiny, so public a monument of its degradation. If at a later date the forgery were made, reverence for the earliest Christians at Corinth and for the Apostle would at once suggest a scrutiny which could not fail to detect the imposture.

That we have two condemnatory letters, increases the unlikeliness of forgery. For two letters would attract more attention than one. And two forgeries must necessarily be more difficult than one.

5. The above evidence, conclusive as it is, is yet by no means the whole. Our study of these Epistles, as embodied in Dissertations I. and II., will assure us that the Epistles to the Corinthians and the Romans came from the same author, from a man of vast mental power, of intense earnestness, and of the highest moral grandeur. Now the contents of the Epistles to the Corinthians are such as must be either genuine or written with an intent to deceive. Can we conceive a man able to write such letters as these three perpetrating a forgery in order to hide his own name in oblivion? Nay more: no man could do it. For the tone of reality throughout these Epistles is too clear to be

simulated. The living picture here presented can be no other than a genuine reflection of actual life. And, that it is such, will be strongly confirmed by our comparison of the Book of Acts. So abundant and unquestionable is this various evidence that in all ages these three Epistles and that to the Galatians have been accepted as genuine both by those who share, and those who trample under foot, the earnest faith of the great Apostle. As Renan says, (*Saint Paul*, Introd. p. v.,) they are "incontestable and uncontested."



# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION III.

### ARE OUR COPIES AND VERSIONS CORRECT?

1. The proofs given in my *Romans*, Introd. § 3, that our Authorized Version is, within narrow and specified limits, a correct reproduction of the words actually written by Paul are equally valid for the Epistles to the Corinthians. And they are strengthened immensely by the Revised Version. For, after a searching scrutiny during many years, by men of different theological opinions, the New Testament is presented to us in a form practically the same as the Old Version. It now remains to us only to note the principle changes in the Greek Text which the Critical Editors agree to propose, the principle variations of Text still open to doubt, and the extent to which the assured results of Textual Criticism in the Greek Text of these Epistles are adopted by the Revisers; and the Revisers' rendering of this Text.

2. Out of 233 variations from the text underlying the Authorized Version of 1 Corinthians which Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles agree to propose, Westcott and Hort (see my *Romans*, Appendix A) accept without note 226: they place 4 more in their text with an alternative in the margin, and 3 more in their margin; and overlook none. In 2 Corinthians, out of 120 variations which the earlier editors agree to propose, Westcott and Hort accept 119, placing only one (#2Co 1:8) in their margin. The only changes worthy of note proposed by them and not mentioned by the other editors are:—

#1Co 2:1: *mystery for testimony* which is put in their margin.

#1Co 13:3: *that I may glory, for may be burned.*

#1Co 15:54: *this corruptible shall put on incorruption* is removed to the margin.

#2Co 1:22: *who* marked as doubtful.

These Editors have carefully sifted for themselves the entire evidence on which rests the Text of the New Testament, using methods of research quite different from those of their predecessors. The remarkable agreement in results, noted above, is therefore a complete proof how solid is the basis of the Text which all recent Critical Editors agree to accept. And, by calling fresh attention to their reading of #1Co 2:1, Westcott and Hort have rendered special service.

3. Of readings (embodied or not embodied in the A.V.) materially affecting the sense, which the Critical Editors confidently agree to accept in the Epistles to the Corinthians, the Revisers accept every one without note; except that in #2Co 1:22 they omit one letter, questioned hitherto only by Westcott's brackets, and in #1Co 7:7; 11:24 they put notes against changes from the A.V. which are accepted without note by all the Editors. Out of 254 changes in 1 Corinthians given by the Revisers without note, 213 are found without note in all the Critical Editions; 17 more with another reading in the margin of one or more Editions: and only in 24 cases given by the Revisers without note do the Critical Texts differ. In the Second Epistle, of 143 such changes, 111 are accepted also without note by all the Editors; 3 more are accepted with an alternative in the margin: and only in 29 cases do the Critical Texts differ. Consequently, unless we question the united judgment of the Editors and

the Revisers, the area open to doubt is limited to the 24 + 29 places just mentioned, and the 16 + 12 textual marginal notes.

4. List of more important corrections agreed to by Editors and Revisers.

1. #1Co 1:15: *you were baptized* for *I baptized*.
2. #1Co 1:22: *signs* for *a sign*.
3. #1Co 1:23: *Gentiles* for *Greeks*.
4. #1Co 2:4: *of wisdom* for *of man's wisdom*.
5. #1Co 2:13: *the Spirit* for *the Holy Spirit*.
6. #1Co 3:3: omit *and divisions*.
7. #1Co 3:4: *men* for *carnal*.
8. #1Co 4:6: omit *to think*.
9. #1Co 5:1: omit *named*.
10. #1Co 5:3: omit *as*.
11. #1Co 5:7: omit *therefore* and *for us*.
12. #1Co 5:7: omit *therefore* and *for us*.
13. #1Co 7:3: *that which is due* for *due benevolence*.
14. #1Co 7:5: omit *and fasting*.
15. #1Co 7:17: transpose *God* and *the Lord*.
16. #1Co 8:2: *not yet learnt* for *knows nothing yet*.
17. #1Co 8:4: *no god* for *no other God*.
18. #1Co 8:7: *habitual intercourse with* for *conscience of*.
19. #1Co 8:11: *for for and;* and read *a brother for whom Christ died*.
20. #1Co 8:11: *for for and;* and read *a brother for whom Christ died*.
21. #1Co 9:1: transpose *apostle* and *free*.
22. #1Co 9:9: *the fruit* for *of the fruit*.
23. #1Co 9:10: read *he that thrashes, in hope of partaking*.
24. #1Co 9:15: read *or . . . no one shall make void*.
25. #1Co 9:20: add *not being myself under law*.
26. #1Co 9:23: *all things* for *this*.
27. #1Co 10:1: *for for moreover*.
28. #1Co 10:19: transpose *idol* and *idol-sacrifice*.
29. #1Co 10:23: omit *for me*.
30. #1Co 10:24: omit *every man*.
31. #1Co 10:28: *sacred-sacrifice* for *idol-sacrifice*.
32. #1Co 10:28: omit *for the earth . . . to end*.
33. #1Co 11:11: transpose twice *man* and *woman*.
34. #1Co 11:24: omit *take, eat*.
35. #1Co 11:26: *the cup* for *this cup*.
36. #1Co 11:27: *the bread* for *this bread*.
37. #1Co 11:29: omit *unworthily* and *of the Lord*.
38. #1Co 12:31: *greater* for *better*. (A.V. *best*)
39. #1Co 15:55: transpose *victory* and *sting*.
40. #1Co 15:55: *death* for *grave*.

41. **#2Co 1:12:** *holiness* for *simplicity*.
42. **#2Co 1:20:** read *for which cause also through Him*.
43. **#2Co 2:1:** *in sorrow* following again.
44. **#2Co 2:16:** *from death, from life* for *of death, of life*.
45. **#2Co 3:1:** omit *2nd commendation*.
46. **#2Co 5:12:** omit *for*.
47. **#2Co 5:14:** omit *if*.
48. **#2Co 5:17:** *they* instead of *all things*.
49. **#2Co 5:21:** omit *for* at the beginning.
50. **#2Co 7:13:** *our* instead of *your*; and rearrange the clauses.
51. **#2Co 8:4:** omit *that we would receive*.
52. **#2Co 8:19:** *our readiness* for *your readiness*.
53. **#2Co 9:5:** *before-promised* for *before-announced*.
54. **#2Co 9:10:** *shall supply, shall multiply, shall increase*.
55. **#2Co 10:7:** omit *Christ's* at end.
56. **#2Co 11:6:** *having made manifest* for *have been made manifest*.
57. **#2Co 11:32:** omit *desirous*.
58. **#2Co 12:11:** omit *in glorying*.
59. **#2Co 12:19:** *for a long time* for *again*.
60. **#2Co 13:2:** omit *I write*.

The reading displaced in No. 18 is a very early and widespread error. In Nos. 24, 31, 39 the displaced reading is in the margin of Lachmann: a variation affecting a part of No. 57 is given in the margin of the R.V. and of Westcott. All the other changes are given without note by the Revisers and by all the Editors: and all may be accepted with perfect confidence.

5. Of the 24 + 29 changes (see p. 7) accepted without note by the Revisers but about which the Critical Texts differ, the only cases worthy of mention are **#1Co 9:22**; **#2Co 12:7**, where I follow the Revised Version; **#2Co 11:4**, open to doubt; **#2Co 12:15**, which I reject; and **#1Co 8:8**; **#2Co 1:22**, where see notes. All the others are unimportant.

Only two variations from the Authorized Version of any moment, given without notes in any two Critical Editions, have the Revisers overlooked, viz.:—

**#1Co 10:20:** *they* for (A.V. and R.V.) *the Gentiles*

**#1Co 14:18:** *with a tongue* for (A.V. and R.V.) *with tongues*.

And the Revisers' reading is supported by evidence in the former case I think decidedly, in the latter slightly, preponderant.

6. Of the Revisers' Marginal Readings, the student will distinguish those said to be read by "many," and those by "some, ancient authorities." The former are:—

1. **#1Co 1:28:** omit *and*.
2. **#1Co 2:1:** *testimony for mystery* in text.
3. **#1Co 7:7:** *for* instead of *yet*.
4. **#1Co 7:15:** *you* for *us*.
5. **#1Co 7:33:** general rearrangement.
6. **#1Co 9:24:** insert *broken*.
7. **#1Co 13:3:** *that I may glory for to be burned*
8. **#1Co 14:38:** *he is not known for let him be ignorant*.
9. **#1Co 15:49:** *let us bear for we shall bear*.
10. **#1Co 15:54:** omit *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and*
11. **#2Co 3:9:** *to the ministration for the ministration*.
12. **#2Co 13:4:** *with him for in him*.

Of these, in Nos. 3, 6 the R.V. text is given without note by all Editors, on evidence so decisive that the marginal note seems needless. In No. 12 the R.V. text is accepted by all Editors, on evidence slightly preponderant; with the other reading in the margin of all but Tischendorf who gives no marginal notes. In No. 10 the R.V. text is accepted without note by the other Editors, on what seems to be sufficient evidence; and is put in the margin by Westcott, with the R.V. margin in the text. In No. 7 the Revisers' margin is given without note by Westcott, and in Lachmann's smaller Edition: in all other Critical Editions the Revisers' text is given, without note. In No. 2 the Revisers' margin is given without note by the earlier Editors: the Revisers' text, which I accept, is given in the text of Westcott. No. 5 does not perceptibly affect the sense. In No. 8 the Revisers' margin is given, with preponderant documentary evidence, by all Editors except Tregelles who puts it in the margin: and the Revisers' text is noted in Westcott's margin. It is a very difficult, and unimportant variation. I prefer the Revisers' margin to their text in Nos. 1, 11; and especially in No. 9, which is given by all Editors, Westcott alone noting in his margin the Revisers' text.

Of marginal readings worthy of mention said to be found in "some ancient authorities," in every case the Revisers' text is preferred by all Editors; except that in **#1Co 2:10; 15:14; #2Co 1:15; 2:1, 7; 7:7** Westcott and Hort prefer the Revisers' margin. So far as I can judge, the Revisers' text has in each case preponderant evidence. Possibly true are the unimportant marginal readings in **#1Co 1:4, 14**, especially the latter.

7. The above figures and lists prove that the assured results of modern Textual Criticism are embodied fairly and fully in the Revised Version. And they reveal how narrow, in the Epistles before us, is the area open to doubt. With the few and small exceptions noted above, the Revisers' Greek Text may be accepted with reasonable confidence as recording the exact words of the great Apostle. A few readings subject to doubt or of special interest, I have discussed in Appendix B.

8. Much more open to question than the Greek Text they have adopted, is the Revisers' Rendering of that Text into English. At this we need not wonder. For we can conceive a Greek Text presenting the exact words written by Paul; and therefore absolutely perfect. But no translation can possibly

reproduce exactly and fully the sense of the original. In every translation something is lost in accuracy and force and beauty. And opinions will differ as to which elements, in any given phrase, can be sacrificed with least loss on the whole. Moreover, the task of the Revision Committee was complicated by the fact that they were set, not to make a new Version, but to revise one made centuries ago. Archaic diction enshrined in the hearts of millions had its claims upon them. And they were frequently compelled to decide between these claims and those of the modern English reader wishing to know as clearly and fully as possible the sense intended by the Sacred Writers.

In Appendix C I have noted, as samples of numberless others, some of the more important improvements of rendering given in the New Version; also some passages in which, as I think, unwisely the Revisers retain the old renderings; and a few in which I venture to think that they have needlessly or wrongly altered the Old Version.

9. It may seem strange that even after the appearance of the Revised Version I have ventured to give a new version of my own. I have done so because I was not able to accept in every case the readings and renderings of the Revisers as the actual words and true meaning of Paul; and because it seemed to me that independent value would attach to a translation made on the principles expounded in § iii. 17 of my Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans, principles very different from those which different circumstances prescribed for the Westminster Revisers. They were bound to preserve as far as possible the familiar speech of the Old Version, and to use classic English suitable for public worship. I was absolutely free. My aim has been simply to reproduce as accurately and fully as I could, even sometimes by inelegant or uncouth grammatical forms or clumsy arrangement, the sense and emphasis of Paul's Greek. My translation was completed before the Revised Version was published; but has been revised, and in some passages amended, by its welcome aid. A few points of importance in which I am unable to accept the Revisers' judgment are discussed in my exposition.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION IV

### *THE CITY OF CORINTH*

1. A moment's survey of the map tells us that Greece consists of two clearly marked divisions, a peninsula called the Peloponnese and now sometimes the Morea, and a part of the mainland of South-Eastern Europe. These divisions are united by an irregular bridge of land some 25 miles long, and averaging rather less than 10 miles across from sea to sea. The greater part of it is mountainous and difficult to traverse. But, as we approach the Morea, the mountains sink into a level stony plain ten miles long reaching to the mountains of the peninsula; and the sea encroaches on either side leaving a low neck of land at one point only four miles across. This is the Isthmus of Corinth the famous Isthmus which has given its name to similar necks of land all over the world. The ground is so nearly level that formerly along a path called the Diolcus or Pulling-through ships were dragged from sea to sea. As a low-lying isthmus uniting a mountainous peninsula to a mountainous mainland, it may be compared to the almost level ground at Llandudno between the Great Orme's Head and the mainland of North Wales.

2. Looking now from the narrowest part of the isthmus towards the Peloponnese, we notice that the receding shores of the sea leave a widening plain, blocked in, except a strip of rich soil along the Northern coast, but a range of hills which closes the entrance by land to the peninsula. In front of these, rising to the height of 1886 feet, is a very conspicuous, abrupt, steep, rocky mountain, perhaps the most gigantic natural fortress in Europe, the Acrocrinthus, or Citadel of Corinth. For its abruptness it has been compared to the rock of Dumbarton, which is however less than one-third its height. In height, a closer comparison is found in Penmaenmawr, opposite Llandudno. At the Northern base and in front of this mountain, on a broad level rock some 200 feet above the plain, in full view of the isthmus and the hills beyond it, and of the two seas which seem to lie submissive at its feet and to refrain from mingling their waves that their separation may enrich the city, on the site now occupied by a small modern town which bears the ancient name, once stood (Florus, ii. 16) "Corinth, head of Achaia, ornament of Greece, between two seas, Ionian and Aegean, as if exposed for public view."

A mile and a half to the North, connected formerly with Corinth by walls, like the Piraeus with Athens, is the ancient port of Lechaëum on the gulf of Corinth, affording ready access to Italy and the West. Eight miles away east-south-east, on the Saronic gulf is the port of Cenchrae, affording access to Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. And eight miles east-north-east, near to the ancient port of Schoenus also on the Saronic gulf, are remains of the temple and enclosure of Poseidon around which were celebrated during long centuries the famous Isthmian athletic Festivals. Also discernible, and forming part of the sacred enclosure of Poseidon, are remains of an ancient fortified wall which reached from the bay of Schoenus across the Isthmus.

3. The summit of the Acrocrinthus, a space some half-mile square, is enclosed by a wall, in part double; which contained sixty years ago a small town, destroyed during the war of liberation and now completely in ruins except a barracks for thirty soldiers. In the old days of Greek freedom, the

fortifications of the city, ten miles long, embraced the Acrocorinthus; with the long walls to Lechaëum making Corinth to be, as it was often called, the citadel of the Peloponnese and of Greece.

The view from the Acrocorinthus is one of the most beautiful and most interesting in the world. And it explains in a moment very much of the history of Corinth. At our feet lies the port of Lechaëum on the bay of Corinth opening out into the gulf of Corinth which stretches before us like a great lake of surpassing beauty bounded by the endless mountain ranges of north-western Greece. Across the bay and across the low-lying isthmus rise in varied outline the Geranian mountains, terminating at the west in the promontory which separates the bay of Corinth from that of Alcyon, these bays together forming the eastern end of the gulf of Corinth. Beyond and above these mountains, at a distance of 25 miles, is seen the mountain range of Cithaëron, famous in heroic story. Due north, across the bay of Corinth rises the still loftier range of Helicon. And to the north-west, 60 miles away, but distinctly visible, are the snowy heights (8186 ft.) of Parnassus. Looking now rather north of east, the port of Schoenus and the site of the Isthmian Festival seem close at hand. And, across the Saronic gulf and above Salamis, island of illustrious fame, at a distance of 45 miles, lit up by the rays of the setting sun and awakening a multitude of reminiscences, the Acropolis of Athens is clearly seen; guarded as it were on left and right by Mounts Pentelicus and Hymettus. And not unfrequently is seen also the whole southern coast-line of Attica as far as the famous and lovely promontory of Sunium, some 60 miles distant. To the south the view is limited by the mountains of Argolis. But to the south-west the landscape reaches across a great part of the Peloponnese. Thus from this Roman Capital was seen, spread out in gorgeous panorama, no small part of the Roman province of Achaia; including parts of the ancient states of Attica, Megaris, Beotia, Phocis, Achaia, Arcadia, and Argolis. And this city of Corinth, commanding both geographically and socially a view of the whole province, was Paul's chosen center from which to hold forth to the eyes of Greece the light of the Gospel of the glory of God.

The geographical position of Corinth determined in great part its historical relations. Unlike Athens, whose relations were chiefly with the East, Corinth, while keeping her hand upon the East through her port of Cenchreae, turned her face towards the West, across the bay whose placid waters lay almost at her feet. Nearly all the early colonies of Corinth were westward: and doubtless its easier access from the West led the Romans to choose it as the metropolis through which to govern the province which included nearly all the soil of ancient Greece. We may therefore suppose that during his residence at Corinth for eighteen months Paul came into contact with the West as he had never done before; and that to his residence there we may attribute in great part his deeply cherished desire to carry to the nations of the West the good news of the blood shed for the whole world.

4. Corinth was famous in every age of Greek history. In the stories which have come down from the so-called heroic times it is mentioned in connection with Oedipus and with Jason. Homer (*Illiad* ii. 570: cp. xiii. 664) speaks of "wealthy Corinth." Thucydides (bk. i. 13) tells us that the Corinthians were said to have been the earliest to undertake seamanship in a way similar to that of his own day; that the earliest large ships were built at Corinth; that 300 years before his time (i.e. in B.C. 700) four ships were built there for the Samians; and that the earliest known sea-fight was between the Corinthians and their colonists the Corcyrians. He also says that "the Corinthians, inhabiting the city of the Isthmus, always had a market: for the Greeks of old, rather by land than by sea, both those within and those without the Peloponnese, had intercourse with each other through their country.

And the people were of great wealth: as has been made clear by the old poets; for they called the city wealthy." Strabo (bk. viii. 6. 20) says it was called wealthy Corinth. He speaks of the wealth of the dynasty of the Bacchiadae who ruled in Corinth and made profit by its merchandise for 200 years; and of Cypselus, who overthrew them in B.C. 655, whose wealth was attested by a large statue of beaten gold presented by him to the temple at Olympia. Under his son Periander, Corinth was the most wealthy and prosperous of the commercial cities of Greece. For this wealth Strabo accounts by the preference of the traders between Asia and Italy to carry their goods across the Isthmus rather than risk the great perils of sailing round the Peloponnese; and by the position of the Isthmus as the only route for merchandise between the peninsula and the mainland of Greece. The Corinthians thus commanded two streams of traffic, on both which they were able to impose toll; and their city was the best residence for the merchants who conducted the traffic. Strabo mentions also the Isthmian Festivals as a source of profit by bringing strangers to the city. See note under **#1Co 9:27**. As a proof, and means of increase, of the wealth of Corinth, he speaks of the temple of Aphrodite, which was served by a thousand sacred courtezans. This is sad proof that in Corinth abundance of material good had produced its frequent result of self-indulgence and gross sin. Strabo says that Corinth was also the chief home of painting and sculpture. We notice, however, that the wealth of Corinth, so conducive to the development of art, did little for intellectual development. Among the many great writers of ancient Greece, no Corinthian is found.

Although ever prominent among the commonwealths of Greece, Corinth never held the first place till the last days of Greek freedom. Its political importance and wealth at that time are attested by the fact that the final blow which crushed the independence of Greece was the destruction of Corinth in B.C. 146, by the Roman general Mummius; and also by the splendor of the triumph, a splendor unknown before, which the spoils of Corinth enabled the conqueror to celebrate at Rome.

The ruin was complete. Except the public buildings, all was destroyed. And the city lay in ruins for a hundred years. In B.C. 46 it was rebuilt by Julius Caesar, as a Roman colony; and became afterwards capital of the Roman province of Achaia, which was nearly coextensive with the modern kingdom of Greece before its recent enlargement.

5. This New Corinth, the city known to Paul, was in many respects very different from, and in many points similar to, the ancient city. Its geographical position was the same: and to its position Old Corinth owed its concourse of strangers, its wealth, and its consequent gross immorality. All this the new city inherited as lineal descendant of the old one. But Strabo's use of the past tense when speaking of the thousand priestesses of Aphrodite, and his simple mention of a small temple to her on the Acrocorinthus without any hint of the continuance of this gigantic service of sin, warns us not to infer that it existed in his day. But, if not exactly in this form, in other forms the new city emulated the sensuality of its predecessor. Moreover, Corinth was still in the midst of Greece: and the Greeks retained, in spite of the loss of independence, many of their ancient characteristics.

But very much was changed. New Corinth was, what the old city had never been, the acknowledged political capital of all Greece. But Greece was now the Roman province of Achaia: and Corinth was its capital as residence of a Roman governor. Seutonius (*Claudius* §25) tells us that the Emperor Claudius gave up Achaia to the senate. This would involve its being governed by a proconsul: and, by an interesting coincidence, this is the exact title given in **#Ac 18:12** to the ruler



of Achaia resident at Corinth. Suetonius also says, in agreement with **#Ac 18:2**, that Claudius "expelled from Rome the Jews, who at the instigation of Chrestus were constantly in tumult."

Corinth was a Roman colony. This term denotes a sort of translation into other soil of a part of the city of Rome. By a decree of the senate, a number of Roman citizens went forth, under appointed leaders, with all the pomp of war, to plant in foreign soil an offshoot of the mother-city. The bounds of the new city were marked out with a plow: a territory was assigned to it: and a portion of land was given to each colonist. The colonists were ruled by their own magistrates, called praetors or generals; the title correctly given in **#Ac 16:20** to the magistrates of the colony of Philippi. Other Roman colonies were Antioch in Pisidia, and Troas.

We must therefore think of Corinth in Paul's day, risen a hundred years ago from its ruins, as no longer a Greek city, but rather a city of foreigners in the midst of Greece. So Pausanias (bk. ii. 1) says: "none of the original inhabitants live still at Corinth, but strangers sent by the Romans." And Strabo, bk. viii. 6. 23: "Corinth, having lain desert a long time was restored, because of its natural excellence, by the divine Caesar; who sent strangers, for the most part of the class of freedmen." But doubtless, in the century which had elapsed since its restoration, the position of the city had attracted to it many of the inhabitants of the surrounding province. And we are not surprised to find, in so central and commercial a city, sufficient Jews to have a synagogue; nor to find (**#Ac 18:2**) that some of the Jews banished from Rome took refuge at Corinth. Perhaps nowhere in the world was there a greater concourse and mixture of races than in this city. In short, in Corinth, a Roman colony and the capital of a Roman province, the political capital of Greece, having a Jewish synagogue, and seated on two seas as the center of the commerce of the eastern Mediterranean, we have an epitome of the civilized world in the days of Paul.

6. The city of Corinth has lingered to our times, and is now rising; or rather is being rebuilt nearer to the coast. It suffered greatly during the war of liberation. In A.D. 1851 Mr. Lewin counted only fifty houses. It is now a straggling, uncouth, and rather unhealthy town of 8,000 inhabitants.

The only remains now of the city known to Paul are seven massive Doric columns, each consisting of one gigantic stone some 21 ft. high and 6 ft. diameter, surmounted by portions of the architrave; which once formed the front, and part of the side, of a temple, and now present a strange contrast to the poor modern town. The architecture of these columns betrays their extreme age. On this massive temple, which even then had survived the changes of probably 700 years, the great Apostle must have often looked, a monument as old in his day as the oldest monuments in our own land now.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION V.

### PAUL AND THE CHURCH OF CORINTH

1. All we know of the church at Corinth is gathered from these Epistles and the Book of Acts.

2. Paul claims (**#1Co 3:6, 10; 4:15; #2Co 12:14**) to be himself alone the founder of the church. With this accords the authority which in these Epistles (e.g. **#1Co 5:3f**) he assumes. So also **#Ac 18:1ff**, where we learn that while his companions Silas and Timothy were still in Macedonia Paul came apparently alone from Athens to Corinth, and where even his host Aquila is spoken of only as "a Jew," and nothing is said of any Christians found by Paul at Corinth.

3. From Corinth probably Paul wrote his letters to the Thessalonian church. For evidently they were written soon after the founding of that church; but not earlier (**#1Th 3:1**) than Paul's arrival at Athens and (**#1Th 1:1**) his reunion with Silas and Timothy, who (**#Ac 18:5**) rejoined him at Corinth. When he made his oration on Mars' Hill at Athens he was waiting (**#Ac 17:16**) for them there in compliance with his request. This request was, it would seem, for reasons unknown to us but easily conceivable, complied with only by Timothy; whom apparently Paul sent back from Athens to Thessalonica to allay by further tidings his anxiety (**#1Th 3:1**) about the church there. Paul was thus "left at Athens alone." That this intermediate journey of Timothy is not mentioned in the Book of Acts, is no presumption against it. And we may suppose that after sending Timothy northward Paul went to Corinth, where he was afterwards joined by Silas and Timothy, the latter bringing good news (**#1Th 3:6**) about the Thessalonian church. This good news prompted Paul's first letter, in the beginning of which (**#1Th 1:1**) he joins with himself Silas and Timothy, who had been his helpers in founding the church and now at Corinth were with him again. That Paul stayed at Corinth eighteen months and then went away almost direct to Syria, suggests that also from Corinth 2 Thessalonians was written. These Epistles cast little light on Paul's labors there or the state of the Corinthian church. But they will help us to understand (cp. **#1Co 15:12ff**) some of the questions raised at Corinth.

4. As usual, Paul began his work at Corinth in the Jews' synagogue, where each Sabbath he reasoned (**#Ac 18:4**) with Jews and Greeks. When his companions from Macedonia arrived, he was specially occupied with Jews. But these soon, by their opposition, made it expedient for him to leave the synagogue. He found, however, a suitable place next door, in the house of Titus or Titus Justus, a Jewish proselyte. This does not imply that Paul left his first home (**#Ac 18:3**) at the house of Aquila, but rather that the house of Justus was the place in which he preached.

Paul had marked success. The family of Stephanas, afterwards (**#1Co 16:15**) most devoted to church work, were the first converts not only at Corinth but in the province of Achaia. Since this province included Athens, this family must have been converted earlier than were (**#Ac 17:34**) Dionysius and Damaris. They may have heard Paul preach at Athens or elsewhere. But, when the First Epistle was written, they belonged to the church of Corinth: and they were an exception to Paul's assertion that he baptized none of his readers. Doubtless Aquila and Prisca were early

converts. We may also suppose that the conversion of the ruler of the synagogue, Crispus, with his family, marked an era in the founding of the church: as did perhaps the conversion of Gaius, probably the same as Paul's host (**#Ro 16:23**) when writing to the Romans, at whose house room seems to have been found for the church assemblies. That those were special cases, is made likely by the exceptional fact that (**#1Co 1:14**) of the baptism of them also at Paul's hands. A vision of Christ foretelling great success at Corinth moved Paul to stay there more than (**#Ac 18:11, 18**) a year and a half. During the latter part of his sojourn, a united effort of the Jews brought him before the court of Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, on the charge that (**#Ac 18:13, 15**) although a Jew he taught a religion contrary to the Jewish Law. But this charge Gallio refused to consider; and did not prevent the mob, who were perhaps favorably disposed to Paul, from ill-treating even in the court of justice the leader of the Jews. After this incident Paul continued some time at Corinth; and then, apparently with external pressure bid adieu to the church, and sailed with Aquila and Prisca to Ephesus and then alone to Caesarea.

And now the curtain falls, hiding from our view for some years the church so auspiciously founded in the political metropolis of the most intelligent and enterprising nation of the ancient world; to be lifted only by the Epistles before us. From these, however, we shall gather some information about the state of the church in the interval. An unmentioned visit of Paul to Corinth, a lost letter, and the circumstances which prompted the existing letters, are discussed fully in the course of my Exposition and at the close of each Epistle. The results of this discussion are embodied in Dissertation IV. at the end of this volume.

To the Epistle to the Romans, the Epistles before us are a marked contrast; a contrast corresponding exactly to Paul's different thoughts at the moment of writing. To a church he had never seen but hoped soon to visit, he gives a connected view of his general teaching, i.e. of the Gospel and of its relation to the Old Covenant. To the Corinthians Paul wrote under the influence, in one case of news about them recently received, in the other of his own wonderful escape from peril and of the tidings just brought by Titus. Consequently, the one Epistle is the most complete and systematic exposition of the Gospel which the Bible contains: the others give, both singly and still more combined, the most graphic picture we have of an apostolic church in which we see the Gospel molding the thought, and contending with the imperfections, of living men. And, since a man's principles of action and his entire disposition are most clearly revealed in his treatment of the various details of life, these Epistles are our best reflection of the heart and inner life of Paul, and of the Gospel as permeating and ennobling the entire self and life of a richly endowed man.

Not less marked is the mutual contrast of these Epistles. The former is essentially matter-of-fact; and takes up one by one, and discusses calmly, a variety of topics. The second letter is from beginning to end a torrent of intense emotion. But each Epistle reflects Paul's circumstances and feelings while writing it. The first was written from Ephesus at the close of a long period of (**#1Co 16:9**) successful and promising labor, and in comparative security. The Second Epistle was written after an almost miraculous escape from what was perhaps the most deadly peril to which even Paul had been exposed, an escape from what seemed to be certain death. And the emotions aroused by his peril and by his deliverance, emotions most various, quiver in every line of the Epistle. Consequently, in no epistle so much as in this do we feel the beating of the great heart of the Apostle.

To the delightful study of these living pictures of one of the noblest of men, and of one of the most famous of the churches he founded, we now betake ourselves.

# I CORINTHIANS

## EXPOSITION OF THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

### SECTION I.

#### *PAUL'S GREETING TO, AND GRATITUDE FOR, THE CORINTHIAN CHRISTIANS*

#### CH. I. 1-9

**Paul, a called apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, to the church of God which there is at Corinth, men sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place belonging to them and to us. Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**I thank my God always about you, for the grace of God given to you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you have been enriched in Him, in all utterance and all knowledge, according as the testimony of the Christ took a firm place in you; causing you not to fall short in any gift of grace, at the same time waiting for the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ; who will also make you firm until the end, unimpeachable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is God, through whom you were called to partnership with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Ver. 1. **Paul, called apostle, Christ Jesus: #Ro 1:1.** Paul belonged to Jesus of Nazareth, the Anointed One, as one sent by Him on a special mission to men and thus placed by Him in the first rank in His Church: **#Ac 26:17f; #1Co 12:28.**

**Through the will of God. #2Co 1:1; #Eph 1:1; #2Ti 1:1; more fully, #1Ti 1:1.** As usual, Paul rises from the Son to the Father, whose will is the source of whatever Christ has done, and therefore of Paul's apostleship. Cp. **#Ga 1:4.** In this letter Paul will be compelled to use his apostolic authority. He therefore begins by reminding his readers that he received this authority by an express summons, and by the will of God.

**Sosthenes:** joined with Paul as joint author of the Epistle, or rather as sanctioning its contents. So "Timothy," in 2Co., Php., Col.; "Timothy and Silvanus," in 1 and 2Th.; "all the saints," in Galatians. The close connection of Timothy and Silvanus with the church addressed, moved Paul to join their names with his own. *Sosthenes*, however, is quite unknown to us. (The same name in **#Ac 18:17** is small proof or presumption of identity.) But he was evidently known to the Corinthians. And, doubtless, Paul had reasons for intimating in this way that he approved the contents of the Epistle. He may have been Paul's penman. But this would be no sufficient reason for his mention here; any more than Tertius, **#Ro 1:1; 16:22.** Nor is it proved by his mention here. For it is not likely that two penmen were needed for the Epistles to the Thessalonians: nor could that to the Galatians be written down by "all the saints with" Paul.

Ver. 2.-3. **The church:** see below.

**Of God.** #1Co 10:32; 11:16, 22; 15:9. As church members they stand in a special relation to God. Cp. #1Th 1:1; #2Th 1:1.

**Which there is etc.:** emphatic assertion that *at Corinth* there is a *church of God*.

**Sanctified in etc.:** made objectively holy; see #Ro 1:7. Subjectively, some of them were very unholy: #1Co 3:3; #2Co 12:21. This reference to the objective holiness of the whole church, implies that *in Christ Jesus* refers to what took place objectively in the historic and personal body of Christ. By giving Him to die and raising Him from the grave and to heaven, and by proclaiming the Gospel through His lips, which Gospel they had accepted, God claimed these Corinthians for His own; and thus placed them in a new and solemn position, in which, even in spite of their unfaithfulness, they now stood. Cp. #Heb 10:10.

**Called saints:** #Ro 1:7; 8:28. After reminding them that they were members of *the church of God*, and that, in the historic facts of the death and resurrection of the Anointed Jesus, God had claimed them for His own, Paul reminds them that it was by a special summons that they had been brought into the solemn position in which God's claim placed them. This three-fold description of their position is specially appropriate at the beginning of a letter written mainly to correct behavior altogether inconsistent with their holy calling.

**With all that etc.]** To others besides the Corinthians, Paul writes. To *call upon Jesus* in prayer, was to confess that He is *Lord* and *Christ* and was therefore a distinctive mark of a Christian. It also made prominent the Name of Him addressed. Hence the full emphatic title. Cp. #Ro 10:13.

**Belonging to them**, i.e. to the Christians at Corinth; goes naturally with the preceding words *in every place*, giving to these a definite reference. Otherwise the Epistle is addressed to all Christians everywhere; which its contents makes very unlikely. The above simple reference is supported by the equivalent "in all Achaia," #2Co 1:1. There were probably other churches in Achaia, e.g. Cenchreae, (#Ro 16:1.) some founded perhaps by Paul himself during his sojourn at Corinth, and others by the efforts of the Corinthian Christians, which looked up to the metropolis of the province as their mother, and thus belonged spiritually to the Christians at Corinth.

**To us:** reminds us that these daughter-churches belonged also to Paul and his colleagues, both as being within the divinely marked limits (#2Co 10:13-16) of their labor and as directly or indirectly the fruit of it. The added words remind us again of Paul's apostolic authority, which he will soon be compelled to use.

**Us;** may include Paul's colleagues, Timothy, Silvanus, etc.; or, for reasons unknown to us, Sosthenes; or may be somewhat indefinite, as in #Ro 1:5.

**Grace and peace:** #Ro 1:7.

Ver. 4. **I thank: #Ro 1:8.** Although this letter was written, with many tears, (#2Co 2:4,) to reprove and correct, Paul's first thought, as he begins it, is gratitude. For, in spite of the gross immorality (#1Co 5:1; #2Co 12:21) of some and the spiritual childishness (#1Co 3:1ff, 5:2) of the church generally, a great work had been done by God at Corinth. And this good work Paul thinks of and acknowledges before he begins to find fault.

**My God: #Ro 1:8.**

**Always: #1Th 1:2; #2Th 1:3.** Gratitude for the work done at Corinth and elsewhere was to Paul an abiding habit of mind. He cannot say "about you all," as in #Ro 1:8; #1Th 1:2.

**Grace given to you.** Cp. #Ro 1:5: not the general favor with which God smiles on all the justified, as in #Eph 1:3, but His special favor shown to the Corinthians in the gifts mentioned in #1Co 1:5. So #Ro 12:3; 15:15. Consequently, *in Christ* is also subjective, denoting that inward spiritual contact with Christ through which we personally receive God's favor and the various undeserved gifts it moves Him to bestow. This implies the objective sense found in #1Co 1:2; but is distinct from it. Through the death and resurrection of the historic Jesus, and through personal contact with His Spirit, God's favor shines upon us.

Ver. 5. **That in etc.;** specifies "grace given." In everything #2Co 9:11: limited, like all universals, by the writer's mental horizon; (see under #Ro 5:18;) and here expounded by *all utterance and all knowledge*, which include all the spiritual capacities needed for church progress.

**Enriched: #Ro 2:4; 9:23; 10:12; 11:12, 33; #2Co 6:10; 8:2, 9; 9:11, etc.**

**In Him;** repeats "in Christ Jesus;" and thus lays stress upon the truth that all real wealth comes through spiritual contact with Him.

**All knowledge:** mental comprehension of the truth in *all* its aspects.

**All utterance:** ability to speak forth the truth in *all* the modes needful to convey it to the various sorts of men. These gifts seldom go together in one man. But he who possesses either of them is an enrichment to his church. And the church which possesses, in its various members, these gifts in a special degree is truly rich.

**Utterance** is put first as the more conspicuous. [The R.V. *were enriched* gives to the indefinite tense a definite reference which does not belong to it. See *The Expositor*, 1st Series vol. xi. p. 296.]

Ver. 6. **Testimony of the Christ: #2Ti 1:8:** probably Paul's witness about the Messiah. Cp. #Ac 1:8, "You shall be my witnesses." For Paul thought, probably, of Christ more frequently as the great matter than as the preacher of the Gospel. That Paul's preaching is here called a *testimony*, agrees with the Epistle to the Romans, of which the argument rests on five unproved assertions which Paul accepted because they came from the lips of Christ. See my "Romans," dissertation i. 3.

**Took-a-firm-place:** same word in **#Ro 15:8**; (cp **#Ro 4:16**;) there objectively, here subjectively. "*The testimony* was fully believed by you, and thus became an immovable conviction *in you*."

**According as etc.]** Their enrichment in utterance and knowledge was a result proportionate to their firm belief of the Gospel. For, a firm grasp of the great foundation truths enables us to make progress in all Christian knowledge, and to speak out suitably, clearly, and forcefully the word we have believed.

Ver. 7. **So that etc.:** result of their firm faith, and therefore a negative parallel to "in everything you have been enriched."

**Fall-short:** **#Ro 3:23**; **#1Co 8:8**; **12:24**; **#2Co 11:5, 8**; **12:11**: in view either of others who have more, or of our own need. Here, probably the latter. It is the exact opposite of enrichment.

**Gift-of-grace;** **#Ro 1:11**, (see note,) **#Ro 12:6**; **#1Co 7:7**; **12:4**; includes all spiritual gifts wrought by the favor of God. All such are capacities for spiritual growth, and for usefulness to others; and are therefore spiritual wealth. No such capacity was lacking to the church at Corinth. And these gifts were a result of their firm faith.

**Revelation of etc.:** **#1Pe 1:7, 13**: the sudden uplifting, at the great day, of the veil which now hides our Master from our view. Spiritually, He is already (**#Ga 1:16**) unveiled to us. Since the appearance of Christ will be an outward objective fact, He is said (**#Col 3:4**) to be "manifested:" since He will be actually seen by all, His appearance is also a revelation. See under **#Ro 1:17, 19**.

**Waiting for:** **#Ro 8:19, 23, 25**. They already possessed spiritual gifts which were a proof of God's favor: while at the same time they were eagerly looking forward to that day when Jesus will visibly appear to bring in the final glory. These added words remind us that the Christian life is essentially a looking forward to future glory. All present enrichment is but an earnest of the better things which Christ, at His coming, will bring.

Ver. 8. **Who also etc.:** another blessing which will follow. The spiritual wealth already received can be retained, and our expectations fulfilled, only by the stability which day by day Christ will give. Cp. **#Ro 16:25**; **#2Co 1:21**.

**Make-you-firm:** same word as in **#1Co 1:6**. They in whom the Gospel has a firm place, are themselves immovable. These words must be understood in harmony with **#Ro 11:20**, etc., which teaches that continuance in the Christian life depends upon continued faith, and implies the possibility that faith may fail, even finally. But this does not prevent us from cherishing a firm confidence of the final salvation of ourselves and others. Cp. **#Php 1:6**.

**To the end;** of the present state of probation, whether ended by death or by the coming of Christ. So **#2Co 1:13**; **#Heb 3:6, 14**; **6:11**.

**Unimpeachable in the Day etc.:** so that they will then (**#Php 1:10**) lie open to no charge (**#Ro 8:33**) such as will exclude them from the Kingdom.



**The Day of our Lord Jesus Christ: #1Co 5:5; #2Co 1:14; #Php 1:6, 10; 2:16; #1Th 5:2; #2Th 2:2.** To the day of Christ's return the early Christians looked forward, as Israel did ages before to the "Day of Jehovah," (**#Joe 1:15; 2:1**, etc.,) i.e. to the day when Jehovah would rescue His people and punish the wicked. To stand *unimpeachable* (cp. **#Col 1:22f**) *in the Day of Christ*, is to obtain the glory which He will bring.

Ver. 9. **Faithful (#1Co 4:17) is God: #1Co 10:13.** Again, as in **#1Co 1:1**, Paul rises from the Son to the Father; and supports the assurance of **#1Co 1:8** by an appeal to the character of God.

**Partnership: #1Co 10:16, 18, 20:** same word in **#Ro 15:26f**. Already (**#Ro 8:16f**) we are sharers of the sonship of Christ: and therefore those kept "to the end" will share the Firstborn Son's inheritance of glory. For this, they were (**#Ro 8:29**) predestined and called. Cp. **#Re 3:21**. Notice the emphatic and repeated title in **#1Co 1:7, 8**, culminating in the fuller title here.

**Through: #Ro 1:2.** The gospel *call* (**#1Co 1:2**) is not only always said to come from the Father as its source, but comes to us by His immediate activity, sending His Son to announce it and raising Him from the dead to prove that the call is divine. Cp. **#Ga 1:1**. "All things are from Him and through Him," **#Ro 11:36**. This call, given to us by the agency of God Himself, implies that His faithfulness is a pledge that Christ will give us the stability needful to obtain that to which we are called.

Approaching the Corinthian Christians, in whom he has much to blame, Paul reminds them that by an express summons, by the will of God, he has been placed in the first rank of the servants of Christ. He thinks proper to add that in what he is about to say, Sosthenes agrees with him. He remembers the dignity of his readers as members of the church of God; that, through the death and resurrection of Christ, they have been claimed by God to be His own; and that, like his own apostleship, this claim was conveyed to them by a divine summons. Nor does he forget that other churches around look up to that at Corinth as their mother; churches which belong to him as well as to them. To the mother and her daughters he sends greeting from the common Father and the common Master.

Although writing to them in tears for their unfaithfulness, it is ever in Paul's mind that he has at Corinth cause for gratitude to his God. The church there has evident marks of the favor of God. The Gospel they have firmly believed has made its members rich in knowledge of the Will of God and in ability to declare it. In no gift needful for spiritual progress are they behind. They are looking forward to the appearance of Christ. And Paul cherishes a hope resting on the faithfulness of God that Christ will keep them steadfast to the end.

Notice that Paul speaks first in **#1Co 1:2**, of the objective holiness of the Corinthian church arising from the divine call which has gathered them together and made them a church, a holiness belonging to all Christians alike; and then, in **#1Co 1:4-7**, of their own special subjective development in the Christian life.

The word **CHURCH** represents a common Greek word, *Ecclesia*, or "calling out;" from which we have "ecclesiastic," etc., and the French "eglise," etc. The *ecclesia* was the assembly of the free

citizens of a Greek city, summoned by herald to discuss and determine matters of public interest. The word was also used for any public assembly, whether regular as in **#Ac 19:39** or occasional as in **#Ac 19:32, 41**, where we have the same word. It is often used in the LXX. for the regular gatherings of Israel, in reference either to the event, or to the people gathered together. Cp. **#De 9:10**, "in the day of the assembly;" also **#Ps 22:23** with **#Heb 2:12**; **#1Ki 8:65**; **#De 23:1-3**, **#1Ch 28:2, 8**; **#Ne 13:1**, where we have the "church of the Lord," "of God;" and Judith 6:16; 14:6; Sirach 15:5; 1 Macc. 4:59. Similarly, in **#Ac 7:38** it denotes the nation of Israel assembled in the wilderness.

This name, familiar both to Greeks and Jews, but with different associations was chosen by the followers of Jesus for their frequent gatherings, for mutual edification and for joint-worship: cp. **#1Co 11:18; 14:19, 28, 34f**. It then came easily to denote a company of believers in the habit of thus meeting together. This naturally included all professed Christians living in one city. But even small assemblies, parts of larger churches, and held in private houses, were called churches; as in **#1Co 16:19**, etc. The totality of believers in even the largest cities is spoken of as the one church of that city; but those living in different cities of one country, as (**#1Co 16:1, 19**) "the churches of Galatia," etc. The only exception is **#Ac 9:31**, "The church throughout all Judea." This local sense is that of three-fourths of the cases in which the word is found in the New Testament.

Paul assumes always that all church-members are justified, sons of God by faith, sealed by the Holy Spirit, **#1Co 6:11; 12:13**; **#Ro 5:9, 11**; **#Ga 3:26; 4:6**; and never urges them to obtain these blessings. This does not imply that there were no false or weak brethren; but certainly implies that these blessings are the present privilege of all followers of Christ.

In a few sublime passages, **#Eph 1:22; 3:10, 21; 5:23-32**; **#Col 1:18, 24**; **#Heb 12:23**, the *Church* denotes all those who are savingly united to Christ; and therefore includes, we may hope, many not in outward union with the professed people of God, and excludes some who are. Some of these passages include the church triumphant.

The word refers sometimes to a particular church as representing the conception of the universal church, **#1Co 10:32; 11:22**; **#Ac 20:28**; in **#1Co 12:28**, to the whole community of believers, at whose head God placed the apostles, and whom (**#1Co 15:9**; **#Ga 1:13**; **#Php 3:6**) Paul formerly persecuted.

To sum up: The word *church* denotes either the totality of professed followers of Christ living in one place, organized under its own officers and probably meeting together if practicable for edification and worship, or a smaller assembly included in the larger one and meeting for the same purposes, or the totality of the justified children of God, visible only to His eye, now in part on earth in part within the veil, but destined to be forever the glorified bride of Christ. In a few cases it denotes a particular church as representing the whole community of believers; and once the community as a whole.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION I

### ABOUT THE CHURCH-PARTIES

#### CHAPTERS I. 10-IV.

#### *SECTION II*

#### *HE HAS HEARD OF THEIR DIVISIONS*

#### CH. I. 10-17a

But I exhort you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you may all speak the same thing, and there may not be among you divisions, but you may be fully equipped in the same mind and in the same opinion. For it has been declared to me about you, my brothers, by them of Cloe, that there are strifes among you. I mean\* (\* Or, say.) this, that each of you says, I am a follower of Paul, but I, of Apollos; but I of Cephas; but I, of Christ. Christ has been divided. Was Paul crucified on your behalf? Or, for the name of Paul were you baptized? I thank God that not one of you I baptized, except Crispus and Gaius; lest any one should say that for my name you were baptized. And I baptized also the house of Stephanas. For the rest I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to announce good news.

This Epistle is a reply to a letter from Corinth (#1Co 7:1) asking advice on sundry matters. But other matters more serious than these and apparently not mentioned in the Corinthian letter, Paul has heard of, and must deal with, before he begins to answer these less important questions. Of these more serious matters, he mentions first and at great length the church-parties. This subject he introduces in § 2, by an exhortation to harmony, #1Co 1:10; tells them what he has heard, #1Co 1:11, 12; shows its impropriety, #1Co 1:13; and expounds his own contrary conduct, #1Co 1:14-17a.

Ver. 10. **Brothers**: exact term used for the sons of one human father. Paul supports his earnest and affectionate appeal (#Ro 15:30; 16:17) by mentioning that one great *Name* (#1Co 1:2, cp. #Ro 1:5) which awakens in all Christians the deepest emotions of love and gratitude, which all Christians profess and seek to exalt among men, and which should be a bond of union to the universal church.

**Speak the same thing**: opposite of "each of you says etc.," #1Co 1:12.

**Divisions**: separations arising naturally from expressed differences of opinion.

**Fully-equipped**: quite ready for use or service: akin to "thoroughly furnished," #2Ti 3:17. Same word in #Ro 9:22, "made-ready for destruction." It is frequently used of that which has been

damaged, and thus made unfit for use: e.g. **#Mt 4:21**, "mending their nets;" **#Ezr 4:12**, "set up the walls." It was used by the Greeks for the removal of faction in the state: e.g. Herodotus, bk. v. 28.

**The same mind:** same mental faculty of looking through (**#Ro 1:20**) things seen to their inward essence, naturally leading to *the same opinion* (**#1Co 7:25, 40**) in matters of detail. Only those churches and Christians who are filled with a spirit of harmony and who look at the various details of church life in the light of an earnest desire for the general good, are fully equipped for their work and conflict.

Ver. 11.-12. Reason for the above exhortation. Paul introduces his charge by an expression of affection, *my brothers*, even warmer than that of **#1Co 1:10**. Both Cloe and the relationship to her *of them of Cloe*, are quite unknown. Paul's mention of them implies that they were willing for it to be known that they had given this information. This was no small test of their good faith.

**Strifes:** natural result of "divisions."

**Each of you.** The fault was universal.

**Apollos: #Ac 18:24-19:1.** His complete personal concord with Paul, **#1Co 16:12** reveals.

**Cephas:** an Aramaic name denoting "rock" or "stone," given (**#Joh 1:43**) by Jesus to Simon. "Petra" is its Greek equivalent, and is so used (LXX.) in **#Jer 4:29; #Job 30:6**, where we have a Hebrew form of the same Aramaic word. But, since "Petra" is feminine, the less exact masculine equivalent "Petros" (Peter) is used as the Greek name of the Apostle. The meaning of this name gives force to **#Mt 16:18**, "Thou art Rock: and on this Rock I will build my church." This sense is reproduced, though not accurately, in the French version "Tu es Pierre, et sur cette pierre etc." In Paul's epistles the name Peter is found twice, **#Ga 2:7, 8**; Cephas, eight times, **#Ga 1:18; 2:9, 11, 14; #1Co 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5**. That a party in Corinth, a Greek city called itself by an Aramaic name, suggests that its members were chiefly Jews, and that probably they prided themselves in the name so solemnly given and expounded by Christ.

This verse refers to a matter well known to the Corinthian Christians; but known to us only by difficult and uncertain inference from **#1Co 1:10-4:8**, and from a few scattered and doubtful references elsewhere. As we come to each reference we will examine the evidence it affords. This evidence we will gather together at the end of DIV. I.; and try to obtain thus a view, necessarily imperfect, of these church-parties.

From this verse we learn that at Corinth there were four parties, calling themselves by four names; and that to one or other of these parties all the church members belonged. That Paul puts all the parties side by side, proves that all were to blame, even the last. That Paul is mentioned first, then Apollos, suggests that the parties arose in the order here given. That *Cephas* was a party name, is no proof that Peter, any more than *Christ*, had actually preached at Corinth. The Aramaic name suggests that the party was founded by Jews who appealed to the authority of Peter. Possibly something Peter had said or done (cp. **#Ga 2:11**) may have been misconstrued for their own purposes by

unscrupulous partisans. One party had dared to inscribe on its banner, in token doubtless of assumed superiority, the name of *Christ*.

Ver. 13. **Christ** has been and **is divided**, suggesting by "of Christ" but applicable to all the parties; and showing their sad result. All the parties, even that which prided itself in His Name, had been practically tearing to pieces the Master they professed to serve; and continued to do so. Christ shows Himself, and speaks, to men, and works out His purpose of mercy, through the lives and lips of His people, who are His body, (**#1Co 12:27**,) and His representatives. The practical influence of Christ upon the world is proportionate to their oneness of aim and effort: for this oneness is evidently not human but divine. Consequently, whatever divides Christians, lessens Christ's influence upon the world; by presenting to men a practically mutilated, and therefore comparatively ineffective, Saviour. The practical identity of Christ and His people will often meet us. Cp. **#1Co 12:12**, "So also is Christ."

With good taste *Paul* chooses his own name as an example of the impropriety of making men heads of church-parties. The evident surprise of this question betrays the infinite difference, in his view, between Christ's death for men and the deadly peril to which Paul constantly exposed himself for the salvation of men. This difference can be explained only by the great Doctrine of **#Ro 3:24-26**.

**On your behalf: #Ro 5:6.**

**Crucified, baptized:** the greatest events in the history of the church, and of the individual; (cp. **#Ro 6:3**;) and most closely connected.

Ver. 14. **I baptized none of you:** a beautiful trait of Paul's character. Most preachers delight to take a prominent part in the public reception of their converts. But Paul saw the danger of this, as tending to exalt the preacher in men's eyes. He therefore purposely (**#1Co 1:15**) and systematically placed himself on such occasions in the background. Cp. **#Ac 10:48**. This he could well afford to do because of the greater honor, given to him, of preaching the Gospel and thus leading men to Christ. He wished men to think, not of the successful preacher, but of Him whose professed servants the baptized ones were. How different was the aim of those who wrote Paul's name on the banner of their party! Paul thanks God for his own conduct. For every good action is prompted by God, and enriches the actor.

**Crispus: #Ac 18:6-8.** The conversion of the ruler of the synagogue with his whole family was doubtless an era in the founding of the church at Corinth.

**Gaius: #Ro 16:23.** That he was "host of the whole church," suggests that he, like Crispus, was a man of importance. And, though souls are of equal worth to God, yet the accession of these men was so important in its influence upon others that Paul thought fit to make them an exception to his usual custom, and himself baptize them. For, like all wise men, he was prepared, when special circumstances made it expedient, to deviate even from a good custom.

Ver. 15. Purpose of Paul's abstinence from baptizing, viz. to prevent the supposition that the baptized ones stood henceforth in some special relation to himself, i.e. to prevent what had actually happened at Corinth.

**Any one:** within or without the church.

**Should say:** in contrast to "*each of you says*," **#1Co 1:12**. It is possible that Paul had noticed at Corinth a tendency to hero-worship, and to guard against it had been specially careful to keep himself in the background.

Ver. 16. Another exception in Paul's custom.

**House: #Mt 10:13; 12:25:** the household, including wife, children, and servants. The family of *Stephanas*, as of Crispus, (**#Ac 18:8**) joined its head in accepting the Gospel: **#1Co 16:15**. Perhaps even before Paul came they were like Cornelius (**#Ac 10:2**) who "feared God with all his house." The importance of the conversion of this family, which was the beginning (**#1Co 16:15**) of the church in Achaia, moved Paul to baptize it personally, and perhaps all together. *Stephanas* seems to have been (**#1Co 16:17**) one of the bearers of the letter to which this Epistle was a reply. How little we know the interesting memories awakened in Paul's mind by the names of Crispus, Gaius, and *Stephanas*!

That Paul is said to have baptized the three households of Lydia and the gaoler (**#Ac 16:15, 33**) and *Stephanas*, has been appealed to in proof that he baptized infants; on the ground that these three families probably contained infants, and that when Paul baptized the household he must have baptized the infants. But that these three persons, one a woman in business of whose husband nothing is said, had infant children, is far from certain; and is a very unsafe basis for argument. Nor does the phrase, *baptized the house*, make it certain that the infants, if there were any, were baptized. For we are told (**#Joh 4:54**) that the courtier of Capernaum "believed, himself and his whole house:" so did (**#Ac 18:8**) Crispus and probably (**#Ac 16:34**) the gaoler: Cornelius (**#Ac 10:2**) "feared God with all his house:" the house of *Stephanas* was (**#1Co 16:15**) a firstfruit of Achaia. But this by no means implies that in these five homes there were no infants, or that the infants believed the Gospel or feared God; but simply that those capable of understanding the Gospel believed it. Just so in reference to baptism. Paul's readers knew whether he was accustomed to baptize infants. If he was, they would infer that in these cases he baptized the infants, if there were any. If he was not, they would interpret his words to mean that he baptized all who were of suitable age. We are told expressly that three entire households, one (**#Joh 4:53**) probably containing servants, believed the Gospel. Even now it sometimes happens that a whole family seeks admission to the church. And such cases must have been far more frequent when the Gospel was first preached. No doubt other families besides that of Cornelius were groping their way towards the light, and were ready to hail its appearance. Consequently, these passages render no aid to determine whether the apostles baptized infants.

Dr. Whedon, under **#Ac 16:34**, supposes that all the gaoler's household were infants (!!!), and that their faith was implied in his. Under **#Ac 16:15**, he quotes approvingly Dr. Schaff, who asserts five cases of baptized households and in proof quotes passages of which two are seen in a moment to be

actually against him. Dr. S. adds: "It is hardly conceivable that all the adult sons and daughters in these five" (he ought to have said three) "cases so quickly determined on going over with their parents to a despised and persecuted religious society." I understand him to mean that the fact that the household was baptized makes it inconceivable that it contained adult children. But we are told that three men believed with "all" their houses: and we cannot conceive this to mean that the faith of infants was implied in their father's faith. Schaff and Whedon say that the baptized households are "given merely as examples:" but of this they give no proof whatever.

**I do not know etc.;** implies that Paul's practice had not been so strict as to exclude the possibility of other exceptions. His uncertainty is not inconsistent with the divine authority of the New Testament. The Holy Spirit did not think fit to quicken his memory in this matter to the point of certainty. But this uncertainty, which Paul acknowledges, does not imply uncertainty or error in matters of which he speaks with confidence.

Ver. 17a. Justifies Paul in not baptizing his converts, by saying that his not doing so was no failure to do the work for which Christ sent him.

**Not to baptize;** does not mean that Christ forbid him to baptize, but that this was not the purpose for which Christ appeared to him and sent him.

**Good-news: #Ro 1:1:** literally, "not to baptize but to evangelize." This agrees exactly with **#Ac 9:15; 22:14; 26:16**. It does not imply a mission different from **#Mt 28:19**: for there baptism is subordinate to making disciples. This verse embodies the great truth that even the most solemn outward forms are secondary to inward spiritual life. But even a second place in the kingdom of God may be of great importance.

Paul has now stated the first of the matters which moved him to write to the Corinthians, viz. a report of a serious and universal evil in the church. He has given them his authority, told them the terrible practical consequence of their conduct, and reminded them how contrary it is to the spirit which animated his own ministry among them. To avoid the appearance of gathering disciples for himself, he abstained from baptizing his converts. This was no neglect of his apostolic mission. For, the announcement of good news, not the formal reception of church-members, was the work for which he was sent by Christ.

# **I CORINTHIANS**

## *SECTION III*

### *HIS OWN PREACHING AT CORINTH LAID NO CLAIM TO HUMAN WISDOM*

#### CH. I. 17B-II. 5

**For Christ sent me . . . to announce good news; not with wisdom of word, lest the cross of Christ be made an empty thing. For the word of the cross, to those indeed who are perishing, is foolishness: but to those who are being saved, to us, it is a power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise ones: and the understanding of the understanding ones I will set aside." (#Isa 29:14.) Where is the wise man? where the scribe? where the disputant of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For, since amid the wisdom of God the world did not by means of the wisdom know God, it pleased God by means of the foolishness of the proclamation to save those who believe. since both Jews ask for signs and Greeks seek wisdom: but as for us, we proclaim Christ crucified, to Jews indeed a snare, and to Gentiles foolishness; but, to the called ones themselves, Christ, God's power and God's wisdom. Because the foolish thing of God is wiser than men. and the weak thing of God is stronger than men. For, look at your calling, brothers, that not many are wise according to flesh, not many powerful, not many well-born. But the foolish things of the world God has chosen, that He may put to shame the wise ones: and the weak things of the world God has chosen, that He may put to shame the strong things: and the low-born things of the world and the despised things God has chosen, the things which are not; that He may bring to nought\* (\* Or made of no effect.) the things which are: in order that no flesh may exult before God. And from Him you are in Christ Jesus, who has become wisdom to us from God, both righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, that, according as it is written, "He that exults, let him exult in the Lord." (#Jer 9:24.)**

**And for my part, when I came to you, brothers, I came not according to superiority of word or wisdom announcing to you the mystery of God. For I did not judge fit to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I, in weakness and in fear and in much trembling I was with you. And my word and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with proof of the Spirit and of power; that your faith may not be in men's wisdom but in God's power.**

At this point Paul seems to turn away from the matter of the factions, which he has touched only for a moment, to discuss the powerlessness of human wisdom and the divine power of the Gospel. But we shall soon see that throughout DIV. I. he has the factions in view; and that he now rises from them to discuss great principles, in order to bring these principles to bear upon this detail of church life. For a similar mode of argument, but on a smaller scale, see **#Ro 14:13-21**. He thus makes a transitory matter at Corinth a pattern for similar matters in all ages. The application of the argument of § 3 to the factions at Corinth is to us partly obscured by our ignorance of their exact cause and circumstances. It will, however, become clear to us that their real cause was an overestimate of



human wisdom, an error common to at least the parties of Paul and Apollos; and that by proving the powerlessness of human wisdom Paul strikes at the root of the whole evil.

In justifying himself for baptizing so few, Paul has appealed to his commission by Christ. He now makes this commission a starting point for dealing with the relation of the Gospel to human wisdom; a matter which he discusses in §§ 3, 4. At the end of § 4 he brings the results of his discussion to bear upon the matter of the factions.

Verse 17b. **Wisdom of word**, or (same as in **#1Co 1:5**) *of utterance*: a skilful way of putting a matter, so as best to attain the speaker's purpose. Cp. **#1Co 2:4, 13**. The good news which Christ sent Paul to announce was not clothed in skilful speech.

**An empty thing**: barren of results. Had the Gospel been set forth with clever reasoning, its results might have been attributed to the skill of the preacher. If so, the superhuman power, which through the death of Christ operates on men, would have been overlooked. And, if so, it would have been shorn of results: for the blood of Christ saves in proportion as its saving power is recognized. Therefore, in order that His own death might not become a mere incident in the story of the past, like that of Socrates, but might be crowned with results, Christ committed to Paul a message not clothed in skilful speech.

Ver. 18. Explains and justifies, in outline, the motive just given. Of this outline, **#1Co 1:19-30** are a filling up.

**Word of the cross**: the announcement, as good news, that Christ has died.

**To them that are perishing**: same words in **#2Co 2:15; 4:3; #2Th 2:10**. See note under **#Ro 2:24**. The destruction of those who reject Christ has already begun, and daily goes on. For, in them, spiritual forces are already at work which unless arrested by God, will inevitably bring them to eternal death. Since they are now beyond human help, they are said in **#Mt 10:6; #Eph 2:1; #Ro 7:9**, to be "lost" and "dead." But since they are still within reach of Christ's salvation but daily going further from it, Paul prefers to speak of them here, not as "lost," but as *losing themselves or perishing*.

**Foolishness**: unfit, from an intellectual point of view, to attain any good result. Such is the Gospel, to the thoughts of, and in its practical effect upon, those whose faces are turned towards eternal ruin.

**Being saved**: same contrast in **#2Co 2:15**: experiencing day by day a present deliverance from spiritual evil, and thus daily approaching final salvation. See **#Ro 5:9**.

**Power of God**: **#Ro 1:16**. The announcement that Christ died for us is, to God's people, the strong hand of God stretched out to save them, and daily saving them. Thus our own thoughts about the story of the cross will tell us to which of these classes we belong. Notice Paul's love of contrast, as in **#Ro 8:12, 15**. etc.

Verse 18 expounds the motive contained in "lest the cross etc." by telling us the fullness of which "the cross of Christ" might be "emptied" if announced with skilful speech. The death of Christ owes its results, not to anything which commends itself to human wisdom as suitable to attain its end, but purely to God's power operating upon men through Christ's death. And the cross is effective in proportion as this power is recognized. Now whatever might seem to aid the cross would claim a share of its victory, and thus obscure the unique and divine power to which alone the whole victory is due. Therefore, acting under the direction of Him who "sent" him, Paul refuses the aid even of human eloquence.

Since the Gospel is a *power of God*, it must needs appear *foolishness* to those who do not experience its power. For the power of God is beyond our comprehension: and all means beyond our comprehension seem to us unfit to attain any good result; for we cannot see the connection between the means and end. Consequently, superior wisdom has often, at first sight, the appearance of folly.

Ver. 19. Begins a defense and proof of **#1Co 1:18**, by quoting almost word for word (LXX.) **#Isa 29:14**, which refers probably to the invasion of Sennacherib, **#Isa 36:1**. The statesmen of Judah had sought to protect their country by an alliance with Egypt. And, but for the covenant of God, which made it an act of rebellion against Him, such alliance would have been their best defense, and therefore a mark of political *wisdom*. But God made this *wisdom* practically worthless, and in this sense *destroyed* it, by bringing against Judah the armies of Sennacherib and thus placing the nation in a position in which all political wisdom was powerless to save. And, as Paul's readers knew, by His own power God wrought salvation in a way most unlikely. Now, in **#1Co 1:18**, Paul said that the Gospel, which to many seemed utterly unfit to do any good, was nevertheless a power of God to save. It might be asked, How can this be? The story of Sennacherib tells us, and thus removes the improbability of **#1Co 1:18**. And the constancy of the principles of God's administration, and the fact that every divine deliverance is a pattern of the great deliverance, make the words of Isaiah a prophecy of the gospel salvation. But the chief force of this quotation lies in **#1Co 1:20-24**, which prove that in the Gospel this ancient prophecy has been actually fulfilled, on a far larger scale than in the days of Sennacherib.

**Understanding:** **#Ro 1:21**: the faculty of putting together, and reading the meaning of, facts and phenomena around.

**Wisdom:** see note below: the noblest kind of knowledge, used as a guide in action.

Ver. 20. **Where is Wise-man? where is Scribe? where is Disputant?** triumphant questions (cp. **#1Co 15:55**, **#Ro 3:27**) suggested in form perhaps by **#Isa 19:12; 33:18**; but prompted by the complete failure of human wisdom to bring salvation.

**Scribe:** literally "man of letters," "Scripture-man:" a class of Jews devoted to the study of the Scriptures, **#2Sa 8:17**; **#2Ch 34:13**; **#Ezr 7:6, 11**; 2 Macc. 6:18; **#Mt 7:29; 17:10**. Cp. **#Mt 23:34**, "prophets and wise men and scribes;" **#Mt 13:52**. Also, among the Greeks, an officer of the state **#Ac 19:35**, "town clerk;" Thucydides, bk. vii. 10, iv. 118. It is used here probably in its common Bible sense of "student of the Jewish Scriptures."

**Disputant**; refers probably to Greek men of learning, among whom discussion had a large place. If so, *wise-man* includes Jewish *scribe* and Gentile *disputant*.

**This age**: see **#Ro 12:2**: the complex realm of things around us except so far as it submits to Christ, looked upon as existing in time, and for a time. The unsaved are "sons of this age," **#Lu 16:8; 20:34**: for all they have and are belongs to this present life. Contrast "the coming age," **#Lu 18:30; #Eph 2:7; #Heb 6:5**.

**The world**: see **#1Co 5:10**: the complex total of things around us, looked upon as now existing in space.

**The wisdom of the world**: the best knowledge possessed by those who belong to the world around, looked upon as a practical guide of life.

**Has not God etc.**; answers, by a question recalling a matter of fact, the previous questions; and justifies their triumphant tone. It introduces **#1Co 1:21**, which proves that the prophecy of **#1Co 1:19** has been fulfilled in the gospel and that the assertion of **#1Co 1:18**, to support which the prophecy was quoted, is true.

**Made foolish**: equivalent to "destroy the wisdom," **#1Co 1:19**. How God did this, is explained in **#1Co 1:21**.

Ver. 21. **Since the world knew not God**: a fact which moved *God to save by . . . the proclamation*.

**Amid the wisdom of God**: surrounded by the works of creation, all which, from the little flowers under our feet to the great orbs of heaven, are embodiments and witnesses of *the wisdom of God*. And before many of Paul's readers (for the *world* includes Jews, **#1Co 1:22**) lay open the pages of the Old Testament on which God had written His wisdom in still plainer characters. Paul has no need to say whether *by means of the wisdom* refers to the wisdom of God or of man. For to *know God by means of wisdom* is to lay hold by the human faculty of wisdom of the divine Wisdom revealed in Nature, in social life, and in the Scriptures; and thus to make wisdom the avenue of approach to God.

**Did not know God**: contrast **#Ro 1:21**. They knew Him (**#1Co 8:2**) as existing and powerful; but not "as one must needs know" in order (**#Joh 17:25, 3**) to have "eternal life." They did not know the love which is the very essence of His nature. For this is known only (**#Mt 11:27; #Ro 5:5; #Eph 3:18f**) by Christ's revelation. And, not to know that God loves us, is not to *know God*. Notice the marked contrast, *in the wisdom of God* and *not by means of the wisdom*. God's wisdom was all around them; but was not to them a channel of knowledge of Himself.

**It pleased God**; suggests that the choice of the instrument was prompted only by the kindness of God.

**The proclamation**, of the heralds of salvation: see **#Ro 2:21**. This, taken by itself, as a mere spoken word, is utterly unable to save. Therefore, looked upon as an instrument of salvation, it is an

embodiment of foolishness. And God chose it that the very insufficiency of the instrument might show forth the might of Him who by a mere word spoken by human lips could rescue believers from the grasp of sin and death. Just so Samson's weapon (**#Jud 15:15**) proclaimed by its ludicrous insufficiency the infinite power of the Spirit of God. Notice the double failure of human wisdom. It was unable to read God's name as written in Nature, and pronounced that to be foolishness which He chose as the instrument of salvation.

This verse proves the assertion implied in the question of **#1Co 1:20b**. By saving men after man had failed to obtain through the avenue of wisdom that knowledge of God which brings salvation, by saving them with an instrument which to man's best wisdom seemed utterly inadequate, God made man's wisdom worthless as a means of salvation; and thus "made it foolish," and "destroyed" it.

Ver. 22.-24. Develops, and thus confirms **#1Co 1:21**; **#1Co 1:22** develops "the world knew not God;" **#1Co 1:23**, "the foolishness of the proclamation;" **#1Co 1:24**, "to save those who believe."

**Ask for etc.:** in their disputations with Christians.

**For signs:** agrees with **#Joh 4:48**; **#Mt 16:4**.

**Signs:** evidently something different from, and yet as the same word (**#2Co 12:12**; **#Ro 15:19**) implies similar to, the miracles actually wrought by Paul. They probably asked for a visible appearance of Christ in glory and power, such as would dispel all doubt about His Messiahship.

**Wisdom:** see note below.

**Seek wisdom:** constant habit of their nation, and specially prominent in their treatment of the Gospel. They demanded, as proof that Christ was worthy to be their teacher, that He should expound the mysteries of being and reveal the great principles underlying the phenomena around.

**Proclaim:** as heralds.

**Snare:** see **#Ro 11:9**. That He who claimed to be the *Anointed One* actually died a criminal's death, was a trap in which the Jews were caught: i.e. they rejected Jesus because He was *crucified*. Cp. **#Ro 9:33**; **#Ga 5:11**; **#Mt 11:6**; **13:57**; **#1Pe 2:8**.

**Foolishness:** as, from the point of view of human intelligence, utterly unsuited to attain any good result. The announcement, as a means of salvation, of that which was to the Jews a reason for rejecting Jesus and to the Greeks seemed altogether unfitted to do any good, was the foolishness of the proclamation."

**The called ones:** they in whom the proclamation rejected by others has proved itself to be a summons from God. See under **#Ro 8:28**. Cp. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* i. 18: "While all men have been called, they who were minded to obey received the name of *called ones*." *Christ is God's power* because through the objective and historic birth and death of Jesus, and through inward

subjective spiritual union with Him, God stretched out and stretches out His mighty arm to rescue those who obey the divine summons. Similarly, "the word of the cross is the power of God," **#1Co 1:18**; **#Ro 1:16**: for through the word the power operates. Christ is God's *wisdom* because through Him, objectively and subjectively, God reveals the eternal realities underlying the present life and world, and His own eternal purpose in which with infinite skill the best means are chosen for the best ends. Cp. **#1Co 2:7**; **#Col 2:2**.

The facts and teaching of **#1Co 1:22-24**, Paul's readers admitted. These prove the concise statement of **#1Co 1:21**, and justify the triumphant statement in **#1Co 1:20** that the prophecy quoted in **#1Co 1:19** has been fulfilled in the Gospel. Thus, from the facts of his own day, read in the light of an ancient prophecy, Paul has proved the statement of **#1Co 1:18**, and justified the motive given in **#1Co 1:17b**.

Ver. 25. After proving the facts of **#1Co 1:18**, Paul now accounts for them by comparing *God* and *men*.

**The foolish-thing of God:** that which belongs to *God*, but which to men seems *foolish*. Whatever comes from God is guided by infinite wisdom, and is therefore *wiser*, i.e. better fitted to attain a good end, than are men, with all their skill, to attain their ends. Now the means chosen by one wiser than ourselves often appear to us foolish, simply because our ignorance prevents us from seeing their suitability. Therefore, if we admit God's superior wisdom we shall not be surprised that He uses means which to us seem foolish. Nor need we be surprised that His instruments seem to us, and in themselves are, *weak*. For, in the hands of the Almighty, the weakest instruments are capable of producing results far surpassing all that man can do.

Ver. 26.-29. Apart from proof, the assertion of **#1Co 1:25** commends itself at once as indisputable. But Paul thinks fit to support it by another fact in addition to those of **#1Co 1:21-24**. He thus gives a second proof from matters of acknowledged fact of the chief teaching of § 3, viz., that the Gospel is not an appeal to human wisdom. This he has already proved by pointing to the impression and effect of the Gospel on different kinds of men, believers and unbelievers. He will now prove it by pointing to the class of men which most readily accepts the Gospel.

**Your calling:** the gospel call, looked upon as actively operating. Since it comes from God, it is "His calling," **#Eph 1:18**: but, as the means of our salvation and the ground of our hope, it is "our calling," **#Eph 4:1, 4**. "Contemplate in its operation the gospel call in which you have heard the voice of God." With characteristic good taste Paul does not say "not many of you," which is sufficiently indicated by *your calling*. These words imply that some of the early Christians were men of education and influence; an interesting coincidence with **#Ro 16:23**; **#Ac 18:8**; **13:12**; **22:3**.

**Wise according to flesh;** i.e. in reference to the needs and pleasures of the present life, which are determined by the constitution of the human body. See note under **#Ro 8:11**. It is the "wisdom of the world," **#1Co 1:20**; "of this age," **#1Co 2:6**.

**Powerful:** men with influence arising from office, wealth, or natural talent.

Ver. 27.-28. A contrast to "not many wise," and a description of those in whom chiefly the call had been effective. The Greek neuter, *foolish things*, suggested here by similar words in #1Co 1:25, looks at the object without considering whether or not they are personal. It refers frequently to what are in fact persons. So #Lu 1:35, "the Holy Thing;" #Ga 3:22; #Joh 6:37. The persons referred to here are looked upon simply as objects of God's choice, and as coming under the general principle of #1Co 1:25.

**The foolish things of the world:** uneducated men, who before they believed the Gospel belonged to the world.

**Chosen:** see note under #Ro 9:13. The reception of the Gospel chiefly by the lower classes (#1Co 1:26) arose from its very nature. It is good news of a deliverer. But every kind of earthly good tends to make us unconscious of our need, and independent of divine help. Intellect, education, rank, and wealth, so precious when laid on the altar of God, yet, by promising to supply of themselves our need, tend to keep men from accepting the Gospel. Cp. #Ro 11:9. On the other hand, misfortune and want have led many to cry to God for help. In full view of this, God chose an instrument of salvation which He foresaw would appeal with greatest force to men in humble positions. Now the early converts to Christianity were God's agents for spreading it through the world. Therefore, by choosing as the instrument of salvation a message which He knew would commend itself chiefly to the uneducated, the obscure, and the low-born, God chose these for Himself to be His representatives to the world and His agents for setting up His kingdom. Cp. #Jas 2:5.

**That He may put to shame etc.** That for the more part God selected as His agents unlearned men, was a stern rebuke to those who trusted in learning; and was designed to be such. *The weak things, the strong things*, recall "not many powerful."

**Chosen:** three times, emphatically asserting that the social position of the early converts was by God's deliberate choice. *Put-to-shame* (twice,) and *bring-to-nought*, lay stress upon the further purpose of this choice.

**Things which are not:** a climax, things practically the same as though they had no existence.

**Bring-to-nought:** #1Co 2:6; 6:13; 13:8, 10f; 15:24, 26; #2Co 3:7, 11, 13f; #Lu 13:7: same as *make-of-no-effect*; see #Ro 3:3.

**Things which are:** whose existence seems to be a power, and therefore a reality. By choosing as His instruments things reckoned to be nothing, and passing by things reckoned to be much, God made the latter to be practically nothing. The neuter forms are maintained throughout #1Co 1:27, 28, perhaps because of the principle asserted is true both of men and things.

A broad general statement of God's purpose in putting the Gospel in a form which would appeal chiefly to men in humble position. Cp. #Eph 2:9.

**No flesh:** see #Ro 3:20.

**Exult**, or *boast*: a favorite word almost peculiar in the New Testament to Paul, and very common in these two epistles, also #Ro 2:17, 23; 5:2f, 11; #Ga 6:13f; #Php 3:3; #2Th 1:4; #Jas 1:9; 4:16. It denotes a rising or gladness of spirit which has always in view the object, external or internal, which called it forth, and which is ever ready to express itself in words. It thus combines the meanings of *rejoice*, *exult*, and *boast*.

**Before God**: who watches perishing flesh and blood lifting itself up because of something man thinks he can do.

Argument of 26-29. Evidently the Gospel has been successful chiefly among the humbler ranks. And the reason is that the possession of earthly good makes men less anxious for the heavenly gifts offered in the Gospel. All this God foresaw, and took up into His plan, in choosing the Gospel to be His instrument of drawing men to Himself. It is therefore correct to say that He deliberately chose for Himself these men of humble rank. For He might have put the Gospel in a form which would have attracted chiefly the learned; as did the teaching of Plato. Now the uneducated and obscure men were, as agents for the spread of Christianity, both foolish and weak. Consequently, that God chose them and gave them success, proves that even foolish and weak things, in the hand of God, are able to achieve results altogether beyond the utmost power of man. It also proves that the Gospel and its results must not be measured by the standard of human wisdom.

Ver. 30. Stands in a relation to #1Co 1:26-29 similar to that of #1Co 1:24 to #1Co 1:21-23, declaring what Christ actually is to His people. #1Co 1:27, 28 say what God did that men may not (#1Co 1:29) exult in themselves: #1Co 1:30 says what God has done in Paul's readers that they may (#1Co 1:31) exult in Him.

**You are etc.**: cp. #1Co 6:11.

**In Christ**: see #Ro 6:11. "Christ is the element in which you live and from which you draw your life."

**From Him**: from God, the source of all inward union with Christ. For, salvation and all that pertains to it has its origin in the Father.

**Who has become etc.**] In those who dwell in Christ, Christ dwells; and in proportion as His presence fills and rules them are they full of divine *Wisdom*. Having Him they have a key which unlocks the mysteries of God's eternal purpose of mercy, and of the present life: and, knowing this eternal purpose and the eternal realities, they are able to choose aright their steps in life.

**From God**: emphatic repetition of *From Him*. He who gave Christ to be the element of our life also gave Him to be in us as our *wisdom*. These references to wisdom prepare the way for § 4.

**Righteousness**: as in #Ro 1:17.

**Sanctification**: the impartation of objective and subjective holiness. See notes, #Ro 1:7; 6:19. Since Christ died that we (#Ro 3:26) may be justified, and (#Ro 6:10, 11) may live by spiritual

contact with the risen Saviour a life devoted to God, and since this purpose is realized in those who abide in Christ, He is to us both righteousness and sanctification.

**Redemption:** liberation on payment of a price: see **#Ro 3:24; 8:23**. The bondage or evil, from which the redeemed are set free, must in each case be determined by the context. The general statement here suggests deliverance from the material and moral evils and powers around us, from death, and from the grave. So **#Lu 21:28; #Eph 4:30**. In Christ *redemption* is already ours. For we are now free in spirit from the powers which once held us in bondage: and the rescue of our body is only a matter of time. And, only in proportion as Christ is the element of our life, are we free. Thus Christ crucified is (**#1Co 1:24**) to us the power and wisdom of God.

Ver. 31. Supports the teaching of the whole section by recalling **#Jer 9:23f**: "Thus has Jehovah said, Let there not boast a wise man in his wisdom, and let there not boast the strong man in his strength, let there not boast a rich man in his riches: only in this shall there boast he that boasts, to understand and know me, that I Jehovah am doing favor, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth." That these old words may be now fulfilled, God gave Christ to be the element of our life, and by His presence in us a source to us of righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

**Lord:** see under **#Ro 9:29**. Its precise reference here is uncertain and unimportant. For, to boast in the Son is to boast in the Father: cp. **#Ro 5:11**. Perhaps it is better to retain the common New Testament use; and to suppose that Paul refers to our exultation in Him "who has become to us wisdom." The exact reproduction of these words in **#2Co 10:17**, suggests that they were often used by Paul, as a concise reference to **#Jer 9:23**.

Ver. 1.-5. Paul has now proved his statement in **#1Co 1:18** that the Gospel does not commend itself to human wisdom but is nevertheless a vehicle of God's power, a statement explaining and justifying Christ's motive in committing to him a Gospel not clothed in such language as human wisdom would have chosen. He then goes on to show that his own conduct among his readers was in exact agreement with Christ's commission.

**Not according to etc.]** He was not moved to preach, nor was his mode of preaching determined, by any supposed superiority of speech, or superior acquaintance with the unseen causes of things around.

**Mystery of God:** a forerunner of the important teaching of **#1Co 2:6ff**. Cp. **#Ro 6:14** with Rom. vii., and **#1Co 5:5** with Rom. viii. The reading is quite uncertain. See Appendix B. **#1Co 2:2** accounts for **#1Co 2:1**.

**Not . . . to know among you:** not to be influenced in my intercourse with you by knowledge of anything else. For only in this sense could he resolve to know or not to know among men.

**Judge-fit:** or *judge*: same word in **#1Co 5:3; #2Co 2:1**; see **#Ro 14:13**. Paul presented himself to the Corinthians as a man who knew something but what he professed to know was only that Jesus was the Messiah, and that the Messiah had been crucified. And this was his deliberate purpose when coming to them. Consequently, his preaching to them was not prompted or directed by supposed



*superiority of word or wisdom.* For, to human wisdom, a crucified saviour (#1Co 1:23) was ridiculous.

Ver. 3.-5. **And I**; again directs attention to the writer.

**Fear and trembling:** #Ps 2:11; #2Co 7:15; #Php 2:12; #Eph 6:5: strong eastern hyperbole, for anxious care to do right in something difficult and serious.

**Weakness:** any kind of inability, including bodily weakness caused by sickness. This latter sense is very common, and is suggested in #Ga 4:13. But there is no hint of it here. Notice the slowly rising climax. In his intercourse with the Corinthians Paul was conscious of his own utter powerlessness to do the work he had in hand: this moved him to fear lest he should fail: and his fear became so great that he trembled while he preached. #1Co 2:4 gives further particulars about his preaching.

**Word:** any kind of verbal intercourse: *proclamation*, the formal announcement of the Gospel. *Persuasive words of wisdom.*

**In men's wisdom:** that you may believe the good news not because of the preacher's skill but because of the manifested power of God proving the message to be from God. This proof made persuasion needless.

What was the proof afforded by the Spirit and power of God? Not the effect of the Gospel in the heart and life. For this can be appreciated only by those who experience it, i.e. by those who have already accepted the Gospel. It therefore cannot be the ground of their first acceptance of it. The effect of the Gospel in earlier converts may influence us: cp. #1Co 9:2. But this would not affect the founding of a church like that at Corinth. In #Ro 15:19 Paul speaks of the "power of signs and wonders, power of the Spirit of God," with which Christ wrought among the Corinthians as signs of his apostleship. And the *proof* appealed to here can be no other than the miracles wrought by the *power* of God through the agency of the Holy *Spirit* in proof that Paul's *proclamation* is true. Such proof would, as his words imply, supersede all persuasion.

Our ignorance of details prevents us from distinguishing exactly between the signs which Paul actually wrought and those which the Jews (#1Co 1:22) vainly asked for. But this difficulty is, by its close coincidence with #Mt 12:38; 16:1; #Joh 4:48, a mark of genuineness. And these passages remove any objection, based on #1Co 1:22, to my exposition of #1Co 2:4. For Christ, while refusing the signs asked for by the Jews, wrought miracles in proof of His words: #Joh 5:36; 10:25.

Notice that #1Co 2:4 and #2Co 12:12 confirm #Ro 15:19. For Paul appeals in these passages to miracles wrought among those to whom he writes, and from whose midst he writes to the Romans, in proof of his teaching. His appeal is confirmed by the independent authority of #Ac 14:3, 10; 19:11; 3:7; 4:16, etc; and by the Gospels which attribute to Christ similar miracles with the same purpose.

We do not wonder now that Paul abstained carefully from all appearance of rhetorical art. The visible proofs of the power and presence of God made persuasion needless. An attempt to persuade would rather obscure the sufficiency of the divine credentials.

Although the underlying principles of this section are valid for all ages, the absence of miracles now warns us to be careful in applying to our own day Paul's words to the Corinthians.

Paul's appeal to God's power in proof of his teaching, and his description of it (certainly in **#1Co 1:6**) as a testimony, agree remarkably with his assumption, without any proof, of the five great foundation doctrines of the Epistle to the Romans. See my *Romans*, Dissertation i. 3. In **#1Co 1:21b** we have Doctrine 1: and the prominence given to the cross of Christ in **#1Co 1:17f, 23; 2:2** as the matter of Paul's preaching, finds its only explanation in Doctrine 2. And, that the success of the Gospel chiefly among the humbler ranks was by God's deliberate choice, accords exactly with the doctrine of election taught in **#Ro 9:12**. Thus on the threshold of this Epistle we recognize the voice of the author of the Epistle to the Romans.

SECTION 3 is throughout a proof that mere human wisdom is powerless to save. The good news was not clothed in such forms as human wisdom would select, lest the clothing should obscure and thus impede the divine power which operates through the death of Christ and through its announcement to men. This agrees with an ancient prophecy touching the statesmen of Judah at the time of Sennacherib's invasion and the deliverance then wrought by God. And it is confirmed by the facts of Paul's own day. For it is evident that all the wisdom of the world has not revealed to men a saving knowledge of God; while, by an announcement which the wisdom of the world condemned as foolish and which actually led many Jews to reject Christ, God's people have experienced the power, and have looked into the mind, of God. This is also confirmed, not only by the different effect of the Gospel on different men, but also by the kind of men whom by the Gospel God has drawn to Himself: for these are such as seem least likely to do His great work. These unlikely agents He has joined to Christ, who has become to them all they need.

With this method of God's procedure Paul's conduct at Corinth was in exact agreement. The human wisdom which God refused to employ, Paul also refused. As a preacher he was a monument of weakness: but his word was accompanied by the manifestations of divine power, in order that on the manifest power of God the faith of his converts might rest securely.

The word **WISDOM** denotes sometimes an artist's skill: e.g. **#Ex 28:3**, "All that are wise of heart, whom I have filled with a spirit of wisdom: and they shall make Aaron's garments;" **#Ex 35:25-35; 36:1-8**. Such skill was looked upon (**#Ex 36:3, 6**) as a result of intelligence and knowledge; just as we say "He knows how to do it." In this sense the *wise* man is one who knows what others do not know, and who can therefore do special work. Similarly, men who have had a special training are called *wise*, **#Ge 41:8; #Ex 7:11**. For it was supposed that they knew what others did not, and that their knowledge was of practical use. Men able to direct well matters of practical life were called *wise*, **#Ge 41:33, 39; #2Sa 20:16, 22; #Eze 28:3-5**. In **#2Sa 13:3** the word *wise* (A.V. "subtle") denotes mere cleverness in selecting means without thought of the quality of the aim. But it was early seen that right choice of an aim is even more important than choice of the means to attain it, and needs a still deeper knowledge. Consequently, the word *wisdom* denotes also that knowledge

which enables men to choose rightly both objects of pursuit and the path to reach them. And, since all sin injures the sinner, all pursuit of sinful objects is folly, arising from ignorance of the objects pursued. Consequently, the highest wisdom includes a moral element. Cp. **#De 4:6; 32:6, 29; #Pr 1:2, 20ff; 2:2, 6, 7.**

King Solomon was an embodiment of human wisdom, in its unity and in its variety: **#1Ki 3:9-28; 4:29-34.** His wisdom included a wide acquaintance with natural objects, the practical counsel embodied in his 3000 proverbs, the poetry of his 5000 songs, and a discernment of men's characters which fitted him to be a king and judge. The noblest element of the wisdom of Solomon and his followers is permanently embodied in the *Book of Proverbs* and in the Apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Wisdom of the son of Sirach*. It is a knowledge of that which is most worth knowing, a knowledge which fits men to choose the best aims and means in life.

The wisdom of God is the attribute manifested in His eternal choice of His purposes and of the means to attain them. It is specially seen in the various works of Creation: **#Ps 104:24; #Pr 3:19; 8:22ff; #Job 9:4; 12:13, 16; 28:20,** Wisdom 9:9f.

The common Greek conception of wisdom was similar to that of the Jews. In Plato's *Apology*, pp. 21-23, Socrates speaks of the wisdom of statesmen, poets, and artisans; and considers himself wiser than they because they knew not the limits of their own wisdom. He says truly (*Apology* p. 23a) that "Human wisdom is worth little or nothing;" and (*Phaedrus* 278d) that "God only is fitly called wise." See quotation under **#2Co 4:2.** Aristotle speaks (*Ethics* bk. vi. 7) of wise stonecutters and sculptors; and of some men as wise, not in some specialty, but generally. He denies, however, that the statesman's prudence is *wisdom*; and defines the word to mean an acquaintance with first principles, a kind of knowledge which he declares to be profitless for matters of common life. In this he is supported by the *Definitions* which go under Plato's name, which define wisdom to be "An understanding of the things which exist always; a contemplative understanding of the causes of existing things." Cicero (*De Officiis* bk. ii. 2) says: "Wisdom, as it has been defined by old philosophers, is a knowledge of things divine and human and of the causes by which these things are held together." Cp. 4 Macc. 1:16, "Wisdom then is a knowledge of divine and human matters and of the causes of these." But the common Greek use of the word differs little from the lower use of its Hebrew equivalent. Jews and Greeks alike conceived of wisdom as a knowledge of something worth knowing, and especially of that which is most worth knowing. But the Greeks valued most a knowledge of the underlying and eternal realities, as being the most worthy matter of human knowledge and as most fully satisfying the intelligence whereas the Jews ever remembered that knowledge is of real worth only so far as it enables a man to choose the best steps in life. And these collateral ideas were more or less embodied in the Greek and in the Hebrew conceptions of wisdom. Thus, their use of this one word reflected in no small measure the distinctive genius of the two nations.

The New Testament conception of *wisdom* agrees exactly with, and develops, that of the Old Testament. We have "a wise builder," **#1Co 3:10.** The "wisdom of the Egyptians" (**#Ac 7:22**) was whatever knowledge the nation had of things not generally known. So **#Ro 1:14.** "The wisdom of the world" (**#1Co 1:20**) is a knowledge embracing only things around, whether it be looked upon as satisfying the intelligence or as guiding the life. A life thus guided has necessarily to do (**#Jas 3:15**)

only with things of this world; and is closely associated (**#1Co 3:19**) with craftiness. "The wisdom of God" is the attribute by which He selects purposes suited to His Nature, and the best means of attaining them. It is manifested (**#1Co 1:21**) in creation; and more wonderfully (**#1Co 1:24**) in redemption. Since the means chosen are various, it is "the manifold wisdom of God," **#Eph 3:10**. Since the purpose, and the means, of salvation were matters of divine forethought, we are told (**#1Co 2:7**) that this "wisdom of God was foreordained before" time began. These divine purposes and the means for their accomplishment are made known to us (**#Eph 1:17**) by the "Spirit of wisdom and revelation," that thus they may become in ever increasing degree objects of human intelligence and the guide of human life. Cp. **#Jas 3:17**.

In this divinely-given wisdom are realized whatever conceptions of wisdom were formed by Jews or Greeks. The believer possesses, by God's gift, a knowledge of that which is most worth knowing, even of God Himself and His purposes, a knowledge which satisfies the highest human intelligence, reveals the eternal realities, and explains to some extent the mysteries of life. But this knowledge, instead of being, like that of Anaxagoras and Thales, (Aristotle, *Ethics* vi. 7,) merely speculative and of no practical use, enables its possessor to choose the best aim in life and the best means of attaining it. Thus is Christ "to us wisdom from God."

On *The wisdom of the Hebrews*, see excellent papers in the *Expositor* vol. xi. p. 321, vol. xii. pp. 381, 436 by Dr. A. B. Davidson.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION IV

### PAUL PREACHES WISDOM TO MATURE CHRISTIANS: BUT HIS READERS ARE NOT SUCH

#### CH. II. 6-III. 4

Wisdom, however, we do speak, among them that are full grown; but wisdom not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nought.\* (\*Or, being made of no effect.) But we speak God's wisdom, in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God foreordained before the ages for our glory; which not one of the rulers of this age knows, (for, if they had known it, not the Lord of the glory would they have crucified,) but, according as it is written, "Things which Eye has not seen and Ear has not heard and into man's heart have not gone up, so many things as God has prepared for those that love Him." (#Isa 64:4.) But to us God has revealed them through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows, of men, the things of the man except the spirit of the man which is in him? In this way also the things of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. But we, not the spirit of the world did we receive but the Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things which by God have been graciously given to us. Which things we also speak, not in taught words of human wisdom, but in taught words of the Spirit to spiritual things joining spiritual things.

But a soul-governed man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. for they are foolishness to him,; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned.† (†Or, examined, examines.) But the spiritual man discernst all things: but himself is by no one discerned.† (†Or, examined, examines.) For who has learnt the mind of the Lord, and will instruct Him? And, as for us, we have the mind of Christ.

And I, brothers, I could not† (†Or, have not been able to speak.) speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of the flesh, as to babes in Christ. Milk I gave you to drink, not solid food. for not yet were you strong enough. No, not yet even now are you strong enough. For you are still fleshly. For where there is among you emulation and strife, are you not fleshly and walk as men? For when one says, I am a follower of Paul, another, I of Apollos, are you not men?

Although the Gospel does not claim acceptance because it imparts wisdom, yet, to mature Christians, it imparts the highest wisdom, #1Co 2:6-9; a wisdom revealed to Paul and his colleagues by the Spirit, #1Co 2:10-13; and therefore incomprehensible to men possessing only natural intelligence, #1Co 2:14-16; to men such as the conduct of Paul's readers proves them to be, #1Co 3:1-4.

Ver. 6. The change from "my word" (#1Co 2:4) to *we speak*, is frequent in these epistles to mark a transition from Paul's personal matters to the Gospel and its preachers generally. Cp. #2Co 2:13, 14.

**Wisdom:** higher knowledge, satisfying the intelligence and directing purpose and action. See note above.

**Full grown, or mature:** that which has reached its full development or goal: common in classic Greek for a full grown man in contrast to a child. Cp. **#1Co 3:1**. Same word in **#1Co 13:10; 14:20; #Eph 4:13; #Heb 5:14; #Php 3:15; #Col 1:28; 4:12; #Ro 12:2**. The rendering "perfect" is less accurate; and is very liable to be misunderstood. That Paul speaks of himself in **#Php 3:15** as one of the mature ones, after saying (**#Php 3:12**) that he is not yet "matured," implies that the word was not a technical term for a definite stage of spiritual growth. As in bodily, so in spiritual, life we cannot mark exactly the moment of maturity. But the use of the word implies a stage of growth higher than justification and sufficiently definite to be an object of thought. They who enjoy the full salvation proclaimed in **#Ro 6:11** have a maturity compared with which their earlier state was childhood. Once their spiritual life was dependent on human helpers. Now they find that God is Himself sufficient to maintain them in full vigor by His own presence under all circumstances with or without human helpers. And, than this, there is no surer mark of Christian maturity. Full grown, refers, not to knowledge merely, but to the entire Christian life. For Paul, while admitting (**#1Co 1:5**) the knowledge of the Corinthian Christians, appeals (**#1Co 3:1**) to their contentions in proof that they were still "babes in Christ," and therefore incapable of higher teaching. And to this he evidently refers here. Only mature Christians can understand the higher knowledge: and therefore, only when surrounded by such, does Paul teach it.

**Not of this age:** not such wisdom as is possessed by men "of this age;" not "the wisdom of the world," **#1Co 1:20**.

**Rulers of this age;** whose policy pertains only to the present world-period. They are a conspicuous example of the *wisdom of this age*.

**Who are coming to nought:** their power is passing away. See under **#1Co 1:28**. Their power belongs to, and will cease with, the present age. Therefore, as this age is each moment *passing away*, so is their power.

Ver. 7.- 8. **God's wisdom:** the eternal purpose of salvation, embracing the noblest ends and means, satisfying the intelligence of God and of those to whom it is revealed, the guide of God's own action and the only worthy guide of human action. This purpose, announced in the Gospel, Paul and his colleagues *speak* in the form of *a mystery*, (see note below,) i.e. in words which contain (under a guise which the world calls foolishness) a secret of infinite worth known only to those to whom God reveals it, viz. to mature Christians.

**Hidden wisdom;** keeps before us the chief thought of *mystery*, thus preparing the way for **#1Co 2:11, 14**. Cp. **#Eph 3:9, #Col 1:26**. The *wisdom of God* assumed concrete form in His purpose of salvation, which He *marked-out-before-hand* (or *foreordained*: see **#Ro 8:29**) in His own mind *before the ages* of time began, with a view *to our glory*, i.e. to cover us with eternal splendor. Cp. **#Ro 8:30**. That this purpose was earlier than the ages, proves it to be superior to the wisdom of this age."

**Which not one etc.:** stately contrast to *which God etc.*

**For if etc.:** proof that they did not know it.

**The Lord of the glory:** #Jas 2:1; cp. #Eph 1:17; #Ac 7:2: the Master, of whom the well-known splendor is a marked characteristic. Before this glory, all the glitter of earthly rulers pales. And it is a pledge of *our glory*. That the rulers *crucified* Jesus, proves that they saw not the splendor of His rank, and knew not the purpose of eternal wisdom which He came to accomplish. Since the murderers of Christ acted on principles common to all who belong only to the present life, their action is given in proof that *not one of the rulers of this age knows the wisdom of God*.

Ver. 9. **But we speak according as it is written etc.:** parallel with "but we speak" in #1Co 2:7, and marking a contrast to #1Co 2:8. This verse has no exact counterpart in the Old Testament. But Paul's favorite phrase, *as it is written*, is found elsewhere only with Old Testament quotations. Origen thought that Paul was quoting some apocryphal work. Jerome found here a reference to #Isa 64:4. And this is confirmed by the Epistle of Clement of Rome, in ch. 34, where we read: "For He says, Eye has not seen and ear has not heard and into man's heart it has not gone up, how many things God has prepared for those who wait for Him." This quotation is so similar that either it must have been taken from the Epistle or both from the same source. And its last words, "wait for Him," point still more clearly than does the passage before us to #Isa 64:4. In #1Co 1:31 we found Paul quoting in his own words the true sense of the Old Testament: and probably he does so here.

In prophetic view of a trodden down sanctuary, Isaiah cries to God for an unexpected and tremendous deliverance. "O that Thou hadst rent heavens, hadst come down, that from Thy face mountains had trembled; like fire kindling bushes, fire makes water to boil, to make known Thy name to Thy enemies: from Thy face nations shall be thrown into confusion; when Thou dost terrible things we expect not." The prophet grounds his hope and prayer upon the fact that "From of old men have not heard, have not listened to, eye has not seen, a God besides thee; He will act for him that waits for Him." He teaches plainly that in saving His people God surpasses their expectation, and does for them things unheard before. And this is concisely expressed by Paul in the words before us.

**For those that love Him, (#Ro 8:28,)** rather than "that wait for Him," was prompted, perhaps, by loving gratitude for benefits so inconceivable. This verse refers probably to the final "glory" (#1Co 2:7) of God's people, the ultimate aim of the eternal purpose hidden from the world, revealed to Paul and others, and spoken by him among mature Christians. It is already revealed (#Eph 1:17f) as an object of hope; and will soon (#Ro 8:18) be revealed as our actual possession. These words find also a fulfillment on earth. For our present spiritual blessedness is a foretaste of our eternal joy.

Ver. 10. **To us:** (like "we speak," #1Co 2:6:) in contrast to "the rulers of this age." Revealed. see #Ro 1:17: always actual and supernatural impartation of knowledge. Only *through* the agency of the *Spirit* of God are the truths of the Gospel made known. This agrees with #Ro 5:5: cp. #Eph 1:17; 3:5.

**For the Spirit etc.:** reason of this, viz. because only the Spirit knows the secrets of God.

**Searches:** vivid picture of the active intelligence of the Spirit.

**The deep things**, or *depths*: the underlying Purposes and Nature of God. Cp. **#Ro 11:33**: contrast **#Re 2:24**.

Ver. 11. Proves the assertion of **#1Co 2:10b**, by the analogy of man's spirit. This implies, as indeed the name Spirit does, that the Holy Spirit bears to the Father a relation in some points similar to that of our spirits to ourselves. In so mysterious a matter we must be careful not to press the analogy beyond the point for which Paul uses it. We may conceive of a man as distinct from his own spirit, as abstract personality, as a point without dimensions; and as looking out from this abstract point upon his own spirit, the animating principle which gives him life and consciousness. See note, **#Ro 8:17**. Now *the spirit of the man*, the principle of life *which is in him*, and of created spirits it only, looks from within upon all the man's thoughts and purposes. *In this way also the Spirit of God* is within the essence of God, and from within looks through and investigates the entire contents of the mind of God. And, of intelligent spirits, He alone does this. Notice carefully that exclusive assertions about the Spirit never exclude the Son: and conversely. For the Son and the Spirit move in different planes, so to say, the one as God before our eyes, the other as God within our hearts; and are alike divine, and therefore unlimited.

Ver. 12. From a general principle Paul now turns to himself and colleagues.

**The spirit of the world**: the one animating principle of the men of the world. It is "the spirit which now works in the sons of disobedience," **#Eph 2:2**; "the spirit of error," **#1Jo 4:6**: an intelligent spiritual power acting in obedience to (**#Eph 2:2**) its ruler, "the ruler of this world," **#Joh 12:31**. Thus they who disobey God are acting under the direction of His enemy. Cp. **#Ro 6:16**. *The Spirit of God* is also *from God*: for, the Spirit which breathes in the breast of God and permeates His entire consciousness, He sends forth to be the animating principle of His people's life. Cp. **#Re 1:4**; **5:6**.

**Graciously-given**: cognate to "gift-of-grace," **#1Co 1:7**; **#Ro 1:11**. It refers probably to the future glory, (**#1Co 2:7**), passing human thought, (**#1Co 2:9**), which, in the purpose and by the undeserved favor of God, is already (to our faith and hope) our inheritance and possession. But these words are true also of present spiritual gifts. Just as God breathed into Adam's body a human spirit, that he might become conscious of the material good which God had given to him, so God has breathed into us the breath of His own life that we may become conscious of His richer and eternal and altogether undeserved gifts to us in Christ.

**That we may know etc.**; completes the explanation of **#1Co 2:10a**.

That the Spirit who "searches all the deep things of God" is an actively intelligent Person distinct from the Father, (cp. **#1Co 12:11**, "according as He pleases,") is implied in **#Joh 16:13**, "He will not speak of His own accord, but as many things as He hears He will speak," where Christ teaches that the Spirit is so distinct personally from the Father as to listen to, and repeat, the Father's words. And that the Spirit knows everything in the mind of the Father, as a man's spirit knows all the man knows, proves Him to be divine. Since, sent by the Father, He dwells in us, He is "given" and "received."



Just as the Son, a Divine Person, is given for us, that He may be our Lord so the Spirit is given to us, to be in us as the animating principle of our new life. The names of the Three Divine Persons of the One Trinity are found side by side in **#1Co 12:4-6; #2Co 13:13; #Mt 28:19; #Re 1:4, 5.**

Ver. 13. **Which things we also speak;** takes up "we speak," **#1Co 2:6, 7**, after the explanation in **#1Co 2:10b-12** of the statement of **#1Co 2:10a**. In **#1Co 2:10-12** we learn the source of the matter of Paul's preaching: we now learn that his manner has the same source. This completes the discussion, begun in **#1Co 1:17**, of the relation of the Gospel to wisdom.

**Taught words of human wisdom:** such words as human knowledge and skill would choose. Cp. **#1Co 1:17b; 2:4**. Just as scholastic training, without dictating words and without destroying the individuality of the speaker, nevertheless enables him to clothe his thoughts in words better than he could otherwise have chosen, so the Holy Spirit enabled Paul to give appropriate utterance to the truths already revealed to him by the Spirit. But the analogy of *human wisdom* forbids us to infer that he received words by mechanical dictation. And this is disproved by the literary variety of the Bible. Many strings touched by one Divine Harpist give forth notes answering to the nature and tension of each. And thus the sacred chorus is harmony, not unison.

**Spiritual things:** "the things of the Spirit of God." (**#1Co 2:14**), i.e. truths taught by the Spirit. So **#Ro 1:11; 7:14; 15:27**.

**Joining spiritual things:** a mode of speech prompted by the Spirit. These words suggest the incongruity of trusting to human learning or skill in setting forth divine truth.

Ver. 14.-16. Paul will now show, paving the way to an application of the foregoing teaching to the church-parties at Corinth, that this teaching places the wisdom revealed in the Gospel beyond the reach of men not animated by the Spirit.

**Soul-governed man:** one whose inward and outward life is directed by the soul, the lower side of his immaterial being, by the side nearest to the body and the outer world, i.e. by his appetites and emotions; but not necessarily sensual appetites and emotions, for others besides these are evoked by things around us. Of this character, selfishness is a constant mark. For all unselfish instincts are from above, and appeal to that in us which is noblest. To these influences from the world around, the Spirit is ever opposed. Same word in **#1Co 15:44, 46; #Jas 3:15**, "this wisdom is earthly, soul-governed demon-like;" **#Jude 1:19**, "soul-governed, not having the Spirit." See note **#1Co 15:54**. In such men, the animal element, which is controlled by the body and by the material world, controls the actions, purposes, and even in part the intelligence. They are therefore "men of flesh," **#1Co 3:1; #Ro 7:14**; and their wisdom is "fleshly," **#2Co 1:12**. But Paul prefers to give them here the highest title they can claim, viz. "men governed by the lower side of their immaterial nature." He thinks probably of men altogether without the Spirit, which (**#Ro 8:9**) all the justified possess. And of them only these words are true in their full compass. But this verse is also true, in its measure, of all who, like the Corinthian Christians, yield themselves to emotions awakened by the world around. It thus prepares the way for **#1Co 3:1-4**.

**Things of the Spirit of God:** "spiritual things," **#1Co 2:13**: those with which the Spirit has to do.

**Does not accept:** a simple matter of fact.

**For they are etc.:** reason of it. The excellence of the aims, and the suitability of the means, chosen by the Spirit are not seen by the man taught only by the lower side of human nature: and therefore, to him, these aims and means seem to be an embodiment (cp. #1Co 1:18) of *foolishness*, i.e. worthless from an intellectual point of view. *And he* not only does not accept, but *cannot know, them*, i.e. so understand their nature as to wish to have them.

**Because etc.:** reason why *they are foolishness to him*, and why he has not ability to *know them*.

**Discern:** to examine, and by examination detect the real nature of a thing. Same word in #1Co 4:3, 4; 9:3; 10:25, 27; 14:24; #Lu 23:14; #Ac 4:9; 12:19; 17:11; 24:8; 28:18. The process of discovering the divine wisdom revealed by the Spirit to the apostles and spoken by them in words suggested by the Spirit goes on only under the influence of the Spirit. Consequently, those destitute of the Spirit cannot know the truth taught by Him: for they have not the spiritual life essential to spiritual vision.

Ver. 15. **The spiritual man:** #1Co 3:1; #Ga 6:1: whose inner and outer life is ruled by the Spirit of God, in contrast to one ruled by his animal nature.

**All things:** men and things; see #1Co 1:27. So far as we are under the influence of the Spirit of God do we sift the men and things around us and discover their real moral worth. Thus the Spirit within us casts a light on objects around us. So #1Jo 2:20.

**By no one;** i.e. destitute of the Spirit. While the spiritual man, from his higher point of view, looks through and understands the purposes and motives of worldly men, his own purposes and motives are to them an insoluble mystery. And this in proportion as he is guided by the Spirit.

Ver. 16. **Reason for this;** a quotation from #Isa 40:13, quoted also in #Ro 11:34.

**Of the Lord:** see #Ro 9:29; 10:13. The contrast of *Christ* suggests that Paul retains Isaiah's reference to the Father.

**Mind of the Lord:** word for word from the LXX., instead of "Spirit of Jehovah." It is the seat of the intelligence and the wisdom of God. Since the Spirit carries out into accomplishment the purposes of God, the change is unimportant. And, as it suits Paul's argument, he adopts it.

**Who will instruct Him:** one who, understanding fully the circumstances and purposes of another, can give him advice. But the thought of giving *instruction* to God reveals how infinitely far is the wisest man from comprehending the mind of God.

**We have;** includes all "spiritual" men.

**Mind of Christ:** personally distinct from, but practically the same as, the "mind of the Lord." For the Son is one with the Father. And whatever knowledge, purposes, and methods, lie in the mind of

the Father, are fully understood and approved and appropriated by the intelligence of the Son. Moreover, by actual contact with Christ through the agency of His Spirit, the contents of the *mind of Christ*, i.e. His knowledge and purposes, are in part given to us and appropriated by us; so that so far as we "are led by the Spirit of God" the wisdom of Christ is the directing principle of our life. The name *Christ* reminds us of His specific work. Hence the change of expression. And the context in Isaiah reminds us that the *mind of Christ* contains the infinite wisdom revealed in Creation. All this explains **#1Co 2:15**. The spiritual man understands all men and is understood by none: for in him dwells, and he is guided by, the wisdom of the Creator, who understands all things and whose purposes and methods none can understand.

Notice the tone of triumph here. In **#Ro 11:33** we heard a similar triumph as Paul contemplated the wisdom of God using national prejudices and obstinacy to work out His universal purpose of mercy. And we now learn, with still greater wonder, that the same infinite wisdom which directs the affairs of nations to the attainment of His own purposes also directs the steps of even the least of those who yield themselves to the guidance of His Spirit. And, if so, his steps, though they tread the lowliest path, are guided by a wisdom which the wisest worldly man can never understand.

In **#1Co 3:1-4**, Paul applies to himself and the Corinthian Christians the general principles of **#1Co 2:6-16**: as in **#1Co 2:1-5**, the principles of **#1Co 1:17-31**. The Gospel does not commend itself to human wisdom: therefore his preaching to them laid no claim to such wisdom. Yet the Gospel proclaims wisdom, a wisdom revealed by the Spirit and understood only by the spiritual: it was therefore useless to preach it to them.

Ver. 1. **And I . . . to you**; as in **#1Co 2:1**, turns suddenly from a general principle to a personal matter.

**Brothers**; suitably introduces a brother's reproof. So **#1Co 1:10**.

**Speak**; takes up **#1Co 2:6, 13**.

**Spiritual**: as in **#1Co 2:15**. It admits of degrees, in proportion as a man's purposes and life are controlled by the Spirit. All the justified (**#Ro 8:9**) have the Spirit. But the contrast with *babes in Christ* shows that Paul refers here to some fullness (**#Eph 5:18**) of the Spirit. Only of such is the statement of **#1Co 2:15** conspicuously true.

**Men-of-flesh**: same word in **#Ro 7:14**. Paul is compelled *to speak* to them *as to* men consisting only of the material side of human nature, i.e. to teach them the rudiments of the Gospel (**#Heb 5:12**) as though still unsaved.

**Babes in Christ**: in contrast to "full grown," **#1Co 2:6**. So **#1Co 14:20**; **#Eph 4:13f**; **#Heb 5:13f**; cp. **#Ro 2:20**. It rather softens the foregoing words. He does not look at them as altogether destitute of the Spirit, but as men whose spiritual life is as yet undeveloped.

Ver. 2.-3a. **Milk**: explained in **#Heb 5:12**.

**Solid food:** the "wisdom" of **#1Co 2:6**. These words, which must refer chiefly to Paul's personal teaching at Corinth, suggest a long sojourn in their midst; and thus confirm **#Ac 18:11**.

**Not yet were you:** when last he taught them.

**Not yet even now;** opens the way to their present state, which is Paul's special business now.

**Fleshly:** men whose conduct is more or less controlled by the material side of human nature. Not quite so strong as "men-of-flesh."

Ver. 3b.-4. Proof that they are still fleshly, and therefore unable to digest strong food. That emulation (see under **#1Co 12:31**) and *strife* are given as complete proof of a *fleshly* disposition, proves that these arise always from a life in pursuit of the things needful or pleasant to the body. Cp. **#Ga 5:19**. This arises from the essential selfishness of such a life, which puts us in opposition to our fellows. See note, **#Ro 8:11**. Not that the body is essentially evil; (for it is a creature of God;) but sin, ever a principle of separation and discord, sets the body in opposition to the man's highest nature, that thus eventually the whole man may be corrupted.

**Walk:** **#1Co 7:17; #2Co 4:2; 5:7; 10:2f; 12:18; #Ro 6:4; 8:4**; an Old Testament word (**#Ge 5:24; #Le 18:4; 26:40; #1Ki 2:4**, etc.) favorite with Paul and John to describe the outer side, and the direction, of human life.

**As men:** under the influence of ordinary unsaved human nature.

**For when etc.:** proof from acknowledged fact that in the Corinthian church there is *emulation and strife*, and that therefore its members are *fleshly*. *Are you not men?* implies that the Christian life is superhuman. Cp. **#Ro 3:5**. *Where* (**#1Co 3:3**) and *when* (**#1Co 3:4**) point conspicuously to Corinth and to the present time. All this explains Paul's inability to "speak wisdom" at Corinth.

SECTION 4 teaches that, to those who accept it fully, the Gospel conveys wisdom, i.e. a knowledge of that which is most worth knowing, and of that which they most need to know. It tells them what they are, what God is, how they may come to God and become like God. Amid much ignorance of details, they look up, through the various forces around, to the Great Source and Ruler of all. They understand in some measure, and approve, and appropriate, the eternal purposes of God. These purposes, and the method of their attainment, satisfy their highest intelligence and explain to them, in some measure, the mysteries of life and of suffering; and become the guide of their actions. Thus their mind is filled, and their steps directed, by the wisdom of Him who made the world. Compared with this wisdom, all merely human wisdom is folly. For it fails to explain the mystery of our being, and to put before us the true object of life and the best means of attaining it. Of the folly of human wisdom, the world's treatment of Jesus was a conspicuous example.

We also learn that this divine wisdom is conveyed to us by the agency of the indwelling Spirit of God, who alone looks into and through the mind of God. Consequently, only in proportion as we are under His influence is this wisdom understood by us. It is, however, embodied in words spoken by human lips. But these words are a mystery. Only as the Spirit opens our eyes do we understand their

hidden meaning. Now the Spirit seeks to direct our steps as well as to enlighten our mind: and He ever leads men to Christian unity. And He does the one only so far as He does the other. Consequently, jealousy and strife are sure marks of absence of that fullness of the Spirit without which we cannot understand the higher teaching of the Gospel. Where these are, such teaching is useless. Thus does Paul rebuke the pride of knowledge which lay at the root of the church-parties at Corinth.

We cannot mark out particular doctrines as belonging to this higher wisdom. It is that nearer and clearer vision of God, which in all ages has been the privilege of those who dwell in His nearer presence, which they have read in the pages of Holy Scripture, which to unsaved men is incomprehensible or ridiculous, but which guides the steps of those who possess it along a path in which they find their highest happiness and usefulness.

Notice that, just as § 3 assumes the first fundamental Doctrine of the Epistle to the Romans, so here Paul assumes and develops the fifth Doctrine. See **#Ro 5:5; 8:3-16**; where we learned that the Spirit reveals to us God's love, moves us to call Him Father, and directs our steps in life. Of this teaching, § 4 is but a practical application.

**MYSTERY**: An English form, and the constant rendering, of an important Greek word. A cognate word is found in **#Php 4:12**. From the same root word are "mystic" and "mysticism."

The mysteries of ancient Greece were secret religious rites and teaching, forming the chief part of festivals celebrated at regular intervals in certain places. The most famous were those held annually, with great pomp, for nine days, at Eleusis, twelve miles from Athens on the way to Corinth. After six days of public ceremonies, those who had previously undergone a preliminary initiation, and were now called in Greek "mystai," were led, under the darkness of the night, by strict vows of secrecy, into the sanctuary of the goddess Demeter, where they saw and heard things forbidden to all others. So well was the secret kept that we now only can guess what then took place. But scattered references of classic writers imply that in these mysteries religious teaching was imparted, the noblest teaching perhaps of the heathen world. So Plato, *Phaedop.* 81a: "Whither having come, it is given to the soul to be happy, being made free from error and folly and fears and coarse passions and the other human evils, as they say about the initiated (same word as **#Php 4:12**) in the mysteries, in truth spending the rest of their time with the gods." And Cicero, himself initiated, in his *Laws* bk. ii. 14: "Though Athens seems to me to have produced and brought into the life of men many excellent and divine things, yet nothing better than those mysteries by which from a boorish and wild life we are trained to humanity and are softened, and just as they are called initiations so in truth we have learned the first principles of life: and not only have we received a way of living with joy, but also of dying with a better hope."

See the excellent remarks of p. 198 of Mahaffy's *Rambles in Greece*, quoted in vol. v. p. 471 of the *Expositor*.

In accordance with classic use, the word *mystery* in the Bible denotes always a secret known only to the initiated, i.e. those to whom it has been specially revealed. It is used in the Apocrypha for any confided secret; e.g. Sirach 27:16f, "he who reveals mysteries has destroyed confidence;" Tobit 12:7;

Judith 2:2: and in Daniel (LXX.) for an outward form under which lay unknown truth; **#Da 2:18f**, "in a vision of the night the mystery was revealed;" **#Da 2:28; 4:9**. Cp. Wisdom 8:4, "wisdom is an initiated one (mystis) of the understanding of God."

In still closer accord with classic use, the truths underlying the parables of Christ are called (**#Mt 13:11; #Mr 4:11; #Lu 8:10**) *mysteries* known only by those to whom "it is given." Cp. **#Mt 11:25**. And the teaching here attributed to Christ took firm hold of the mind of Paul, and frequently reappears variously developed in his writings. The many-sided purpose of redemption is called (**#Ro 16:25; #Eph 1:9; 3:3; 6:19; #Col 1:26f; 2:2; 4:3**) a mystery kept in silence (even from angels, **#Mr 13:32; #1Pe 1:12; #Eph 3:10**) during eternal times, but now made known. To proclaim this mystery to all, was the life work of Paul, **#Eph 3:9; 6:19; #Col 4:3**; who was thus a steward of the mysteries of God, **#1Co 4:1**. Of a purpose of God still kept secret, we never read. Yet God's eternal and universal purpose of mercy is none the less (**#Col 2:3**) hidden in Christ. For, though proclaimed everywhere, it is understood only by those whom God leads into the secret chamber of His presence, whose eyes and ears He opens by His Spirit to the heavenly light and the heavenly voice: **#1Co 2:10; #Eph 3:5**. Consequently, Paul spoke "in a mystery" words understood only by the initiated, i.e. by mature Christians. He had himself (**#Php 4:12**) been "initiated" into the secret of life, and therefore knew how "to be humbled and to abound." Thus the word mystery is in itself an embodiment of the chief teaching of this section.

In a more general sense the same word is used sometimes of any truth revealed specially by God, e.g. **#Ro 11:25; #1Co 15:51**; and for a secret of which the key has not yet been given, **#2Th 2:7**. In **#Re 1:20; 17:5, 7**, the truths underlying the visible symbols are called mysteries. **#Re 10:7** approaches the teaching of this section.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION V

### *APOLLOS AND PAUL ARE BUT SERVANTS DOING THE WORK OF ONE MASTER*

#### CH. III. 5-IV. 5

**What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom you believed, and as to each one the Lord gave.**

**I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So that neither he that plants is anything, nor he that waters; but God who gives the growth. And he that plants and he that waters are one: and each will receive his own reward according to his own labour. For God's fellow-workers are we: God's field, God's building, you are.**

**According to the grace of God given to me, as a wise masterbuilder, I laid a foundation: and another builds up. But let each one see how he builds up. For, another foundation no one can lay, beside that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. And if anyone builds up on the foundation, a piece of gold, a piece of silver, costly stones, pieces of wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest. For the day will declare it: because in fire it is revealed, and each one's work, of what kind it is the fire itself will prove. If any one's work shall remain which he built up, he will receive reward. If any one's work shall be burnt up, he will suffer loss. But he himself will be saved, but in this way, as through fire.**

**Do you not know that you are God's temple, and the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any one injures the temple of God, him God will injure: for the temple of God is holy, which you are.**

**Let no one deceive himself. If any one thinks himself to be wise among you in this age, let him become foolish, that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He that lays hold of the wise ones in their craftiness." (#Job 5:18.) And again, "The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise ones, that they are vain." (#Ps 94:11.) So then let no one exult in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present or things coming; all things are yours: and you are Christ's: and Christ is God's.**

**In this way let a man reckon us, as helpers of Christ and stewards of mysteries of God. This being so, moreover, search is made about stewards, that a man may be found faithful. But to me it has become a very little thing that by you I may be examined, or by a human day of assize. No, I do not even examine myself. For of nothing am I conscious to myself But not in this am I justified. But He who examines me is the Lord. So then, do not before the right time judge anything, until the Lord come, who will also bring to light the hidden things of the darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts. And then the due praise will be given to each one from God.**

Ver. 5. **What then etc.:** a wider question than "who then?" Since they call themselves followers of Paul or Apollos, Paul asks what these men are, i.e. what are their position, powers, and achievements. He thus, armed with the great principles developed in §§ 3, 4, approaches the specific matter kept in view throughout DIV. I.

**Ministers:** see **#Ro 12:7**.

**Through whom:** **#Ro 1:2**; cp. **#Joh 1:7**; **#1Pe 1:21**.

**You believed:** were led to believe the Gospel: see **#Ro 13:11**. From this we learn that the ministry of Apollos, not only (**#Ac 18:27**) benefited the Corinthian believers, but increased their number.

**And as etc.:** adds another important truth.

**The Lord:** probably Christ, the One *Master* whose work Paul and Apollos were doing. So **#1Co 8:6**; **12:5**; **#Eph 4:5**.

**Gave:** for the converts' faith was Christ's work in them: cp. **#Ro 12:3**; **1:8**; **#Joh 6:44, 65**. Therefore, since converts will be (cp. **#Php 4:1**; **#1Th 2:19**) the preacher's eternal enrichment and joy, they are Christ's gift to each one. Yet each man's faith is his own mental act, his own self-surrender (which he might have refused) to divine influences which came to him before he believed, and led him to faith. And the preacher's success is usually in proportion to his energy and skill. But the full truth of Paul's words is felt by all who have had the joy of turning a sinner from the error of his ways.

Ver. 6.-9. A beautiful metaphor, illustrating **#1Co 3:5**.

**I planted etc.:** expounds "through whom etc.:" **but God gave etc.,** expounds "as to each one etc." The hearts of the men at Corinth were the soil: the preached word was the *planted* cutting: (or seed sown, **#Mr 4:14**;) the faith with which the word was received and the life of faith, or the church at Corinth which was a visible embodiment of this faith, were the growing plant. The nourishment brought by Apollos developed the existing branches, and caused them (**#1Co 3:6**) to put forth fresh twigs. But that the cutting took root and grew into a tree, was the work, not of the gardeners who *planted* and *watered* it, *but* entirely of *God*. As usual, Paul rises from the Son to the Father. The Son, as Master of the house and as Administrator of salvation, allots success to His servants: but all spiritual life and growth have their original source in the Father. Cp. **#1Co 12:5f**.

Ver. 7. Since we are only garden laborers who plant and sow, of whom any number may be had, we are practically of no importance whatever.

**But God etc.:** is everything.

Ver. 8.-9. **Are one;** literally, one thing they are practically the same, **#1Co 11:5**. Just so in the vineyard the man who plants is in a position neither better nor worse than the man who waters. These words, cautiously used, will cast light on **#Joh 10:30**; **17:11, 21**.



**But each man etc.:** points both to the oneness, and the individuality, of the servants of God. Because they stand in exactly the same relation to the Master, each will receive according to his labor.

**Reward:** suggests their humble position as men paid for their work.

**Labour:** not according to results, but according to the quantity and quality of his toil.

**His own reward, and his own labour,** exactly correspond. #1Co 3:9a proves #1Co 3:8b.

**Fellow-workers:** #Ro 16:3, 9, 21; #2Co 1:24; 8:23; #3Jo 1:8: a favorite word with Paul. Men are permitted to join with God in the work of salvation. And their reward will be in proportion to their toil. For God's work will be successful: and its success will be an eternal joy to all who have labored for it. And the joy of success is always proportionate to the toil with which it has been attained.

**Field:** cultivated land, including the soil and the growing produce. Since the Corinthian church is a *field* belonging to God, those who *labour* in it are God's *fellow-workers*.

**God's building;** opens the way to another metaphor.

The question of #1Co 3:5a is answered; and its answer reveals the folly of making Paul and Apollos heads of church-parties. They are but laborers in a vineyard, all standing in the same relation to the owner as hired servants each to be paid according to his labor.

The frequency of the foregoing metaphor proves plainly that it rests upon a far-reaching harmony of things natural and spiritual. Cp. #Ro 11:16-24; #Ps 1:1-3; #Isa 5:1-7; #Mt 13:3-30; #Lu 13:6-9; #Joh 15:1-6. All agriculture is man working together with God. For every pious farmer feels that his harvest is a result and reward proportionate to his own toil and skill, and yet altogether God's gift to him. Just so, the preacher places the word of God in its appropriate soil, the human heart. And, from the preached word, in virtue of its hidden life, there springs up the beautiful and fruitful plant of a Christian believer and Christian life.

Ver. 10.-15. To show how humble is the position of himself and Apollos, Paul said in #1Co 3:8 that each will receive pay according to his labor. This truth he now uses as a warning to some of his readers. As a basis for the warning, he introduced in #1Co 3:9g a second metaphor, which he now develops.

Before using words which seem to imply superiority, Paul acknowledges that whatever he has done he owes to the undeserved *favour of God*. This also reminds us that in laying the foundation he acted by divine authority.

**Wise:** in its earliest sense of "skilful;" see note, #1Co 2:5. The teaching of § 4 makes the word very appropriate here.

**I laid:** parallel with "I planted," #1Co 3:6. In face of some who depreciated his ability, (#2Co 10:10) Paul claims to have skilfully founded the church of Corinth. Cp. #1Co 4:15.

**Builds-up:** carries upward the building already begun. Same word, repeated for emphasis, in #1Co 3:12, 14.

**Another:** Apollos or any other teacher. Hence the present tense, though (#1Co 16:12) Apollos had left Corinth; and the words *let each one see how etc.* This warning, #1Co 3:10-15 develop. The different modes of continuing Paul's work warn each one to look how he builds.

Ver. 11. Justifies #1Co 3:10b, which confines our attention to the manner of continuing Paul's work, by declaring that there can be no other foundation than that which he has already laid. Christ is the foundation of the church, objectively; inasmuch as upon His death and resurrection rest His people's faith and hope. He is so subjectively, by His presence in them. The rock on which we stand is both beneath our feet and within our hearts. This foundation, laid objectively for the whole church in the Great Facts, was laid subjectively in the hearts of the Christians at Corinth as the firm ground of their personal hopes, by Paul. Consequently, all other Christian work done at Corinth will be a continuation of that which he began. This, of course, leaves out of sight the almost impossible case of the extinction of the church: in which case the work would need to be begun again.

Ver. 12.-15. After justifying in #1Co 3:11 the limitation implied in #1Co 3:10b, Paul now takes up and develops his warning. He tells us that he refers to the materials used; and mentions two classes, one destructible and the other indestructible, each class containing different kinds of different value. The real nature of the results produced by *each one will become manifest*, i.e. set publicly before the eyes of all.

**For the day etc.:** proof of this.

**The day;** of judgment, #1Co 1:8; #Ro 2:16. That Paul calls it simply *the day*, reveals the large and definite place it had in his thought. Cp. #2Th 1:10; #2Ti 1:12, 18; 4:8.

**Will declare:** the great day is personified.

**Because in fire . . . will prove:** two facts showing how *the day will declare it*.

**Revealed:** see under #Ro 1:17, 19. The present tense is used, as often, for that which will indisputably come and is therefore already present in the mind of the believer.

**Fire:** the surest and severest test of the hidden nature of objects subjected to it. There will be no need for the judge to declare what men have done. For the Day itself, as its light floods the intelligence of men, will declare all. For the light of that day is a fire searching out the inmost quality of every man's work.

Ver. 14.-15. Result of the testing.

**Built-up;** keeps before us the foundation, #1Co 3:11.

**Burnt-up:** if the great day put an end to the results attained in this life.

**Suffer loss:** viz. of the reward he would have had if his work had survived the test.

**Will be saved:** for Paul speaks of believers building on the one foundation. Even the "babes in Christ" (#1Co 3:1) have spiritual life and are members of the family of God.

**In this way:** with his work destroyed.

**As through fire:** explains *in this way*. The picture may be thus conceived. Two workmen are building on one foundation, one with imperishable, the other with perishable, materials. The building is wrapped in flames. One man's work survives the fire: and he receives pay for it. The other's work is burnt up: and he rushes out through the flame, leaving behind the ruins of his own work. And for his work, which the fire proved to be worthless, he receives no pay.

What are the materials and who are the builders in this picture? Since it was by preaching and teaching that Paul laid the foundation of the church of Corinth, the builders must be different kinds of teachers. Since the matter taught is the material the teacher uses, this must be the gold, silver, wood, straw, etc. The results produced by the teacher in the hearts and lives of his hearers are the building he erects. He may produce good results which will last for ever and be to him an eternal joy and glory. Since these results are altogether the work of God, and are revealed in their real grandeur only in the great day, they are a "reward" given by God in that day for work done on earth. But a teacher may also produce results which now appear great and substantial, but which will then be found utterly worthless. He may gather around him a large number of hearers, may interest them, and teach them much that is elegant and for this life useful; and yet fail to produce in or through them results which will abide for ever. If so, the great day will destroy his work and thus proclaim its worthlessness. But he may be said to build upon the one foundation, Jesus Christ. For he is a professed Christian teacher: and people go to hear him as such. He may be a sincere, though mistaken, Christian believer; and therefore be himself saved. But his work, as a teacher, is a failure. Now the permanence of a teacher's work depends upon the matter taught. The soul-saving truths of the Gospel enter into men's hearts and lives, and produce abiding results. We understand, therefore, by the wood and straw whatever teaching does not impart or nourish spiritual life. The three terms suggest the various kinds of such teaching. It may be clever or foolish, new or old, true or false; but not subversive of the "foundation," or it would come under the severer censure of #1Co 3:16f. The frequency of such teaching is proved by #1Ti 1:4; 4:7; 6:4; #2Ti 2:14, 23; 4:4; #Tit 1:14; 3:9. We have perhaps a Jewish example of it in very much that was written by Paul's earlier contemporary Philo: and we have Christian examples in many of the speculative and trifling discussions which have been frequent in all ages. We also learn that even of the teaching which produces abiding results there are different degrees of worth; in proportion, no doubt, to the fullness and purity with which the teaching of Christ is reproduced. In both cases, the buildings erected are the results, lasting or transitory, produced in the hearers' hearts by the use of these materials; results which are in some sense a standing embodiment of the teaching.

Under **#1Co 4:21** we shall see that in this solemn warning Paul strikes at the root of the church-parties at Corinth. Cp. **#2Ti 2:23**.

**#1Co 3:8, 14** reveal different degrees of future blessedness. Conversely, **#Ro 2:5**. For we have here a man who "will be saved," but will not obtain the reward which others will have and which he might have had.

The excellent Roman Catholic commentator, Estius, says properly that "reward" implies merit, i.e. appropriateness for reward, in the action rewarded. But he has not observed that the reward here said to be given for work done on earth is not eternal life, (cp. **#Ro 6:23**,) but a higher degree of blessedness. Notice carefully that, since our good works are wrought in us by God, both the actions rewarded (as Estius admits) and the reward are altogether gifts of the undeserved favor and mercy of God.

At the council of Florence, A.D. 1439, the Latin fathers appealed to **#1Co 3:15** in proof of the doctrine of purgatory. But the fire here mentioned belongs, not to the interval between death and judgment, but to the judgment day. Estius, whose exposition in the main I agree with, raises a difficulty about the bodies of the saved, which must be incapable of pain, passing through fire; and supposes that the teachers referred to passed through the fire in the moment before their resurrection, and were thus cleansed from sins till then unforgiven. But Paul does not say that the fire inflicts pain or cleanses from sin, but only that it destroys the teachers' work and reward. How the consciousness of past failure and unfaithfulness will be reconciled with the unalloyed joy of heaven, is a mystery we cannot solve. But it is not lessened by the suggestion of Estius. For this consciousness of failure will certainly continue after the resurrection. It will perhaps be neutralized by joy that so unworthy a worker is permitted to enter the Master's presence.

The metaphor of the building, found also in **#Mt 7:24ff; 16:18; #Eph 2:21; #1Pe 2:5**, and in the word "edification," may be profitably compared with that of the field or garden in **#1Co 3:6-9**. The latter comparison teaches that the growth of a church is a development of life, such as only God can give; and shows how subordinate is the position of a Christian teacher. It therefore reveals the folly of making Paul and Apollos heads of parties. The other metaphor presents the human side of Christian work; and teaches that its permanence depends upon the materials used, materials brought together from various places according to the builder's judgment and resources. It was therefore a suitable warning, to those who were continuing Paul's work at Corinth, to put into the minds of their hearers such teaching as would produce enduring results. And it was the more appropriate because, as **#1Co 3:18-20** suggest, a love for mere human wisdom was a chief source of the evils which Paul now attempts to remove.

Ver. 16.-17. **Do you not know**: common phrase of Paul: **#1Co 5:6; 6:2f, 9, 15f; 9:13, 24; #Ro 6:16; 11:2**. Its frequency in this Epistle was a rebuke, probably undesigned, of the boasted wisdom of the Corinthian Christians. The suddenness and evident astonishment of this question suggest that **#1Co 3:15** had reminded Paul of something at Corinth which implied forgetfulness of the solemn teaching of this verse. The searching test to which all Christian work will be subjected recalls to his mind some who were not building at all, but were pulling down or defacing the good work of others. And, that Paul appeals to his readers generally, suggests that the church as a whole tolerated them.

Cp. **#1Co 5:2**. He clothes his appeal in a metaphor suggested by the preceding one. The injury these men are inflicting reminds Paul of the dread solemnity, and the solemn relation to God, of the building which he and others are erecting. He asks whether his readers are ignorant of this: and his question implies that they have no excuse for ignorance.

**Temple**; represents in the Auth. Version two entirely different Greek words, viz. the "sanctuary," or sacred enclosure, open (cp. **#Le 12:4**) to all Jews, **#1Co 9:13**, **#Ac 2:46**; **3:1ff**, **8**; **5:25**, **42**, etc.; and the temple proper, the sacred house into which (**#Heb 9:6**) only the priests went and containing the holy and the most holy place, **#1Co 3:16f**; **6:19**; **#2Co 6:16**; **#Eph 2:21**; **#2Th 2:4**; **#Lu 1:9**, **21f**; **#Ac 19:24** A.V. and R.V. "shrines." Same distinction among pagan writers: e.g. Herodotus, bk. i. 183, "There is belonging to the sanctuary in Babylon another temple below; where there is a great statue of Zeus." The corresponding Hebrew and Aramaic word is rendered (A.V.) "palace" in **#1Ki 21:1**; **#Da 1:4**; **4:1**; **5:5**; **6:18**.

**Temple of God**: not temples. So **#1Co 6:19**; **#2Co 6:16**; **#Eph 2:21**. Cp. Philo, *On Monarchy* bk. ii. 1: "Since there is one God, there must be only one sanctuary." Just as in the Old Covenant there was but one temple, the place which (**#De 12:5ff**) God chose, where alone (**#Le 17:8f**) sacrifice could be offered, so now there is but one temple, of which the one church throughout the world is the holy place and the church within the veil the holy of holies. Of this one church, each visible community of Christians is a miniature representative. And each separate building (**#Eph 2:21**) on the one foundation is growing up into, and when completed in glory will form, one holy temple.

[The above distinction of **ιερον** and **ναος** is marked in the R.V. by the note "Or, *sanctuary*," wherever the latter is found; except that in the Book of Revelation, by unpardonable parsimony, one marginal note is made to suffice for sixteen places. But, whatever be its origin, the rendering "temple" suggests now the sacred house; and therefore ought not to be used for the sacred enclosure. Moreover, the distinction should have been made in the text. Much better and everywhere available (even in **#Ac 19:24**, which should be "temples") is my rendering "sanctuary" and *temple*. The R.V. "a temple" is a serious error. For it suggests other temples; an idea utterly opposed to the whole Mosaic Covenant. The anarthrous substantive (cp. **#1Co 6:9**; **#1Th 5:2**) looks at the one temple not as a single definite object of thought but in its abstract quality.]

**The Spirit of God etc.**: a restatement of Doctrine 5, (see under **#Ro 8:4**,) viz. that God's purpose that we be holy is realized by the agency of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. Now, if this doctrine be true, as Paul confidently assumes, believers are the *temple of God*. For the central idea of a temple was, to Jews and heathens, a dwelling place of God. Cp. **#Ex 25:8**; **29:45f**; **#1Ki 8:27**; **#2Co 6:16**. Just as under Moses God erected a building of earthly materials by the hands (**#Ex 31:3**) of men filled with the Spirit of God, that it might be His one dwelling place on earth, the one spot of earth nearest to heaven, and in which He might show forth His glory; so in the New Covenant, by giving His One Spirit to dwell in the hearts of His people, He unites them into one, raises them above the earth, and makes them His one dwelling place on earth, that He may fill them with His presence, cover them with His glory, and in them show forth His glory to the world. Cp. **#1Co 6:19**; **#2Co 6:16**; **#Eph 2:21**.

**The Spirit of God** (as bearer of the presence of God, **#Ro 8:10**) **dwells**: rather than "God dwells," (as in the Old Testament,) because in us God is present as an animating *Spirit*, the source of divine life and activity. Not as such can He dwell in a temple made with hands.

Ver. 17. **If any one etc.**; evidently introduces the matter which caused the astonishment of **#1Co 3:16**. From this we infer that at Corinth there were men actually injuring the church.

**The temple of God**: a general term including the temple made with hands and the living temple.

**Injuries**: by pulling down (**#Ro 14:20**) or defacing. The context suggests that Paul refers to those who prompted the church-parties, and to the injury they thus did to the church.

**Will injure**; includes the loss, damage, and destruction, bodily and spiritual, present and future, which comes by the just punishment of *God* to all who pull down or deface what He has set up. Paul then gives the reason why God *will injure etc.*, viz. because *the temple of God* stands in special relation to Him, as erected for His purposes and glory. See note on holiness, **#Ro 1:7**. Therefore, to injure the temple, is to rob and insult God.

**Which you are**: viz. holy. In other words, the foregoing general principle applies to Paul's readers.

**#1Co 3:16, 17** appeal to ideas almost universal in the ancient world, but vanished now. Both Greeks and Jews believed that the place which God had chosen to reveal Himself to men, belonged to Him in a very special sense, and was guarded by Him with infinite jealousy; and that damage or insult to the holy place would be followed by divine vengeance. Paul reminds his readers that the very name, "saint," or "holy person," by which they designated themselves, implies that the sacredness of the temple belongs to the church; and rightly so, for in its members, by His Spirit, God dwells. Therefore, whatever injury is done to the church will be avenged by its Great Inhabitant.

This warning contains a metaphor well worthy of study. If, as all admitted, the Spirit of God dwells in His people, His presence makes them a temple, erected by human hands, but of materials more precious than gold or costly marble. The builders may therefore tremble lest, even without design, they injure the building they profess and endeavor to be erecting.

Ver. 18. **Let no one, if anyone**: an appeal, not to the whole church as in **#1Co 3:16**, but to the men of **#1Co 3:17**. Not only were they ignorant of the sacredness of the church, but were in error in their estimate of themselves. Cp. **#1Co 6:9; 15:33**.

**If any one thinks**: **#1Co 8:2; 14:37**. As compared with other church-members *among* whom he moves, he *thinks* himself well acquainted with the things of *this* present passing age. So **#1Co 1:20**. *To become foolish*, is the only way to *become wise*. Once we were *wise*, in our own estimate. But when we find out that we cannot by our own mental power or effort learn that which we most need to know, viz. such knowledge as will enable us to choose the objects most worthy of pursuit and the best means of attaining them; and that we can learn this only as each moment God reveals it to us; we then become, in our own correct estimate of ourselves and in view of the difficult path we have

to tread, utterly *foolish*, i.e. destitute of the wisdom we need. Then we *become* truly *wise*. For we know what we are: and we ask and receive the Spirit of wisdom, (**#Eph 1:17**), who by His presence in us reveals to us that which we most need to know and guides our steps along the best path. We may therefore test the worth of our wisdom by asking whether we have ever become foolish.

Ver. 19.-20. Proof that we can become wise only by first becoming foolish, viz. because, in the sight of God who judges rightly, that which *this world* (see under **#1Co 5:10**) calls *wisdom* is *foolishness*. This has been proved in **#1Co 1:20ff**, of which these words sum up the results and apply them to the matter under discussion. **#1Co 3:19b, 20** support **#1Co 3:19a** by quoting **#Job 5:13; #Ps 94:11**.

**The wise men:** those who know things not generally known, and are therefore better able to choose their ends and means.

**Craftiness:** a disposition to do anything, right or wrong, to attain one's ends. Into this, worldly wisdom often degenerates.

**Lays hold of:** while pursuing their own ends in their own way, the hand of God falls upon them and stops them. That *the wisdom of the world* is prevented by the hand of God from attaining its ends, proves it to be *foolishness in the presence of God*. For *the world* leaves the hand of God out of account.

**The wise men:** not in **#Ps 94:11**, but evidently implied.

**Vain: #Ro 1:21:** barren of good results. *Wise men* cannot by their own *reasonings* attain any good result. To know this, is the first step in real knowledge. Therefore, to become truly wise, we must first be shorn of our own wisdom.

The abrupt transition of **#1Co 3:18**, like that of **#1Co 1:17**, seems to imply that an overestimate of their own wisdom was a chief source of the injury done by the men warned in **#1Co 3:17**, who were no doubt those who fomented the church-parties.

The above quotation from the Book of Job presents a difficulty, in that it gives, apparently as Scripture, the reported words of Eliphaz; although no writer is responsible for sentiments he reports, and God Himself declares (**#Job 42:7**) that the friends did not speak rightly. Some would charge the Apostle with a moment's forgetfulness. But the complete harmony of these words with the whole book of Job and with the entire Old Testament, shows plainly that the writer here puts his own sentiments into the lips of Eliphaz. We cannot dispute the truth of the quoted words without disputing the whole moral teaching of the great Poem. Indeed the friends erred not so much in the moral principles they assert as in their application of them to Job.

Ver. 21a. Desired result of the foregoing. After warning us, by quotations from Scripture, not to think, (**#1Co 3:18**) ourselves wise, Paul now says that the same quotations are a reason for not looking upon others as wise and making them the heads of parties.

**Exult: #1Co 1:29:** let no one be lifted up because of anything men are or can do. Paul refers evidently to the boasted superiority (**#1Co 4:6**) of certain teachers, which gave rise to the church-parties. All such boasting in men is shut out by the powerlessness of all human wisdom.

Verse 21b.-23. Another reason for not boasting in men.

**All things:** in the wisest sense, all the men and things (cp. **#1Co 1:27**) with which we have to do. All these were made by God and were by Him permitted to assume their present form that they may work out, and they are now (**#Ro 8:28**) working out, His purposes of mercy toward us, which are also (so far as we understand them) our own purposes. *All things* are, therefore, ours; in the sense in which a father's house belongs to his whole family.

**Whether Paul etc.:** details included in *all things*. Whatever powers, acquirements, or spiritual life, *Paul* possessed, were an enrichment to the whole church. For whatever Paul had, he used for the good of all. Therefore we cannot exult in one to the depreciation of others. For all exist for our good. That *Cephas* is not mentioned in **#1Co 3:4, 5; 4:6**, suggests that the partisans who adopted his name and that of Christ were so few that Paul could leave them out of sight in his general treatment of the matter. His mention here of *Cephas*, was a courteous acknowledgment that he was an enrichment to the whole church, even to Gentile believers.

**The world: #1Co 1:20.** A sudden leap from individual men to the entire world. All men and things around us are working out our good.

**Life or death:** cp. **#Ro 8:38**. The various events of *life* come that they may develop our spiritual strength and give us opportunities of working for God and thus obtaining eternal reward. And the angel of *death* is our servant waiting to lead us into the presence of Christ. The infinite variety of circumstances surrounding us today, and the unknown and perhaps quite unexpected events of tomorrow, are God's gift, working out our good.

**All things are yours:** triumphant summing up. We look out into the world around and into the unknown future, and say, All these belong to me: for they were created, and are now directed and controlled, by my Father, for my good.

Ver. 23. As lords of the world we belong to One infinitely greater than ourselves. Only so far as we exist for *Christ* do all things exist for us. Cp. **#1Co 6:19; 15:23; #Ro 14:8**.

**And Christ is God's:** rising, as usual, from the Son to the Father. So **#1Co 1:9; 3:7; 4:1; #Ro 9:5; 15:5, 13; 16:20, 25**. We have here the great truth that the Son is essentially subordinate to the Father, not as a creature, but as the Son, of God; a truth absolutely essential for a correct view of the unity of the divine Trinity. We belong to Christ, and exist to work out His purposes. And in this subordination our divine Master is our pattern. For the Eternal Son receives His being (**#Joh 5:26**) from, and therefore belongs to, and bows to, the Eternal Father, and exists to work out the Father's purposes. Cp. **#1Co 15:28**. See my *Romans* Dissertation 1. 7. Christ's absolute devotion to the service of the One Father should deter men from inscribing even His name, as did (**#1Co 1:12**) some



at Corinth, on the banner of a party. Whether Paul had this in view in writing these words, we do not know: for the truth here taught was naturally suggested by the foregoing words.

Ver. 1. **In this way**: as belonging to you, you to Christ, and Christ to God. This completes Paul's answer to the question of **#1Co 3:5**, an answer to be obtained by deliberately reasoning out the foregoing teaching.

**Us**: Paul, Apollos, etc.

**As helpers etc.**; expounds *in this way*, and sums up Paul's teaching about himself and Apollos.

**Helpers**: common Greek word for sailors, and for any kind of assistant in private or public business. It therefore recalls **#1Co 3:8**.

**Stewards**: **#Lu 16:1-8**: men, sometimes slaves, who managed a household or business.

**Mysteries of God**; recalls **#1Co 2:7**. Cp. **#Eph 3:2, 9**, "what is the stewardship of the mystery;" **#Tit 1:7**; **#1Pe 4:10**. God had set these men in authority in His household on earth, and had committed to them the hidden truths of the Gospel to be distributed, as spiritual food, to His children. If we look at all Christian teachers in this light, we shall not render them such homage as will be a barrier between us and other Christians. Our desire will be to obtain from each the spiritual food committed to him for us. Notice that Paul, as a wise steward, gives milk (**#1Co 3:2**) to babes and solid food (**#1Co 2:6**) to full-grown men.

Some have thought that *mysteries* refers expressly to the sacraments: and in **#Eph 5:32** the same word is so translated in the Latin Vulgate. But Estius properly points to **#1Co 1:17**, which teaches that to administer these was not Paul's chief work. This great commentator's loyalty to the exact meaning of Scripture, and his refusal to draw from Scripture an unfair argument for the doctrines of his church, deserve the highest praise. And every Protestant will thank God that a work so full of evangelical truth is published under the express sanction of the Roman Catholic Church.

Ver. 2.-4. Another point involved in the teaching of **#1Co 4:1** and bearing upon the church-parties. Like all stewards, Paul must (**#1Co 4:2**) give an account of his stewardship: but as (**#1Co 4:3, 4**) God's steward, he owes this account to God, and to Him only. The steward expects *inquiry*: and the master makes it, and the steward submits to it, *in order that* the latter *may be found faithful*. But, to Paul, the prospect of the Master's inquiry has made it *a very little thing* whether or not his conduct be sifted, and its true worth discovered, by men. Like "the" great "Day" in **#1Co 3:13**, a human day of assize is personified; as though the day itself sifted conduct. So far from caring about the sentence of others, not even upon himself does Paul sit in judgment. This does not contradict **#2Co 13:5**: for it refers only to examination with a view to sentence, i.e. of due reward or punishment. This, Paul does not attempt. He does not calculate the merit of his own conduct. For this, **#1Co 4:4** gives a reason. In his conscience, that inner chamber (**#Ro 2:15**) in which he contemplates his inner self, there is nothing which condemns him. Yet not in this fact does Paul find a sentence of approval from his great Judge. (This he finds only in the Gospel of Christ.) And, because his consciousness of God's favor does not depend on his own verdict about his own

faithfulness, he does not sit in judgment upon himself. That Paul, who knew the secrets of his own heart, forbore to pronounce judgment about himself, was a warning to others not to do so. Notice Paul's fully developed Christian character, **#1Co 15:10**; **#2Co 1:12**; and that even this was to him no ground for assurance of God's favor.

**He that examines etc.:** who sifts my conduct in order to pronounce sentence upon it.

**The Lord:** Christ, soon to come, **#1Co 4:5**. As a steward, Paul's conduct must be investigated; but he cares not for man's examination; and does not even judicially examine himself. His judge is the Master.

Ver. 5. Practical result of the foregoing. The metaphor of *light*, compared with "fire" in **#1Co 3:13**, suggests the ease and suddenness and completeness with which the great Day will make all things known; just as the daylight reveals things unknown in the night.

**The hidden things;** suggests how much that is needful for a correct estimate of men's conduct now lies under an impenetrable veil.

**The counsels etc.:** the purposes, now hidden in men's *hearts*, which move them to activity and which will determine their reward. A solemn warning to many at Corinth. All judgments on Christian workers before *the Lord comes* are *before the right-time*: (same word as *season*, see **#1Co 7:5**;) for not till then will all the facts be known.

**From God:** rising as usual from the Son, whose coming will bring to light all the facts of the case, to the Father, who is the original source of *the praise* which, through the lips of Christ, will be given *to each* faithful servant.

From **#1Co 3:21-4:7** we infer that the church-parties at Corinth were occasioned and nourished by the various estimates of various persons about Paul and Apollos. But these teachers, and all others, were alike helpers of Christ, distributing the hidden wealth of God. Each of them was thus an enrichment to the whole church. Moreover, upon them and all His servants, the Master will Himself pronounce sentence; and will justify His sentence by bringing to light all the facts of the case. Since these facts are not yet fully known, the Corinthians cannot pronounce a correct sentence on the merits of their teachers; and therefore ought not to attach themselves to one or other of them as his special disciples.

SECTION 5 deals specifically with the church-parties at Corinth. It is in part a reply to the question of **#1Co 3:5a**, a question suggested by the reference in **#1Co 3:4** to the church-parties; and in part a warning against evils which were their real source. Our ignorance of details obscures Paul's reference to these evils, and lessens the force, which his readers would feel at once, of the sudden transitions of **#1Co 3:16** and **#1Co 3:18**. But is evident that the Christians at Corinth overestimated mere human knowledge, and that some prided themselves on their superior learning. We can well conceive that some of these taught human learning rather than the "word of the cross;" and that some, by claiming undue recognition of their own learning, were actually injuring the church. Also, that the same spirit moved the church-members generally or universally to pronounce sentence on

the comparative learning or eloquence of Paul and his colleagues; and that their differing estimates caused the divisions in the church.

To correct this complication of evils and errors, Paul says that both Apollos and himself were but garden laborers, doing the same kind of work and paid for their work, **#1Co 3:5-9**; that the work of all their teachers, which is but a continuation of work already begun, will be tested in the great day, **#1Co 3:10-15**; that they who injure the work already done will receive tremendous punishment, **#1Co 3:16, 17**; that the truly wise man is he who has learned that all human wisdom is of itself utterly worthless, **#1Co 3:18-20**; that for this reason, and because all things belong to God's people, no one ought to boast about men, **#1Co 3:21-23**; and that Paul and Apollos are but helpers and stewards, who will be judged by Christ, and whom no man is capable of judging aright, **#1Co 4:1-5**.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION VI

*THE DIVISIONS HAVE ARISEN FROM THE SELF-CONCEIT OF THE  
CORINTHIANS, WHO HAVE FORGOTTEN PAUL'S CONTRARY EXAMPLE.  
HE HAS SENT TIMOTHY TO REMIND THEM OF IT.*

CH. IV. 6-21

These things, brothers, I have transferred to myself and Apollos because of you, that in us you may learn not to go beyond the things which are written, that you may not be puffed up and one on behalf of the one against the other. For who makes thee to differ? And what hast thou which thou didst not receive? But if thou didst receive it, why dost thou exult as though not having received it?

Already made full you are: already you have become rich: apart from us you have become kings. And, at any rate, would that you had become kings, that also we may become kings with you. For I think God has exhibited us, the apostles, in the last place, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, and to angels and to men. We are foolish because of Christ; but you are prudent in Christ: we are weak; but you are strong you are well-thought-of; but we are dishonoured. Until the present hour we both are hungry and are thirsty, and are without sufficient clothing, and are smitten, and are homeless, and labour, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we bear it; when evil spoken of, we entreat. As offscourings of the world we have become, a refuse of all men, until now.

Not putting you to shame do I write these things; but as admonishing beloved children of mine. For if you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, yet not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, by means of the Gospel, it was I that begot you. I exhort you then, become imitators of me. Because of this I have sent to you Timothy, who is a child of mine, beloved and faithful, in the Lord, who will recall to your memory my ways in Christ, according as everywhere, in every church, I teach. Supposing that I am not coming to you, some have been puffed up. But I shall come quickly to you, if the Lord will. And I shall know, not the word of those that are puffed up, but the power. For not in word is the kingdom of God, but in power. What do you wish? With a rod am I to come to you? or in love, and the Spirit of meekness?

Ver. 6. **These things**: from #1Co 3:5 onwards, where, as here, Paul speaks only of the parties of *Apollos* and himself.

**Brothers**: an appeal to the whole church.

**Transferred**: put into another shape. Same word in #2Co 11:13-15; #Php 3:21. The teaching of § 5, about Christian teachers, Paul applied specially *to himself and Apollos*. He now says that in

doing so he put his teaching into a shape different from that which it would naturally have assumed; and that he did this for his reader's good, that they might learn etc.

**Things which are written:** in the Old Testament, according to Paul's constant and frequent use of this phrase. These words remind the readers that a careful study of the Scriptures would have corrected these errors. An interesting coincidence with Paul's habit of referring to the Old Testament.

**Not to go beyond etc.:** not to exceed, in their estimate of themselves and others, the descriptions of human nature given in the Old Testament. Of these descriptions we have specimens in **#1Co 3:19f.**

**That in us you may learn etc.:** i.e. by considering Paul's description of the position of himself and Apollos, as garden laborers, paid for their work, house stewards, etc.

**That you be not etc.:** further purpose, a result of that foregoing.

**On behalf of the one against the other:** graphic description of party-spirit.

**Puffed up:** become large in your own esteem. This word is a marked feature of Paul's description of the Corinthian Christians: **#1Co 4:18, 19; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4; #Col 2:18.** Its use here implies that their self-conceit was the source of their party-spirit. They set themselves on the side of one man and against another because of something in the one which seemed to flatter, and something in the other which did not flatter, their vanity.

The word *transferred* casts light upon the factions at Corinth. It tells us that, while speaking of himself and Apollos, Paul was really referring to others. These must have been those who were the real leaders or abettors of the parties. For Paul and Apollos were not such: though we are told plainly in **#1Co 1:12; 3:4** that the factions actually bore their names. We infer, therefore, that there were men who, under cover of professed devotion to Paul or to Apollos, fomented the factions, in order thus to exalt themselves and increase their influence. These were the real party leaders. And they found a following through the extravagant estimate of their own powers and acquirements cherished by the Corinthian Christians. We can easily conceive that some man of learning began to be looked up to by some who prided themselves in their love of learning; and that he strengthened his influence over them by pointing to the learning and mental power of Paul. Another man, of fluent speech, was perhaps looked up to by some who had formerly listened with delight to Apollos. Now it is evident that Paul's whole teaching in § 5 about Apollos and himself applies, with far greater force, and with solemn warning, to these men. They needed to beware with what materials they were building; and lest, while seeming to build, they were really pulling down, the temple of God. They needed, to save them from self-deception, to be reminded that the Scriptures taught that mere human wisdom is but folly in disguise; and that the light of the great day will reveal even the secret purposes of the heart.

Ver. 7. A direct appeal against this inflated self-estimate, which Paul has just shown to be the real source of the factions.

**For who etc?** reason for not being "puffed up."

**Thee:** any one of the church-members whose self-conceit had drawn him after a party leader.

**Who makes thee to differ?** No one, except thy own imagination.

**And what hast thou etc.:** solemn and wide question, suggesting an answer to the foregoing question.

**Exult:** see under **#1Co 1:29**. Superior mental or material possessions led some to think that themselves were superior. This question reminds us that whatever we have was *received*, and is therefore no part of ourselves, or ground for self-gratification.

Ver. 8. Having uncovered and rebuked the real root of the factions, Paul reveals its utter unseemliness by a bitter contrast of the conceit of his readers with the actual circumstances of himself and his colleagues.

**You are:** to the church collectively, in contrast to the individual (cp. "one on behalf of the other," **#1Co 4:6**) singled out in **#1Co 4:7**.

**Already**, conspicuously placed and repeated, shows that the point of Paul's irony is that their enrichment had come so early. And this suggests that he refers here to the fullness, wealth, and royalty, of God's people in the world to come. Cp. **#Php 4:19**; **#Ro 8:17f**; **#2Ti 2:12**; **#Re 5:10**; **#Mt 5:6**; **#2Co 8:9**. They thought, spoke, and acted, as though they had already obtained the glory for which others were waiting, as though even now, before they have gone down into the grave or Christ has appeared, all their needs and yearnings had been satisfied, as though they had already received their share of the wealth of the City of God and had sat down upon the throne beside Christ.

**Apart from us:** without our aid or participation. Although Paul had been the means of their spiritual life, he did not possess and therefore could not convey, such things as they boasted of.

**And would that etc.:** sudden waking up from his dream of self-conceit. "Would that your dreams were true, that also we might share the royalty you seem to fancy you have already obtained!" In other words, if their self-estimate be true, they are much more fortunate than their teachers.

Ver. 9. An abundant reason for the wish just expressed, viz. Paul's present position.

**I think:** Paul's view of himself in contrast to his readers' self-estimate.

**Us the apostles;** (see **#Ro 1:1**, and **#2Co 8:23**;) seems to imply that the other apostles endured hardships similar, though probably not equal, to those of Paul. But it does not imply that Apollos was an apostle. For Paul is now dealing, not with the factions, but with self-conceit generally. And this he puts to shame by the hardships of those who hold the first rank in the church. He conceives God as *exhibiting* to the universe a public *spectacle*, in which *the apostles* were brought out *last*, the astonishing climax of all, just as *men condemned to death* were thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheatre.

**Because etc.:** proof of this, from matters of fact.

**The world:** or, universe, consisting of *both angels and men*. Since the word *angels* is used in the New Testament, as with us, without further explanation, for good angels, it is best so to understand it here. The holy angels watch, with wonder and sympathy, the endurance of the apostles. And men watch them, with various feelings.

Ver. 10. Interrupts the description of the spectacle to remind us of its purpose, viz. to show the contrast between the apostles and Paul's readers.

**Foolish:** exact opposite of "wise," in all senses: "one who knows less than others."

**We are foolish:** in a double sense. The better to serve Christ, Paul refrained from making acquirement of knowledge his chief aim. And many others have renounced a path which might have led to literary eminence in order to devote their entire energies to evangelical work. Again, by abstaining from teaching mere human learning and by preaching a Gospel which in the eyes of men was folly, Paul became, and felt himself to be, in their view, a foolish man. In other words, because of his loyalty to Christ he passed among men as one destitute of wisdom. Cp. **#1Co 2:2**.

**Prudent in Christ:** also in a double sense, either (cp. **#1Co 1:5**) as actually having, by union with Christ, practical spiritual intelligence, or as having it in their vain self-estimate. Both senses probably were present to Paul's mind. If his readers had spiritual wisdom, it was because for their sakes he had laid aside human wisdom: if they prided themselves in fancied Christian wisdom, their pride was an utter contrast to his self-humiliation.

**Weak:** powerless and helpless amid trials, hardships, and perils.

**Strong:** with real or supposed spiritual strength.

**Well-thought-of:** by others, by each other, or by themselves.

**Dishonoured:** a technical term for deprivation of the rights of a free citizen. See **#1Co 15:43**. The order of the last pair is changed, that the word *dishonoured* may be the keynote of **#1Co 4:11-13**. The contrast in this verse is between the position which, in loyalty to Christ, Paul accepted and felt that he occupied, and the position, real or feigned, which the Corinthians occupied.

Ver. 11.-13. Development of "dishonoured," **#1Co 4:10**; and justification of the metaphor of **#1Co 4:9**. *Until the present hour* and *until now* lay emphasis on the ceaselessness of these hardships, and remind the readers of Paul's position at the moment of writing.

**Hungry, thirsty, etc.:** **#2Co 11:23-27**.

**Without-sufficient-clothing:** "we shiver in the cold," Stanley: literally, *naked*, denoting in Greek without clothing, or lightly or insufficiently clad; **#Mt 25:36**; **#Joh 21:7**; **#Jas 2:15**. Cp. Seneca, *On Benefits* v. 13: "He that has seen a man badly clothed and ragged says that he saw him naked."

**Smitten:** see #2Co 12:7.

**Homeless:** Or, "driven about from place to place."

**Working with our own hands:** so #1Co 9:6ff; #1Th 2:9; #2Th 3:8ff; and, an important coincidence, #Ac 18:3; 20:34. That Barnabas also did this, we learn from #1Co 9:6. In the eyes of men around, this was a further mark of degradation. For Paul seemed to be so little valued by his disciples that they refused to maintain him.

**We bless:** speak smoothly, as in #Ro 16:18. See #Ro 1:25.

**We endure it;** not repelling the attack of our enemies.

**We entreat**, or *exhort*, as in #1Co 1:10: stronger than *we bless*. "We beg a favor from those who speak hurtfully of us, as though utterly at their mercy." To return smooth words for rough ones, to submit to, instead of resisting, the attacks of enemies, to ask favors from, instead of spurning, those who revile us, arises usually from the absolute helplessness of men who dare not defend themselves. And Paul's forbearance would be thus interpreted. It was, therefore, a mark of the humiliation of his position.

**Offscourings, refuse:** that which, for the sake of cleanliness, must be removed. Cp. #Ac 22:22. Paul was treated as one who must be cast out, as defiling, not merely from his nation, but from the world, from all contact with men. Such was the position cheerfully accepted by those who held the first rank in the church. They were incessantly exposed to hunger, thirst, cold, and personal violence: they wandered about like men without a home: they had to depend for maintenance upon the labor of their hands: they had no angry words, or resistance, for those who reproached and attacked them: nay, they actually sought favor from those who defamed their character. In a word, they were looked upon as the world's refuse, unworthy to be even trampled under foot, which must be removed from the presence of men.

Notice the modesty with which, by using the words *we* and *us*, Paul implies that his own hardships were not a solitary case among the apostles. What a vista this opens of early Christian endurance unknown to us!

Notice also how severely this description rebukes the self-conceit of the Christians. In the presence of such tremendous earnestness and such forgetfulness of self, they could not but feel how utterly contemptible was all thought of their own learning or skill. And in these days, amid much that tends to foster an extravagant self-estimate, we need ever to feel the purifying influence of the example of the martyrs.

Ver. 14.-16. Paul has now completed his discussion of the church-parties, by uncovering their source, viz. an inflated self-estimate; and this he has sought to annihilate by the example of his own self-forgetfulness. So severe is the contrast thus presented that Paul's courteous tact and tender heart move him to soften it. "To *put you to shame*, is not my purpose; and therefore not the real meaning of my words."



**Admonish:** #Ro 15:14; #Col 1:28: reproof with a view to improvement. Paul looks upon them *as children*, even his own children, and exercises towards them the discipline of intelligent paternal love. This assumption of paternal authority, #1Co 4:15 justifies.

**Ten thousand etc.:** hyperbolic supposition, indicating the readiness of the Corinthian Christians to assume the office of teacher.

**Guardians:** #Ga 3:24f: men, nearly always slaves, who in wealthy Greek families took care of the sons under seven years old, but did not teach them. The would-be teachers at Corinth were but guardian slaves as compared with the father of the family, i.e. in a position quite different from that of the human author of the spiritual life of the whole church.

**I begat you:** cp. #Ga 4:19; #Phm 1:10: an approach to the doctrine of the new birth; #Joh 3:3; #1Jo 3:9; 5:1, etc., #1Pe 1:23; #Jas 1:18. To this doctrine, Paul's only direct reference is #Tit 3:5.

**Through the Gospel:** instrument by which Paul, *in* virtue of his life-giving union with *Christ Jesus*, gave them a new life and brought them into a new world. So #Jas 1:18; #1Pe 1:23. Notice that, though Apollos and others had led (#1Co 3:5) individuals to faith and thus given to them spiritual life, yet Paul, by preaching the Gospel first and making the first converts at Corinth, had been directly or indirectly the instrument of the spiritual life of the whole church; and that therefore his relation to the church was quite different from that of any one else. Cp. #1Co 3:10ff; 9:1, 2. He has therefore a right to treat them as his children.

**Imitators of me:** #1Co 11:1; #1Th 1:6: not necessarily in his sufferings, (#1Co 4:9-13,) but in the spirit Paul manifested therein. Happy are the teachers who can say this to their hearers.

Ver. 17. **Because of this:** that you may become imitators of me. From #1Co 16:10 we learn that Paul did not expect **TIMOTHY** (see #2Co 1:1) to arrive at Corinth till after this letter, and that his coming was uncertain. Consequently, he was not the bearer of the letter, but left Ephesus earlier than it, or at the same time. This agrees exactly with #Ac 19:22, which says that some time before Paul left Asia he sent Timothy from Ephesus to Macedonia, which lay (cp. #1Co 16:5) on the road to Corinth. We may suppose that, when sending Timothy to Macedonia, Paul instructed him to go on to Corinth; but had some doubt whether he would be able to do so. The change from *who will recall etc.*, to the uncertainty revealed in "if he come" in #1Co 16:10, is easily accounted for by the fluctuation of the human expectation, or possibly by some change of circumstances while writing this long letter.

**My child;** #1Ti 1:2, 18; #2Ti 1:1; 2:1; seems to imply that Timothy was converted by Paul. (Cp. #Phm 1:10.) And, if so, during the time of #Ac 14:6-23: for, in #1Co 16:1, he was already a believer.

**Faithful:** either believing, as in #Ga 3:9; #1Ti 4:10, 12; 5:16; 6:2; or trustworthy, as #1Co 1:9; 4:2; 7:25; 10:13. Timothy's mission suggests the latter sense. The father sends to his children at Corinth another child, an object of his love and worthy of their confidence.

**In the Lord:** parallel to "in faith," #1Ti 1:2. The relationship between Paul and Timothy existed in virtue of their spiritual contact with the Master, Christ.

**Who also;** expounds *because of this*.

**In Christ:** added in consciousness that his conduct as a teacher was an outflow of spiritual life in union with Christ. How deeply a remembrance of this was woven into the entire thought of Paul, we learn from the frequency of these words.

**My ways:** cp. #2Co 12:18, "we walked by the same steps;" #2Co 4:2; 10:2f; 5:7. These *ways* are further described, in addition to #1Co 4:11-13, in #1Th 1:5; 2:7-12. Paul wishes his readers to join the Thessalonian Christians (#1Th 1:6; 2:14) in imitating his self-sacrificing spirit.

**Everywhere in every church:** very emphatic.

**As I teach:** as I conduct myself as a teacher. Timothy's description of Paul's conduct will correspond with Paul's actual behavior as a teacher, which he declares emphatically to be the same everywhere. Notice the consciousness of the Christian uprightness of his whole conduct (cp. #2Co 1:12) which breathes throughout Paul's letters and emboldens him to point to himself as a pattern.

Ver. 18.-21. Not only has he sent Timothy to remind them of his conduct but he will himself come shortly.

**Supposing etc.:** perhaps because Paul did not fulfill his purpose (#2Co 1:15) to go first to Corinth and then to Macedonia. *Some* of the Corinthians interpreted this to mean that Paul dared not face them: and thus his change of purpose gave them an inflated notion of their own importance. The real reason of the change, Paul tells us in #2Co 1:23.

**If the Lord will:** #Jas 4:15. That Paul speaks always and frequently of the will of God, never unless here of the will of Christ, suggests that here as in the LXX. *the Lord* denotes the Father. But Paul's constant use of this word as the distinctive title of the Son outweighs this, and warrants us in accepting this passage as a solitary reference to the will of Christ as the Master whose work Paul was doing.

**Power:** ability, given by God, to produce spiritual results in the hearts of men by means of the Gospel. Cp. #1Co 1:18; #Ro 1:16. When Paul comes, he *will know*, not what they say, but what they can do to advance the kingdom of God among men.

**Kingdom of God:** #Ro 14:17: the eternal kingdom to be set up in full splendor at the coming of Christ, of which believers are already citizens, and which is therefore already spreading on earth as day by day men are enrolled as citizens. Its progress depends, not on man's talk, but on the putting forth, through men, of God's power. Therefore not word but power is the element in which it is being set up. And Paul cares, not what the inflated ones say, but for the degree of power which attends them. We have here the only true standard for self-measurement.

Ver. 21. **With a rod:** which belongs to a father. With what terrible power Paul could use it, we learn from **#1Co 5:5**. Cp. **#2Co 13:2-10**. We are not told to what kind of discipline he here refers.

**Or with love:** i.e. giving vent to his love for them. In either case, love to them will be the animating principle of Paul's conduct. But whether he comes to them armed *with a rod*, or manifesting his *love*, depends on themselves.

**Meekness:** see under **#2Co 10:1**; **#Eph 4:2**; **#Col 3:12**; **#1Ti 6:11**; **#2Ti 2:25**; **#Tit 3:2**; **#Jas 1:21**; **3:13**; **#1Pe 3:4, 5**: absence of self-assertion, a disposition moving us to forego our supposed rights and to refrain from putting forth our powers in defence of them. By inflicting punishment, Paul would assert his authority and manifest his power. His usual conduct (**#1Th 2:7**) was the opposite of this.

**Spirit of meekness:** the Holy Spirit, of whose activity meekness (cp. **#Ga 5:23**) is a characteristic. Cp. **#Isa 11:2**; **#Ro 8:15**; **#2Co 4:13**; **#Eph 1:17**; **#2Ti 1:7**. For to Him much more frequently than to the human *spirit* does the word refer. It points here to the divine source of that Christian *meekness* which Paul wishes to display at Corinth.

From **#1Co 4:18** we learn that, though the factious spirit was universal (**#1Co 1:12**) at Corinth, certain men were especially guilty of self-inflated opposition to Paul. This suggests that he has here in view the two classes of special offenders mentioned in **#2Co 11:13ff** and in **#2Co 12:21ff**. Of these, the former would certainly foster the partisanship just condemned; and the latter would tolerate the crime mentioned in the next chapter.

After expounding in § 5 the principles which ought to regulate his readers' view of himself and Apollos, Paul begins § 6 by reminding them that there are others besides himself to whom these principles apply, and points to inflated self-esteem as the root of the church-parties: **#1Co 4:6**. Against this, he appeals directly in **#1Co 4:7, 8**; and supports his appeal by the contrasted career of himself and his colleagues, **#1Co 4:9-13**. This contrast he depicts, not to put them to shame, but to correct them, as their father in Christ: **#1Co 4:14-16**. That they may imitate him, he has sent to them his trustworthy son Timothy, who will remind them of his example: **#1Co 4:17**. And, in spite of the self-flattering predictions of some, he will himself come soon, and test the real worth of those who think so much of themselves: **#1Co 4:18-20**. Upon themselves it depends whether his visit be marked by severity or kindness.

The CHURCH PARTIES at Corinth are known to us only from the foregoing chapters and from uncertain allusions in the Second Epistle.

The whole church (**#1Co 1:12**) was divided into four parties calling themselves by the names of Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ. That Paul passes at once from the church-parties to discuss in §§ 3, 4 the practical worth of human wisdom and then returns to the parties called by the names of himself and Apollos, his sudden reference in **#1Co 3:18** to wisdom, and his warning in **#1Co 3:21** not to boast in such men as himself and Apollos, suggest that these parties had their real source in an overestimate of human knowledge or skill. And, that they arose from an inflated self-estimate in the church-members generally, we are in **#1Co 4:6** told expressly. The same verse implies that

behind the names inscribed on the banners were other men who were the real leaders of the parties. And this was so, probably, in all the parties.

The Aramaic name Cephas suggests that the party which bore it was of Jewish nationality. And, if so, the parties of Paul and of Apollos were probably in the main Greek. This agrees with **#1Co 1:22**, which tells us that a search for wisdom was a mark of Greek, as distinguished from Jewish, nationality. From **#2Co 11:22** we learn that there were at Corinth bad men, apparently (**#2Co 11:4**) foreigners, and openly hostile (**#2Co 10:10**) to Paul, who boasted that they were Jews, and whom, like their fellow-countrymen in Galatia, Paul distinguishes (cp. **#2Co 10:2-6; 11:4, 12-15, 20, 22**) from the native Christians. Of these men and their followers the Cephas party probably consisted.

That the Christ party is classed with the others, places it under the common condemnation. Indeed the mention of it moves Paul to say that Christ Himself has been divided. The words of **#2Co 10:7** are in any case so easily accounted for that we cannot be sure that they refer expressly to this party. But they unveil a spirit which would easily assume form in a party using as its special or exclusive right, and therefore for party purposes, the Great Name which all Christians confess.

That only the parties of Paul and Apollos are mentioned in **#1Co 3:4, 5; 4:6**, suggests that the other parties were comparatively small in numbers or influence. And this agrees with the indications that the Cephas party was of Jewish nationality. The order of names in **#1Co 1:12** is retained in **#1Co 3:4; 4:6**, the only other clear references to the parties. This suggests that the order in **#1Co 1:12** may be throughout the order of the origin of the parties. All else is mere conjecture.

We can well conceive that the fervent eloquence (**#Ac 18:24f**) of Apollos, contrasted with the simplicity of speech which prompted the taunt of **#2Co 10:10** against Paul, would evoke the special enthusiasm of some hearers; and would call forth from others special expressions of loyalty to the great Apostle who seemed to be for the moment forgotten amid the popularity of Apollos. The pride of culture would lead many to set up themselves as judges of the relative merits of their great teachers. And unscrupulous men might make use of the various estimates thus formed to increase their own influence by avowing themselves followers of Paul or of Apollos that thus they might, by flattering the vanity of others, gain a following for themselves. The party spirit, so accordant with Greek character, evoked in some such way as this, soon infected the whole church.

Amid all this, Jewish enemies of Paul and of Christ crept into the Corinthian church, as into others, (cp. **#Ga 2:4**.) under the guise of a false Christian profession. Such men would fan the flame of dissension; and in opposition to both existing parties would proclaim themselves disciples of the great Apostle to whom had been given by Christ the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The solemn warnings of **2Co 10., 12.**, confirm **#1Co 1:12** by proving that these foreign intruders found a following at Corinth.

In view of these three parties calling themselves by the names of men, we wonder not that other men claimed independence of men and avowed themselves disciples of Christ, and claimed to be such specially and exclusively, thus separating themselves from their fellow-Christians and forming practically a fourth party. Like some in our own day they used as their own special name the One

Name which belongs equally to the whole family of God. But, equally with the others at Corinth, they are condemned by the Apostle as partisans.

The foregoing suggestions accounts for all the known facts of the case. And, till better informed, we accept it as a probable explanation of the rise of the church-parties at Corinth.

The mention of the factions in ch. 47 of Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians (see Appendix) is only a reference to this Epistle, and gives no further facts. It is, however, very interesting as proof of the genuineness of the Epistle before us, and as showing how deeply seated in the Corinthians was the spirit of faction.

REVIEW OF DIVISION 1. The Corinthian church had written to Paul for instruction on various matters. But other matters had come to his ears, of which they had said nothing, but which demanded prior attention. Of these, the church-parties occupied the first and largest place. For this evil was universal at Corinth; and is utterly inconsistent (cp. #Joh 17:21) with the aim of Christianity. Paul reminds his readers that he had, in their midst, purposely avoided everything tending to make himself the head of a party. Since the real source of their divisions was an overestimate of human wisdom, he shows that the Gospel reveals the powerlessness of such wisdom, and that, both in itself and as preached by him, it did not claim acceptance on the ground of the wisdom it displayed. Yet none the less Paul teaches wisdom, a wisdom quite different from that esteemed by men, revealed by the Spirit of God and incomprehensible to all but those in whom the Spirit dwells. How little fit the Corinthians are for such teaching, their divisions prove. Having thus struck at the root of the evil, Paul shows how unsuitable are men like Apollos and himself to be made heads of parties. He warns his readers to build with those materials only which will abide the test of the great Day; and bids them beware lest, instead of building up, they pull down, the temple of God. Once more he appeals against their overestimate of human wisdom. He bids them, instead of boasting about the merits of their teachers, to remember that whatever good there is in any of them belongs to the whole church. Although, as stewards, the apostles must give account, yet the Corinthians are unable to pass sentence upon them; and ought to wait till in the light of the Great Day all things are known. Paul then reminds his readers that he has in view others besides those whose names are inscribed on the banners of the church-parties. He has spoken of himself and Apollos as a rebuke of their overestimate of themselves. He wishes indeed that their estimate were true. For the lot of the apostles is very different from the fancied exaltation of the Corinthians. Yet he wishes, not to put them to shame, but to correct them. For he alone can speak to them as a father. To remind them of his own example, he has sent Timothy. And, though some self-confident men think otherwise, he will himself come soon. It is for them to decide whether his visit be marked by kindness or severity.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION II

### ABOUT THE MISCONDUCT OF SOME CHURCH-MEMBERS

#### CHAPTERS V., VI

#### SECTION VII

#### THEY TOLERATE, BUT MUST EXPEL, A NOTORIOUS OFFENDER

#### CH. V. 1-8

To speak generally, fornication is heard of among you, and a kind of fornication which is not even among the gentiles, for one to have his father's wife. And you are puffed up; and you did not rather mourn in order that he who has done this work might be taken out of your midst. For I indeed, absent in the body but present in the spirit, have already pronounced judgment as though present, touching him who in this way has carried out this thing, in the name of our Lord Jesus, you having been gathered together and my spirit, with the power of the Lord Jesus, to give up such a one to Satan, for destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Not good is your ground of exultation. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens all the lump? Cleanse out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump; according as you are unleavened. For indeed our passover has been sacrificed, even Christ. So then let us keep feast, not with old leaven, nor with leaven of wickedness and maliciousness, but with unleavened cakes of sincerity and truth.

Besides the party-spirit which had permeated the whole church at Corinth, there were individual cases of special misconduct, in which all the church-members were more or less involved, and with which Paul must deal before he goes on to the matter mentioned in their letter to him. To the worst of these cases, the severe words of **#1Co 4:21**, "with a rod," are a convenient stepping stone.

Ver. 1. **Fornication**: literally "intercourse with harlots," but often including, as being practically the same, all improper intercourse of the sexes. Of this sin, Paul first *speaks generally*; then of a specially aggravated *kind of fornication*. With the "many" other cases (**#2Co 12:21-13:2**) Paul will himself deal when he comes. But "to *so* great a degree, not found even at Corinth among the heathen, has fornication risen *among you that some one has etc.*"

His **father's wife**; or stepmother, recalls the same words in **#Le 18:8**; **#De 22:30**. That he had actually married her, seems to be implied in "has," denoting present possession, compared with "has done" and "has carried out," **#1Co 5:2, 3**, denoting a past act. Cp. **#Mr 6:17f**; **#Mt 14:4**; **22:28**; **#1Co 7:2, 29**; 1 Macc. 11:9. This would explain the confidence with which Paul assumes the man's

guilt, and at once pronounces sentence. That he says nothing about the woman, suggests that she was not a Christian. From **#2Co 7:12** we infer that the woman had a living and injured husband. He was probably the offender's own father: for if she had married again she would hardly be called here *his father's wife*. If so, the man was guilty, not only of incest, but of the worst kind of adultery. That this matter precedes **#1Co 7:1** and is introduced with suddenness and surprise, implies that of this gross scandal nothing was said in the letter to Paul.

Ver. 2. Turns suddenly from the one notorious sinner to the church generally. By tolerating him, all exposed themselves to blame.

**Are puffed up:** or, *are men who have been puffed up*: **#1Co 4:6, 19**. Their inflated self-esteem not only gave rise to the church-parties but made the whole church oblivious of the disgrace which this man had cast upon it.

**Rather mourned:** instead of being *puffed up*. For his sin was a calamity to all.

**Done this work:** married the woman he now "has."

**In order that etc.** They ought in sorrow to have resolved that the guilty man should be driven from their ranks. This censure proves that a church ought to separate from itself those indisputably guilty of gross immorality.

Ver. 3.-5. Notice the contrast: "some one," **#1Co 5:1**; "you," **#1Co 5:2**;

I. Paul supports the blame implied in **#1Co 5:2**, by saying what he has *already resolved* to do in the matter.

**In the spirit:** Paul's own spirit, implied in the contrast with his own body. So **#1Co 7:34**, **#Ro 8:10**. Though *absent in the body*, Paul was *present in the spirit*, not only (**#Col 2:5**) observing them, but able to put forth his power in their midst by inflicting punishment. His bodily distance made his spiritual presence more wonderful.

**Have already resolved:** or, *judged*, i.e. pronounced sentence in his mind: see **#1Co 2:2**. He did this remembering that he was virtually *present*, i.e. able from a distance to put forth his power among them.

**In this way;** refers to the aggravating manner, unknown to us, of the crime.

**In the name etc.:** **#2Th 3:6**: as the servant, and with the authority, of Jesus. Close parallels in **#Ac 3:6, 16; 4:10, 12**. Cp. **#1Co 6:11; #Eph 5:20; #Php 2:10; #Col 3:17**. Paul had already resolved to hand over, as the representative of Christ, this man to Satan; and he will do so in the presence of the assembled church, himself present in spirit and using the power which (**#2Co 13:10**) Christ has entrusted to him.

**And my spirit:** emphatic repetition of *present in spirit*. This assembly of the church and of Paul in spirit will also be accompanied by *the power of the Lord Jesus*, manifested in punishing the offender.

**To give up etc.:** see note, **#Ro 1:24**: the sentence then to be executed.

**To Satan:** **#1Ti 1:20**; **#Job 2:6**: surrender to the power of Satan for the infliction of some kind of evil.

**For destruction etc.,** immediate purpose; *that the spirit etc.*, ultimate purpose, of the surrender. It is, as in **#1Co 5:3, 4**, the man's own spirit.

**May be saved in the etc.:** admitted, by the verdict of that *Day*, (**#1Co 1:8**; cp. **#2Ti 1:18**.) into eternal life. Both spirit and body will be saved. But the *spirit* only is mentioned, as the nobler and essential part, and in contrast to the *flesh* now to be given up to *destruction*.

This surrender to the power of Satan evidently includes, but means much more than, expulsion (**#1Co 5:2, 13**) from the church. A man already by his sin a captive (**#2Ti 2:26**) of the Devil, is to be given up to his power in some further sense. This can only refer, as in **#Job 2:6**, (cp. **#Lu 13:16**.) to the infliction of bodily injury by the agency of Satan and by the permission and design of God. Cp. **#Ac 5:5; 13:11**. The grossness of the present offence called for alike terrible penalty. Such would manifest *the power of the Lord Jesus* and the apostolic authority of Paul who was present in his spirit. It was not immediate death: for it was designed (cp. **#1Ti 1:20**) to lead the sufferer, by repentance, to final salvation. That it was a work of Satan, increases its terror and marks its connection with the man's sin. All sin is self-surrender (**#Eph 4:19**) to the power of evil: and the surrender reaches further than the sinner thinks.

**Destruction of the flesh**, which is given as the immediate purpose of this bodily infliction, might denote destruction of the power of bodily appetites, to which this man was evidently a slave. Cp. **#Ga 5:24**. For these have their source in the peculiar material of the body, *the flesh*, which "body of the flesh" must therefore (**#Col 2:11**) be "put off." If so, the man's body was to be smitten, (for, no other surrender to Satan can we conceive to be beneficial,) that it might cease to be a chain binding him to sin. Or, by naming the purpose, these words may practically specify the extent, of the surrender to Satan, viz. to be smitten with a fatal disease, which, by leading him to repentance, may save his soul. And this is the simplest and most likely meaning of the words used. The word *flesh*, instead of "body," is no objection to it. For the body of believers will live for ever. Only their *flesh*, i.e. the present material of their body, (cp. **#1Co 15:50**.) will be destroyed. Nor is this view disproved by Paul's subsequent forgiveness, **#2Co 2:6ff**: for this may have been, and doubtless was, as miraculous as the punishment, a miraculous deliverance from otherwise certain death. This miraculous punishment for gross immorality cannot in any way justify corporal punishment inflicted by man for doctrinal error.

It is remarkable that in this matter of discipline, and throughout these two Epistles so full of church matters, Paul never refers to the elders or bishops. That such existed, is made almost certain by **#Ac 14:23; 20:17, 28; #Php 1:2; #1Ti 3:1ff; 5:1, 17ff; #Tit 1:5**. The omission arose perhaps



from this, that in a church where all were recent converts the distinction between officers and private members was necessarily less conspicuous than in a church of longer standing. But, however explained, it is a sure mark of the very early age, and therefore of the genuineness, of these Epistles.

Ver. 6.-8. After dealing with the notorious offender, Paul turns again to the whole church, with words similar to **#1Co 5:2**. Your supposed wisdom *is no good ground-of-exultation*.

**A little leaven etc.:** found word for word in **#Ga 5:9**. This suggests that it was a kind of proverb; which agrees with the metaphorical mention of leaven in **#Mt 13:33; 16:6**.

**Lump**, of dough, as in **#Ro 11:16**. The proverb reminds us that there are other things besides leaven of which a small quantity silently permeates, and influences, and communicates its nature to, the whole of that with which it comes in contact. Paul assumes that in this respect sin is like leaven, and asks whether his readers are ignorant of the wide-spread effect of even a *little leaven*. His question, and the proverb, apply to sin both in the abstract and as embodied in the wicked church-member at Corinth. The least sin tolerated affects the whole man and the whole church.

**Cleanse out:** remove from your midst by cleansing.

**Old, new:** a spiritual contrast favorite with Paul; **#Ro 7:6; 6:4, 6; #Eph 4:22ff; #Col 3:9f**. Sin, which like *leaven* communicates its nature to whatever it touches, was an essential ingredient of our *old* life. We must therefore become altogether *new*. To this end we must *cleanse out* all sin as belonging to the past.

Although deliverance from sin is entirely a work of God's undeserved favor, through the death of Christ and the agency of the Holy Spirit, we are here exhorted to cleanse ourselves. Cp. **#2Co 7:1; #1Pe 1:22; #Jas 4:8; #Col 3:5, 9f**. For, only by speaking thus can we grasp the great truth that it depends upon ourselves whether or not we actually receive the purity which God works. We receive it by faith: and by a life of faith we work out (**#Php 2:12f**) the salvation which God works in us. This exhortation is quite general: cp. **#1Co 5:8**. But it includes (cp. **#1Co 5:13**) the removal of the man whose obstinate sin was contaminating the whole community.

**According as etc.:** what Paul bids, accords with objective fact. In the purpose and command of God, and in their own profession, they are separated from all sin; which is to them what, during the Passover week, leaven was to the Jews. This objective use of *unleavened* accords with "sanctified" in **#1Co 1:2**.

**For indeed our Passover etc.:** explains *unleavened*, and gives a motive for the foregoing exhortation. Our position is analogous to that of the Israelites, who were forbidden (**#Ex 12:15-20**) under pain of death to eat leaven during the seven days which followed the death of the paschal lamb. For *Christ* is to His people what the lamb was to Israel. This comparison, not found elsewhere, agrees exactly with **#Joh 1:29**.

**So then let us keep feast:** for the death of the lamb was always followed, at the strict command of God, by the feast of unleavened bread, during which no leaven was allowed in the houses of

Israel. The word *old*, repeated from **#1Co 5:7**, suggests perhaps a reason for this, viz. to teach Israel by a change of food that there must be a change of life. And, just as the death of the paschal lamb laid upon the Jews a divine obligation to put away their *old* food and begin to eat *new* bread, so the death of Christ lays us under obligation to put away sin and begin to lead a new life.

**Nor with a leaven of wickedness etc.:** further description of the *old leaven*, giving its moral constitution. Just so *sincerity and truth* are the moral constitution of the new spiritual food.

**Maliciousness: #Ro 1:29.**

**Sincerity: #2Co 1:12:** that which is the same throughout.

**Truth:** see **#Ro 1:18:** that which corresponds with eternal realities.

The exhortation of **#1Co 5:6-8** rests upon two great truths, viz. that sin, like leaven, communicates its nature to all it touches; and that the death of Christ lays upon us an obligation to cast away all sin. Of these, the former attests itself to the conscience and experience and observation of every one. Even the least thing which God hates, if clung to, darkens our spiritual intelligence, weakens our spiritual efforts, and pollutes our entire being. Therefore sin may justly be compared to leaven. That Christ is our Passover, follows by direct inference from Doctrines 2 and 3, viz. that salvation comes through the death of the Son of God, and that God designs us to be by union with Christ sharers of the life of Christ, a life devoted to God. See under **#Ro 3:26; 6:10; 8:39**. For, if we are saved from death by the death of Christ, then Christ is to us what the lamb was to the firstborn, who but for its death would himself have died. Whereas, apart from this doctrine we cannot conceive any sufficient justification for the comparison here used by Paul. Nor can we account for the institution of the Mosaic sacrifices. Thus this comparison, introduced incidentally to support a moral exhortation, strongly confirms our exposition of **#Ro 3:24-26**. Again, if Christ died that we may become (**#Ro 6:6-11**) dead to sin, then His death lays upon us an obligation to reject all sin, an obligation similar to that which bound Israel in Egypt to abstain from leaven after the paschal lamb was slain. In other words, Christ died that His death might be to us the gate to a life altogether new, and be a never-passed barrier between us and our old life in sin. Thus the exhortation of **#1Co 5:8** implies the teaching of **#Ro 6:6-11**.

**#1Co 5:6-8** also suggest the practical use, and the probable design, of the Mosaic ritual. It embodied essential truth, truth expounded fully only when Christ came, in a form which, while actually conveying important teaching, yet as evidently needing further explanation, kept alive expectation for the coming of Him who was to unlock its mysteries.

That Paul nowhere else refers to the Passover, taken in connection with **#1Co 16:8**, suggests that he wrote this letter about the time of the Jewish Passover, and that this comparison and exhortation were prompted by the associations of the season at which he wrote.

Paul's mention of Christ as our Passover agrees with **#Joh 19:14, 31; 18:28; 13:29**, which assert or imply that Christ died on the afternoon of Nisan 14, at the very time prescribed in the Law (**#Ex 12:6**) for the slaying of the paschal lamb; and with **#Joh 19:36**, where a command about the

Passover is said to be fulfilled in Christ. This agreement is not invalidated by the apparently contrary testimony, which we cannot here discuss, of **#Mr 14:12**; **#Lu 22:7**; **#Mt 26:17ff**. See *The Expositor*, vol. xii. p. 82.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION VIII

*THEY MUST WITHDRAW, NOT FROM ALL WICKED MEN,  
BUT FROM ALL WICKED CHURCH-MEMBERS*

CH. V. 9-13

**I wrote to you, in the letter, not to be mixed up with fornicators. Not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous ones and grasping ones or idolaters. Since, if so, you ought to go forth out of the world. And now I have written to you not to be mixed up, if any one bearing the name of brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or drunken, or grasping; with such a one not even to eat together. For what have I to do with judging those outside? As to yourselves, is it not those within whom you judge? But those outside God judges. Take away the bad man from among yourselves.**

Ver. 9. A new subject closely connected with the foregoing, introduced abruptly by a reference to something Paul has already written to the Corinthians.

**In the letter:** a previous letter. Cp. **#2Co 7:8**; which refers evidently to this First extant Epistle. Had Paul written no earlier letter and referred here only to **#1Co 5:1-8**, these words would be needless and meaningless: whereas, if he wished to say that he referred here not to some earlier letter but to this one, he would certainly have written "in this letter." Moreover, the word "now" in **#1Co 5:11** contrasts **#1Co 5:1-8** with something written before. An earlier letter from Paul to the Corinthians is by no means impossible or unlikely; and seems to be implied in **#2Co 10:10**. Nothing is proved by **#Ro 16:22**; **#1Th 5:27**; **#Col 4:16**: for they refer to a letter just finished, and the word *letter* is needful to make up the sense. We need not suppose that Paul wrote no letters but those now extant. God has preserved so many as He saw to be needful for the direction and edification of the church. But there were doubtless others, written under the guidance of the Spirit and for those who received them clothed with apostolic authority, which attained their purpose by meeting a temporary emergency. *In the letter*, refers to some one definite letter, known to the Corinthians, which Paul has here in view; and therefore does not imply that he had written to them only one earlier letter.

Ver. 10. **Not altogether.** The words "not to be mixed up etc." in the earlier letter are not to be understood universally, as referring to all fornicators without exception. Whether these words had been actually misunderstood, and the misunderstanding made known to Paul either orally (e.g. **#1Co 1:11**) or by letter, (**#1Co 7:1**), we do not know. Perhaps some had wilfully misinterpreted them, to make them appear impracticable. In either case he naturally deals with the matter here.

**Of this world:** **#1Co 3:19; 7:31; #Eph 2:2; #Joh 8:23; 11:9; 12:25, 31; 16:11; 18:36.**

**World:** **#1Co 1:20**: all the complex realm of things around us, looked upon as existing in space. It then denotes, in contrast to those who belong to the coming age, men and things around so far as they do not submit to Christ. As an outward distinction, it denotes those outside the community

which professes to have been saved from the world. So here. Paul's words about fornicators are not to be taken universally, i.e. of those who belong to the world around us, but only of professing Christians.

**Or etc.:** other sins mentioned in Paul's letter.

**Covetous:** greedy for material good. It will be discussed under **#Eph 5:5**.

**Grasping:** who with violence take other men's goods.

**Since, if so, etc.:** such a universal prohibition would forbid all intercourse with men around; which would be evidently impracticable. And this impracticability proves sufficiently that Paul's former words are not to be thus understood.

Ver. 11. **Now I have written etc.:** viz. in **#1Co 5:1-8**, which are practically a repetition of the injunction given in the former letter. For, the blame in **#1Co 5:2** implies that they ought to separate themselves from immoral professors.

**Not to be mixed up etc.:** repeated from **#1Co 5:9** reminds us that the principle involved in **#1Co 5:2** is but a repetition of the earlier injunction. The word *idolaters* betrays, as do **#1Co 6:9; 10:7, 14; #1Jo 5:21**, a proneness in some early Christians to take part, publicly or privately, through fear or through an inadequate sense of the evil of all idolatry, in the rites of heathenism.

**A railer:** using violent language against others.

**With such a one etc.:** teaches plainly that they were to treat a wicked church-member quite differently from a heathen guilty of the same sins. For the church-member was sailing under false colors. Any intercourse with him would be a practical acknowledgment that he was what he professed to be, which it was most important to disown.

Ver. 12.-13a. Reason for this different treatment of equally immoral church-members and heathens, viz. that Paul has no business to pronounce sentence on *those outside* (**#Col 4:5; #1Th 4:12; #1Ti 3:7**) the church.

**Whom you judge:** an appeal, in support of this reason, to their own church-discipline. "It is your business to see, not whether heathens, but whether church-members, are guilty of sin."

**God judges:** both now, and finally at the great day. The punishments which in this world follow sin, prove that sinners are already condemned.

Ver. 13b. After enforcing and guarding the express injunction of a former letter, and a principle involved in § 7 of this letter, Paul concludes § 8 by urging his readers to carry out this principle with the notorious offender of **#1Co 5:1**.

**Take away etc.;** almost word for word from #**De 17:7; 21:21**, which refer to the punishment of death for idolatry and for disobedience to parents. Thus the wicked Israelite was removed from the people. The terrible meaning of these words in the Old Testament gives great weight to them when used for the lighter sentence here enjoined; and clothes this sentence with Old Testament authority.

**From among yourselves:** emphatic contrast to "those outside," reminding the readers that the evil to be removed was in their own midst.

The great precept of § 8, viz. that we must have nothing to do with those who profess to serve Christ and yet live in sin, was probably more easy to obey in Paul's day than in ours. For the veneer of a higher general social morality covers up, now more than then, very much actual sin, and makes it often impossible to determine the guilt or innocence of suspected persons. In nothing is Christian wisdom more needed than in our treatment of such. But, wherever it can be applied with certainty, the general principle is valid and important.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION IX

### *SOME OF THEM GO TO LAW, AND THAT BEFORE UNBELIEVERS*

#### CH. VI. 1-11

**Dares any of you, having a matter with another, go to law before the unrighteous ones, and not before the saints? Or, do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if before you the world is judged, are you unworthy of smallest judgments? Do you not know that angels we shall judge? To say nothing of this life. If then touching matters of this life you have judgments, is it those who are despised in the church, is it these whom you appoint? To put you to shame I say it. To this degree is there among you no wise man who will be able to judge between his brother? But brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers.**

**To go no further indeed, speaking generally, it is a damage to you that you have judgments among yourselves. Why do you not rather suffer injustice? Why do you not suffer fraud? But it is you that practise injustice and practise fraud, and that to brothers. Or, do you not know that unrighteous\* (\*Or unjust.) men will not inherit God's kingdom? Be not deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor luxurious men, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous men, no drunken men, no railers, no grasping men, will inherit the kingdom of God. And these things some of you were. But you washed yourselves, but you were sanctified, but you were justified, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of our God.**

Ver. 1. A new subject, viz. another disorder among church-members which Paul must deal with before he comes to the matters mentioned in the letter from Corinth. The suddenness and surprise of the question,

**Dares any one of you etc.**, suggest the peril of thus insulting the majesty of the Church of Christ. That no one person is mentioned as in **#1Co 5:1-5**, the earnest appeal to the whole church, the words of **#1Co 6:4**, "you appoint," and perhaps the present tense in **#1Co 6:6** noting a general practice "goes to law," suggest that there were more cases than one.

**Any of you]** Even one case would be outrageous.

**Go-to-law:** same word in **#Ro 3:4**.

**Unrighteous:** same word as *unjust*, used often both in this narrower sense, and in the wider sense of "not as it ought to be." See note, **#Ro 1:17**.

**The unrighteous ones:** heathen judges, who doubtless in many cases well merited this description. Cp. **#Ga 2:15**.

**The saints:** the church-members, whom God had claimed to be His own, and who professed to live for Him. In this contrast an argument lies. "Do you seek a settlement of your disputes from those whom you look upon as sinners under the anger of God rather than from those whom God has made specially His Own?"

Ver. 2. **Or, do you not know:** common phrase of Paul, **#Ro 6:3; 7:1; 11:2**; see **#1Co 3:16**. By a second question he supports the argument implied in the first.

**The saints will judge the world:** a truth which the readers ought to *know*, but which their preference for heathen judges proves that they had strangely forgotten. Same teaching in **#Da 7:22, 27**, "judgment (the right to pronounce sentence) was given to the saints of the Most High." Cp. Wisdom 3:8. Christ's people will share His royalty, **#Ro 8:17; #2Ti 2:12**; and therefore they will share the government which (**#Joh 5:22**) the Father has committed to the Son. Cp. **#Mt 19:28; #Lu 22:30**. In the great Day the saints will intelligently and cordially approve and endorse the sentence pronounced by Christ on the millions of earth. Possibly, this approval may be a divinely appointed and essential condition, without which sentence would not be pronounced. For, it may enter into God's plan that sentence be pronounced, not only by Man upon men, but by men, themselves redeemed from their own sins, upon those who have chosen death rather than life. (In **#Mt 12:41; #Ro 2:27**, the words "condemn" and "judge" are differently used.) It may be that final sentence cannot, according to the principles of the Divine Government of the Universe, be pronounced upon the lost without the concurrence of the saved, i.e. without a revelation of the justice of the sentence so clear as to secure the full approbation of the saved. If so, the concurrence of the saved is an essential element in the final judgment; and they may truly be said to judge both men and angels. That the sentence which the saints will pronounce is put into their lips by Christ, does not make their part in the judgment less real: for even the Son says (**#Joh 5:30**) "I cannot of myself do anything; as I hear, I judge."

**The world:** either all men, or (cp. **#1Co 5:10**) all unsaved men. But this latter limitation is not absolutely needful here. For as summoned by Christ to sit with Him, the saints will approve and endorse the measure of reward to be given to themselves. To appeal to human courts of law, was to appeal to men upon whom, as upon all men, they themselves, amid the splendor of the great assize, will pronounce an eternal sentence.

**Smallest judgments:** about earthly matters, and therefore, as compared with the awards of that Day, utterly insignificant. That they *will judge*, implies that already they *are* not *unworthy etc.* For, not only does designation to honor confer present dignity, but whatever we shall be in full degree and outward actuality we are already in some degree inwardly and spiritually. The light of eternity, which will enable us to estimate with infallible justice all actions done on earth and to approve and endorse the sentence of Christ, already shines in the hearts of those in whom the Spirit dwells. For His presence imparts (**#1Co 2:15f**) the wisdom of Christ. Therefore, in proportion as we are influenced by the Spirit, we are able to estimate conduct so far as the facts are known to us: i.e. spiritual men are, other things being equal, most fit to decide the differences of their brethren.

Ver. 3. Another known truth, forming with **#1Co 6:2** a climax.



**Angel**, when not otherwise defined in the New Testament always a good angel. But here the word *judge* recalls at once the angels who sinned. This verse implies, as **#2Pe 2:4**; **#Jude 1:6** plainly assert, that the sentence of the great Day will include at least the fallen angels. We cannot doubt that it will be pronounced by Christ. If so, **#1Co 6:2** suggests that in this sentence His people will join. Thus Man and men will pronounce sentence on those mighty powers which have seduced men, but from whose grasp the saints have been saved. The condemnation of wicked angels suggests that in the great Day the faithful angels will receive reward. If so, they may be included here; as in **#1Co 6:2**, "the world" may include "the saints." All this reveals a mysterious and wonderful connection (cp. **#Col 1:20**) between the moral destiny of our race and that of other races.

The teaching of **#1Co 6:2, 3** is implied in the great truth that whatever Christ is and does He calls His people to share; and therefore helps us to realize the infinite grandeur of our position. We cannot (**#1Co 4:5**) pronounce judgment now: for the facts are not yet fully before us. But in view of the majesty of that great assize, before which even angels will tremble, *matters of this life* are unworthy of mention.

Ver. 4.-6. **Those who are despised**: heathen judges, who, as ignorant of the wisdom which the Corinthian Christians conceived that they had obtained through the Gospel, were, *in the church*, looked down upon with contempt. By taking their disputes into courts of law Christians practically *appoint* heathens to be their judges. Paul asks with bitter irony, "Is it because your matters of dispute are so small, as belonging merely to the present passing life, compared with the tremendous sentence yourselves will share in pronouncing-is it for this reason that you submit them to men on whom you look down with contempt as aliens from the kingdom of God and exposed to the condemnation of the great Day, to men worthy to decide only these trifling temporal matters?"

**To put you to shame**: **#1Co 15:34**. It states Paul's immediate aim; **#1Co 4:14**, his ultimate aim.

**I say it**: I ask the foregoing bitter question. Your conduct implies that *to this degree* your large church is destitute of wisdom, that *there is not among you even one wise man who will be able* as cases arise *to judge etc.*

**Between his brother**: viz. the one man who brings the complaint. This question was most humiliating. Just as in **#1Co 3:1ff** Paul proves from the existence of the church-parties that they were incapable of the higher Christian teaching, so now from their lawsuits he infers that the whole church does not contain one wise man. **#1Co 6:6** asserts as fact, in reply to Paul's own question, the matter which gave rise to the question of **#1Co 6:1**.

**Unbelievers**; explains "the unrighteous" in **#1Co 6:1**.

Ver. 7.-8. **To go no further**, than the fact that "brother goes to law with brother," **that you have judgments with yourselves**. As in **#1Co 6:1**, Paul descends from fornication "generally" to a specially aggravated "kind of fornication," so now he rises from lawsuits before unbelievers to all lawsuits between Christians.

**Judgment:** sentence pronounced by a judge, which, as being the culminating point, implies the whole process of the suit. Apart from the heathen judges, the lawsuits were themselves a spiritual injury; they tended to lessen and destroy the spiritual life of those concerned and of the church generally.

**Damage:** same word in **#Ro 11:12**.

**Why . . . ? why . . . ?** solemn repetition and climax. It is better to *suffer-injustice* and *fraud* than spiritual *damage*. *But* their conduct was the precise opposite of this.

**Injustice:** that which is not right, **#1Co 6:1**.

**Fraud:** taking, generally by guile, the known property of others. Of this, Paul must have known that some of them were guilty.

Ver. 9.-10. **Do you not know]** This conduct, like all sin, arose from ignorance.

**Unrighteousness**, or *unjust*, refers specifically to **#1Co 6:8**; but includes the sin of **#1Co 6:1** and all other sin. For, against all sin equally this solemn warning is valid.

**Inherit God's kingdom:** **#1Co 15:50**; **#Ga 5:21**; **#Eph 5:5**: become, in virtue of filial relation to God, citizens of the future and glorious realm over which, in a royalty which His children will share, He will reign for ever.

**Be not deceived etc.:** solemn repetition, and exposition in its wider sense, of **#1Co 6:9a**. Cp. **#Ga 5:21**.

**Fornicators;** recalls **#1Co 5:1ff**.

**Idolaters;** see **#1Co 5:11**.

Ver. 11. Supports the foregoing solemn warning by the contrast of their entrance to the Christian life. When Paul speaks of sin in the abstract, he says, "There is no difference: for all have sinned," **#Ro 3:22**; **5:8ff**. But, when speaking of gross and open sins, he says *some of you*. For there may have been at Corinth men who, like Paul, (**#Ac 26:5**), were outwardly moral from their youth.

**You washed yourselves:** close coincidence with **#Ac 22:16**, "Baptize thyself (or, have thyself baptized) and wash away thy sin." God designs the Christian life to be one of purity, i.e. free from the inward conscious defilement, causing shame, which always accompanies sin. To this life of purity, Baptism, as a public confession of Christ and formal union with His people, was the divinely appointed outward entrance. Only thus, in ordinary cases, could men obtain salvation: **#Mr 16:16**; **#Ac 2:38**. And the use of water set forth in outward symbol the inward purity which God requires, and is ready to give. Therefore by voluntarily receiving Baptism, not only did the early converts profess their desire for the purity promised in the Gospel, but, by fulfilling the divinely ordained condition, they actually obtained it in proportion to their faith. Consequently, by coming to baptism,

they practically *washed themselves* from the stain of their sin. Cp. **#Tit 3:5**, "He saved us by means of the laver of regeneration." This does not imply purification in the moment of baptism, or apart from the converts' faith and steadfast resolve to forsake sin. But these words reminded the readers that, unless it was a meaningless and an empty form, their baptism was a renouncing of all sin. The allusion here is similar to the mention of baptism in **#Ro 6:2ff**: see notes.

**You were sanctified:** as in **#1Co 1:2**. "When God rescued you from sin and joined you to His people, He claimed you for His Own, and thus placed you in a new and solemn relation to Himself."

**Justified:** a solitary instance probably in the New Testament of the simplest sense, "made righteous." For Paul is dealing here (cp. **#1Co 6:9a**) with practical unrighteousness: and with him the justification of pardon always precedes (e.g. **#1Co 1:30**) sanctification. But we have the opposite order here, because practical conformity with the Law is an outflow and consequence of devotion to God. Therefore, by claiming us for His Own, and by breathing into us the devotion He claims, God makes us righteous. *You washed yourselves*, reminds the readers that by their own act they renounced sin: therefore to continue in sin is to retrace their own act. *You were sanctified etc.*, reminds "them that by One greater than themselves they were devoted to the service of God and made righteous: therefore, to sin is to resist God." Thus the change of expression sets before us two sides of the Christian life.

**In the Name etc.;** belongs probably to all three verbs. Their baptism was an acknowledgment that *Jesus* claimed to be their *Anointed Master*, whose *Name* they were henceforth to bear. Cp. **#Ac 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5**. They were "sanctified in Christ," **#1Co 1:2**. And moral uprightness was imparted to them in view of their confession of the Name of Christ, and for the honor of that Name.

**The Spirit of God:** the inward and immediate source, as *the Name of Christ* is the outward professed source, of the Christian life. This Spirit they received at Baptism, **#1Co 12:13; #Ac 2:38; 19:5f**: (though not by mechanical necessity but by faith, **#Ga 3:14, 26f; #Ga 4:6; #Eph 1:13**; and therefore not necessarily in the moment of Baptism:) and He was the source of (**#Ro 15:16; #2Th 2:13**) their loyalty to God; and of (**#Ro 8:4**) their conformity to the Law.

In this section, as frequently, Paul deals with matters of detail by appealing to great principles of wide application. Not only are there at Corinth legal disputes, but these are carried into the common law-courts. The litigants insult the majesty of the church, forgetful of the dignity awaiting its members, by submitting their disputes to the decision of men on whom they themselves look down with contempt as aliens from God, as though the church did not contain even one man wise enough to decide them. That there are lawsuits at all, is a spiritual injury to them, an injury they would do well to avoid, even at the cost of submitting to injustice. It is needful to warn them against the error of expecting that bad men will enter the kingdom of God; and to remind them that, when they entered the church and so far as their profession was genuine, they renounced sin, became the people of God, and therefore righteous men.

The above does not imply that in that early day there were regularly constituted Christian law-courts. The readers are simply urged to settle their disputes privately by Christian arbitration

rather than by a public legal process. A century later there were regular, though private, Christian courts; in which the bishops gave judgment between church-members.

To us, the argument of **#1Co 6:1-6** is modified by the fact that our public courts are for the more part presided over by excellent Christian men. But the injury inflicted upon a church by lawsuits between members, and the spirit of unscrupulous grasping, in one or both parties, which lies at the root of nearly all lawsuits, are the same in all ages. And, in proportion as men are moved by the Spirit of God, disputes about property will become rare; and the disputants will decide them, not in a public court, but by private arbitration, and by arbiters who themselves are guided by the same Spirit. Whether, in any one case it be more for the advancement of the kingdom of God that we defend our property or submit to injustice, must be determined by that spiritual wisdom which God has promised to give. From **#1Co 6:8** we learn that there are cases in which we shall do well to choose the latter alternative.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION X

### *ALL LICENTIOUSNESS IS CONTRARY TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE*

#### CH. VI. 12-20

**All things to me are allowable: but not all things are profitable. All things to me are allowable: but not I will be mastered by any. The food-stuffs are for the belly, and the belly for the food-stuffs: but God will bring to nought both it and them. But the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God both raised the Lord and will raise up us through His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of the body of Christ? Shall I then, having taken away the members of the body of Christ, make them members of a harlot's body? Far from it. Or, do you not know that he who joins himself to the harlot is one body? For, says he, "The two will become one flesh." (#Ge 2:24.) But he who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit. Fly from fornication. Every act of sin, whatever a man may commit, is outside the body. But he who commits fornication sins against his own body. Or, do you know not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have from God; and you do not belong to yourselves? For, you were bought with a price. Then glorify God in your body.**

After various matters of detail, viz. the incestuous church-member, intercourse with such men, and lawsuits, Paul asserted in #1Co 6:9-11 a negative and a positive truth condemning all kinds of sin. He now takes up one sin, which, because of its prevalence at Corinth even (#2Co 12:21) in the church, he has already placed first in the dark catalogue of #1Co 6:9, 10; and brings to bear against it, in addition to the general truths of #1Co 6:10, 11, special and weighty arguments.

Ver. 12. The subject is introduced by a startling assertion, which is immediately repeated,

**All things to me are allowable.** The repetition of these words, and their occurrence, similarly repeated, in #1Co 10:23, suggest that they had been spoken before, by Paul or others. But whatever be their origin Paul makes them his own, thus admitting their correctness; and guards them from abuse. That in both places they are spoken in connection with food, and the abrupt and transitory mention of food in #1Co 6:13, suggest that this was their original reference, and that they are equivalent to Paul's own words in #Ro 14:20, "All things are clean." If so, they may have come originally from his lips, touching food offered to idols or forbidden in the Mosaic Law. Cp. #1Ti 4:3. We notice that these words are here carefully guarded against abuse, and that the broad difference between food and the intercourse of the sexes is argued at length. This suggests that, though true and important within their own limits, these words had been perverted into an excuse for in chastity; and that some professed to infer from them that all restrictions on the intercourse of the sexes, as on food, had been set aside by the Gospel. This misuse of words which he does not hesitate to reassert, Paul meets at once by showing in #1Co 6:12 that they contain in themselves a limit to their practical application, and (#1Co 6:13, 14) that the cases of food and of intercourse of the sexes are so altogether different that we cannot argue from the one to the other.

**To me:** who have been set free by Christ from the Mosaic Law. Cp. **#Ro 14:14**.

**Profitable:** helpful to ourselves or others. In all matters, and especially about food, we ask not only whether it is lawful but whether it will do us good or harm.

**Be mastered by anything:** be put under its rule; one case in which an action may be allowable but not profitable. Some actions (e.g. the use of stimulants) tend to create in some persons an irresistible habit. Now whatever deprives us of self-control does us harm; and must therefore be avoided, even though in itself lawful. In this case, in order to preserve our liberty we put a limit to its exercise. Paul says, "All things are in my power: but over me nothing shall have power." He leaves his readers to apply these principles to the matter of fornication; to determine whether it is profitable to them, or whether it brings them into humiliating bondage.

This verse is a good guide of conduct in matters not expressly forbidden. By experience and observation, guided by the Spirit of wisdom and love, we must discover the effect of various actions upon our own inner life and through us on those influenced by our example, and act accordingly. For no intelligent man will do a thing, without considering its results, merely because it is lawful. A beautiful development of this principle is found in **#1Co 10:23-33; 8:9-13; #Ro 14:13-21**.

Ver. 13a. After showing that the maxim of **#1Co 6:12** contains its own limitation, Paul now meets its misapplication to the unrestricted intercourse of the sexes, by showing that this case differs so entirely from that of food that inference from the one to the other is unsafe.

**The food-stuffs:** the different kinds of food. Same word in **#1Ti 4:3; #Heb 9:10; 13:9; #Mr 7:19**. These were created *for the belly*, i.e. in the purpose of God, the stomach and whatever gives nourishment were designed, each for the other. Cp. **#Ge 9:3**. Even much of the food forbidden in the Law was nourishing and its nourishing properties must have been given by the Creator. Therefore, in eating such food, we are carrying out His purposes.

**Bring to nought:** **#1Co 2:6:** at the death of the individual, and finally at the destruction of the world. Therefore both food and digestive organs belong, not to the eternal, but to the passing things of time. This implies that nourishment, at least in its present mode, will, like marriage, (**#Mt 22:30**), have no place in the world to come. Cp. **#1Co 15:44, 50**.

Verse 13b.-14. In the rest of § 10, Paul sets forth the dignity of **the body**: and thus makes us feel instinctively how altogether different from food is the intercourse of the sexes. *The body* was *not* created in order that we might use it *for fornication*. That it was created for this end, not one, probably, of Paul's readers, and few others, would venture to assert. Thus the two cases differ. Whoever eats food, of whatever kind, puts it to its designed use: whoever commits fornication uses his body in a way for which it was never designed.

**But for the Lord:** that it may belong to Christ, as a means by which He will work out His purposes and a medium through which He will reveal Himself to men. Cp. **#Php 1:20**. And for this end our bodies were created. This infinite contrast supports strongly the foregoing negative, *not for fornication*.

**For the body:** to save it from vanity and sin and corruption, and to make it His own for ever. This is an essential part of the purpose Christ came to accomplish.

**And God etc.,** corresponds with "but God etc." in **#1Co 6:13**: as does *but the body etc.* with "the food-stuffs etc."

**Both Christ . . . and us:** an inseparable connection. So **#Ro 8:11**.

**Through His power;** suggests the difficulty of breaking the barrier of the tomb, and the solemnity of the resurrection as a manifestation of the power of God.

Ver. 15.-17. develop and support "for the Lord." **#1Co 6:13**; in order to strengthen the instinctive feeling, already evoked by the contrast between food and intercourse of the sexes, that fornication is utterly opposed to the purpose for which our body was created.

**Members of the body of Christ:** see under **#1Co 12:12, 27; #Ro 12:4**. The bodies of believers stand in a relation to Christ similar to that of the various members of a man's own body to the spirit within. For they are the visible and material and variously endowed organs through which He shows Himself to, and acts upon, the world. So that, as far as God's purpose is now attained in us, the presence of our bodies in a place is the presence of Christ there, who smiles through our face, speaks His own words of wisdom and love and life through our lips, and through our hands perform His works of mercy. In this sense "the body" exists "for the Lord."

**Shall I then etc.:** intense reality of Paul's thought. Cp. **#Ro 3:7**. If to do this is right, it is right for Paul to do it. But how inconceivable!

**Having taken away etc.;** shows what the foregoing question practically involves. To be unchaste is to rob Christ of the members of His own body, to deprive Him of the use of them as organs of His self-manifestation to the world.

**A harlot:** whom Paul assumes, and no one will deny, to be absolutely opposed to Christ.

Ver. 16. A truth which the readers ought to *know*, justifying the foregoing words.

**Is one body:** therefore, he who commits fornication makes his body a part, or member, of a harlot's body.

**For etc.:** proof of *is one body*.

**The two etc.:** word for word from **#Ge 2:24, LXX**.

**Says he:** Adam, or the author of Genesis. Probably the former, moved by prophetic impulse on seeing Eve. But to Paul both were invested with divine authority. So **#Ro 3:19**. That these words refer originally to marriage, does not lessen their appropriateness here. For they teach that the marriage relation was divinely instituted at the creation of the race, in order to unite husband and

wife so closely that in them even personal distinction should in some respects cease. Intercourse with harlots desecrates this divine ordinance to a means of sin. Therefore, in a Christian, it robs Christ of a member of His own body in order to place it in union with one utterly opposed to Christ, a union so close that it implies a cessation in some sense of personal distinction.

Ver. 17. Increases the force of the foregoing, by showing how exalted is the fellowship with Christ of which fornication is a renunciation.

**Joined to the Lord:** to Christ. Same words, in reference to God, in **#De 10:20; 11:22; #2Ki 18:6; #Jer 13:11**. They denote here that spiritual contact with Christ by which we abide in Him and He in us.

**Is one spirit.** In proportion as we are joined to the Lord are the thoughts, purposes, efforts, and entire activity, of our spirit an outflow of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us and moving us. Thus in Him and in us one Spirit dwells, moves, and manifests itself. This oneness of spirit with Christ is the source of the mutual oneness (**#Joh 17:11, 21ff**) of His people. This union with Christ, for which we were created, which comes to us through the noblest element of our nature, even our spirit, and permeates our whole being, making even our mortal bodies to be members of the body of Christ, reveals the infinite indignity of intercourse with a harlot; an intercourse prompted only by the lower and material side of our nature, and preventing absolutely all union with Christ.

Ver. 18. **Fly from fornication:** direct exhortation, carrying the force of the foregoing arguments, and further supported by those following.

**Outside the body:** they require some motive or weapon other than the body. But this sin stands alone in making the human body, the chosen medium of Christ's self-manifestation to the world, to be itself a sufficient motive and instrument of sin. Therefore, as a unique dishonor (**#Ro 1:24**) to the body, it is in a unique sense a *sin against* (**#1Co 8:12; #Lu 15:18**) *our own body*.

Ver. 19.-20. Known truths which greatly aggravate this unique sin against the body.

**Your body**, not bodies: see **#Ro 1:21**.

**Temple etc.:** exactly parallel of **#1Co 3:16**.

**Holy Spirit:** appropriate designation of that inward, personal, divine, animating principle, whose every impulse is towards God and away from sin. See note, **#Ro 8:17**. That the Spirit comes to us from God, makes dishonor to the Spirit a dishonor to the Father. This verse claims for the believer's body, as **#1Co 3:16** claims for the church generally, the dread solemnity associated with the temple at Jerusalem. The Christian's body is the most sacred spot on earth. And every dishonor to it is an insult to the Great Spirit who has chosen it to be His dwelling place on earth, and to the Father who gave Him to us.

**Not belong to yourselves:** another thought suggested at once by *temple*. For God's presence there removed it, as the palace of the heavenly King, from all human ownership. For where the King is,



He is both ruler and owner. Therefore, the presence of the Spirit in our bodies has made them no longer our own.

Ver. 20. **For you were bought etc.:** #1Co 7:23; ground of the foregoing, and another argument in support of #1Co 6:18a. Christ died in order (#Ro 14:9) that we may live a life of which He is the one aim. Therefore He died that we may be His: and His blood was the price with which He bought us for Himself. Cp. #1Pe 1:18. Consequently, all in chastity is, not only dishonor to that dread Spirit whom God has put within us, but resistance to Him who so earnestly desired us for His own that to gain us He poured out His blood.

**Then glorify God:** positive and general exhortation, including the negative and specific one in #1Co 6:18a. We *glorify God* when we receive Him as an object of our admiration; and when, by words or works, we make Him known to others to be an object of their admiration. See under #Ro 1:21.

**In your body:** #Php 1:20. "So act that your bodily presence may be a display of the grandeur of God, and may call forth admiration for God in those who have intercourse with you."

SECTION 10 is the one New Testament passage which deals professedly and fully with this one sin. Paul begins by quoting with approval a maxim used by some as a cloak for it. He shows that this maxim contains its own limits, even in these matters to which it properly refers; and, after indicating these limits, leaves his readers to apply them to the matter in hand. But indiscriminate food, to which the maxim really refers is altogether different from promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, to which some would apply it. For the one is according to, the other opposed to, God's original design; and the one pertains to time, the other to eternity. The dignity of the human body, which Paul refers to first as a contrast, he then uses further as a direct dissuasive. To commit fornication, is to rob Christ of the members of His own body, in order to place then, by desecrating God's ordinance, in closest fellowship with a harlot; whereas it is our privilege to have spiritual fellowship with Christ. It is a dishonor to our own sacred bodies, and to the divine inhabitant whom God has placed to dwell therein; and an invasion of a right which Christ has acquired at the cost of His own blood.

It is not Paul's purpose to prove that fornication is wrong; (for this, in their heart of hearts, all men know;) but to show how terribly wrong it is, how utterly opposed to God's glorious purpose about our body, how insulting to the Great Spirit who dwells within us, and how hostile to the earnestness of Him who made us His own at the cost of His life. From #1Co 5:1; #2Co 12:21, we learn how much this teaching was needed at Corinth.

The teaching of this section implies, and flows directly from the fundamental doctrines assumed in the Epistle to the Romans. #1Co 6:20a is explained by Doctrine 2, #Ro 3:24ff; "for the Lord" in #1Co 6:13, by Doctrine 3, #Ro 6:3-11; #1Co 6:19, by Doctrine 5, #Ro 8:4-11. "Members of Christ" is a development of Doctrines 3 and 5.

DIVISION II., which deals with the gross misconduct of some church-members, is now complete. Paul has pronounced a severe sentence on one conspicuous offender, and has supported it by referring to the paschal sacrifice of Christ, #1Co 5:1-4; and has urged his readers to separate

themselves, not from all bad men, but from all bad Christians, **#1Co 5:9-13**. He has shown the impropriety of their lawsuits between church members, and against all other sins, **#1Co 6:1-11**; and especially against in chastity. **#1Co 6:12-20**.

Paul has thus completed his discussion of those more pressing matters which demanded his first attention before he could reply to the questions in the letter from Corinth. He dealt first, and at greatest length, in DIV. I., with the church-parties. For these had spread over the entire church; whereas only a part, probably a small part, was guilty of the misconduct mentioned in DIV. II.; and because these church-parties, and the overweening self-conceit from which they sprang, were weakening the spiritual life of the whole church and thus opening a way for the immoralities mentioned immediately afterwards.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION III

### ABOUT MARRIAGE

#### CHAPTERS VII

##### *SECTION XI*

##### *COUNSELS, CHIEFLY TO THE MARRIED*

##### CH. VII. 1-17

About the things of which you wrote. It is good for a man not to touch a woman. But, because of the fornications, let each one have his own wife, and let each one have her own husband. To the wife let the husband pay that which is due; and in like manner also the wife to the husband. The wife has not authority over her own body, but the husband and in like manner also the husband has not authority over his own body, but the wife. Defraud not one another; except perhaps it be by agreement for a season that you may have leisure for prayer, and again may come together, lest Satan tempt you because of your want of self-control. But this I say by way of making allowance, not by way of command. But I wish all men to be like myself. But each one has a gift of grace of his own from God, one in this way and one in that way.

But I say to the unmarried and to the widows, it is good for them if they remain as I also am. But if they have not self-control, let them marry: for better it is to marry than to burn.

But to those who are married, I give charge, not I but the Lord, that a woman do not separate from her husband, (but, if she do separate, let her remain unmarried, or let her be reconciled to her husband;) and that a man do not send away his wife. But to the rest say I, not the Lord, if any brother has a wife an unbeliever, and this woman agrees to live with him, let him not send her away: and any woman who has an unbelieving husband, and this man agrees to live with her, let her not send the husband away. For sanctified is the unbelieving husband in the wife, and sanctified is the unbelieving wife in the brother. Else we should infer that your children are unclean. but now are they holy. But, if the unbeliever separates himself let him separate himself. Held in no bondage is the brother or the sister in such cases. Moreover, in peace has God called us. (For what dost thou know, Wife, whether thou wilt save thy husband? Or, what dost thou know, Husband, whether thou wilt save thy wife?) Except that as to each one the Lord has allotted, as God has called each one, so let him walk. And in this way in all the churches I ordain.

Ver. 1. **You wrote**; implies a letter from the Corinthian Christians to Paul, asking advice on sundry matters. To these he now comes, after dealing with the more pressing matters of 1Co. 1-6.

Only imperfectly, from Paul's own words in this Epistle, can we infer what these questions were. One of them referred to marriage. And to this question the solemn teaching of § 10 forms a suitable transition.

Verse 1b. **Not to touch a woman:** to be unmarried. For it is contrasted with *have his own wife*, which refers evidently to marriage: and in **#1Co 7:3ff** Paul advises married people not to separate. In **#1Co 7:1** Paul admits and asserts a general principle; but points out in **#1Co 7:2** a practical obstacle to it. He reasserts it in **#1Co 7:8** with the limitation of **#1Co 7:9**. Since here and in **#1Co 7:8** the principle is asserted without explanation or proof, but is fully discussed and proved in **#1Co 7:25-38**, the words "because of the present necessity," placed conspicuously in front of this full discussion, must be taken as applying to, and limiting, the cursory statement of the principle here and in **#1Co 7:8**.

**The fornications:** the actual and ever recurring cases of this sin, for which Corinth was infamous. These exposed the Christians to so great temptation that to them the principle of **#1Co 7:1** was impracticable.

**Each one;** not quite so absolute as "every one."

**Have:** as in **#1Co 7:1**.

**Wife:** same word as "*woman*" in **#1Co 7:1**. The Greeks had no common distinctive word for "wife" or "husband." The emphatic words *his own* make the meaning clear. The reason given, *because of etc.*, shows that this verse is not mere permission but real advice; i.e. that the general principle, *not to touch a woman*, though good in itself, was, to speak generally, impracticable at Corinth.

**Each . . . each:** for the good of each sex equally, marriage is desirable.

The foregoing recommendation of marriage introduces suitably advice to married people, **#1Co 7:3-7**; and, after a word (**#1Co 7:8f**) to the unmarried suggested by Paul's reference to himself, further advice to the married, chiefly about divorce, **#1Co 7:10-17**.

Ver. 3.- 5. The emphatic repetition, **and in like manner also**, gives to husband and wife exactly equal marriage rights, which the other is bound to **pay**. This equal right is made very prominent by the repetitions of **#1Co 7:2-4**. It culminates in **#1Co 7:4**, which states a truth which lies at the base of the injunction of **#1Co 7:3**, and is the essential principle of monogamy.

**Do not defraud;** keeps before us the obligation, "that which is due," **#1Co 7:3**.

**Except perhaps etc.:** an exception to his prohibition of separation, which Paul hesitatingly allows, on condition that it be by mutual consent, and only for a definite time.

**Season:** **#1Co 7:29; 4:5; #2Co 6:2; 8:18; #Ro 5:6**, etc.: not mere length of time, but a portion of time looked upon as an opportunity of doing something.

**Have leisure for prayer;** suggests the excellent custom of occasionally setting apart a period of some days for special devotional exercises. During such periods, for unremitting attention to spiritual matters, separation may *perhaps* be desirable.

**And may again come together:** an integral part of the purpose to separate. So careful is Paul lest a temporary separation become permanent.

**Lest Satan tempt etc.:** object to be avoided by making reunion a part of the purpose to separate, viz. that Satan should make their *want-of-self-control* an occasion for tempting them to sin.

**Your;** points to a special weakness of the readers. Therefore Paul fixes narrow limits to the allowed separation. This careful warning implies some real need for it; and suggests either that the matter was mentioned in the letter from Corinth, or that separation was inculcated by some in the church.

**To fasting and:** certainly spurious, as is the same word in **#Ac 10:30**, probably in **#Mt 17:21**, and not unlikely in **#Mr 9:29**. These various readings affect materially the teaching of Scripture about fasting.

Ver. 6.-7. **This:** viz. that married people do not separate except for a definite time.

**Making allowance:** taking into indulgent consideration "your want-of-self-control." The prohibition to separate is not an imperative *command*, as touching right and wrong, but advice prompted by their spiritual weakness.

**But I wish etc.:** something better than the counsel just given.

**Like myself:** endowed with complete self-control. This would make these counsels needless.

**But each one etc.:** a modest softening down of the apparent assumption, in **#1Co 7:7a**, of superior piety.

**Gift-of-grace:** as in **#1Co 1:7**; **#Ro 1:11**; **12:4**. Paul remembers that his own self-control was the gift to him of God's undeserved favor; that *each* believer has a gift, i.e. some kind of spiritual excellence wrought in him by God; that in some the favor of God shows itself *in this way*, i.e. by giving self control, in others in some other gift, perhaps equally valuable. Therefore, Paul's possession of this one gift is no proof of superiority on the whole. Cp. **#Ro 12:3-6**. This principle ought to control all our comparisons of ourselves with others.

Ver. 8.-9. After expressing a wish that all men had the self-control which by God's grace he has, and prompted by this mention of himself, Paul now says a word to those who, like himself, are *unmarried*, i.e. without wives, including (cp. **#1Co 7:11**) widowers.

**And the wives:** included in *the unmarried*, but added because to them (cp. **#1Co 7:40**) these words apply specially. Cp. "and Peter," **#Mr 16:7**.

**It is good etc.:** restates the principle of **#1Co 7:1**.

**Remain as I also am:** continue unmarried, in contrast to *let them marry*. The words *if they remain* imply that Paul refers here to his outward position, not as in **#1Co 7:7** to his inner self-control. And this proves that he had no wife when he wrote; but gives no hint whether he once had.

**Have not self-control:** case in which the foregoing principle does not apply. Practically the same is the reason given in **#1Co 7:2**, "because of the fornications." For these would not expose to danger a man of perfect self-control; and therefore to him would be no reason for marrying. That the sensuality around is given in **#1Co 7:2** as a reason why "each one," speaking generally, should marry, seems to imply that the Corinthians generally had not the self-control needful to make celibacy expedient. But here Paul leaves each to determine this for himself.

**To turn: #2Co 11:29.**

**Better:** because the one, though disadvantageous, is innocent; the other is not. The matter touched in **#1Co 7:8, 9**, is dealt with fully in **#1Co 7:25-40**.

Ver. 10.-11. **To those who are married:** in contrast to "let them marry." That those married to unbelievers are made in **#1Co 7:12** a special case, implies that Paul refers to Christians married to Christians. Just so, in **#1Co 7:9** "let them marry" refers only (cp. **#1Co 7:39**) to marriage with a believer.

**Give charge:** not advice, but solemn command.

**Not I but Christ, the Lord** of the Church; who had already (**#Mt 5:32; 19:6-9**) given an express command. His word made Paul's word of no account. This implies, not that Paul's own authority (cp. **#1Co 14:37**) is less than absolute; but that special solemnity belongs to those words which came from the lips of the incarnate Son.

**Not to separate etc.:** cp. **#Mt 19:6**, where with the same word Christ expressly forbids a divorce.

**But if she do separate;** suggests that there may be a case in which for special reasons even the solemn words of Christ may be inapplicable.

**Remains unmarried,** i.e. without a husband: according to still more solemn words of Christ, **#Mt 5:32; 19:9**.

**Be reconciled: #Mt 5:24:** lay aside, or persuade him to lay aside, whatever prevents them from living together. The mention of this alternative suggests that reunion is desirable, even in the special case in which separation has taken place. A dissolution of marriage, for any reason or no reason, was easy in Roman law. Hence the need for the injunctions of **#Mt 5:32; 19:9**. The shorter injunction in **#1Co 7:11b** to the husband, suggests perhaps that the wish for divorce was more likely in the wife. And we can easily conceive a wife to be prompted to the total change consequent on her conversion and by a new-born consciousness of Christian liberty, to avail herself of the laxity of Roman law,

in order to escape from the control of one whom, though a Christian, she felt to be an unsuitable consort. Paul reminds her, while leaving room for an exceptional case, that Christ has expressly forbidden separation; and has still more emphatically forbidden re-marriage.

Ver. 12.-13. **To the rest:** to those married to unbelievers, whose case is so different from that of **#1Co 7:10, 11** that it requires special treatment, and which now alone remains.

**Not the Lord;** implies that **#Mt 19:6** does not apply to them. The intimate connection of heathenism with the details of social life made the position of Christians married to heathens so peculiar that it could not be dealt with on the ground of words spoken by Christ to those only who were worshippers of the true God. Therefore, having no command of Christ to quote, Paul himself speaks. Cp. **#1Co 7:25**.

**Has a wife an unbeliever;** whom he has already married, before or since his conversion. To marry such is, in **#1Co 7:39**, expressly forbidden.

**Agrees to live with him;** implies that both husband and wife are willing.

Ver. 14. Justifies the foregoing advice against a possible objection. The Israelites were forbidden **#De 7:3** to marry heathens. And those who had done so were bidden by Ezra (**#Ezr 9:2**) to put them away: for "the seed of holiness" must not mingle with the unholy. But Christians also are holy: **#1Co 1:2**. And it might be thought that contact with a heathen husband, or wife would defile them. Paul says no, the heathen husband in virtue of his wife's holiness, is himself holy. Just so "whatever touches the altar shall be holy," **#Ex 29:37**; **#Le 6:18**. The Christian wife lays her heathen husband upon the altar of God; and in all her intercourse with him as God's servant, striving ever to accomplish His purposes. Therefore, whatever the husband may be in himself, he *is sanctified in the wife*: i.e. in the subjective world of her thought and life he is a holy object; and her treatment of him is a sacrifice to God. Such intercourse cannot defile. Therefore, his heathenism is not in itself a reason for separation. (Similarly, the Christians' friends, abilities, wealth, time, are, or should be, holy. Else even they will defile him.) Notice the contrast of **#1Co 6:16**. All intercourse with a harlot is sin; and cannot therefore be a sacrifice to God, nor she a holy object. Consequently, her presence is ever defiling.

**Else etc:** inference we are compelled to make if the principle involved in **#1Co 7:14a** be not admitted. It is an argument, *reductio ad absurdum*, in proof that the heathen husband or wife is holy, and therefore not defiling.

**Your children:** an appeal to all Christian parents, in contrast to the special case of **#1Co 7:14a**.

**Unclean:** and therefore polluting; and not to be touched by the holy people. If a wife must leave her husband because intercourse with a heathen is defiling, she may infer fairly that her *children* also are *unclean*, and must be forsaken. For some of these may be adult heathens. But all natural and Christian instinct says that she is in every case bound to show to them a mother's love; and that such love, even towards a heathen, cannot pollute. But on what principle is this? Only that in the Christian

mother's thought and life her children are laid upon the altar of God, and therefore, in relation to her, holy.

**But now etc.:** in contrast to the absurd inference which would follow a denial of **#1Co 7:14a**. That the children *are holy*, Christian instinct compels us to admit. And their holiness can be explained only by admitting the principle involved in **#1Co 7:14a**. Thus from the admitted case of the children Paul argues the case of the husband.

From this verse, Neander, Meyer, Stanley, and others, have inferred that infant-baptism was not usual when it was written; on the ground that, if the children of believers had been baptized, the difference between them and the unbaptized husband would bar all argument from one to the other. And we must admit that the children referred to here were unbaptized. But the word *children* includes adults; (cp. **#Mt 10:21; 21:28**;) and therefore, in some cases, adult heathens. Indeed the argument suggests such, as being a closer parallel to the unbelieving husband. Consequently, it does not necessarily imply that the infants were not baptized. For, even if they were, the argument from the older children would still remain. That Paul did not find it needful to say "your unbaptized children," suggests perhaps that baptism in infancy was not then usual. But on this argument no great stress can fairly be laid. Whether or not the children were baptized, and whether they were infants or adults, they had an indisputable claim to the care of a Christian parent. Therefore, to give them such care, could in no case defile. Consequently, baptism had no bearing at all on the case. And this is sufficient reason for Paul's silence about it, even though the rite had been administered to some of the children. Similarly, as not affecting the argument, nothing is said about converted *children*. Yet we cannot infer from this that at Corinth none of the children of believers were themselves believers.

We cannot therefore accept this verse as proof or presumption that infant-baptism was unknown in the Apostolic church.

On **#1Co 7:10-14**, see further in *The Expositor*, vol. x. p. 321.

Ver. 15. After dealing with the case of **#1Co 7:12**, "if she agrees to live with him," Paul takes up now the other alternative, *if the unbeliever separates himself*; thus completing his counsel "to the rest," i.e. to those married to unbelievers.

**Let him separate himself**; refers probably to simple separation, as opposed to "live with him," **#1Co 7:12**; but doubtless includes divorce. "If the unbeliever wishes to go, do not prevent him." To be obliged to force oneself on a reluctant heathen husband or wife, would be a *bondage* inconsistent with Christian liberty.

**Moreover in peace etc.:** additional reason for letting him go. The Gospel came proclaiming *peace*, **#Eph 2:14, 17**; in contrast to the bondage, and therefore confusion, which would follow an attempt to force oneself on an unbeliever. The peacefulness of Christianity forbids this.

Ver. 16. A negative reason for the foregoing advice.



**Thou will save:** #1Co 9:22; see #Ro 11:14.

**Whether etc.:** same phrase in LXX. as a ground of hope and motive for action, in Esther, #Es 4:14; #2Sa 12:22; #Joe 2:14; #Jon 3:9. But that here it supports the foregoing permission to separate, is proved by #1Co 7:17a, which gives an injunction not to change one's position as an *exception* to the principle defended in #1Co 7:16. If it were certain that the enforced presence of the Christian would save the heathen consort, this certainty would justify the spiritual risk of the continued connection. But it was far from certain; and therefore not worth the risk involved. And separation did not imply an abandonment of any suitable efforts to save the separated one.

Ver. 17. A general and universal principle, viz. "Be not eager to change;" which limits the foregoing counsel.

**As the Lord:** Christ the ruler of the church and the world, who divides among men the various circumstances, and *has* thus allotted *to each one* his position. But this allotment does not include positions of sin. These are always self-chosen.

**As God hath called:** the circumstances in which you received, and obeyed, the gospel call. [The perfect tense directs attention to the abiding result of the call.] That this verse does not imply that believers have received a call withheld from others by God for secret reasons, see under #Ro 8:28.

**Walk:** see #1Co 3:3. "Continue in the position and pursue the path, in which Christ has placed you, and in which God has called you to be His people." In § 12, this important principle will be developed and supported.

**I ordain;** asserts Paul's authority to announce the principles on which Christians should act.

**In all the churches;** testifies the importance of this universal principle, and Paul's impartiality in applying it.

THE COUNSEL of § 11 reveals Paul's careful consideration of everything bearing upon the matter in hand, undisturbed by personal prejudice or by a desire to force upon others his own practice. He has found out by experience the advantage under present circumstances of celibacy. But the self-control which alone makes celibacy expedient many have not. This, however, gives Paul no right to boast: for self-control is a gift of the undeserved favor of God, who gives to all believers real, though various, Christian excellences. The immorality prevalent at Corinth makes marriage, to speak generally, desirable both for men and women. But the force of this reason depends upon each one's degree of self-restraint, which each must estimate for himself. The marriage relation should be real, not pretended. The separation of husband and wife is not desirable, except for a spiritual purpose, by mutual consent, and for a definite time. If prolonged, it may, owing to the imperfect self-control of the Corinthian Christians, expose them to temptation. Paul reminds believers married to believers that Christ has forbidden them to break the marriage tie; and has specially forbidden re-marriage of divorced persons. That Christ's command does not apply in full force to believers married to heathens, Paul admits; and gives his own advice. He recommends that, if the heathen desires it, the marriage relation be kept up. This is not inconsistent with the holiness of the people of God. For the

heathen husband is laid by the Christian wife upon the altar of God, and becomes to her a sacred object. Only on this principle can we justify the intercourse of Christian parents with unsaved children; which all admit to be both right and obligatory. But if the unbelieving partner wishes to go, the believer is not bound to oppose it. This would be an unworthy bondage; and would lead to a confusion contrary to the essence of Christianity. The uncertain benefit to the heathen is no sufficient reason for endeavoring to force upon him the continuance of an alliance he wishes to break off. But this permission to separate must be limited by the general principle, a principle which Paul inculcates everywhere with apostolic authority, that it is well not to disturb existing relations.

Notice that Paul does not give, as do small-minded men everywhere, one specific direction to be applied in all cases; but states general principles, principles bearing in opposite directions, and leaves each man to determine which of them bears with greater force on his own case. Each of these conflicting principles, he states impartially and fully.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XII

### BE NOT EAGER TO CHANGE YOUR POSITION

#### CH. VII. 18-24

**Circumcised, was one called? let him not become uncircumcised. In uncircumcision has one been called? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing; and uncircumcision is nothing but a keeping of God's commandments. Each one, in the calling with which he was called, in this let him remain. A slave, wast thou called? Care not for it. (But if also thou art able to become free, prefer to use the opportunity.) For the slave called in the Lord is a freedman of the Lord. In like manner the free man, when called, is a slave of Christ. With a price you were bought. Do not become slaves of men. Each one, in the state in which he was called, Brothers, in this let him remain with God**

Ver. 18.-20. The great principle of **#1Co 7:17**, viz. that change is at present undesirable, bears not merely on the marriage relation but on all others, and especially on the believer's relation to Judaism. Therefore, while adducing it in relation to marriage, Paul takes the opportunity of expounding its wider bearing. He thus reveals its great importance as a broad and universal principle; and strengthens himself for further use of it in § 13 in reference to marriage.

**Become uncircumcised:** as in Macc. i. 15, Josephus, *Antiquities* xii. 5. 1: a recognized surgical operation; see Celsus, bk. vii. 25. 1. "Let those who received the Gospel as Jews lay aside formally their visible connection with the ancient people of God; and let not those who as heathens received it enter the Jewish community. "This equally balanced advice, **#1Co 7:19** supports with an equally balanced fundamental principle. Cp. **#Ga 5:6**. A man is neither better nor worse by being a Jew. Therefore, neither side has any reason for change.

**Keeping the commands of God**, is everything: only upon the degree to which we do what God bids, depends our rank in the kingdom of God.

**And nothing . . . nothing**, implies that circumcision neither helps nor hinders our obedience to God. Paul thus proclaims explicitly, as did Christ in **#Mt 15:11**, the abrogation of the Old Covenant. For of that Covenant circumcision was an obligatory sign: **#Ge 17:10**; **#Le 12:3**. See under **#Ro 2:25**.

**Keep commandments:** **#1Ti 6:14**, cp. **#Ro 2:26**: favorite words with John, **#Joh 14:15, 21, 23; 15:10**; **#1Jo 2:3f; 3:22, 24; 5:2f**: cp. **#Re 12:17; 14:12**. This verse and **#Ga 5:6** help to harmonize the teaching of Paul with **#Jas 2:24**, etc. All who believe become thereby (**#Ga 3:26**) sons of God, and receive (**#Ga 4:6**) the Holy Spirit, who leads them (**#Ro 8:4-14**) in the path of obedience. But, unless we follow His guidance, our faith will die: **#Jas 2:20**. Consequently, our obedience is the test and measure, though not the ground or source, of our Christian life.

Ver. 20. Repeats the general principle of #1Co 7:17, just applied to the believers relation to Judaism.

**The calling:** the Gospel call, as in #1Co 1:26, but looked upon in connection with the various circumstances in which it found the readers and was accepted by them, circumstances henceforth linked with it indissolubly in the thought of the called ones. "In whatever circumstances you heard the Voice of God, *therein remain.*"

Ver. 21. After dealing with the chief ecclesiastical, Paul now turns to the chief social, distinction. To the *slave* (or *servant*: see under #Ro 1:1) he does not say, as in #1Co 7:18, Do not seek to change your position; but, Do not let it trouble you. Lest, however, he might seem to underrate civil liberty, he adds at once, *nevertheless*, although I bid you not be troubled about your slavery, yet if you who received the call of God as a slave *are also able to become free, rather than remain a slave make use of your ability to become free.*

Ver. 22. Reason for the chief thought of #1Co 7:21, "care not for it;" overleaping #1Co 7:21b, which needs no support, as being counsel any one would give, thrown in parenthetically to guard against misapprehension. Just so the exception in #1Co 7:17 attaches itself to #1Co 7:15, overleaping #1Co 7:16.

**Called in the Lord:** practically equal to "called in the grace of Christ," #Ga 1:6. Only in virtue of the mission, death, and resurrection, of Jesus, our Master, does the gospel call come to us: and it brings us into spiritual union with Him.

**Freedman:** in Latin, *libertus* and *libertinus*: one who has been made free, as distinguished from a born *freeman*, *liber*. The liberation of slaves, as reward for good behavior or for other reasons, was so common in the Roman Empire that the case of #1Co 7:21b was not unlikely. A freedman stood in special relation, and was under special obligations, to his former master, now called his "patron." This relation, past and present, was expressed by the phrase "Cicero's freedman." But *The Lord's freedman* was one set free from service not to Himself but to sin, (#Ro 6:22,) by Christ, who is now, not his patron, but in the fullest conceivable sense his Master and Owner. These words simply mean that the slave who hears and accepts the gospel call, and is thus brought into union with Christ as his Master, is thereby made free (#Joh 7:32, 36) from every kind of bondage; and, made free by Christ, belongs to Christ. So complete is this freedom that it cannot be destroyed or weakened even by civil bondage. The Christian slave knows that his hard lot has been chosen for him by the wisdom and love of his Father in heaven, as the best pathway to infinite happiness and glory; and that his human master can inflict upon him no task or pain except by the permission of God, which will be given only so far as will conduce to the slave's highest good. Therefore, as long as civil freedom is beyond his reach, he accepts with a free heart the bondage which God has put upon him; and, though a slave, is free indeed. But, if liberty be offered, he accepts it with gratitude as God's gift, and as a pleasanter pathway to the same glorious goal. Chrysostom, in an excellent note on this passage, contrasts Joseph, who was morally free though a slave, with his mistress who was a slave to her own passion.

**In like manner etc.:** much more alike than at the first appears are the positions of Christian slaves and freemen. The rendering slave of Christ need not alarm us. The slave-master assumes rights

belonging only to Christ, who made us and bought us, and who claims us to be in every sense His own. We cannot, like hired servants, give notice to leave His service. For we are bound to be His servants for ever. And only as we realize that we are slaves of Christ are we truly free. For only then can we work, unhindered by fear of consequences, what our best judgment proclaims to be for our highest good.

In the light of this verse, all human distinctions vanish. We are all servants, doing what seems good, not to ourselves, but to our Lord. We are all free: for we accept with joy, and with the full consent of all that is noblest within us, the position in His household which our Master has allotted to each.

Ver. 23. Proof of "slave of Christ." Same words in **#1Co 6:20** to prove "you are not your own."

**You were bought, do not become:** an appeal to the whole church. The word "freeman" in contrast to "slave" marked the end of the discussion about slavery.

**Servants, or slaves, of men:** cp. **#Ga 1:10; #Col 3:22, 24**. Those who forget the Master who has put them where they are that they may do His work and who will pay their wages, become *servants of men*: i.e. whether slaves or freemen they feel that their well-being depends upon the favor of men, and that they themselves are therefore at the mercy of men. And this is the essence of bondage. *Become*, rather than "be," reminds us that Christ has made His people free, and that to look upon men as the arbiters of our destiny is to abandon our freedom. Cp. **#Ga 5:1**. Christ died that we may be His servants and His only. Therefore, the blood shed on Calvary, which has made us free, forbids us to bow to the yoke of bondage.

Ver. 24. Repeats abruptly; **#1Co 7:20**, without any evident connection with **#1Co 7:23**, to open a way to § 13. But notice that the principle underlying **#1Co 7:21f**, viz. that all human differences, so far as they come to us without our choice and therefore from God, are powerless to destroy or lessen our Christian liberty or to hinder our service to Christ, and this principle only, justifies the exhortation of this verse.

**With God;** marks the progress of thought since **#1Co 7:20**. In every position in life we are in His presence: and His presence, as our Guide, Protector, and Supply of all our need, sanctifies our lot and saves us from undue eagerness for change.

**#1Co 7:21b** has given rise to much discussion. Instead of *prefer to use the opportunity*, Chrysostom expounds, "prefer to be a slave," and is followed by the Greek fathers generally, but Estius, and by Meyer, Alford, Stanley, and others. But the Peshito Version, some men referred to by Chrysostom, Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, Neander, and others, give the exposition adopted above.

Against this latter view are urged the words *ἀλλ ἐι καὶ*, and the thrice given advice not to change one's position. But *καὶ* is used in its simple sense of *also* (cp. **#Lu 11:18; #2Co 11:15**) to give prominence to *δυνασαι*, i.e. to the supposable case of a slave who has not only received the Gospel but who is *also able to become free*. *Ἀλλὰ* brings in a contrast, not to *care*, the matter deprecated, as it does usually with a negative, but to the deprecation itself, *care not*, looked upon as one idea,

as in **#1Co 4:4**; **#2Co 12:16**; **#Ro 5:14**. That this exposition does not contradict the scope of the passage, I have already endeavored to show.

On the other hand, *χρησται* finds its complement naturally in the opportunity implied in the words immediately preceding, rather than in the distant word *slave*. Moreover, if Paul were advising the Christian slaves at Corinth to refuse an opportunity of becoming free, advice utterly repugnant to all true human instinct, he would certainly convey his strange advice, not in words which might mean this or the exact opposite, but in words open to no doubt whatever. Again, the teaching of **#1Co 7:22**, so weighty as a reason for not being troubled about compulsory bondage, is no reason whatever for refusing offered liberty. The inevitable we accept, as from God, and as therefore designed to give us the best opportunity of doing our Master's work. But this is no reason for remaining, by our own choice, in a position which, to all appearance, presents many hindrances to our service of Christ. In short, the former exposition implies that Paul gave advice repugnant to one of the noblest instincts of humanity, a love of freedom, that he conveyed it in language which might mean this or the exact opposite, and that he did not support it by any reason whatever. Probably not one of the writers who adopt this exposition would themselves give to a slave the advice they attribute to the Apostle. According to the exposition I adopt, the counsel *care not for it* in **#1Co 7:21a** is fully justified in **#1Co 7:22**: and **#1Co 7:21b** is thrown in parenthetically to show that, while proving that the Christian slave has abundant reason for contentment, Paul is not indifferent to the advantages of freedom. And the ambiguity will not surprise us. For the only alternative is between advice which anyone would give, put in merely to guard against a mistake to which the foregoing words might give rise, and advice utterly unlikely and unsupported. See further in *The Homiletic Quarterly*, vol. iv. p. 210.

Paul concluded § 11 with a principle which he everywhere inculcates. In § 12 he shows that it applies not only to marriage but to other relations in life. He supports it in reference to circumcision by showing that this neither helps nor hinders the Christian life; and then reasserts the principle. How comparatively indifferent are outward differences, and therefore how practicable the principle is, he proves by adducing the greatest social difference, viz. that between freemen and slaves, and by showing that even this difference is not inconsistent with the fullness of the Christian life. While referring to the case of slaves as an extreme proof that the Christian need not be eager for change, Paul is careful to say that he does not wish his readers to apply to this extreme case the general principle of conduct asserted in **#1Co 7:20, 24**. Indeed, that circumcision and abandonment of it are voluntary, whereas slavery is with few exceptions involuntary, marks sufficiently the difference between the two cases. Having thus given, by expounding the Spiritual position of slaves and freemen, an abundant reason for contentment with our lot whatever it be, Paul again repeats his advice that we be not eager for change. This principle, thus emphatically reasserted, will be the foundation stone of § 13.

This section contains two important principles of universal application. The sudden change from heathenism or Judaism to Christianity might prompt some of the converts to seek to express their inward change by some conspicuous outward change. But Paul saw that such desire for change would both unsettle the minds of the converts and prejudice against Christianity those who were interested in maintaining the present state of things. He therefore counsels them to remain as they are. Perhaps for the same reason he forbore to speak against slavery. Had he done so, he would, by

arousing the hostility of all slave owners, have hindered the spread of Christianity. He preferred to assert great principles, and to leave these to work out silently the changes which must in time inevitably follow. Paul also asserts a principle which is the only rational preservation from restless desire for change, viz. that even the humblest social position is consistent with the highest degree of the Christian life, and therefore with our highest good. This principle applies to all the varieties of human lot. The poor man is rich in Christ: whereas the rich man is but a steward who must give account for all he has. Sickness has often driven men to seek help from God: and bodily strength, by making men unconscious of their need of One stronger than themselves, has often allured them to eternal ruin. The distinctions of outer life are less important than they seem. We may therefore view them with comparative indifference.

To these general principles there are two practical exceptions, of which Paul mentions one, and leaves the other to be understood. If improvement of position comes fairly within our reach without spiritual loss, he counsels us to accept it. But he has no need to say that a mode of life which involves sin must be forsaken at any cost.

# **I CORINTHIANS**

## *SECTION XIII*

### *COUNSELS TO THE UNMARRIED*

#### CH. VII. 25-40

About the maidens, a command of the Lord I have not: but an opinion I give as one to whom mercy has been shown by the Lord to be trustworthy. I think this then to be good because of the present necessity, that it is good for a man to be thus. Bound to a wife art thou? Do not seek to be loosed. Loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But if even thou marry, thou hast not sinned. And if the maiden marry, she has not sinned. But, affliction for the flesh such will have. But you I, for my part, am sparing.

And this I assert, brothers, The season is cut short; in order that henceforth they having wives be as though not having them, and the weeping ones as though not weeping, and the rejoicing ones as though not rejoicing, and those buying as though not retaining, and those using the world as though not using it to the full. For the form of this world is passing away.

And I wish you to be without anxiety. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he who has got married is anxious about the things of the world, how he may please his wife. And divided also are the wife and the maiden. She that is unmarried is anxious about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in her body and her spirit. But she that has got married is anxious about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. But this I say with a view to your own profit; not that I may put a rein upon you, but with a view to that which is becoming and to waiting before the Lord without disturbance.

But if any one thinks that is acting unseemly towards his maiden, if she be beyond her bloom, and if it ought so to be, what he wishes let him do; he commits no sin: let the affianced ones marry. But he who stands firm in his heart, not having necessity, but has authority about his own will, and has determined this in his heart, to keep his own maiden, will do well. So that both he who gives in marriage his own maiden does well, and he who does not give in marriage does better.

A woman is bound for so long time as her husband lives. But, if her husband fall asleep, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. But happier she is if she remain thus, according to my opinion, And I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

Paul will now deal fully with the matter touched for a moment in #1Co 7:8. He gives his opinion, #1Co 7:25-28; states a great principle which is broader and better than this opinion, #1Co 7:29-31; gives a reason for his opinion, #1Co 7:32-35; deals with an exception, #1Co 7:36-38; and gives special advice to widows, #1Co 7:39, 40.



Ver. 25. **Maidens**: women never married, as is evident from **#1Co 7:34, 36**. So always, **#Re 14:4** is figurative. This verse suggests that *about the maidens* advice had been specially sought in the letter to Paul. He replies in words applicable to both sexes. That Paul knew that *the Lord* had given *no command* reveals his full acquaintance with the teaching of Christ. Whether he learned it by written documents or by report of those who heard Christ, we do not know. That no word of Christ about the marriage of maidens is found in our Gospels, indicates their agreement with the teaching reported to Paul.

**I give an opinion**: refusing to speak with apostolic authority. This by no means proves that when he claims this authority, as in **#1Co 7:17; 14:37**, his words are not absolutely binding. It rather proves that he could measure the degree to which he was enlightened by the Spirit.

**Mercy**: kindness to the helpless. Compare carefully **#2Co 4:1; #1Ti 1:13, 16; #Ro 9:15**.

**Trustworthy**: same word as faithful. See **#1Co 4:17**. In giving his opinion Paul remembers with humility that whatever claim he has to his readers' confidence, and he has such a claim, he owes entirely to the compassion of God.

Ver. 26.-27. **That this is good**; repeats **#1Co 7:1, 8**.

**Present**: either "already existing," as usually, **#1Co 3:22; #Ro 8:38**; or "now beginning;" or "just going to begin," **#2Th 2:2**.

**Necessity**: **#1Co 7:37**: the existing pressure of outward circumstances, which compels men to do what otherwise they would not. Cp. **#2Co 6:4; 12:10; #1Th 3:7; #Lu 21:23**. Cp. 3 Macc. 1:16, "to give help for the present necessity;" **#Ga 1:4**. This makes it undesirable for a man to change his state; e.g. for the unmarried to marry. Meyer, Alford, and Stanley suppose that Paul refers to the calamities immediately preceding the coming of Christ, which they think he supposed to be near. But of this there is no hint whatever. The already existing perils of the early Christians were sufficient reason for the advice here given.

**Man**: a human being of whatever age or sex, (cp. **#Joh 16:21**), like the Latin *homo* and the German *mensh*. But **#1Co 7:27, 28a** show that here Paul thinks of men. This is not inconsistent with **#1Co 7:25**: for Paul's advice is good for both sexes.

**Thus**: expounded in **#1Co 7:27**.

**Do not seek . . . do not seek**: on the principle of **#1Co 7:17, 20, 24**, and according to the advice already given in **#1Co 7:8-13**. The married are mentioned first to make it prominent that the advice to the unmarried is but an application of a general principle applicable to all.

**Loosed**; includes, as the whole section proves, even those never married. Else, to these no advice is given. It is more graphic than "loose." Those who received the Gospel while unmarried may look upon themselves as made free by the providence of God from the anxieties (**#1Co 7:32**) of married life.

Ver. 28. A safeguard, for both sexes, against the supposition that this advice is anything more than mere expediency justified only by the present abnormal circumstances.

**The flesh:** as in #2Co 12:7: the body, as now constituted. What the *affliction* is, Paul leaves us to infer. And this is not difficult. A man with wife and family presents more points of attack in days of persecution, and is therefore more exposed to troubles, and even bodily privation, than the unmarried man. Hence the "anxiety" of #1Co 7:32.

**Am sparing you:** from this bodily privation, by advising you to remain unmarried. An appeal appropriate to men over whom (#1Co 3:1-3) the bodily life had great sway, and doubtless Paul wished to save them, not merely from bodily privation, but from the peril of apostacy to which such privation would expose babes in Christ. This advice will be further discussed below.

Ver. 29.-31. After giving advice prompted by the present abnormal circumstances and carefully guarded, Paul *asserts* a great principle which ought to regulate the conduct of all men in all they do.

**The season:** #1Co 7:5: our present life, whether it be ended by death or by the coming of Christ.

**Cut-short:** more graphic than "short," like "loosed" in #1Co 7:27. God has compressed into a short period our relations with the present world; *in order that* we may pass through the world without clinging to it. Even the shortness and uncertainty of life are ordained by God to save us from trusting to material good.

**Henceforth:** very emphatic, in contrast to our earlier life.

**As though not having them:** remembering that the marriage relation is a passing one, of importance only as it bears on the realities of eternity.

**They that weep,** mentioned before **they that rejoice** as being more numerous during "the present necessity." To remember that the causes of our sorrow and our joy are alike passing away, will even now wipe away many tears and moderate our joy.

**As though not retaining;** the purchased goods. A solemn warning to all who lay up wealth.

**The world:** the whole realm of things around us; see #1Co 1:20.

**Using-to-the full:** eagerly using up all opportunities of gain or pleasure, as though these were the end of life.

By thus giving God's purpose in cutting short the present life, Paul virtually bids us not to cling to the things of earth. And this he supports by saying that *the form of this world*, i.e. the whole aspect of things around us in the present life, *is passing away*. Even the mountains and islands (#Re 6:14; 16:20) will fly from their places; and with them will vanish at once and for ever the complex stage and scenery of the present drama of life. To the eye of Paul, illumined by the light of eternity, the external aspect of the world around *is* already *passing away*: #1Jo 2:17; #1Co 2:6; #Re 21:1; #Mt

**5:18; #2Pe 3:10.** For each moment is bearing it towards the fiery grave in which it will soon be buried.

These words are parallel to "the season is cut short;" but are more tremendous. Many rejoice not only in the present life as their chief good, but in the thought that their possessions and their fame will abide when they have gone. But Paul reminds us that whatever exists around us is but a part of the passing appearance which the world has assumed for a time and will soon lay aside. Notice (cp. **#1Co 3:13; 4:5; 13:12** etc.) how Paul discusses various details of the present life in the light of eternity.

Ver. 32.-34. Armed now with the great truth of **#1Co 7:29-31**, viz. that things around are passing away and are therefore of secondary importance, Paul now comes to expound the reason given in **#1Co 7:26**, viz. "the present necessity," for his advice to the unmarried not to marry. In times of persecution family cares increase terribly a man's *anxiety*. And from this he wishes to save them. The bearing of this wish upon marriage, he now expands.

Verse 32b.-34. **Anxious about the things of the Lord:** quite consistent with *without anxiety*. And with **#Php 4:6**. Cp. **#2Co 11:28**. The use of the same word in **#1Co 7:32** and **#1Co 7:33**, only reveals to us the total difference, in their nature and spiritual effects, of these two kinds of anxiety. The former, even in "the present distress," does not expose to, but guards us against, spiritual peril; and prompts to ceaseless "waiting before the Lord," **#1Co 7:35**.

**Anxious about the things of the Lord, of the world:** not in all cases, but usually. It notes a natural tendency. *The married man* was compelled to take account of the disposition and pleasure of his wife; and might thus be kept back from that unswerving, and sometimes reckless, courage which in those dark days full loyalty to Christ demanded. But *the unmarried man* stood alone before his Master, Christ, and need think of nothing but *how*, whether by avoiding or incurring peril, *he might best please* Him.

**Also the wife etc.:** of the female sex also **#1Co 7:33** is true. Marriage has put the wife in a position quite removed from that of the unmarried woman: and has thus *divided* womankind as well as men in reference to anxiety. On the variations of text here, see Appendix B.

**Holy:** subjectively so; see note, **#Ro 1:7**: parallel with, but stronger than, *please the Lord*. Her *anxious* purpose is to exist only for God, and to use all her powers and opportunities to work out his purposes.

**In her body:** by using her body and its powers for God only; **#Ro 12:1**.

**And her spirit:** so that every pulsation of the principle of life may have God for its one aim. The sanctification of the soul, (**#1Th 5:23**), the connecting link (see note, **#1Co 15:44**) of *body* and *spirit*, is implied in their sanctification. But the *married* woman's obligation to *please her husband* makes her *anxious about the things of the world*, which are needed for his necessities or pleasure; and this may induce forgetfulness that she belongs only to God.

Ver. 35. Parallel with "I spare you," #1Co 7:28.

**Put a rein:** fling a noose over you to catch you as animals are caught, in order to deprive you of your liberty. To immature Christians, God's commands often seem like a bridle pulling them back from the way they wish to go. But this was not Paul's purpose in writing this letter.

**Becoming:** that your conduct may be worthy of the dignity of your position. Of this, anxiety is unworthy. It is therefore forbidden, #Php 4:6; #Mt 6:25-34.

**Without-disturbance:** literally, *without-being-pulled-about*.

**Waiting before the Lord etc.:** a second purpose of Paul's advice, viz. that, free from worldly anxiety, not only may their outward conduct be worthy of the gospel but that they may in their inner life present themselves undisturbed by distracting cares before Christ, to hear His voice and feel to the full His life-giving power. All worldly anxiety hinders spiritual communion with God.

We now see Paul's reason for dissuading the unmarried from marriage. The perils of the early Christians tended to create in them great anxiety. But all such was, however excusable, unworthy of the Christian name and obstructive to communion with God. Now, the possession of wife and family increased immensely this anxiety; and gave rise, in many cases, to (#1Co 7:28) severe hardship. Therefore, without wishing to restrict their Christian liberty, but seeking only their benefit, Paul advises his readers not to marry. This advice does not contradict the great truth (#Php 4:6) that it is the Christian's glorious privilege to be free under all circumstances, married or unmarried, from all anxiety. For we cannot claim "the peace of God" if by our choice we go deliberately into needless peril. We are bound to avoid peril (cp. #Mt 10:23) so far as is consistent with absolute loyalty to Christ. But when, using our best judgment and for the work of God, we go into danger, we may claim, and we shall have, deliverance from fear.

Although "the distress" which prompted Paul's advice has passed away, there are even now cases in which it is rightly adopted in spirit and even in the letter. There are men in the vanguard of the missionary army who, in view of their constant peril, have preferred to forego the happiness of family life, lest care for the safety of wife and children should fetter their daring enterprise as pioneers of the cross. In view of the shortness of time they are content to wait for domestic joys till that Day when they will take their place, their place of honor, in the glorified family of God.

#1Co 7:32-35 contain also a principle of abiding validity, viz. not needlessly to increase our anxieties. In choosing a path in life, and in the conduct of business, it is well to avoid, if practicable, those positions which are likely to give us unseemly care and thus hinder our spiritual life. This has been often forgotten, even by Christians, merely for greater gain; and with terrible results.

Ver. 36.-38. An exception to the advice of #1Co 7:32-35.

**His maiden:** daughter or ward. Paul here deals specifically with the matter of #1Co 7:25.

**Acts unseemly:** if for any reason, in the maiden or in her circumstances, the father thinks that by keeping her unmarried he is acting in a way which will not command respect, etc.

**If she be etc.:** the only case in which the above exception could occur.

**Bloom:** given as twenty years by Plato, *Republic* bk. v. 460e. For the reason of **#1Co 7:32-35**, early marriages were then specially desirable.

**It ought so to be:** parallel with *acting unseemly*, adding to it moral emphasis. Many circumstances might make it not only unseemly but morally wrong for the father to withhold his consent to marriage. In such cases, refusal of consent has often produced serious results.

**What he wishes;** limits this exception to cases in which the father wishes his daughter to marry.

**Does not sin:** parallel to **#1Co 7:28**.

**Let them marry:** the maiden and he who seeks her hand. This verse admits that there may be cases in which the advice of **#1Co 7:32-35** is unsuitable: and its indefiniteness suggests that this may arise from various causes. Paul declares that in these cases the father may act, without fear of committing sin, according to his own judgment.

Ver. 37. Restatement of the advice of **#1Co 7:32-35** for those cases in which the exception of **#1Co 7:36** does not apply.

**Stands firm:** in his resolve to keep his maiden at home, in contrast to him who "wishes" to give her in marriage. One who in his heart thought it better to keep his daughter at home might be moved from his resolve by the prevalent fear (cp. Sirach 42:9) of having an unmarried daughter, or by other similar reasons. To those not thus moved away, Paul speaks.

**Not having necessity:** where the reasons do not exist which in **#1Co 7:36** made it unseemly or wrong to refuse consent to the marriage. Else he cannot rightly persist in his purpose.

**Authority about his own will:** When circumstances permit him to do as he wishes. It is an emphatic exposition, in positive form, of the negative *not having necessity*. Only in this case the father *does well* to refuse marriage.

**Determine, or judge:** as in **#1Co 2:2; #Ro 14:13**.

**This:** not to give his daughter in marriage.

**In order to keep etc.:** purpose of this resolve, viz. to keep his daughter, in those perilous times, under his own control. "If the father is unmoved from this purpose, and is not morally bound by special circumstances, he will do well to carry it out."

Ver. 38. Paul's last word "about maidens." It is evidently limited by the reason placed in front (#1Co 7:26) of the whole section, "the present distress." The peculiar circumstances of the early Christians made change in social position undesirable: and the shortness of time made it unimportant. Marriage would add greatly to their anxieties. Therefore, where no special circumstances determined otherwise, Paul advises that the maidens of the church remain such.

**Well, better:** not a matter of strict right or wrong, but of less or greater advantage. Not that it would be better for him who gives his daughter in marriage not to do so, but that circumstances prevent the more advantageous course. Taking all into account, it is sometimes (e.g. #1Co 7:9) "better to marry."

Ver. 39. First a restatement of #1Co 7:10, as a contrast (cp. #Ro 7:1) to a special case, that of widows.

**Fall asleep:** see under #1Co 15:18.

**Free:** #Ro 7:3.

**Only in the Lord:** acting in spiritual union with Christ. This would make marriage with an unbeliever impossible: cp. #2Co 6:14. And this is the reference which Paul's words naturally suggest.

**Happier:** #Ro 4:6. For reasons given in #1Co 7:34, her position *is* more desirable.

**Thus:** in the position in which her husband's death has placed her.

**An opinion:** notification at the end, as (#1Co 7:26) at the beginning, of the section that Paul does not speak with apostolic authority.

**My:** emphatic, revealing his consciousness of the value of his *opinion*.

**And I think, etc.:** modest proof of this, one which no one can question.

**Also I:** as well as others who claim to *have the Spirit of God*. To whom he refers, the readers probably knew. Cp. #2Co 10:7. He speaks, not necessarily of some special apostolic gift, but of the spirit given (#Ro 8:9) to all believers, that He may be in them #Eph 1:17 "A Spirit of wisdom." The opinion of men actuated by the Spirit of God, and in this proportion, claims our respect. And that Paul had the Spirit in a rich measure, no one could deny. Notice here Doctrine 5, asserted in #Ro 8:4.

SECTION 13, the completion and crown of DIV. III., explains and justifies #1Co 7:1, 8. Paul begins and ends it by saying that he is merely giving an opinion, but one which claims respect. It is not an abiding principle, but advice prompted by special and difficult circumstances. He advises the unmarried to remain as they are; and gives this as a case of the broader principle that in existing circumstances a change in social position is undesirable. But he is careful to say that marriage is not a sin, an opinion he elsewhere (#1Ti 4:3) condemns as serious error. Yet, though marriage is no sin,

it will bring trouble and anxiety. In giving this advice, he wishes not to bridle his readers, but to save them from that which may lead to conduct unworthy of a Christian and may hinder their communion with God. Having given this advice, Paul admits that there are cases in which, from various causes, it is impracticable; and concludes by saying that they will do well to follow his advice if they can. To widows he gives the same advice; but does not find it needful to repeat in their case the exceptions mentioned in reference to maidens.

REVIEW OF DIVISION III. The Corinthian church had written asking advice about marriage; referring perhaps specially to maiden daughters and to those married to heathens. In reply, Paul discusses in § 11 the case of married people; states in § 12 a great principle applicable to all; and shows in § 13 its special applicability in those days to the unmarried.

He reminds married believers that Christ has forbidden divorce, and advises them not to separate for any length of time. He advises believers to live even with heathen partners, if the latter wish it. To the unmarried, his advice is conflicting; because conflicting reasons bore upon their case. In **#1Co 7:1, 8** he says that celibacy is good. This assertion he justifies, and thus limits, in **#1Co 7:26**, by referring to the present distress; and in **#1Co 7:32-34**, by referring to the anxiety which marriage then entailed. Yet in **#1Co 7:2** he seems to set aside this principle as impracticable; and, in **#1Co 7:9**, mentions a case, a very common one, in which it is impracticable. But, in spite of this apparent contradiction, the Apostle's meaning is harmonious and clear. The perils of his day made celibacy desirable to those who had full self-control: to others it was dangerous. He seems to contradict his own words because he states great principles bearing in different directions, from which each must select that which suits his own case, known only to himself. Paul's advice for maidens he gives also to widows, without hesitation and without noting any exception. But we notice that further experience or altered circumstances led him (**#1Ti 5:14**) to modify this advice. He bases his advice, both to married and unmarried, on the undesirability of change; and his advice to the unmarried, also on the un wisdom of increasing causes of anxiety. And even now, when the distress which made celibacy expedient has almost passed away, these two principles of conduct are still safe and good. We shall do well to be slow to make important changes or to incur anxiety.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION IV

### ABOUT THE IDOL SACRIFICES

#### CHAPTERS VIII-XI. 1

#### *SECTION XIV*

#### *BE CAREFUL LEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE LEAD OTHERS TO SIN*

#### CH. VIII

**About the idol-sacrifices. We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up: but love edifies.\* (\* Or, builds up.) If anyone thinks that he knows anything, not yet has he learnt as one must needs learn. But if anyone loves God, this man is known by Him.**

**About the eating, then, of the idol-sacrifices, we know that there is no idol in the world, and that there is no God except one. For indeed if as all know, there are so-called gods, whether in heaven whether on earth, (just as there are gods many and lords many,) nevertheless to us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through Him.**

**But not in all is there knowledge. And some, by their accustomed intercourse until now with the idol, as an idol-sacrifice eat it: and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. But food will not present us to God. Neither if we do eat do we abound, nor if we do not eat do we fall short. But see lest in any way this right\*\* (\*\* Or authority.) of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak ones. For if one see thee, who hast knowledge, sitting in an idol-precinct, will not his conscience, he being weak, be edified\*\*\* (\*\*\*) Or, built up.) to eat the idol-sacrifices? For the weak one perishes through thy knowledge, the brother because of whom Christ died. But, while thus sinning against the brothers and smiting their conscience, it being weak, against Christ you are sinning. For which cause indeed if food ensnares my brother, I will not eat flesh for ever, that I may not ensnare my brother.**

Ver. 1. **The idol-sacrifices:** animals offered in sacrifice to idols, of which the greater part was eaten by the offerer and his friends either (#1Co 8:10; 10:27) within the precincts of the temple or in private houses, or (#1Co 10:25) was sold in the market. Same word in #Ac 15:29; 21:25; #Re 2:14, 20. Similarly, a great part of the Mosaic peace offerings was eaten by the offerer: #Le 7:15-18, 20; 17:2-6. The sudden and matter-of-fact transition to this subject without any reason given (contrast #1Co 1:11; 5:1; 6:1) and in a form similar to #1Co 7:1, suggests that it was mentioned in the letter to Paul. He deals with it by first laying down as usual a great general principle, viz. that love is better than knowledge, #1Co 8:1-3; and then looks at the matter in the light (#1Co 8:4-6) of knowledge and (#1Co 8:7-13) of love. He supports the warning thus given by referring to (§ 15) his



own rights, and (§ 16) to his own example and to (§ 17) the story of ancient Israel; and then gives specific advice about eating idol-sacrifices (§ 18) at an idol-feast, and (§ 19) in private homes.

**We all:** a general admission, of which the compass cannot be exactly defined. Paul here tells his readers that when speaking of the weak brethren he does not refer to himself or them. He therefore uses the third person: **#1Co 8:7-12; 10:28**. Contrast **#Ro 14:3, 10**.

**Have knowledge:** cp. i. 5; and the many indications throughout the Epistle that the Corinthians boasted, and probably possessed, considerable Christian intelligence; e.g. **#1Co 1:17-2:16; 3:18ff; 6:5**.

**Puffs up:** as in **#1Co 4:6, 18; 5:2**: the inflated self-esteem which is the natural tendency of *knowledge*, and its constant result when not counterbalanced by love.

**Love:** as a general principle, and embracing all with whom we have to do. So **#1Co 13:1-13; #Ro 12:9**.

**Edifies:** builds up. Cp. **#1Co 3:9**, and see **#Ro 14:19**. Love, by its own nature, prompts us to use our powers for the good of others, and especially for their highest good, i.e. the development of their spiritual life. It is therefore better than knowledge.

Ver. 2. Further superiority of love.

**Thinks that he knows;** expounds "puffs up." This thought is a natural result of knowledge not counterbalanced by love.

**Knows anything:** thinks that what he knows is something of intrinsic value.

**Learnt it:** viz. the *anything* he *thinks he knows*. All knowledge which does not teach us that even the highest knowledge cannot of itself bless, is defective even as knowledge. Yet we *must needs know*: for salvation and spiritual life come through the intelligence; **#Joh 8:32; 17:3**. But the knowledge we *need* is so thorough that it reveals its own powerlessness of itself to save.

Ver. 3. **Love to God (#Ro 8:28)** is of the same nature as, and is parent of, (**#1Jo 5:1**), love to our brethren; and may therefore be contrasted with knowledge.

**Known by Him:** **#Ga 4:9; #2Ti 2:19**: present to His mind as an object of observation and thought. Cp. "foreknew," **#Ro 8:29**. The context implies that God's knowledge of us will be used for our protection and well-being. We are ignorant of much that concerns us. But, if we love God, His infinite intelligence, which comprehends fully our nature, our weakness, our circumstances, and our needs, is at work for us, watching us with ceaseless vigilance and choosing for us whatever is best. And, that God knows us, is a pledge that His purposes about us will not fail. Thus, love, whether we know much or little, places us under the protection and guidance of the infinite knowledge of God.

**#1Co 8:2, 3** teach the important principle that Christian love is in itself essentially good, so that whosoever has it is better in proportion as he has it. For love is the inmost essence of God, **#1Jo 4:8, 16**; and is therefore the inmost essence and the summit of the Christian life. Cp. 1Cor. 13. But knowledge is of secondary value, like wealth and bodily health, and like them will do good or harm according as we use it.

Ver. 4.-6. After asserting and expounding the great principle of **#1Co 8:1-3**, Paul now takes up the special matter of Div. IV.

**Idol**: not here a mere image, but, by an inevitable transition of thought, the deity worshipped in the image. Paul says that Zeus, Apollo, etc, have no existence. If you search everywhere *in the world*, you will find no reality corresponding to the images. Consequently, *there is no god*, no supreme power, *except one*. This assertion, **#1Co 8:5, 6** support in face of prevalent polytheism.

**So-called gods**: conceptions to which the name *god* is given. The fancy of the Greeks peopled with deities the *heaven*, visible and invisible, and the mountains, woods, and rivers of *earth*. That *gods many and lords many* refers only to the subjective thought of the heathen, is proved by the express statement of **#1Co 8:4**, and by the subjective reference, "to us," in **#1Co 8:6**. Of the objective and superhuman and infernal bases and source of idolatry, (see **#1Co 10:20**,) there is no hint here. In the thought and lips and life of the heathen, the *gods many and lords many* were and are a terrible reality. These words admit, as fact, the supposition of **#1Co 8:5a**; and prepare, by contrast, a way for **#1Co 8:6**.

**God**: a superhuman power.

**Lord**: one whose bidding men do.

Ver. 6. **To us**: practically the same as "we know," **#1Co 8:4**. There is no deity whose existence concerns us except *One God* and *One Lord*.

**The Father**: constant designation of the *One God* **#1Co 1:3**; **#1Co 15:24**; **#2Co 1:2f**; **#Ga 1:1, 3f**; **#Ro 6:4**; and especially **#Joh 1:14, 18**; **5:17-45**; **10:15-38**, etc. Moved by the Spirit of adoption, (**#Ro 8:15**,) our chief thought of God is of *the Father* who begot us to be His children and who looks upon and cares for us with a Father's love.

**From whom**: as the original source.

**All things**: creatures, with or without reason, as in **#Col 1:16**; **#Joh 1:3**. Cp. **#1Co 1:27f**. Whatever exists has sprung from our Father.

**And we for Him**: another truth, counterpart of the foregoing. Like *all things* we sprang *from* God. But, though "all things are from Him and for Him," (**#Ro 11:36**,) yet, in a special sense, through the death of Christ and the gospel call, God has claimed *us* for His own and claims to be Himself the one aim of our every purpose and effort.

**Lord:** specially set apart in the New Testament for Christ's relation to us. Cp. **#1Co 12:5**. *Just so, through* expresses His relation to the work of creation and redemption. So **#Ro 1:5**; **#Col 1:16, 20**.

**All things:** as above. Jesus of Nazareth, the Anointed King, the one Master whose commands we obey, is the one Agent through whose activity the universe was created; and through whose incarnation, teaching, death, and resurrection, in a special sense *we* believers are what we are.

Notice that even as compared with the Son, the Father is the *One God*; and that everywhere Paul uses the term *God* as the distinctive title of the Father. Cp. **#1Co 3:23; 12:3; 15:28; #Joh 20:17**. But this does not contradict **#Joh 1:1**, (**#Joh 1:18** probably,) **#Joh 20:28**, where the Son is expressly called "God;" any more than the special title *One Lord* denies that the Father is also our Master. But it does imply that the title *God* is specially appropriate to the Father even as distinguished from the Son, and the title *Lord* to the Son even as distinguished from the Father. In the thought of His contemporary followers, Jesus was distinguished from the Father as He cannot be in our thought. For, the chief element of their spiritual life was loyalty and obedience and service to One from whose human lips commands had been given. To Him, therefore, the title *Lord*, by which He was accosted on earth, (**#Mt 7:21; 8:2, 6, 8**, etc.,) was specially appropriate. And, to the Father, as being First of the mysterious Three, the Eternal Source, essentially and historically, of the Eternal and in their days Incarnate Son, (**#Joh 5:26; 6:57; #Col 1:19**,) and of the Spirit, (**#Joh 5:30; #Joh 16:13**,) thus furnishing an eternal pattern of devotion; to Him, even as compared with the Divine Son and Spirit, the supreme title *One God* is specially appropriate. For this reason, in presence of prevalent polytheism and of jealous Jewish monotheism, Paul never (see note, **#Ro 9:5**) speaks of the Son as God and even John uses (cp. **#Joh 17:3**) the word God as the distinctive name of the Father. Paul left others to make the correct inference embodied in the august title God the Son. Oversight of this has given rise to unitarian arguments based on the monotheistic language of Paul.

Notice that before Paul advises his readers to abstain in certain cases from meat offered to idols, in order to show that his advice is not prompted by latent suspicion of the reality of their power, he proclaims the great truth, destructive of all idolatry, that there is One God; and the great Christian truth that this one God operates and rules through the One Master, Jesus Christ.

Ver. 7. **Not in all etc.:** a fact which in our conduct we must take into account.

**Knowledge:** recalls "we know," **#1Co 8:4**. With his usual courtesy Paul does not say, "*not in all of you*;" as though his readers were without knowledge.

On the interesting and very early variation, *accustomed-intercourse with the idol* or *conscience of the idol*, see Appendix B. The former reading is the word rendered *custom* in **#1Co 11:16**. It is literally *a living together with* some one, and thus by unconscious self-adaptation becoming accustomed to him. In days gone by the idols had been to Paul's readers a terrible reality ever molding their thoughts and lives. And the impress made by this long continued mental intercourse with idols remained *until now*, even after they had accepted Christianity. These words, though they would apply to Jewish superstitious dread of idols as infernal, or to the continued obligation of **#De 7:25f**, refer more naturally to converted heathens who were unable to cast away altogether the deeply

inwoven mark made in their minds by the idolatry of earlier days. Instances of this are very common now on the mission field.

**Eat it:** the meat of idol-sacrifices. Owing to their former contact with idolatry, they look upon the meat, while eating it, *as an idol-sacrifice*. To those who know that idols do not exist, it is but common meat.

**Conscience** (see **#Ro 2:15**) **being weak:** the inward faculty which contemplates the secrets of the man's own heart not having mental and spiritual strength to grasp the truth that an idol is but an empty name. Consequently, in his heart of hearts he is conscious of *defilement*, i.e. of that which lessens his respect for himself and which he would hide from others. By speaking of this as something actually going on, Paul makes it more easy for us to realize and contemplate the process of defilement.

Ver. 8. A great truth which bears on this matter.

**Present to God:** set before Him for service or approval; **#Lu 2:22; #Ro 6:13, 16, 19; 12:1; 14:10; #2Co 11:2; #Eph 5:27; #2Ti 2:15.**

**Food:** of any kind, including idol-sacrifices. Such will not lay us more completely on the altar of God, or place us before Him more favorably.

**Neither etc.:** emphatic exposition of the foregoing. Eating, or absence from, any kind of food, can make the spiritual life richer or poorer. Thus before showing how greatly we may injure a brother by eating an idol-sacrifice Paul proves that to abstain from this or any other kind of food will do us no real harm. On the confusion of various reading here, see Appendix B.

Notice, in the careful repetition of this verse, another express abrogation (cp. **#1Co 7:19**) of the Mosaic Covenant, of which the distinction of food was an essential feature. So **#Col 2:21; #1Ti 4:3; #Mt 15:11; #Ac 10:15.**

Ver. 9.-10. Solemn warning lest, from something in itself unimportant, serious injury arise.

**Right** or *authority*: see *Expositor*, 1st series, vol. p. 26.

**This right of yours:** liberty to eat anything, involved in the great truth of **#1Co 8:8.**

**Stumbling-block:** see **#Ro 14:13.** The man whose "conscience is weak" (**#1Co 8:7**) is himself weak. Cp. **#Ro 14:2; 15:1.** In **#1Co 8:10** we have reason for the warning of **#1Co 8:9.**

**Who hast knowledge:** and whose known intelligence would increase his influence over a weak brother.

**Idol-precinct:** same word in 1 Macc 1:47: 10:83: the sacred enclosure round the temple. Here public banquets were held. Consequently, without entering the precinct, a weak brother might see him sitting at a feast.

**Edified:** or *built up*: terrible irony. "If you do this you will develop your brother's faculty of pronouncing sentence on his own actions, and to such a degree that he will eat that which in his heart he believes to be wrong." Thus ruinous development will be a result of his weakness, which is unable to make a firm judgment. The extreme case, *in the idol-precinct*, betrays the tendency of all such conduct. And, possibly, even this extreme case was found among the worldly Christians at Corinth.

This verse warns us not to force upon others our own standard of right and wrong. That which is right to us may be wrong, and there fore very hurtful, to others less instructed.

Ver. 11.-12. Terrible and possible result of this "edification," given as a dissuasive; and then expounded.

**Perishes:** see **#1Co 1:18**. A natural tendency, Paul represents as actual fact. For tendencies are sure to realize themselves sooner or later in facts. And this gives them their significance.

**Through thy knowledge:** melancholy result. If the strong man had not known that idols do not exist at all, the weak brother would not have been overcome by his example (an example the stronger because of his well-known *knowledge*) and led to eat that which he believed to be wrong, and thus made still weaker till he fell from Christ and fell into eternal death. Notice the three-fold darkness of this picture; there perishes, a brother, for whom Christ died. Same argument, **#Ro 14:15**. This argument, **#1Co 8:12** further expounds.

**Thus:** as expounded in **#1Co 8:10, 11**.

**Sin against:** **#Mt 18:21**.

**The brothers;** reproduces the argument lying in "brother," **#1Co 8:11**.

**Smiting their conscience:** By leading them to do what their conscience disapproves, we create in them unintentionally a consciousness of having done wrong; and thus inflict upon them a blow in the inmost and most vital part of their being.

**It being weak:** and, therefore, liable to receive injury. A reason for caution on the part of the strong.

**Against Christ:** for by doing so we frustrate the purpose of His death. Cp. **#Mt 25:45; 18:5**.

Ver. 13. **For which cause:** because to wound the conscience of the weak is to "sin against Christ."

**Ensnares my brother:** as in **#Ro 14:13**.

**Food:** spoken in contempt, as in **#1Co 8:8; #Ro 14:15, 20**. "If a piece of meat, eaten by me, entraps my brother."

**Not eat meat;** does not imply that this was needful to avoid ensnaring a brother, but only shows how far Paul is ready to go rather than do this.

**For ever:** strong hyperbole, as some say now "While the world lasts."

**That I may not etc.:** emphatic repetition of Paul's definite purpose. By turning suddenly away from his readers to himself, and by giving voice to his own deliberate resolve to make any sacrifice for any length of time rather than cause a brother's fall, Paul puts to shame by his own example the possible objection that it is unfair to ask us to give up our liberty because of the ignorance of others. The example thus given will be expounded fully in § 15, to which this verse is a stepping-stone.

Of **#1Co 8:9-13** the animating principle, though not expressly mentioned, is love, which in **#1Co 8:1-3** Paul proved to be better than knowledge. The connecting link is found in **#Ro 14:15**. Of this love, the word "brother," four times in **#1Co 8:11-13**, is an expression. After proving that love is better than knowledge, which he admits his readers have, Paul recognizes the worth of knowledge by looking in the light of it at the idol-sacrifices. But he remembers that such knowledge is not enjoyed by all; and that, therefore, to some the idol-food is defiling. On the other hand, no kind of food is in itself necessary for the highest degree of Christian life. He therefore warns his readers not so to use their liberty as to entrap those whom they acknowledge to be brethren; and shows how they may do this. He supports his warning by pointing to the terrible consequence of neglecting it and to Christ who died to save even the weak. In view of all this he expresses his own determination to submit to any sacrifice rather than entrap a brother.

**#1Co 8:13** has been appealed to, I believe justly, in support of the practice of abstaining as far as practicable from intoxicating beverages. To so great an extent men do what they see others do that we may be sure that some will drink these beverages because we do so. And we notice that a moderate use of them not unfrequently develops into intemperance with its various and terrible consequences. We shall therefore do well to consider whether any benefit we may derive from the habitual use of stimulants is of value equal to the risk of thereby occasioning, though unintentionally, injury to others. And we cannot forget that this injury may lead to eternal ruin, of our brethren, for whom Christ died. God will give to each one wisdom to decide in his own case what course will combine the greatest good to others and to himself with the least harm.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XV

*PAUL'S OWN EXAMPLE. HE HAS A CLAIM TO BE MAINTAINED BY THE CHURCH*

### CH. IX. 1-14

**Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Jesus our Lord, have I not seen? My work, are not you, in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least to you I am. For my seal of the apostleship you are in the Lord. My defence to those who examine me is this.**

**Have we not a right\* (\*Or, authority) to eat and drink? Have we not a right\* (\*Or, authority) to lead about a sister as wife, as do also the other apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or, I only and Barnabas, have we no right\* (\*Or, authority) not to work?**

**Who serves as soldier ever with his own rations? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the fruit of it? Or, who shepherds a flock and does not eat from the milk of the flock? Is it as a man that I speak these things? Or, the Law also, does it not say these things? For, in the Law of Moses it is written "Thou shalt not muzzle an ox while thrashing." (#De 25:4.) Is it for the oxen that God cares? Or, because of us altogether does He say it? For, because of us it was written; because in hope he who ploughs ought to plough, and he who thrashes, in hope of partaking "If we for you have sown spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your fleshly things? If others partake the authority\*\* (\*\*Or, right) over you, do not we more? But we have not made use of this right;† (†Or, authority) but we bear all things, that we may not cause any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ. Do you not know that they who perform the sacred things eat the things from the sanctuary? that they who give attendance at the altar receive a portion together with the altar? In this way, also the Lord ordained for those who announce the Gospel that they should live from the Gospel.**

At the end of § 14 Paul supported his warning to beware lest by eating idol-sacrifices those who have knowledge injure the weaker ones, by the example of his own firm purpose to abstain from all meat rather than ensnare a brother. The force of this example he will not increase by expounding the principles of his own entire conduct, and specially his reasons for refusing to be maintained by the church. For this exposition, which occupies § 16, he prepares the way by asserting and proving, in § 15, his right to maintenance.

Ver. 1.-3. **Free:** further expounded in #1Co 9:19. In view of his purpose to lay a restriction on his own food because of the weaker brethren, Paul asserts virtually in this question his full liberty to eat what he likes.

**An apostle:** the first rank (#1Co 12:28) in the church, and therefore least likely to be under restrictions. See note, #Ro 1:1.

**Seen Jesus our Lord;** supports the assertion implied in *Am I not an apostle?* Doubtless it refers specially, though perhaps not exclusively, (cp. #Ac 22:18-21,) to the appearance of Christ on the way to Damascus. Then (#Ac 26:16ff) or shortly afterwards (#Ac 22:14) he received his commission to the Gentiles. Cp. #Ga 1:1, 16. This question suggests that they only were apostles who received a commission immediately from the lips of Christ.

**Are not you etc.;** proof, from evident matter-of-fact, that Paul was indeed an apostle.

**In the Lord:** objectively and subjectively; as in #1Co 1:2. The historic facts of Christ were the basis upon which, and the living presence of Christ was the spiritual element *in* which, were wrought the results attained by Paul at Corinth. #1Co 9:2 Develops the proof implied in the foregoing question.

**Others may doubt my claims:** you cannot. Of this, #1Co 9:2b is proof.

**Seal:** a visible, solemn, authoritative attestation. See #Ro 4:11. The church at Corinth being evidently God's work, was a conspicuous and divine attestation of Paul's often repeated claim that by the immediate voice of Christ he had been called to be an apostle. For, no impostor or fanatic could produce the abiding and blessed results which had followed Paul's preaching. Similar argument in #1Co 15:15.

**To those who examine** (same word as in #1Co 4:3f) **me.** The present tense suggests that Paul's apostleship was frequently called in question. Cp. #2Co 11:22.

**Is this;** refers probably to #1Co 9:1-3, in which Paul has given complete proof of an important point, viz. his apostleship, rather than to #1Co 9:4ff, where Paul, on the ground of the proof given in #1Co 9:1-3, merely claims equal rights with the other apostles.

Ver. 4.- 6. After proving his apostleship, Paul now begins to prove (#1Co 9:4-14) his claim to be supported by the church. He thus introduces the specific matter of 1Cor. 9.

**Eat and drink:** at the cost of the church. For God to give Paul a work which so occupied him that he could not earn (#2Co 11:8) sufficient food, and yet to forbid him to be supported by his converts, would be practically to forbid him to *eat and drink*. Contrast #Lu 10:7.

**We;** includes (#1Co 9:6) Barnabas, and perhaps others. Contrast #1Co 9:1-3. The mention of *eating*, in a matter quite different recalls #1Co 8:13.

**As wife:** see #1Co 7:2: to be maintained by the church. To refuse this, would be practically to forbid the apostles to marry.

**Lead about:** as companion of their apostolic journeys. These words seem to imply that at least Paul was not married: so #1Co 7:8. And the words following imply clearly that most of the apostles and certainly *Cephas* (cp. #Mt 8:14) and *the brothers of the Lord* were, when Paul wrote, living in married life. The mention here of *the brothers of the Lord* reveals their important position among



the early Christians. Cp. #Ac 1:14. The mention of *Cephas* suggests that opponents are referred to here belonging to the Cephas-party. Cp. #2Co 11:22. If so, these words betray their inconsistency. The mention of *Barnabas* implies that he, Paul's earliest missionary companion and originally a man of property, (#Ac 4:37; 13:2,) shared the resolve to labor at a trade rather than be maintained by his converts. To refuse Paul's claim to maintenance, is to make "him and Barnabas" exceptions to *the other apostles*. "Am I forbidden to eat and drink? To forbid me to be maintained by the church, amounts to this. Do not the other apostles, whose equal I have proved to be, and even Cephas, whose disciples my opponents profess to be, claim maintenance not only for themselves but for their wives? Have I and Barnabas been specially forbidden to desist, even while preaching the Gospel, from manual toil?"

Estius, (who, however, honestly corrects the order of the words in the papal Vulgate,) following Tertullian, *On Monogamy* ch. 8, Jerome, *Against Jovinian* bk. i. 26, Augustine, *The work of monks* chs. 4, 5, supposes that Paul refers in #1Co 9:5 to Christian ladies who accompanied the apostles in their journeys, and at the cost of themselves or others supplied their wants; and compares #Mt 27:55; #Mr 15:41; #Lu 8:2f. But this supposition has no historic ground whatever except this verse. For the explanations of this verse by Tertullian, Jerome, and Augustine, cannot be accepted as such. The suggested practice would lie open to grave suspicion; especially as Paul speaks of leading about one sister. The entire context shuts out all thought of a lady who at her own cost supplied the apostle's need. And the added word *wife* cannot be accounted for except as indicating that the *sister* in Christ was also a *wife*. #Ac 22:1, a rhetorical appeal with different order of words, is no parallel to the plain language of this verse. That some of the apostles were married, Estius admits.

*The brothers of the Lord*, will be discussed under #Ga 1:19.

Ver. 7. His claim to maintenance, Paul has supported by an appeal to the example of the other apostles, whose equal he has proved himself to be. He now further supports it by appealing to his readers' sense of justice.

**His own rations:** at his own expense. It includes both food and pay. Same word in #Ro 6:23. These words remind us of the mercenary service so common at one time among the Greeks. This first comparison suggests that in the following comparisons Paul refers to those who *plant* and *shepherd* not as owners but as servants. Such expect naturally to be maintained out of the produce of their own toil.

**The fruit:** not "all the fruit." He who produces may fairly claim to *eat*.

**From the milk;** including both the butter and cheese made *from*, and the money derived *from* sale of, *the milk*. The man who tends the flock has food from its produce. Cp. #1Co 9:14, "live from the Gospel"; #1Co 10:4. Each of the above occupations Paul uses elsewhere (#2Co 10:3; #1Co 3:6; #Ac 20:28: cp. #1Pe 5:2f) as metaphors of himself or of Christian teachers generally. It is evident that one who devotes himself to the care of others, and who by his own toil produces for them food and nourishing drink, has a right to be maintained by them.

Ver. 8.-10. **These things:** about the shepherd and the vinedresser. Not *as a man*, i.e. merely asserting a principle current among men, (cp **#1Co 15:32**; **#Ga 3:15**,) does Paul speak; but says that which *the Law also says*.

**Moses:** an appeal to the authority of the great Lawgiver; to whose lips the following injunction, taken word for word from **#De 25:4**, LXX., is expressly (**#De 5:1**; **27:1**) attributed. It is quoted also, in a similar connection, in **#1Ti 5:18**. It refers to oxen treading out grain with their feet, or dragging over it a threshing machine. Both modes are still common in the east: and the injunction of Moses is observed by both Christians and Mohammedans. See Thompson, *Land and Book* ch. xxxv.

**Is it for the oxen etc.;** must be interpreted to mean, not, "does God care for oxen?" but, "was it His care for them that prompted these words."

**Altogether:** not, "for us only;" but that every letter of **#De 25:4** was written because of us, viz. for those who labor to provide spiritual food for others. Paul then justifies the question of **#1Co 9:10a**, by asserting, and giving the Divine motive for, that which the question clearly implies.

**Because in hope etc.:** a broad principle which moved God to have **#De 25:4** written one applicable both to gospel workers and to all who labor to provide food of any kind for others. Hence the change from the first person, *because of us*, to the third, *he who ploughs*.

**Ought:** an obligation resting on those for whom he works. It is right that a ploughman's toil be lightened by a prospect of reward.

**He who thrashes;** ought to do so *in hope*.

**Of partaking:** sharing the grain he thrashes out, according to the custom, everywhere prevalent in the early stages of civilization, of payment in kind. But the ploughman ought not to have to wait for this. Hence, of him, the word partake is not used.

**#De 25:4** is very conspicuous for its unexpected, sudden, and momentary reference to cattle, amid matter quite different. For this there must be some reason more important than the mere well-being of cattle. Indeed, all injunctions of kindness to animals are more for our good than theirs. For he who needlessly hurts them inflicts by doing so a far deeper wound in his own moral nature. Moreover, the very insignificance of a mouthful of corn reveals some deeper motive for these words. The open mouths of the cattle treading out the grain proclaim in plain language the great principle that they who by their toil obtain food for others ought themselves to share it. And, of this principle, the gospel laborer is a special and very conspicuous case. For his remuneration is voluntary; and therefore needs to be supported by some great principle. Therefore, if, as Paul and his readers believed the words of Moses are the voice of God, since whatever God says He says in view of all its future applications, we cannot doubt that He moved Moses to write these words with a definite reference to laborers like Paul.

Notice carefully that these words, spoken and written (**#De 27:1**; **31:9**) by Moses, are assumed by Paul, as a matter not open to doubt, to be the voice of God, and to have been written *because of*

us, a purpose far above Moses' thought. This implies that through the lips and pen of Moses' God spoke. See my *Romans*, Dissertation iii.

Ver. 11.-12a. Two more arguments in support of Paul's claim to maintenance.

**We:** Paul and others such as Timothy and Silvanus, (#2Co 1:1; #Ac 18:5,) his fellow-workers at Corinth.

**Spiritual, fleshly:** same thought in #Ro 15:27.

**A great thing:** #2Co 11:15. The word preached by Paul at Corinth was a seed (#Lu 8:11) from which his hearers had reaped a spiritual harvest. Was it then a great recompense if he received from them things needful for the body, which were a far less valuable product of their bodily labor?

**Sow, reap:** keeping up the metaphor of #1Co 9:10, and specially appropriate for results corresponding to the organic laws of bodily and spiritual life. Cp. #2Co 9:6; #Ga 5:22; 6:7ff.

**If others etc.:** another argument, similar to, but more pointed than, #1Co 9:6. "*Others* are already exercising *the right* (or, *authority*) *over you*, the right to maintenance, #1Co 9:4, 6,) which I claim." This question reminds us irresistibly of the hostile and false teachers of #2Co 11:12; with which passage it is an important coincidence. But, to whomever Paul refers, his claim was infinitely superior to theirs.

Ver. 12b. A forerunner of § 16: cp. #1Co 9:15,18. Paul has proved his apostleship, and therefore his right to the maintenance enjoyed by other apostles for themselves and their wives. This claim he has supported by an appeal to the common practice of men, to a remarkable passage in the Mosaic Law, to the greater value of the spiritual good his readers have received as compared with any material gifts from them to him, and to the fact that they concede to others what he claims for himself. All this is but a background designed to throw into bold relief his own refusal to use his claim. This refusal he now begins to expound.

**This right:** as in #1Co 9:12a.

**All things:** cp. #2Co 11:7ff; #2Th 3:9; #Ac 20:34. These words raise the case in point into a universal principle with Paul. He makes it his constant practice to submit to every kind of hardship rather than in any way hinder the Gospel. The progress (#2Th 3:1) of the Gospel depends very much upon the impression made upon the hearers by the character of the preacher. Now, if Paul had been maintained by his converts, he might have seemed to be merely making a living by his teaching as others did. Whereas his refusal to be paid for teaching claimed attention for the gospel as something new and disinterested. Cp. #2Co 11:7-12. Therefore, had Paul used his right to maintenance, the Word he preached would have lost this moral advantage and would so far have been hindered.

**We:** cp. #1Co 9:6. He does not wish us to think that he is alone in this forbearance.

**The Gospel of Christ:** full emphatic title. He is careful not to hinder the spread of the good news about the long-expected Anointed One. This verse warns us that the life-giving Gospel may be hindered, even by an Apostle, claiming his rights. Therefore, our right to anything is in itself no sufficient reason for claiming it. We are bound by our loyalty to Christ to consider whether we shall most advance His kingdom by claiming or waiving our right.

Ver. 13.- 14. Two more arguments supporting Paul's claim to maintenance. That they are separated from the former arguments by **#1Co 9:12b** and are introduced by the emphatic words *do you not know*, gives them great prominence.

**The sacred-things:** the various rites of the temple.

**Eat from the sanctuary**, or *sacred-place*: receive maintenance from the temple. A part of most sacrifices was given to the priests for food: **#Le 6:16, 26; #Nu 18:8-19**.

**Give attendance at the altar:** present themselves to offer sacrifice.

**Receive portions with etc.:** Of peace offerings, a part was consumed on *the altar*, and a part by the priest. In **#1Co 9:13a** we have the priest's work generally; in **#1Co 9:13b**, that part of it in which the principle before us is most conspicuous.

**In this way also:** not only adds to the ordinances of Moses an ordinance of Christ, but strengthens the authority of each by showing that they embody the same principle.

**The Lord**, Master of His church, **ordained:** in **#Mt 10:9f; #Lu 10:7**; another mark of agreement of or Gospels with the words of Christ as reported to Paul. Cp. **#1Co 7:10**.

**Live from the Gospel:** obtain by preaching it the things needful for bodily life.

This section was primarily designed to be merely a background throwing into bold relief Paul's refusal to be maintained by the church. But the earnestness of his tone, the accumulation of arguments, and hints in **#1Co 9:3, 13**, betray the presence of opponents whom Paul wished to confute and abash. Cp. **#2Co 11:12**. And the general applicability of his many arguments, and especially of **#1Co 9:14**, have evident reference to the necessity, foreseen by Paul though possibly not then existing, for paid workers in the church. And doubtless, with a view to this, as well as to the preachers sent forth by Himself personally, the words of **#Mt 10:9f; #Lu 10:7** were spoken and recorded. Probably the conspicuous feature of the Mosaic ritual mentioned in **#1Co 9:13** was designed with the same purpose. That each church has a right to decide which of its members shall be thus maintained, Paul admits, by presenting in **#1Co 9:1-3** his own credentials. And, by waiving his right to maintenance in order thus more effectively to do Christ's work, Paul set an example of that gratuitous service of the church which is not only a beautiful expression of unselfish devotion but is also one of the most important factors in the progress of Christianity.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XVI

### TO SAVE OTHERS AND HIMSELF, PAUL REFUSES TO USE HIS CLAIM TO MAINTENANCE

#### CH. IX. 15-27

**But, for my part, I have not used any of these. And I have not written these things that it may be so with me. For it were good for me rather to die, or no one shall make vain my ground of exultation. For, if I be preaching the Gospel, it is not to me a ground of exultation. For necessity lies upon me. For woe is there for me if I do not preach the Gospel. For, if of my own will I am doing this, I have a reward: but, if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my reward? That when preaching the Gospel I may make the Gospel without cost, in order not to use to the full my right in the Gospel.**

**For, being free from all, to all I made myself a servant,\* (\*Or, brought myself under bondage.) that I may gain the more part of them. And I became to the Jews as a Jew, that I may gain Jews; to those under law as under law, (not being myself under law,) that I may gain those under law; to those without law as without law, (not being without law to God but in law to Christ,) that I may gain those without law. I became weak to the weak ones that the weak ones I may gain. To all I am become all things, that in all ways I may save some.**

**And all things I do because of the Gospel that I may become a sharer of it with others. Do you not know that they who run in a racecourse, all indeed run, but one receives the prize? In this way you are running, that you may obtain. And every one that contends at the festal games in all things is self-controlled. They indeed that they may receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable. I then in this way am running, as not without a definite goal: in this way I box, not as striking air. But I bruise my body, and lead it about as a slave; lest in any way having acted as herald to others, myself be rejected.**

Paul will now reassert and explain his refusal (#1Co 9:12) to receive a livelihood from the Gospel. He persists in his refusal, as being his only ground of exultation, #1Co 9:15-18; that he may save others, #1Co 9:19-23; and thus himself obtain the victor's crown, #1Co 9:24-27.

Ver. 15. After arguments of general application. Paul turns now to his own conduct.

**Not used;** takes up the same words in #1Co 9:12.

**Any of these:** the various advantages implied in "living from the Gospel;" according to the use of the Greek plural.

**That thus etc.:** that I may receive maintenance from the Gospel.

**For it were good etc.:** reason for *I have not written etc.*

**Or no one etc.:** the only alternative. Either he will retain in its fullness his *ground-of-exultation* (see under **#1Co 1:29**) or he prefers to die. His refusal to receive a livelihood from the Gospel was to him a source of joy and of spiritual elevation: and he is resolved that this source of joy no one shall reduce to an empty thing by persuading him to be paid for his work. Cp. **#2Co 11:10**.

Ver. 16.-17. Reason for this steadfast purpose, viz. that this is Paul's only ground of exultation. *For*, that he merely preached the Gospel is no ground of special inward elevation and joy.

**For necessity etc.:** proof of this.

**For woe etc.;** explains the necessity which compels him to preach.

**Woe:** calamity, in this case, eternal death. So explicit and solemn was Christ's commission that Paul could not retain His favor if he refused to obey it. **#1Co 9:17** shows how this impending woe, and the *necessity* it laid on Paul, make the mere fact of his preaching no ground of exultation.

**Reward:** as in **#1Co 3:8, 14**: not necessarily eternal life (which is God's free gift to all who believe,) but the special reward to be given to all who have done work for Christ.

**Have a reward:** **#Mt 6:1; #Lu 6:23**.

**Stewardship:** cp. **#1Co 4:1**. If in preaching the Gospel Paul had acted of his own prompting, and without the necessity of **#1Co 9:16**, his preaching would have moral worth, (a worth, however, wrought in him by God's free undeserved favor,) and would be followed by *reward* in the great Day. But the compulsion under which he preaches, i.e. the *woe* which awaits him *if he do not preach*, deprives it of moral worth, and places him in the position of one (with the Greeks, usually a slave) to whom his master has entrusted the oversight of an establishment, and who under pain of punishment disposes properly of goods committed to his charge. Cp. **#Lu 17:10**. Consequently, Paul's preaching is to him no ground of exultation, whereas it would be if it had the moral worth which God will reward.

Ver. 18. **What then etc.?** "Since the threatened woe deprives the mere fact of my preaching of all merit, what service remains to me which God will reward? Am I shut out from the reward of **#1Co 3:8, 14**?" This question must have a positive answer. For, evidently, Paul is not shut out from such reward. And the answer must be sought for, and is found, in *that when preaching etc.* That Paul of his own prompting refuses to use the privilege of maintenance given to him by Christ, is meritorious and will receive reward. His refusal to *use-to-the-full, while preaching-the-Gospel, the right* to maintenance, involving as it did much extra toil and prompted by a belief (**#1Co 9:12**) that he would thus help forward the Gospel, was acceptable to God and will be followed by reward. This answer to the question is put in the form of a purpose: because the conduct which God will reward is a steadfast purpose directing Paul's conduct.

This verse implies that to preach the Gospel without pay was Paul's usual practice. Cp. **#2Th 3:8f**; **#Ac 20:34**. And the wisdom of it is evident. He wished to make church finances as simple as possible, and to discourage the idle people (cp. **#2Th 3:10ff**) who are ever ready to make gain of the piety of others. But Paul accepted (**#2Co 11:8f**; **#Php 4:16**) gifts from churches at a distance. For such offerings were a noble mark of Christian character, were little liable to abuse and to accept them had no appearance of self-seeking.

Notice that certain actions will receive *reward* because of their spontaneousness; and that this is evidently looked upon here as meriting reward. But all our good actions are God's work in us and gift to us. Even when they spring from our own free choice they are really a fruit of the Spirit (**#Ga 5:22**) given to us by God. But they are none the less good actions: and God graciously recognizes His work in us as meriting reward.

Notice Paul's wish to do something beyond that made almost compulsory by his circumstances and by Christ's definite command. Much that is right loses its value and moral influence because other reasons besides loyalty to Christ move us to do it. The true test of fidelity is our conduct when we have no definite command and when we can do otherwise without serious and evident consequences. We may well be eager to do that for which there can be no conceivable motive except devotion to our Master.

We learn here that our own actions may be a ground of spiritual exultation. When we find ourselves actuated by motives which once were foreign to us but which our best judgment commends, and doing work which is evidently Christ's work in us and a precursor of eternal reward, we are filled with a gratitude, joy, and confidence, which are truly an "exultation in the Lord," **#1Co 1:31**.

Ver. 19. Reason, in addition to those of **#1Co 9:15ff**, for the conduct described in **#1Co 9:18**.

**Free**; takes up **#1Co 9:1**, and thus marks a transition from Paul's specific refusal of maintenance to his conduct generally.

**Free from all**: from any one who can compel him to do this or that.

**Servant**: or *slave*: see **#Ro 1:1**.

**Made myself servant**: cp. **#Ga 5:13**. He submitted to restriction, toil, privation, for their benefit.

**May gain**: explained in **#1Co 9:22**. To "save" his soul, is to *gain* him as an eternal Crown of rejoicing: **#1Th 2:19f**; **#Php 4:1**. Cp. **#Mt 18:15**, **#Phm 1:15**. Paul reminds us that he will *gain* by his voluntary service.

**The more part**: as in **#1Co 10:5**; **15:6**; **#Ac 19:32**; **27:12**. It suggests a sad conviction that in some cases Paul's self-denial would be in vain.

Ver. 20.-22a. Expounds in detail "I made myself to all:" **#1Co 9:22b** restates Paul's purpose, "that I may gain the more part."

**As a Jew:** observing among Jews the Mosaic ordinances of food and feasts. An important coincidence with **#Ac 21:26; 16:3**. But **#Ga 2:14** proves that even among Jews he did not pretend to share Jewish repugnance to Gentiles.

**I became:** by my own purpose and conduct. For, though born a Jew he had, by his conversion, been set free (**#Ga 3:28; 5:1**) from Jewish restrictions.

**Those under law:** **#Ro 6:14f; #Ga 4:4f, 21; 5:18**: Jews, looked at from an inward and spiritual, not an outward and national, point of view. The Law is, to those who accept it as the only way to God, a ruling power *under* which they lie powerless and condemned. And by submitting to the restrictions of the Law Paul put himself in some measure by their side.

**Not under law:** no longer looking up to it as a master: cp. **#Ro 6:14**, explained **#Ro 7:1-6; #Ga 5:18**. For he knows that, instead of God's gifts being obtained by obedience to law, both obedience and its rewards are God's free gifts to those who believe.

**To those without-law:** as in **#Ro 2:12, 14**.

**As without-law:** not observing, among Gentiles, Mosaic restrictions. Not without-law of God: not without commands of God which I obey.

**In-the-law of Christ;** expounds the foregoing. Although the commands of God are no longer a rule and a burden *under* which he lies, yet the commands of Christ (**#Ga 6:2**, cp. **#Mt 22:37ff**) are a directing element *in* which he walks. Cp. **#Ro 8:2; #Heb 8:10**. These words remind us that Christian liberty is ours only so long as we abide in the will of Christ.

**I became weak:** **#2Co 11:29**; see **#Ro 15:1**. Because they were unable to grasp the full practical bearing of the Gospel, and lest his example should lead them to do that which would injure them Paul imposed limitations (e.g. **#1Co 8:13**) upon himself; and thus, in sympathy and practice, shared their weakness. This last detail of conduct brings before us **#1Co 8:7-13**, the specific matter of DIV. IV. It refers to believers: **#1Co 9:20, 21** include, and refer chiefly to, unbelievers. These latter Paul sought to *gain* by leading them to Christ and thus to heaven; those of **#1Co 9:22**, by saving them from falling, and thus saving them for ever.

**To all:** broad statement of principle, parallel with **#1Co 9:19** and **#1Co 9:12b**.

Ver. 22b. **All things:** limited by the word *save* to things not actually sinful. To do wrong can save no one.

**In-all-ways:** leaving untried no method likely to win.

**Save:** see note, **#Ro 11:14**.



In **#1Co 9:19-22** lies an important principle, viz. that, other things being equal, our spiritual influence over others is in proportion to our nearness to them in the various circumstances and habits of life. In harmony with this principle, the Son of God clothed Himself in human flesh that He might speak to us through human lips and stretch out for our salvation a human hand. Cp. **#Ga 4:4**. And Paul was accustomed to diminish as far as practicable, by conforming to their habits and practice, the distance between himself and those he sought to save. To the Athenians he spoke as a philosopher, **#Ac 17:22-31**; among Jews, he acted as a Jew, **#Ac 21:26**; but always without surrendering principle, **#Ga 2:5**. For, to do this, would benefit no one. We shall do well to imitate him. Whatever reminds our hearers that our circumstances and endowments differ from theirs, will lessen the force of our words.

Ver. 23. **All things**; takes up the same words in **#1Co 9:22, 12**.

**Because of the Gospel etc.**: 3rd reason, in addition to those of **#1Co 9:15-18, 19-22** for the conduct stated in **#1Co 9:12b** and reasserted in **#1Co 9:22b**.

**That I may become etc.**; expounds because of the Gospel Sharer with others: "by obtaining, in company with those whom I hope to save, the blessings promised in the Gospel." The good news he announces moves Paul to use all means to save men, because by doing so he will (**#1Ti 4:16**) save himself and those who hear him.

Ver. 24.-27. Justifies **#1Co 9:23** by the analogy of the athletic festivals so well known at Corinth. See note below.

**Racecourse**: the oldest and most popular kind of contest.

**The prize**: same word and thought in **#Php 3:14**: the *crown* (**#1Co 9:25**) or garland of leaves given to the winner.

**But one receives etc.**: so that it can be obtained only by surpassing all rivals. This thought nerved the athlete to intense exertion. These words are no part of the comparison; (for they are not true of the Christian race;) but are added to depict the intense effort required to gain the prize.

**In-this-way**: like racers.

**You are running**; asserts that the racer is a pattern of the Christian. These words remind the readers that, although this metaphor is introduced professedly to expound Paul's own conduct, it is really an example for them.

**That you may obtain**: expounds *in this way*, and directs attention to the one essential point of comparison. Like a racer you are aiming at a prize to be obtained only by victory. **#1Co 9:25** brings the comparison of **#1Co 9:24** to bear on the matter of **#1Co 9:23**.

**Contentends-in-the-athletic-festivals**: includes racing boxing, and all kinds of athletic contests. Same word in **#Lu 13:24**; **#Joh 18:36**; **#Col 1:29**; **4:12**; **#1Ti 4:10**; **6:12**; **#2Ti 4:7**.

**In all things is self-controlled;** refers not to the actual race, but to the ten months' preparation. Indeed this preparation was in some sense a part of the contest: for upon it very much depended success or failure. During these ten months, the athlete, not only submitted to the prescribed limitations of food, drink, and the entire mode of life, but without asking whether it was specially enjoined, did whatever would strengthen him for the decisive day and thus increase his chance of victory, and avoided whatever would weaken him.

**In all things:** emphatic. Every detail of his life was *controlled* by his earnest purpose to gain the prize.

**Crown:** not a mark of royalty, (different word in **#Re 12:3; 13:1; 19:12,**) but a wreath of leaves (or sometimes a golden imitation of such, **#Re 4:4; 9:7; 14:14**) given as (**#2Ti 4:8**) a reward, or worn (**#Php 4:1; #1Th 2:19**) in token of joy. A garland of pine or olive leaves, fit symbol of transitory human glory, was the prize at the Isthmian festival. With this fading wreath Paul contrasts the imperishable reward awaiting the Christian; thus increasing the force of the example in **#1Co 9:25a**.

Ver. 26. After calling ("you," **#1Co 9:24**) his readers athletes, then placing himself ("we," **#1Co 9:25**) among them, Paul now speaks of himself alone; thus bringing **#1Co 9:24, 25** to bear upon **#1Co 9:23**.

**Then:** since Christians are athletes striving for an unfading crown.

**In this way, in this way:** viz. as athletes run and box.

**Am running:** The Christian life is both a preparation for contest and an actual contest. For each day we make ourselves stronger or weaker for the conflict of tomorrow: and each day we are in actual contact with our adversary, and are or ought to be actually pressing towards the goal. Though the Christian has no rival, a race fitly symbolizes his life. For even the athletic racer forgets his rivals, and simply presses forward with all his powers.

**As not without-a-definite-goal;** expounds *in this way*. In his self-denial and efforts Paul, like a racer, has a definite aim in view.

**I box:** another common mode of contest. "Like an athlete, I am not fighting a shadow, but have a real antagonist." And the visible goal and the real antagonist prompt the self-denial of **#1Co 9:19-23**.

Ver. 27. **Bruise:** as boxers do. So far is Paul from fighting a mere shadow that his own body is his adversary whom he must conquer if he is to win the crown. For, through the body sin seeks to conquer him and rob him of the prize. See **#Ro 8:13**. These words reveal the great influence of the body, in Paul's view, upon the Christian life. But the figurative nature of the passage forbids us to infer that Paul inflicted upon his body pain or injury as a spiritual exercise.

**Lead-as-a-slave:** he not only conquers it and robs it of power, by refusing to indulge its desires and dislikes, but compels it to work out his own purposes. And he presents (**#Ro 12:1; 6:19**) the captive as a sacrifice to God. Paul's refusal of maintenance, and the bodily toil resulting therefrom, and his refusal to eat meat which might injure a weak brother, were blows against the spiritual power of his own body, and tended to make the body more and more a servant of the spirit within. He inflicts these blows lest his body gain the upper hand, and thus ruin him.

**Herald:** see **#Ro 2:21**. At the festival he summoned the athletes to the contest.

**Rejected:** as unworthy of the prize. i.e. lose his soul. For the prize is eternal life, **#Jas 1:12; #1Ti 6:12**. Hence the solemn examples in 1Cor. 10. It is the opposite of "become sharer of the Gospel," **#1Co 9:23**. By divine appointment Paul calls men to contend for an unfading crown. But, like all preachers of the Gospel, he is himself an athlete as well as a herald. And he is careful lest, after summoning others to contend, himself fall short of the prize.

**In-any-way:** for in many ways we may fall.

From **#1Co 9:24-27** we learn that not to do our utmost to save, at any personal sacrifice, the souls of others, is to imperil our own salvation. For such effort and sacrifice strengthen the spiritual life. And so serious is our conflict and so tremendous are its issues that we dare not leave unused any means of spiritual strength. Therefore, in seeking to save others we are working out our own salvation.

SECTION 16 reasserts **#1Co 9:12b**, and gives three reasons for it. To refuse maintenance in order not to hinder the Gospel, is an outgrowth of spiritual life, and is therefore to Paul a ground of present inward joy and confidence, **#1Co 9:15-18**. To save others, Jews or Gentiles, is itself a "gain" worthy of pursuit, **#1Co 9:19-22**. Moreover, Paul is an athlete, contending for an eternal prize: and therefore, even to save his own soul, he uses all possible means to save others, **#1Co 9:23-27**.

Of the GREEK ATHLETIC FESTIVALS, the most famous was that held every fourth year at Olympia in the west of the Peloponnese. Very famous and ancient also was the Isthmian festival held every two years at the Isthmus, about eight miles from, and in full sight of, the city of Corinth. Similar festivals were held at Nemea and Delphi. But in these the athletic element was less conspicuous. All these were instituted before the dawn of history. Other festivals in imitation of them, were held in Paul's day in many cities of Asia e.g. at Tarsus, and notably at Antioch in Syria.

All athletes, i.e. competitors for prizes, had ten months' training under the direction of appointed teachers and under various restrictions of diet. At the beginning of the festival they were required to prove to the judges that they were of pure Greek blood, had not forfeited by misconduct the right of citizenship, and had undergone the necessary training. Then began the various contests, in an appointed order. Of these, the oldest and most famous was the footrace. Others were wrestling, boxing, chariot and horse racing. The prize was a wreath (or *crown*) of olive at Olympia, and of pine leaves (at one time of olive) at the Isthmus. The giving of the prizes was followed by processions and sacrifices, and by a public banquet to the conquerors. The whole festival at Olympia lasted five days.

The importance of these athletic festivals in the eyes of the ancient Greeks is difficult to appreciate now. They were the great family gatherings of the nation, held under the auspices, and under the shadow of the temples, of their gods. The laws regulating them were held as binding by the various independent states of Greece. The month in which they were held was called the sacred month, and was solemnly announced. And all war between Greek states ceased, under pain of the displeasure of their gods, while the festival lasted. The festivals were attended by immense crowds from all the Greek states and from even the most distant colonies. The various states sent embassies, and vied with each other in the splendor of them and of the gifts they brought. The greatest cities thought themselves honored by the victory of a citizen. The victor was received home with a triumphal procession, entered the city by a new opening broken for him through the walls, was taken in a chariot to the temple of its guardian deity, and welcomed with songs. In some cases a reward in money was given, and release from taxation. In honor of the successful athlete poems were written; of which we have specimens in the poems of Pindar. A statue of the victor was permitted to be placed, and in many places was placed, by townsmen or friends, in the sacred grove of the presiding deity. An avenue of these statues, shadowed by an avenue of pine trees, leading up to the temple of Poseidon, which stood within 200 yards of the race-course at the Isthmus of Corinth, is mentioned by Pausanias, bk. ii. 1. 7. Close by this temple with its avenue of statues Paul probably passed on his way from Athens to Corinth.

The Olympic festival, which survived the longest, was abolished in A.D. 394, four years after the public suppression of paganism in the Roman Empire.

The Greek Athletic Festivals must be carefully distinguished from the bloody Roman Gladiatorial Combats.

That these athletic festivals permeated and molded the thought both of classic writers and of the Apostle to the Gentiles, we have abundant proof. Eternal life is to be obtained only by contest and victory: **#1Co 9:24ff; #Php 3:14; #1Ti 6:12; #2Ti 2:5; 4:7f**; cp. **#Lu 13:24; #Heb 12:1; #Jas 1:12; #1Pe 5:4; #Re 2:10; 3:11**. The Christian life is both a preparation for conflict, **#1Co 9:25; #2Ti 2:5**; a race, **#1Co 9:24; #Php 3:12; #Ac 20:24; #2Ti 4:7**; *a boxing*, **#1Co 9:27**, and a wrestling, **#Eph 6:12**. Paul's converts will be his crown in the great day: **#1Th 2:19; #Php 4:1**. And, just as the athlete, victorious but not yet crowned, lay down to rest on the evening after conflict, waiting for the glories of the morrow, so Paul: **#2Ti 4:7f**.

This metaphor presents an important view of the Christian life a needful complement of Paul's doctrine of justification by grace and through faith. Though eternal life is altogether a free gift of God, it is given only to those who strive for it with all their powers. Therefore we must ever ask, not only whether an action open to us is lawful, but whether it will increase or lessen our spiritual strength. Just so, an athlete would forego many things otherwise harmless, and some not even forbidden by the laws for athletes, simply because he was striving for a prize.

Again, this metaphor receives in turn its needful complement in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Had we to contend for life in our own strength, we might be doubtful of the result, as was many a resolute athlete on the morning of the contest. But in us is the might of God crushing (**#Ro 16:20; #1Jo 4:4**) our adversary under our feet, and carrying us (**#1Ki 18:46**) forward to the goal. Therefore,

day by day we go down into the arena to fight with foes infinitely stronger than we, knowing that "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

That the crowded Isthmian Festival was held each alternate year at the very gates of Corinth and almost under the shadow of its Acropolis, must have given to the metaphor of **#1Co 9:24ff** special force in the minds of the Corinthians. And, possibly, Paul was himself present at a festival during (**#Ac 18:11**) his eighteen months' sojourn at Corinth, using perhaps the opportunity to summon the assembled strangers to a nobler contest.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XVII

### *THE STORY OF ANCIENT ISRAEL PROVES THAT THEY WHO STAND MAY (THOUGH THEY NEED NOT) FALL*

#### CH. X. 1-13

**For I do not wish you to be ignorant, brothers, that our fathers all were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized for Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they were drinking from a spiritual rock following them. And the rock was Christ.**

**But not with the more part of them was God well-pleased: for they were smitten down in the wilderness. Now these things took place as types of us; that we should not be desirers of bad things, as also they desired. And do not become idolaters, as did some of them: as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play." (#Ex 32:6.) And let us not commit fornication; as some of them committed fornication, and there fell on one day twenty-three thousand. And let us not tempt the Lord; as some of them tempted, and were being destroyed by the serpents. And do not murmur, as some of them murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them typically; and were written for our admonition, to whom the ends of the ages are come. So then, he that thinks that he stands, let him see lest he fall.**

**Of you no temptation has laid hold except a human one. And God is faithful, who will not let you be tempted beyond what you are able; but will make, with the temptation, also the way out, that you may be able to bear up.**

In 1Cor. 8, Paul introduced the matter of food offered to idols; and warned his readers not to do that which might destroy their brethren. This warning he supported in **#1Co 8:13** by his own example. This example he strengthened in 1Cor. 9, by expounding his rights in the Gospel and his conduct; and concluded by saying that he submits to all kinds of bodily privation lest he should himself be lost. Already he has told his readers (**#1Co 9:24**) that they like himself are striving for a prize. And he now supports the warning implied in **#1Co 9:27**, by reminding them that, whereas all who left Egypt were professed followers of God, **#1Co 10:1-4**; yet most of them never reached Canaan, **#1Co 10:5-10**. These things were designed to be a warning for us, **#1Co 10:11, 12**; and God has provided for us a way of escape, **#1Co 10:13**.

Ver. 1. **For**: an important various reading; see p. 7. Paul now supports, by Old Testament examples, the warning implied in the fear expressed in **#1Co 9:27b**.

**Our fathers**: writing as a Jew, but not with special reference to Jews. The *fathers* were common property of all Christians.

**All:** the emphatic word (four times) of **#1Co 10:1-4**.

**Under the cloud:** both locally (cp. **#Ps 105:39**; Wisdom 10:17; 19:7) and by subordination. All ranged themselves under the guidance and protection of Him who revealed Himself in the Pillar of Cloud above their heads.

Ver. 2.-3. Spiritual significance of the bare facts of **#1Co 10:1**.

**Baptized for Moses:** see under **#Ro 6:3**.

**In the cloud etc.** or, *with the cloud*: the material instruments of their baptism. By ranging themselves under *the cloud* and passing through *the sea*, they formally placed themselves in a new relationship to Moses as His followers. They thus openly separated themselves from Egypt, and became the professed people of God. That the position they then took up was analogous to that of Christians, is suggested by the word *baptized*. And the presence of water, in the cloud and sea, made it very appropriate. We saw, under **#Ro 6:4**, that in Paul's day baptism by immersion was usual. But, that the passing of Israel beneath the cloud and through the divided sea on dry land is called baptism, now warns us that if water be used, the mode is not essential to the reality of the baptism. The immersion was reserved for the Egyptians.

Ver. 3. The emphatic repetition of *all* and *the same* keeps conspicuously before us the similar position of men whose fate was different.

**Spiritual food:** the manna, bread from heaven, **#Ps 78:24f**; Wisdom 16: 20; **#Joh 6:31f**; because produced, not naturally, but by the special energy of the Holy Spirit, who is the personal bearer, even in the material world, of the presence and power of God. Cp. **#Ro 1:11**; **7:14**; **#1Co 15:44**; **#Eph 5:19**; **#1Pe 2:5**; cp. **#Ge 1:2**; **#Ps 33:6**; **#Ga 4:29**.

**Spiritual drink:** the water from the rock, **#Ex 17:1-6**; **#Nu 20:2-11**.

Ver. 4. Proof that it was "spiritual drink." That the manna was spiritual, needed no proof: for it was evidently supernatural. But the water from the rock was ordinary water.

**Were drinking:** graphic description of the scene. The real source of the water drunk by Israel on two occasions in the wilderness was not the natural rock from which it visibly flowed, but a spiritual rock, viz. the invisible and spiritual presence and resources of God; and this not stationary like "the rock in Horeb" and that at Kadesh, but *following* them, i.e. God not only going before them as a guide but, after they had pitched their tents providing in each encampment for their need. Therefore, the water from the rock, though natural in composition, was "spiritual drink:" for it was a miraculous work and gift of God present in the Holy Spirit. This exposition is so complete and simple that we have no need to assume a reference here to the foolish Jewish fable about the rock following the Israelites.

**And the rock was Christ:** a great truth linking the spiritual facts of **#1Co 10:3f** with Christianity: as the word "baptized" linked with it the historical facts of **#1Co 10:1**. *Christ* was actually the source

of the water which flowed from the visible rock, being Himself the divine Presence which accompanied, and supplied the need of, Israel in the wilderness. This implies that the not yet incarnate but pre-existent Son of God was the Leader of Israel. Cp. #**Heb 11:26**. Under these passages and #**Col 1:16**; #**Joh 1:3**, lies the great truth that whatever God has done and does outwardly and visibly, in the material universe and in His spiritual kingdom, is through the agency of His Son. Paul here reminds his readers that the same divine power and presence which brought them into, and now maintains them in, the Christian life, of which the two sacraments are a visible representation, also led Israel of old through the Red Sea and daily fed them in the wilderness. This identity lays a foundation for the warnings of #**1Co 10:5-12**.

Ver. 5.-6. **The more part**: very much less than the truth, as the readers knew, but sufficient for Paul's warning. Of this statement, #**1Co 10:5b** is proof.

**Smitten-down in the wilderness**: exact words of (LXX.) #**Nu 14:16**; cp. #**Nu 14:32**. That they died in the wilderness instead of entering Canaan, was a punishment for the sin of #**Nu 14:1-10** Cp. #**Heb 3:16ff**.

**These things**: all that was included in *smitten down etc.*: cp. "none of these things," #**1Co 9:15**.

**Types of us**: sketches in outline of what will come to us if we do as they did. See under #**Ro 5:14**. All lessons learned by others from the fate of the sinning Israelites were not only foreseen but designed, by God. Therefore, since the Old Covenant was preparatory to the New, Paul could say that the various punishments of Israel were chosen and inflicted by God in order to teach the men of his own day the evil of desiring bad things. Cp. #**1Co 9:10**.

**Bad-things**; refers only to the men of Paul's day, not to #**Nu 11:4**: for flesh and vegetables were not in themselves bad.

**As they also etc.**; gives prominence to the conduct followed by such punishment.

Ver. 7.-10. Four examples, expounding in detail "as they also desired."

**Idolaters**: put prominently first, preparing the way for #**1Co 10:14-22**. So "fornicators" in #**1Co 6:9**, preparing for #**1Co 6:13-20**.

**The people sat etc.**: word for word from #**Ex 32:6**. This verse, without expressly mentioning idolatry, recalls the idolatrous scene; and is specially suitable to dissuade from taking part (#**1Co 10:21**; #**8:10**) in idol feasts.

**Fornication**: ever closely connected with idolatry, especially at Corinth; and expressly in #**Nu 25:1-9**, to which Paul here refers.

**Twenty-three thousand**: 24,000 in #**Nu 25:9**, with which agree Josephus, *Antiq.* bk. iv. 6. 12, and Philo, vol. ii. 382. Since Paul had no source of information but the Old Testament, we cannot evade this discrepancy but supposing that *on one day* only 23,000 fell. Surely we need not stretch



his apostolic authority to trifling numerical details. See my *Romans*, Dissertation iii. 2. Nor does a trifling slip of memory, if this be such, in a matter no way touching the spiritual life, lessen in the least degree his absolute authority when declaring the commands and promises of God. Cp. **#Ga 3:17**. How needful at Corinth was this second warning, we learn from **#1Co 5:1**; **#2Co 12:21**.

**The Lord**: probably, especially after **#1Co 10:4**, in its usual sense, viz. Christ, the Master whom all Christians obey.

**Tempt**, or *try*: put to the test, as if to see how long His patience will last.

**The serpents**: plain reference to **#Nu 21:6**. Consequently, *tempted* refers to the murmuring about their food. The similar murmuring in **#Ex 17:3** is expressly called (**#Ex 5:7**, cp. **#De 6:16**) tempting God; and gave a name to the place, Massah, or Temptation. In these cases the Israelites tested whether God was among them and His longsuffering towards them, by looking back to the land of bondage out of which He had brought them. A similar leaning in the Corinthians to the idolatrous practices and the impurity of their past life, prompted the warnings of **#1Co 10:7f**. Such looking back was a tempting of their Master, Christ, similar to that punished by the fiery serpents.

**Were-being-destroyed**: both depicts the scene, and includes the bitten ones who looked at the brazen serpent and recovered. **#1Co 10:10** refers evidently to **#Nu 16:41-49**; and was naturally suggested by the murmuring of **#Nu 21:5**.

**The destroyer**: Wisdom 18:25; **#Ex 12:23**. It implies that the "plague" of **#Nu 16:46ff** was inflicted by a personal agent, probably an angel of God. Cp. **#2Sa 24:16**; **#Isa 37:36**. The story of **#Nu 16:41ff** is a solemn warning to all who set themselves against a divinely constituted authority; and was perhaps referred to here as a covert warning to those at Corinth who rejected Paul's apostolic authority.

Ver. 11. Parallel to **#1Co 10:6**; as are **#1Co 10:7-10** to **#1Co 10:5b**.

**These things**; the foregoing punishments.

**Typically**: by way of pattern of what will happen to others. Yet they were real events: for they *happened to them*.

**Written for our admonition**: cp. **#Ro 3:19**; **4:24**; **15:4**; see my *Romans*, Dissertation iii. 3.

**The ages**: the various world-periods, in which God dealt with men in different modes, e.g. antediluvian, pre-Abrahamic, patriarchal, Mosaic. Of these, the age introduced by Christ is a completion (**#Heb 9:26**) and *the end*, to be immediately followed by the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the new earth and heaven.

**Ends**, (see under **#2Co 11:15**), rather than "end:" because in the Christian dispensation each of the former ages finds its goal and consummation: This justifies Paul's assertion that the narratives *written* in former ages were designed for admonition of those living in the Christian age.

**Have come:** as though the Christian age had overtaken them; and specially appropriate in the lips of one who lived before the Christian age began.

Ver. 12. Desired result of the foregoing narratives.

**He that thinks:** the man's opinion about himself, whether true or false. Cp. #1Co 7:40. Same word (R.V. "reputed") in #Ga 2:2, 6, 9. The man of whom Paul thinks actually *stands*: else he could not fall.

**Stand:** #Ro 5:2; 11:20: retain his Christian position.

**Fall:** lose it by committing the sins of #1Co 10:7ff. Cp. #Ro 11:11, 22.

Ver. 13. Encouragement after warning.

**Temptation:** whatever, painful or pleasant, tends to lead us to sin, and thus tests our loyalty to Christ. Cp. #Mt 4:1-10.

**Human:** within the limits of the spiritual powers God has given to men. We can conceive higher intelligences to be attacked by severer temptations.

**Faithful:** #1Co 1:9. To what has been (#1Co 10:13a) in the past, Paul adds what *will* be in the future.

**Will not let:** for each temptation attacks us under His eye and restraint.

**Will make etc.:** does not imply that *the temptation* is God's work, (though, in a sense, this is true: cp. #Ge 22:1,) but that God will provide that it shall be accompanied by *the way-out*. And that *God is faithful*, pledges Him to do this. For He has promised life to all who believe; and this implies escape from all temptation, which in turn implies that we shall not be tempted beyond the powers God has granted to men.

**That you may etc.:** God's purpose in making *the way out*. We endure temptation by flying from it.

SECTION 17 confirms strongly my note under #Ro 11:24 in disproof of Calvin's doctrine that all who have been justified will be finally saved. The word "rejected" in #1Co 9:27, supported as it is by examples of those who never entered Canaan, can refer only to rejection from heaven. And Paul must have thought this possible in his own case; or the motive given in #1Co 9:27 would be utterly unreal. Yet he was quite sure (#Ro 5:9f; #2Co 5:18) of his own justification. The examples of those who, as Paul so emphatically tells us, actually started for Canaan but never reached it, would be quite inapplicable to those who, the right start once made, could not fall finally.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XVIII

### AVOID GIVING ANY SANCTION TO IDOLATRY

#### CH. X. 14-22

**For which cause certainly, my beloved ones, fly from idolatry. As to prudent men I say, Judge yourselves what I assert. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not partnership in\*** (\* Greek, partnership of the blood, etc.) **the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not partnership in\*** (\* Greek, partnership of the blood, etc.) **the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, one body we, the many, are. For, from the one bread, we all partake.**

**Look at Israel according to flesh. Are not they who eat the sacrifices partners with the altar?**

**What, then, do I assert? That an idol-sacrifice is anything? or that an idol is anything? but that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, to demons and not to God they sacrifice. And I do not wish you to become partners with demons. You cannot be partaking of a table of the Lord and a table of demons. Or, are we moving the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?**

On introducing the matter of food offered to idols, which occupies DIV. IV., Paul laid down in § 14 the principle of not doing that which injures others. This he supported in §§ 15, 16 by his own example; and in § 17 by a warning from the story of the Israelites. He will not deal specifically with one part of the matter in hand, viz. idol-feasts; by showing that attendance at them involves partnership with evil spirits. This he proves by the analogy (#1Co 10:16, 17) of the Lord's Supper and (#1Co 10:18) of the Mosaic sacrifices; shows it to be (#1Co 10:19, 20a) in harmony with what he has already said, and the Old Testament has said, about idols; and adds (#1Co 10:20b-22) a threefold dissuasive from such feasts.

Ver. 14.-15. **Fly from idolatry:** #1Co 10:7 abstain from idol-feasts, (cp. #1Co 8:10,) which Paul will prove to be actual idolatry.

**For which cause:** Since God has pledged Himself to make in every temptation a way of escape, there is no need even in Corinth to yield to the many inducements to attend such feasts. These words remind the readers that such inducements were only a "trial" of their faith.

**Prudent:** or *thoughtful*. This appeal prepares us for something important and difficult.

**Assert:** not an unproved assertion. For *judge for yourselves* implies that reasons will be given.

Ver. 16. Appeal to, and exposition of, The Lord's Supper, as a foundation for the argument of #1Co 10:21 and also to support the analogy of #1Co 10:18. Our interpretation of these words will be in great part determined by our interpretation of #1Co 11:23ff: and this interpretation must be in

turn attested by its applicability to the argument here. We must therefore assume the results gained in our note under **#1Co 11:34**.

**The cup:** put first (contrast **#1Co 11:24**) perhaps because of the fuller exposition in **#1Co 10:17** of the other element, the bread, which presents a closer parallel to **#1Co 10:18**.

**Cup of blessing:** name given by the Jews to the third cup of wine at the Passover. Whether Paul refers to this and whether this term was commonly used of the Lord's Supper, we cannot determine.

**Bless;** see **#Ro 1:25**: literally, to speak good words. The words spoken over the cup evidently set forth the goodness of God; as in **#Lu 1:64; 2:28**. Hence they were equivalent to "thanksgiving." Cp. **#1Co 14:16; #1Sa 9:13; #Mt 14:19; #Lu 9:16**, with **#Joh 6:11; #Mr 8:6** with **#Mr 8:7; #Mt 26:26** with **#Mt 26:27**. So Chrysostom: "A cup of blessing He called it; since, holding it in our hands, in this way we sing praise to Him." Our first thought as we behold the symbols of the death of Christ is gratitude to God. Hence the term "Eucharist," i.e. thanksgiving. And the cup which recalls the death of Christ is made here (cp. **#Mr 8:7; #Lu 9:16**) the object or matter of our blessing. The gratitude evoked by sight of the cup is made very prominent by the addition, which we bless.

**We:** whether by one person at each celebration or by the whole company, is left uncertain. Paul joins with others, whoever they be, in pronouncing it.

**Partnership:** **#1Co 1:9**; see **#Ro 15:26**.

**Partnership of;** denotes both partnership with others, as **#1Co 10:18, 20; 1:9; #Heb 10:33**; and partnership in something, as **#2Co 1:7; 8:4; #Php 3:10; #1Pe 5:1; #2Pe 1:4**. Here probably, in spite of **#1Co 10:18, 20**, partnership (with others) in the benefits of the death of Christ, (contrast **#Mt 23:30**.) reminding us that others share these benefits with us. Cp. **#1Co 10:17**. For we cannot well conceive a partnership with the blood of Christ.

**Is;** must be expounded by Paul's teaching elsewhere, but requires a sense which justifies the argument of **#1Co 10:16-21**. Elsewhere we learn that through the shedding of the blood of Christ we receive pardon of sins and a union with Him so close that He lives in us making our life to be an outflow of His; that this truth is set forth visibly in the wine poured into the cup and drunk; and that to drink the material wine is a divinely-appointed and, to speak generally, indispensable condition of this spiritual partnership. Consequently, had not Christ died, there had been no Eucharist cup: and if we refuse the cup we surrender, by disobeying Christ's express command, all claim to the blessings which flow from the shedding of His blood. Therefore, to us *the cup is*, both symbolically and practically *a partnership of the blood of Christ*.

**We break:** made prominent in the narrative (**#1Co 11:24**) as setting forth, like the poured out wine, the death of Christ.

**Of the body of Christ:** partnership with other believers in the benefits resulting from the entire history of the human body of Christ, from His incarnation, holy life, death, resurrection, and glorified human presence in heaven.

Ver. 17. Confirmation of **#1Co 10:16b**, from the oneness of the church, by an argument from effect to cause. A similar argument would support **#1Co 10:16a**. But to develop one side is sufficient: and the bread is a closer analogy to **#1Co 10:18**.

**We, the many, are one body:** an admitted and glorious truth, a forerunner of **#1Co 12:12ff**.

**Because there is etc.;** declares that of this *one body* the *one* sacramental *bread* is a *cause*.

**For we all etc.:** connecting link between the *one bread* and the *one body*. If to partake the eucharistic bread be a condition of receiving spiritual life of the church, which is its very essence, is in the same sense a result of *all* the members of the church partaking *the one* symbolic *bread*. Consequently, the church of Christ, consisting of *many* members of various nations and all ranks but living the same spiritual life and embodying it before the eyes of men, and drinking this life from the same source, viz. the death and life of Christ, on the condition that all its members partake the same material and symbolic food-the one church proves by its very existence the importance of the Lord's Supper and the spiritual reality which underlies it. These words also suggest the direct uniting influence of this one simple rite. Wherever a Christian went among Christians he found them eating and drinking the same bread and wine in memory of the same bruised body and shed blood; and was thus made to feel, in the most effective way conceivable, the oneness of the whole church. Paul may therefore say that the wonderful fact that the many and various members of the church are visibly united into one community, in which each member lives the same spiritual life, is a result of the fact that upon a table in their various assemblies the same bread lies; and may explain his words by reminding us that of this one bread all the members of all the churches partake.

Ver. 18. After justifying beforehand the words "cup" and "table of the Lord" in **#1Co 10:21**, Paul now introduces beforehand an analogy in support of "partners with" and "cup of demons" in **#1Co 10:22**.

**According to flesh;** suggests that already the word *Israel* was used in a spiritual sense: cp. **#Ga 6:16; 4:29**.

**They who etc.:** the offerers of peace-offerings, who, after a part had been burnt on the altar and a part given to the priest, ate the rest in the temple court: **#Le 7:15-21; #De 12:5ff, 17ff**. They were *partners of the altar*, not only inasmuch as part of the sacrificed animals was consumed by the altar and part by them, but in that, by joining that sacrificial feast in the holy place, they visibly and formally set themselves on the side of the God of the Temple, and lent their influence to maintain the temple ritual. Thus, by simply eating and drinking, they were aiding to set before the nation and the world the great preparatory lessons taught by the ancient symbols. And, in so doing, they were *partners of the brazen altar*, which, stained with the blood of the sacrifices, held so prominent a place in the ritual. That in days of spiritual declension the ritual was left in abeyance, and was restored in days of revival, (**#2Ch 29:1-36; 30:1-27; 35:1-19**,) reveals its spiritual importance.

Ver. 19.-20. Application of **#1Co 10:16f** and **#1Co 10:18** to the idol-feasts, in a form which answers an objection.

**What then etc.:** "in bringing the Christian and Jewish feasts, so full of spiritual significance, as analogies of the heathen feasts, am I not conceding to heathenism the reality of its idol-gods?"

**Is anything:** that any reality underlies the name; *that an idol-sacrifice is anything* more than common meat, and *an idol* than a block of wood or stone.

**Idol-sacrifices, idol:** a climax. The answer to these questions is so plain that Paul does not give it, but merely tells us what he does assert about idols. He does not say that idol-sacrifices or even idols themselves are anything at all, but that the sacrifices offered to them are really offered to *demons*. Same word in Tobit 3:8; 6:15f; #Mt 9:33f, etc., #Joh 8:48f; #1Ti 4:1: in classic Greek, a superhuman being, (#Ac 17:18,) generally of an inferior class; elsewhere in the New Testament, an evil superhuman being.

**To demons and not to God:** word for word from #De 32:17, LXX.; (cp. #Ps 106:37; Baruch 4:7;) and probably a correct rendering of the rare Hebrew word there used. That heathen sacrifices are a service rendered to evil spirits, is but an application of the broad principle of #Ro 6:16 to the specific matter of idolatry. For it is assumed everywhere in the New Testament that the abstract power and rule of sin have taken concrete form in superhuman beings, acting under one personal head, and bringing evil influences to bear on the human race: #Eph 6:12; 2:2; #2Ti 2:26; #Ro 16:20; #2Co 4:4. Therefore, every act of sin, being (#Ro 6:16) obedience to sin, is also obedience to these superhuman enemies, and tends to carry out their purposes of death. Now idolatry is the ritual of sin. It is, therefore, the ceremonial of the rule of evil spirits over men. Consequently, though the heathen neither intend nor know it, every act of idolatry and whatever tends to support it, is a *sacrifice* laid on the altar of *demons*. And nowhere and never was this more evident than at Corinth in Paul's day. The variety of idols suggests *demons* rather than "Satan."

Ver. 20b. Dissuasive from idol-feasts. It is explained and justified by the analogy, in #1Co 10:18, of the Mosaic sacrifices. Those who took part in the sacrificial feasts of the temple were, perhaps unconsciously, supporting by their presence the Mosaic ritual, and thus helping forward the educational and spiritual purposes for which it was ordained by God. And they who sat down at a heathen feast were, really though perhaps unintentionally, giving by their presence countenance to idolatry, and thus helping to maintain it and to accomplish its deadly tendencies. They were thus aiding the work of, and making themselves *partners with, demons*.

Ver. 21. A second dissuasive from idol-feasts, suggested by #1Co 10:16, 17. Now only was the presence of Christians at an idol-feast a service rendered to demons, but the pleasure which induced them to go was a *cup* which *demons* held to their lips. For such pleasure was a result of idolatry, and therefore a result of the reign of demons over men. In this lies an argument. For *a cup of demons* must needs be poison.

**You cannot etc.:** another argument. Not only is it a cup of death, but it keeps from us the cup of life.

**Drink:** the inward reality underlying the material act of drinking, the absorption into our inner nature of the influences proceeding from Christ and from demons. For, outwardly and materially,

it is possible to drink both cups at once. But the spiritual and life-giving influences which flow to believers from the shedding of Christ's blood, and of which the eucharistic cup is a condition, are not given to those who indulge in pleasures resulting from sin. Therefore, to accept the pleasures which idolatry offers, is to renounce the salvation offered by Christ.

**The Lord's table, table of demons;** adds emphasis by picturing, in their incongruity, the sacred meal and an idol-feast.

Ver. 22. A third dissuasive, suggested by **#De 32:17** and **#De 32:21**. Paul asks, "What is the practical significance and effect of our conduct? For, to countenance idolatry, is to rouse the anger of Christ, who claims to be our sole Master." This solemn warning, **#1Co 10:22b** supports by appealing to the greater strength of Him whom some were so carelessly provoking.

ARGUMENT. Paul wishes to dissuade from all contact with idolatry, and especially from attendance at idol-feasts. Even this might be thought allowable; since (**#1Co 8:4**) idols have no real existence, and (**#Ro 14:14; #Mt 15:11**) no food can of itself defile. But Paul reminds us that upon eating and drinking hang great spiritual consequences; that a simple Christian feast is a condition of receiving individually the results of Christ's death, and a means of maintaining the wonderful oneness of the church throughout the world, a result far from the thought of many who partake the feast. But a closer analogy is at hand. They who partake the Mosaic feasts in the temple-court at Jerusalem are evidently, though most of them think nothing about it, supporting by their presence the Mosaic ritual and economy. Now, although idols have no existence, yet behind and beneath them is a real and superhuman and diabolical power. (Else, idolatry were harmless.) Therefore, as in the analogous case of the Jewish sacrificial feasts, all who join the idol-feasts lend by the presence aid to idolatry, and thus help demons to rule over men. Therefore, whatever pleasure comes from such feasts, since it is a result of sin, is a cup presented by evil spirits. From such a cup we may well draw back.

Again, Christ claims our sole allegiance, and will tolerate no rival. Therefore, to indulge in the pleasures offered by idolatry, is to forego the salvation which comes through the shed blood of Christ, which is solemnly set forth in the Christian feast and makes the sacramental cup to be a cup of praise to God. To attempt to mingle the pleasures of idolatry and the salvation of Christ, is but to attempt, in spite of God's warning to ancient Israel, to call forth the jealous and irresistible anger of our Master, Christ.

This section is the stronghold of the Lutheran doctrine of CONSUBSTANTIATION, viz. that all who partake the Lord's Supper thereby receive Christ, though it depends upon themselves whether they receive Him to bless or to condemn. See note under **#1Co 11:34**. The argument is, that he who attends an idol-feast is said to become thereby even without or against his intention, a partner with demons, and that therefore by analogy we must suppose that he who partakes the Lord's Supper becomes thereby, whatever be his state of heart, a sharer of the body and blood of Christ. But it is unsafe to build up an important doctrine not expressly taught in Scripture on its supposed necessity to give validity to one Scripture argument, an argument somewhat obscured by distance of time and total change of circumstances. Moreover, without assuming the Lutheran Doctrine, we have already felt the great force of Paul's argument. Nay more. The Lutheran doctrine is inconsistent with **#1Co**

**10:21.** For, since outward attendance at idol-feasts involves, even against our will, spiritual partnership with demons, if in like manner material eating of the Lord's Supper involved spiritual union with Christ, then it would be possible and easy to eat on the same day of the Lord's table and the table of demons: which Paul declares to be impossible. We therefore infer that he refers to a spiritual reception of the results of Christ's death which does not always accompany a reception of the bread and wine.

The argument of § 18 was doubtless suggested by the matter of § 21. The matters which come before him, Paul grasps so firmly that he instinctively makes various use of them: e.g. **#1Co 9:13f** and **#1Co 10:18**.

This section teaches the solemn and far-reaching lesson that, if by our countenance we help forward anything of which the results are evil, we thereby become allies of those evil spirits who through the bad things of the world are seeking to destroy men; and that, if by the countenance thus given to evil we obtain pleasure or profit, we thereby accept and drink a cup which demons hold to our lips.



# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XIX

### FOR OTHERS' SAKE, DO NOT EAT WHAT IS POINTED OUT TO YOU AS AN IDOL-SACRIFICE

#### CH. X. 23-XI. 1

**All things are allowable: but not all things are profitable. All things are allowable: but not all things edify. Let no one seek his own interest; but that of his fellow.**

**Everything sold in the shambles, eat, making no examination because of conscience. For "the Lord's is the earth and the fullness of it." (#Ps 24:1.) If any one invites you, of the unbelievers, and you wish to go, all that is set before you eat, making no examination because of conscience. But if any one say to you, This is a sacred-sacrifice, do not eat, because of him who pointed it out and because of conscience; conscience, I say, not thy own, but the other's. For why is my liberty judged by another's conscience? If I with thanks partake, why am I evil spoken of about that for which I for my part give thanks?**

**Whether then you are eating, or are drinking, or are doing anything, do all things for the glory of God. "Become men giving no cause of stumbling either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God. According as I also in all things please all, not seeking my own profit but that of the many, that they may be saved. Become imitators of me, as I also am of Christ.**

§ 18 dealt with one side of the matter of DIV. IV. viz. with attendance at idol-feasts: § 19 will deal with the other side of it, viz. with the eating at a private meal of meat offered to idols. An abrupt reassertion of the general principle of #1Co 6:12, modified and developed, marks the transition from the one side to the other; and forms a suitable platform from which to treat of the only question now remaining about idol-sacrifices.

Ver. 23.-24. **All things etc.:** see under #1Co 6:12.

**Profitable:** to ourselves or to others. It thus bears on § 18 and on § 19. Though all kinds of food are lawful, it is against our interest to drink a cup which demons put in our hands. Consequently, the advice of § 18 is consistent with full Christian liberty.

**Edify:** spiritual progress resulting both (#1Co 14:4) to ourselves and (#1Co 14:17) to others from our actions. That the latter chiefly is in Paul's thought, we learn from #1Co 10:24, the foundation stone of § 19. Cp. #Ro 15:2. In #1Co 6:12 he developed *profitable* by "be mastered by any;" because he was dealing with a sin which robs man of self-control. But here, in view of injury to others from our conduct, he develops it by the word *edify*.

**Let no one seek his own interest:** a broad principle which must guide our entire conduct. Cp. #Php 2:4. Our own interest must not be our real aim. If we make even our spiritual profit our final

aim, we shall miss the object aimed at. Regardless of all else we must seek to do the greatest possible good to men around us. It is true that in order to do this we must care for the preservation and greatest possible development of our bodily and spiritual life. But this must be a means to an end. And, between making it a means and an end, is an infinite moral and practical difference.

Ver. 25.-26. Specific advice.

**Examination because of conscience:** do not allow yourselves to be compelled, by that inner judge which pronounces sentence on conduct, to inquire, when buying food, whether it has been offered to idols. Just as all the meat eaten, even privately, by Israel in the wilderness, had (**#Le 17:2-6**: contrast **#De 12:21**) first been presented as a sacrifice to God, so the heathens frequently offered as a sacrifice the animals slain for food. Consequently, a Christian might, without knowing it, eat an idol-sacrifice either (**#1Co 10:27f**) in the house of a heathen, or as **#1Co 10:25** implies, by purchase in the public market. Paul bids his readers not trouble themselves about this possibility.

**Conscience:** the man's own, as representing the abstract and definite idea of conscience. There is no hint here, as there is express and emphatic mention in **#1Co 10:29**, of "another conscience."

**For the Lord's etc.:** word for word from **#Ps 24:1**; a reason for **#1Co 10:25**. Cp. **#1Ti 4:3f**.

**The fullness of it:** parallel with "they that dwell therein:" the totality of men and things, with which the world is full, and without which it would be empty. Cp. **#Ro 9:12**. In itself and looked upon as mere material, everything belongs to God: and therefore nothing is in itself defiling. For a Christian to eat an idol-sacrifice, is merely to claim for God that which is His by right, but which a rebel has offered to His enemy. Whatever evil there is about any created material comes from its associations. But the fear which Paul here declares to be needless rests upon a belief that meat offered to idols is in itself defiling.

Ver. 27.-29a. A second case. In **#1Co 10:25** Paul gave advice to Christians when in the market: he now gives them the same advice when at the table of a heathen.

**Invites:** same word as "call" and "bid" in **#Mt 20:1-14**. See under **#Ro 8:28**. We cannot detect, in *if you wish to go*, a tacit dissuasion from going. This is left entirely to the reader's own judgment.

**But if any one say etc.:** a further development of this second case.

**Any one:** a weak brother, (cp. **#1Co 8:7-13**,) probably a Gentile Christian. For, to eat an idol-sacrifice would not injure the conscience of a heathen: and a Jew, or a Jewish believer of weak faith would not be at a heathen's table.

**Sacred-sacrifice:** more suitable at a heathen's table than "idol-sacrifice," which means "meat offered to an image."

**And conscience:** added to remind us that while refusing to eat because of our brother we are really paying deference to the majesty of the abstract principle of Conscience, the judge divine who speaks in every heart.

**Conscience, I say;** tells us whom Paul has in view in this appeal to conscience in the abstract.

The motive here given is expounded in **#1Co 8:9**. If we eat, our example may lead him to do the same, though he believes it to be wrong. Conscience will then pronounce sentence against him. He will thus receive a wound in that inner chamber of his being in which he contemplates his own actions. See under **#1Co 8:7; #Ro 2:15**. And this wound may be fatal. Therefore, a remembrance of our brother's condition and of the judge which speaks in him, is a reason for not eating that which he has pointed out to us as sacrificial meat.

Ver. 29b.-30. Questions supporting, by reference to the strong man's freedom, the advice prompted by thought of the weak man's conscience.

**My:** as in **#1Co 6:15; #Ro 3:7**. To show the impropriety of that from which he dissuades, Paul supposes himself to be doing it. "My knowledge that idols are nothing makes me free from all personal fear of eating meat offered to them. But if by eating it I injure another man, his conscience will declare that my freedom has been in its effect upon him a bad thing, that it would have been better for him if I had had less knowledge." And Paul sees no reason why such a verdict should be pronounced on his *freedom*, which he knows to be good, by a voice which he is compelled to respect, viz. *another man's conscience*. Similar argument in **#Ro 14:16**. The same argument, **#1Co 10:30** repeats in a modified form, that we may feel its full force.

**With thanks:** (same word as grace; see under **#Ro 1:5**;) proof that his conscience approves his eating.

**Evil-spoken-of:** or, *blasphemed*: see **#Ro 2:24**.

**I for my part, give thanks:** conspicuous incongruity. "While eating this meat I thank God for freedom from scruples which cause such trouble to others. Yet, while I do this, my brother's conscience declares that my liberty has done him harm, that it would have been better for him if I had not that for which I thank God." Such incongruity Paul will not tolerate. And, to avoid it, he advises his readers to abstain from food which is pointed out to them as being an idol-sacrifice.

Ver. 31.-32. General principles of conduct, exemplified in the reasons given in **#1Co 10:29b, 30** for the specific advice of **#1Co 10:28**, in a form, *eat or drink*, suggested by the matter of § 19.

**Glory of God:** see **#Ro 1:21; 3:7**. "Since your conduct and the worth of your religion will be estimated by others according to its effect upon themselves, so act in all the details of life that your action may show forth the splendor of God, the Author of all human excellence, and thus exalt Him in the eyes of men." This conveys a solemn lesson. The practical impression made upon men by the revealed character of God is determined very much by the conduct of His people, even in little things, and especially by the degree to which they take into account the effect of their conduct upon

the well-being of others. **#1Co 10:32** gives a second and negative principle of conduct, suggested by **#1Co 10:28ff**, and a special point to be avoided by all who wish that their entire conduct bring glory to God.

**To Jews or to Greeks:** cp. **#Ro 15:8ff** following Ro 14. Whether the weak brethren were Jews or Gentiles, the matter of sacrificial food brought into great prominence distinctions of nationality.

**Men-without-cause-of-stumbling:** having nothing likely to overthrow themselves or others. Latter reference here (cp. **#Ro 14:13**) and in Sirach 35:21; the former, in the same word in **#Php 1:10**; **#Ac 24:16**. But practically the two senses coincide. Whatever in us tends to overthrow others tends to overthrow ourselves. Be careful so to act as not to trip up men, Jews or Gentiles, who are groping their way to heaven.

**Church of God:** title of dignity. Even those who belong to God and are His representatives to the world may (**#1Co 8:11**) be thrown down or hindered by our conduct.

Ver. 33.-11:1. Paul's own example, as in **#1Co 8:13**, supporting his advice. This example received irresistible force in 1Cor. 9, which expounded and justified the principle which found expression in **#1Co 8:13**.

**In all things:** as in **#1Co 9:25**.

**Please all men:** not an end but a means, viz. *that they may be saved*. Cp. **#Ro 15:2**. Else it would be unworthy: **#Ga 1:10**; **#1Th 2:4**. But, to seek men's favor in order to save them and only thus far, is one of the noblest acts of service to God.

**I please all:** not actually; but noting, according to the use of the Greek present tense, a course of action tending in the direction. So **#Ro 2:4**; **#Ga 5:4**; **#2Co 5:19**; **#Ga 1:13**.

**Not seeking etc.:** as in **#1Co 10:24**.

**That they may be saved:** the final object Paul has in view in *seeking the profit of the many*. He wishes to save them: and, in view of so worthy and so serious an object, he gives up all thought of personal advantage and seeks only their good.

**Imitators:** as in **#1Co 4:16**.

**As I also of Christ.** Therefore, in following his example, they are walking in the steps of Christ. Cp. **#Ro 15:3**.

Paul's advice about the IDOL-SACRIFICES (**#1Co 8:1**) is now complete. He warns his readers in § 18 to abstain from all contact with idolatry; and, especially, not to sanction by their presence idolatrous feasts. Such sanction helps forward the work of demons: and any pleasure resulting therefrom is a cup presented by demons. Yet there is no inherent defilement in meat offered to idols; and therefore (§ 19) no need to inquire about the previous history of meat sold in the market or

placed on the table of a heathen friend. Nevertheless, in the presence of one who conscientiously and openly disapproves of eating meat offered to idols, Paul advises his readers to abstain from it, lest their example inflict spiritual injury upon him. He does not find it needful to mention the case of meat which they may casually learn to have been offered to idols. For his whole argument implies that there is no sufficient reason for abstaining from it.

Notice that Paul disregards utterly the apostolic decree of **#Ac 15:23ff**, which he himself apparently assented to and in his second missionary journey (which first brought him to Corinth) distributed to the churches, and which enjoined abstinence from idol-sacrifices as one of the "necessary things." For even the advice of **#1Co 10:28** referred, not to his readers' conscience, but (**#1Co 10:29**) to that of the weak brother who gave the information. This disregard cannot be accounted for by a change of circumstances, making expedient a change of practice in so short a time. It rather points to an advance of knowledge in the mind of the apostle, to a firmer grasp of (e.g. **#Mr 7:18**) the teaching of Christ. This does not lessen the authority of the apostles as unanimous witnesses of the teaching of Christ. But it warns us to be careful in accepting, as binding for all time, the letter of their advice in matters of small detail. The contrast of **#Re 2:20** is a difficulty which I can neither dissemble nor solve. It refers, however, to specific erroneous teaching, known to the readers but not to us, and perhaps to such an eating as directly sanctioned idolatry.

Section 19 teaches that our conduct must often be limited, not only by what we think, but by what those around us think, to be right. Else we may lead them to do what their conscience condemns, and thus inflict upon them serious injury. By thus refraining for their good, we are bearing their burdens and fulfilling (**#Ga 6:2**; **#Ro 15:1**) the law of Christ.

REVIEW OF DIV. IV. Paul might have passed at once from § 14 to § 18. Indeed §§ 15-17, like §§ 3, 4, and § 12, seem to interrupt the matter in hand. But, in reality, they immensely increase the force of the advice which follows them. From matters of detail Paul rises to broad principles, that he may bring the principles to bear with accumulated force on the matters of detail. He thus makes passing details a pattern of the application of great abiding principles.

In § 14 Paul bids his readers consider the effect upon others of their own conduct. This advice he supports by expounding in § 15 his rights in the Gospel, and in § 16 his cheerful surrender of them to save men; that, by the example of his own self-denial, an example well known to his readers, he may drive away by very shame all hesitation to submit to a trifling limitation in a matter so trifling as food rather than expose to risk of destruction those who are already brethren in Christ. Their confident but false security, Paul puts to shame by saying that this unlimited self-sacrifice is needful for his own salvation; and supports the warning herein implied by the example in § 17 of those who fell in the wilderness for conduct exactly analogous to that of the Corinthians. And for this conduct there is no excuse: for God ever provides a way of escape. The destruction of the Israelites in the wilderness gives great force to Paul's specific warning in § 18 against all contact with idolatry, especially all participation in idolatrous feasts. At the beginning of § 19 he reasserts the great principle of which his own conduct (1Cor. 9) is so conspicuous an example; and then gives specific advice based on this principle about food eaten in private houses. He concludes DIV. IV. by reasserting the same all-important principle, as embodied in his own example and in that of Christ.

The principles exemplified in DIV. IV. have abiding and infinite value. Now, as then, there are in the church differences of opinion about right and wrong: and there are many weak brethren. If we resolve to do whatever we think to be allowable, and to claim our rights to the full, we shall lose opportunities of doing men good and inflict actual injury, shall lose the spiritual progress which immediately follows all self-denial for the good of others, and imperil our own salvation.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION V

### ABOUT THE ABUSES IN CHURCH MEETINGS

#### CHAPTERS XI. 2-34

##### *SECTION XX*

##### *WOMEN MUST NOT LAY ASIDE THEIR APPROPRIATE AND DISTINCTIVE DRESS*

#### CH. XI. 2-16

**I praise you that in all things you remember me, and that, according as I delivered to you the traditions, you hold them fast. But I wish you to know that of every man Christ is the head: and head of woman, the man is; and head of Christ, God is. Every man praying or prophesying with covered head puts to shame his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with the head unveiled puts to shame her head. For she is one and the same thing as the shaven woman. For, if a woman is not veiled, let her also be shorn. But if it is a shameful thing to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled. For indeed a man ought not to have his head veiled, being an image and glory of God. But the woman is man's glory. For not the man is from the woman, but the woman from the man: for also man was not created because of the woman, but woman because of the man. For this cause the woman ought to have authority upon her head, because of the angels. Except neither is woman without man nor man without woman. For, just as the woman is from the man, so also is the man by means of the woman. And all things are from God.**

**Judge in yourselves. Is it fitting that to God a woman pray unveiled? Does not Nature itself teach you? Because indeed a man, if he have long hair, it is a dishonor to him. But a woman if she have long hair, it is a glory to her. Because the hair is given to her instead of a covering. But if anyone thinks to be fond of strife, we for our part have no such custom, nor have the churches of God.**

By a commendation (#1Co 11:2) and a broad general principle (#1Co 11:3) Paul opens the way to a new matter; on which in #1Co 11:4, 5a he at once pronounces sentence. This sentence he justifies in #1Co 11:5b-15; and in #1Co 11:16 concludes § 20 with a warning.

Ver. 2. **In all things:** limited (see under #Ro 5:18) by Paul's mental horizon at the moment of writing. It refers probably to church-meetings only: for only of these does 1Cor. 11 treat. In all their conduct of public worship they think of Paul and of the directions he gave. This is a mark that underneath the disaffection implied in the factions there lay a genuine loyalty to the apostle. Of this

loyalty, the mission of Stephanas and others (#1Co 16:17) was a mark: and an enthusiastic outburst of it was evoked (#2Co 7:11f) by this Epistle.

**Delivered:** cognate with *tradition*: #1Co 11:23; 15:3; #Jude 1:3; #Lu 1:2; #Ac 6:14; 16:4; #Ro 1:24; 4:25.

**Traditions:** instructions about doctrine or practice (here probably the latter: for of this § 20 treats) handed on from one to another: #2Th 2:15; 3:6; #Ga 1:14; #Col 2:8; #Mt 15:2.

**The traditions:** probably the more or less definite instructions given by Christ to the apostles for the church. Samples are found in #1Co 11:23; 15:3. These instructions Paul had, when present with them or by his former letter, given to his readers: and he now commends their careful remembrance of them. This does not contradict what follows: for §§ 20, 21 refer, not to omissions or alterations, but to new practices which had crept in. And Paul does not say, I praise you all.

To these words, Estius appeals in proof that there is an unwritten, but binding, apostolic tradition. If we, like Paul's readers, had proof that certain instructions came actually from him, we should accept them as authoritative, even though unwritten. But I do not know of any unwritten tradition which can be confidently traced to an apostle.

Ver. 3. An important general principle, set up as a platform of approach to the specific matter of § 20.

**The head:** placed by God above the body but in closest and vital union with it, to direct its action. The same word in #Eph 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; #Col 1:18; 2:19 suggests that *every man* refers only to believers, whom alone in 1Cor. 11, Paul has in view. For, although the headship of Christ rests originally upon our creation "in Him" and "through Him and for Him," (#Col 1:16,) yet only those who believe are vitally joined to Him.

**Head of woman:** i.e. immediate head. For Christ is Head of the whole Church. *Woman* is placed by God under the rule and direction of *the man*. This is most conspicuously true of husband and wife. But since marriage is but a fulfillment of God's purpose in the creation of the sexes, these words are true of the sexes generally.

**Head of Christ:** even touching his divine nature. For the Eternal Son, though equal (#Joh 16:15) to the Father is yet (#Joh 5:26; 6:57) derived from and therefore (#1Co 15:28) for ever subject to, Him. Of this eternal subordination, the eternal devotion and the historic obedience of the Son to the Father are an outflow. See under #1Co 3:23; 8:6. Notice that the headship is an objective relationship on which (#Eph 5:22f) rests an obligation to obedience.

Before he warns women not to seek to escape, even in the matter of dress, from the subordinate position of their sex, Paul reminds them that order and subordination are a law of the kingdom of God; that the husband is himself under the direction of Christ; and that even within the divine Trinity the Son is, in accordance with the law of His being, obedient to the Father.



Ver. 4. Does not even suggest that this abuse existed at Corinth. For to woman pertains the whole argument of § 20: and, for this argument, since it turns on the relation of the sexes, it was needful to explain the contrasted position of the *man*. By this contrast, as usual, Paul paves a way to his main argument.

**Prophecy:** see #1Co 12:10.

**Puts to shame etc.:** proved in #1Co 11:7a. He forsakes his place of honor in the race, which a correct instinct has ever marked by a distinction of dress; and thus does himself dishonor. And this dishonor is visible and conspicuous in his treatment of *his own head*.

Ver. 5a. Same form as #1Co 11:4, giving force to the contrast. Since Paul expressly and solemnly (#1Co 14:33ff) forbids women to speak in assemblies of the whole church, *praying or prophesying* must refer to smaller and more private gatherings, probably consisting chiefly or wholly of women. For it would be ridiculous first to argue at length that they ought not to speak with uncovered heads, and then to forbid them to speak at all. On the other hand, common sense forbids us to extend this prohibition to prayer in the family circle. To what Paul refers, his readers knew.

**Unveiled:** without the peplum or shawl, which Greek women wore usually on their shoulders, but in public over their heads. See an engraving in Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*, art. *Peplum*, where a bare-headed man takes the hand of a veiled woman.

**Puts to shame, etc.** For she deserts, by obliterating the distinction of dress, her appointed position, which is to all God's creatures the place of honor; and does this by her treatment of *her head*, the noblest part of her body. The careful proof of these words in #1Co 11:5b-15, proves that this abuse actually existed at Corinth. But Paul's mode of introducing it, (contrast #1Co 7:1; 8:1; 12:1,) and the analogy of #1Co 11:18, suggest, but do not absolutely prove, that he had learned it, not from their letter, but (cp. #1Co 1:11) by hearsay.

Verse 5b.-15. Proof and explanation of #1Co 11:5a. To pray with unveiled head is practically the same as removal of the hair, which is admitted to be shameful: #1Co 11:5b, 6. Reason of this in the original relation of the sexes: #1Co 11:7-10. A limitation: #1Co 11:11, 12. Appeal to the readers' sense of propriety and to the teaching of nature: #1Co 11:13-15.

Verse 5b.- 6. **The shaven woman:** words well understood by Paul's readers. There were women at Corinth, the most shameless women who shaved off their hair, to obliterate entirely from their appearance all distinction of sex. With proofs of this, I cannot stain my pages. Paul says that the woman who lays aside her usual head-dress is practically the same as these shameless women. Of this argument, #1Co 11:6 shows the force.

**Shorn**, or *cropped*: the hair cut short.

**Shaven:** the hair removed altogether with a razor.

**It is a shameful thing:** point of the argument in proof of "puts to shame" in **#1Co 11:5a**. Human propriety declares it to be *a shameful thing to a woman to be shorn*: and the case of those women at Corinth who actually were *shorn or shaven* confirmed this verdict. What is the ground of this sense of shame? A universal and correct sentiment that the distinction of sex ought to be seen very conspicuously in a person's dress. Now, for a woman to remove her hair, was in part to obliterate this outward distinction of sex; and was therefore a trampling under foot of this universal sentiment of propriety. And, as a matter of fact, in Paul's day it was a mark of desertion of the dignity of womanhood. Paul says, and leaves his readers to judge of the truth of his words, that to lay aside the distinctive head-dress of women is practically the same. For it arose from a similar motive, viz. a wish to lay aside an outward mark of the subordination of the female sex. He therefore urges the woman who is determined to pray with a veil to carry her own practice to its logical result, and lay aside her natural as well as her artificial headdress, that thus she may see the direction in which it is leading her; or, if she be conscious of the disgrace of this; to act consistently and abstain from conduct which differs from it only in degree. It is now evident that a woman who "prays with her head unveiled dishonors her head." For, by her treatment of her head she does that which differs only in degree from what all admit to be shameful.

Ver. 7.-10. Supports "let her be veiled," by expounding the truth which underlies the "shame" of **#1Co 11:6**, viz. that the distinction of the sexes is original and essential. As usual with Paul, the reverse is put first to increase by contrast the force of the real argument, which lies in **#1Co 11:8, 9**.

**Image:** a visible representation of God, **#Ge 1:26**. By looking to man we see in outline what God is. Such, in a higher degree the Son of God, **#2Co 4:4**; **#Col 1:15**; **#Heb 1:3**.

**Glory of God:** an outshining of His grandeur. See under **#Ro 1:21**. Cp. **#2Co 8:23**; **#Eph 3:13**. While contemplating man, we behold, and wonder at, the greatness of man's Creator. *Glory* is explained by, and supplements *image*. For there may be (cp. **#Ro 1:23**) an image without glory; and a shining forth of splendor without its definite embodiment in an image. The words before us are true in many senses. But here Paul is speaking only of order and rule and subordination. He means that the male sex, as holding the highest power on earth and exercising undisputed sway over all else, is a visible pattern of God and a shining forth of His splendor. Therefore, since a veiled head is a mark, though an artificial one, of distinction of sex and of woman's subordination, *a man ought not to have his head veiled*.

Verse 7b.-10. **Glory of man:** a manifestation of his greatness. That God provided for him a consort and helper so noble as woman, proves the worth of man in God's sight, and thus adds dignity to him. "Image" is omitted now: for in the one point Paul has in view, viz. supremacy, she is not a pattern of man. The distinction between the sexes, asserted in **#1Co 11:7**, **#1Co 11:8** justifies by a simple restatement of **#Ge 2:18, 21**. Man was not originally derived from the woman, but the reverse. To this simple historic fact, **#1Co 11:9** adds a reason for it. Man was the goal of creation. Woman was created (**#Ge 2:18**) for his pleasure and assistance. To make this conspicuous, man was created first; and woman was derived from him. Similar argument in **#1Ti 2:13**.

**Because of this:** because woman is, by the purpose of her creation, subordinate to man

**The woman ought:** parallel to **#1Co 11:7**. Her head-dress proclaims that she belongs to the subordinate sex. Therefore, *upon her head*, the most conspicuous part of her body, the veiled woman bears a visible embodiment of the *authority* under which God has placed her. She bears aloft, and thus exalts before men, the great principle of *authority* which is the universal law of the kingdom of God and a source of infinite blessing to all who bow to it. Just so a soldier's obedience reveals and exalts the majesty of military discipline.

**Because of the angels:** a motive for obeying this obligation. The absence of "and" suggests that it is a motive, not additional to, but confirmatory of, that given in **#1Co 11:9**. Already (**#1Co 4:9**) we have seen *the angels* contemplating the apostle's hardships. They attend upon men, **#Heb 1:14**; are placed side by side of the church militant, **#Heb 12:22**; and desire to look into the teaching of the prophets, **#1Pe 1:12**. Now, if they take interest in men, they must take special interest in those assemblies in which men unitedly draw near to God, and which have so great influence upon the spiritual life of men. We must therefore conceive them present at the public worship of the church. Now the presence of persons better than ourselves always strengthens our instinctive perception of right and wrong; and deters us from improper action. And the moral impression thus produced is almost always correct. To this instinctive perception Paul appealed by the word "shame" in **#1Co 11:6**; and has revealed its source in the purpose of woman's creation. He now strengthens his appeal by reminding us that we worship in the presence of the inhabitants of heaven. For every right instinct in us is strengthened by the presence of those better than ourselves. Surely a remembrance of these celestial fellow-worshippers will deter us from all that is unseemly.

To this exposition it may be objected that a feeling of shame would be strengthened still more by an appeal to the presence of God. But this objection would lie against all mention of angels in the work of redemption. For whatever they do God could do without them. Angels are mentioned, probably, in condescension to our weakness. We can more easily conceive of God by taking hold, in our thought, of those holy beings who, though creatures like ourselves, yet see His face and perfectly obey Him. Hence the mention of angels has been popular and effective in the religious teaching of all ages. Notice also that, after strengthening his appeal by mention of angels, Paul strengthens it still further in **#1Co 11:13** by mention of God.

Tertullian (*Against Marcion* bk. v. 8, and *Veiling of virgins* ch. 7) understood these words to refer to the "angels whom we read to have been banished from God and from heaven because of desire for women," according to the tradition embodied in the Alexandrian MS. (LXX.) of **#Ge 6:2**, "The angels of God saw etc." But the word *angels* without further explanation suggests holy angels: and we cannot conceive such to be liable to be led into sin by sight of a woman's face; else they would be much weaker, in the matter of sensual desire, than average Englishmen now. Nor could spiritual damage, actual or feared, to angels good or bad, be a practical motive for women on earth.

See further in *The Expositor*, 1st Series vol. xi. p. 20.

Ver. 11.- 12. A corrective against undue depreciation of woman, which might seem to be implied in **#1Co 11:7-10**. In the development of the spiritual life, of which Christ our Master is the element, each sex helps and needs the other. Both man's strength and woman's tenderness develop Christlike character in the other sex. As in **#1Co 11:3**, this is emphatically true of husband and wife; and is

therefore true of the sexes generally as originally constituted. It is very conspicuous in the brothers and sisters of Christian families. Neglect of it is a great defect of monastic life. As usual, the stress lies in the second assertion, for which the first prepares the way. Just as in the Christian life woman needs man, so man needs woman. In **#1Co 11:12**. Paul proves this, from the original bodily relation of the sexes. He assumes that with this the spiritual life must accord. Cp. **#1Co 11:3**. It may, therefore, be quoted in proof of the relation of the sexes in the spiritual life.

**From the man;** restates **#Ge 2:21f**. *The man enters the world by means of the woman*. This suggests also our unspeakable debt to woman's maternal care. Paul thus places side by side, in the order of creation, the obligation of each sex to the other. And the differences noted are not so great as might appear. For man and woman and all else have alike sprung from God. Thus, as in **#1Co 11:3**, Paul concludes his argument in the presence of the Supreme.

Ver. 13.-15. Two abrupt appeals: viz. to his readers' instinctive *judgment* of what is *fitting*; and to the *teaching of Nature*.

**To God:** emphatic, It strengthens the former appeal by bringing us into the presence of Him whose voice all true human instinct is. To lay aside the veil, is to obliterate in part the distinction of the sexes. But this an inborn sense of propriety forbids. This instinctive judgment Paul traced in **#1Co 11:7ff** to the original constitution of the sexes; and strengthened it by pointing to the celestial partners of our worship. He now further strengthens it by reminding us that in prayer we speak *to God*.

Ver. 14.- 15. A second abrupt appeal, supporting the former.

**Nature: #Ro 2:14, 27:** the totality of material objects around us, animate or inanimate, as they exist in virtue of their mode of being, and apart from interference. It denotes here the bodily constitution of men and women. This ought to teach women not to pray unveiled.

**Because a man etc.:** facts in *Nature* which *teach*. As usual, the weight is on the second clause, for which the first, by contrast, prepares the way.

**It is a dishonor to him:** as a partial effacement of the distinction of the sexes which Nature makes by giving (**#1Co 11:15b**) to woman a more abundant covering of hair. So far, long hair robs a man of his honor which belongs to the stronger sex. All attempts to look like women betray an effeminate spirit; and are thus a *dishonor* to men.

Ver. 15. **A glory to her:** A woman's long hair elicits admiration. The ground of this follows. *The long hair* is Nature's gift, to mark her sex. It increases the womanliness of her appearance. It therefore accords with the constitution of things; and so calls forth admiration.

**Instead of a covering** i.e. as a natural head-dress. This suggests how Nature's teaching bears upon the matter in hand. Nature has made a visible distinction of the sexes by covering woman's head with more abundant hair. This teaches that the God of Nature designs the sexes to be distinguished, in the most conspicuous part of their body. This natural distinction is recognized in the general judgment

of mankind that it is dishonor for men or women to assume, in this respect, the appearance of the other sex. Now when men stand uncovered before God, and women covered, they accept formally and visibly by their own action this distinction of sex, and the position in reference to the other sex which God has given. Whereas, if women appear in public unveiled they do something to obliterate a distinction written visibly and conspicuously by nature in the very growth of their hair. Thus **#1Co 11:14, 15** develop, after **#1Co 11:7-10** have revealed its essential basis, the argument of **#1Co 11:6**.

The rendering "does not nature teach you that etc." (A.V. and R.V.) is grammatical equally with that given above. But it would make the short and long hair the chief matter to be proved, and indeed the goal of the argument of § 20. The rendering given above makes it merely a proof of what is evidently the chief matter here, viz. that women ought to be veiled.

In times much earlier than those of Paul, both Greek and Roman men wore long hair. But this does not weaken his argument, which rests on a natural bodily difference. And, that this practice was discontinued, and that in nearly all ages and nations a contrary custom has been usual, supports his argument. For this nearly universal custom proves that the race generally has recognized the meaning of the greater abundance of woman's hair.

Ver. 16. Reveals the probable source or support of the practice objected to.

**Thinks:** looks upon himself, and with approval, as one *fond of strife*. But strife is opposed to an abiding *custom* of the apostles and of *the churches of God*. This warning suggests that, from a boasted love of strife, some defended the women who rejected the head-dress. To such Paul says that in loving strife they stand alone among the churches.

REVIEW of § 20. Paul cannot pronounce what is virtually a censure without remembering his readers' care to follow his directions in all matters of worship. To his implied censure he paves a way by stating the great principle that subordination is a rule of the kingdom of God, one extending even to the Eternal Trinity. This suggests, and the tenor of the whole section implies that the real source of the evil before us was a desire of some Christian women to claim equality with men. This claim Paul meets by reminding us that in the order and purpose of creation woman was made subordinate to man; and says that upon this original distinction rests the universally admitted obligation that the sexes be visibly distinguished in dress. His readers' instinctive sense of the propriety of this, he seeks to strengthen by reminding them that they worship in the presence of angels and that in their prayer they draw near to God; and by pointing to the shameless women who obliterated still further than the women in question the visible mark of their sex, and who did so evidently because they had deserted the dignity of womanhood. To the propriety of the visible distinction of the sexes, even Nature bears witness, by giving to women a more abundant covering. But, while insisting thus upon the subordinate position of woman, Paul declares that, in the spiritual life as in the order of Nature, neither sex is independent of the other. That he treats so seriously a matter apparently so trivial, warns us that in the Christian life even small defects may be serious; either as implying forgetfulness of important principles, or as first steps in a dangerous path.

From this section we learn that whatever is purely human, i.e. whatever is older than man's sin, is not set aside, but is glorified, by Christ in the Christian life. We learn also the value of our

instinctive sense of right and wrong; and that it is strengthened and purified by study of the great truths objectively revealed, and by thought of the presence with us of those heavenly beings who do perfectly and always the will of God and of the presence of Him before whom even angels veil their faces.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XXI

### *THE LORD'S SUPPER MUST BE RECEIVED IN A MANNER SUITABLE TO THE SOLEMN TRUTHS THEREIN SET FORTH*

#### CH. XI. 17-34

But, while giving this charge, I do not praise you that not for the better but for the worse you come together. For, in the first place, when you come together in church-meeting, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in some part I believe it. For there must needs be even sects among you, in order that the proved ones may become evident among you. When then you come together to the same place, there is no eating the Lord's Supper. For, his own supper each one takes beforehand in the eating; and one is hungry and another is drunken. Have you not (is this the reason?) houses for eating and drinking? Or, the church of God do you despise, and put to shame those that have not? What am I to say to you? Am I to praise you? In this matter I give no praise.

For, as to myself I received from the Lord, that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was being betrayed took bread, and, having given thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this for the remembering of me." In the same way also the cup, after having taken supper, saying, "This cup is the New Covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, for the remembering of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you announce the death of the Lord, till He come. So then, whoever may eat the bread or may drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. Let a man prove himself, and thus let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks for himself judgment, if he do not recognize the body. Because of this, among you, are many sick and weak ones, and some sleep. But if we recognized ourselves we should not be judged. But being judged, by the Lord we are chastised, in order that we may not be condemned with the world.

So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait one for another; if any one is hungry, let him eat at home: in order that you may not come together for judgment. And the remaining matters, whenever I come, I will set in order.

A second disorder at church-meetings, viz. improper conduct at the Lord's Supper, #1Co 11:17-22: the facts and purpose of the institution of the Supper, and the proper way of receiving it, #1Co 11:22-32: exhortation to better conduct, #1Co 11:33-34.

Ver. 17. **This charge**: probably the very strong charge implied in § 20, viz. that women do not lay aside the veil. For #1Co 11:17b contains no definite charge; and #1Co 11:22 is too distant. Paul prefaced his charge in § 20 with words of praise. He now tells us that his praise does not extend to the matter of which he is going to speak, which he introduces by saying that their church gatherings tend to do them more harm than good.

Ver. 18. Explains and justifies #1Co 11:17b.

**First:** Without any "second" following it, as in #Ro 1:8; 3:2; implying that the misconduct mentioned is not the only one. In #1Co 11:34 we find other matters which need to be set in order, but which are allowed to remain till Paul's arrival at Corinth; and in #1Co 14:23-35, other definite abuses *when they come together*, though perhaps not sufficiently great as was the matter of #1Co 11:20ff, to justify the strong language of #1Co 11:17.

**In church:** simplest meaning of the word, viz. a formal gathering of the people of God; as in #1Co 14:19, 35. See note #1Co 1:9.

**I hear:** contrast #1Co 1:11. The news continues to come in from various sources.

**Divisions:** not necessarily organized parties, but whatever separates brother from brother. They are mentioned only for a moment, to open a way for #1Co 11:20ff, where we find divisions at church-meetings based on different degrees of wealth. These divisions were, therefore, probably not coincident with those of #1Co 11:10.

**In some part;** suggests Paul's hope that, though he cannot doubt that the report is true in the main, it may be exaggerated. Notice the courtesy, mingled with seriousness, of these words.

Ver. 19. Paul's reason for believing that there is some truth in the report.

**Sects:** organized parties, #Ac 5:17; 15:5; 26:5; 24:5, 14; 28:22; implying, but more (cp. #Ga 5:20) than, "divisions."

**Must needs be:** the defects of human nature render inevitable not only separations between brethren, but organized church-parties. But this necessity is no excuse for those who create divisions: for it rests upon their foreseen and inexcusable selfishness. Cp. #Ro 16:17f; #Mt 18:7; #Lu 17:1. These words do not necessarily imply that the sects already exist; nor do they suggest, as does Mt. 18., that they are still future, but says simply that there are, or will be, sects. Cp. #Ac 20:30. Notice that Paul does not mention the sects with express blame or warning, but merely as a reason for his belief that the report he has heard is in part true. He knows what human nature is, and is therefore not surprised at the existence of divisions.

**Approved-ones:** #2Co 10:18; 13:7; #Jas 1:12: they who have passed satisfactorily through the test and are thus proved to be genuine. In #1Co 11:19b, we have a purpose of God. He uses the inevitable and foreseen tendency to church-parties as a means of showing to the church-members (*evident among you*) those who already to His eye are the *approved-ones*. This suggests that not all the church-members had thus approved themselves to God. There is no severer test of loyalty to Christ than the existence around us of church-parties. They who in such circumstances behave aright are *evidently approved*.

#1Co 11:18, 19 point out beforehand a serious consequence of the abuse in hand, viz. division in the church; and, even in that act of worship which is specially designed (#1Co 10:17) to be a



center of unity, divisions tending to the outward and formal separation of Christians. Nearly all sects have arisen from abuses within the church.

Ver. 20.-21. **When then you come together**; takes up the same words in **#1Co 11:18**, and continues the justification of **#1Co 11:17**.

**To the same place**; **#1Co 14:23**; adds definiteness to *when you come together*, as does "in church-meeting" in **#1Co 11:18**.

**The Lord's Supper**: a meal provided by our Master, Christ; in contrast to *his own supper*. Cp. **#1Co 10:21**.

**There is no etc.**: i.e. it is impossible that that which they eat is a supper provided by Christ. Of this, **#1Co 11:21a** is proof. It seems to imply that at Corinth the Lord's Supper was kept by each one bringing bread, possibly also other food, and wine; and that each one, instead of putting his food into the common stock and thus sharing it with others, used to *take back before* the supper began the food he had brought.

**Takes** (not eats) **beforehand**. Perhaps, before service began each appropriated to himself the food he had brought; and then, after the blessing had been pronounced, all began at the same time to eat what each had previously taken.

**Each one**; implies that the practice was universal. And, if those who brought the best food took it for themselves, there would be nothing left for the poorer members but what they had themselves brought. This would cause the "divisions" of **#1Co 11:18**: for it would create in the church-meetings a conspicuous distinction of richer and poorer members.

**Is hungry, is drunken**: extreme cases of this distinction. But we have no right to say that they never occurred. These words imply either that the Lord's Supper was a real meal, capable of satisfying hunger, and at which it was possible to drink to excess, or that it was connected with such a meal. The hunger of some members in the midst of plenty, and the insobriety of others, were a gross and conspicuous abuse.

Ver. 22. Question after question reveals the unseemliness of their conduct. "Is your reason this, that you have no other place in which to satisfy hunger and thirst except that in which you unite to worship God?" This implies that they did wrong in making the Lord's Supper a meal for supplying bodily need. The next question exposes a special and more serious abuse in this their wrong mode of keeping the Supper.

**Do you despise etc.**: explained by put to shame. By taking back before the Supper began the richer food which they had themselves brought, and thus leaving for the poorer members nothing but their own poorer food, the rich made them feel their poverty even in the church assembly and thus *put them to shame*. And this was contempt for *the church of God*. For it betrayed ignorance of the essential and infinite grandeur of the position of every member of the family of God. To men guilty

of such conduct Paul knows not *what to say*. He bids them judge for themselves whether they deserve *praise*.

**I give no praise:** his own solemn answer to his own question.

**In this matter:** a conspicuous exception to his praise of them in (#1Co 11:2) other matters. It marks the completion of the matter begun in #1Co 11:17.

Verses 20-22 may be illustrated by Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates*, book iii. 14.1: "Whenever, of those who came together for supper some brought a small portion of food and others much, Socrates used to bid the attendant boy to put the small portion before the whole company, or to divide a part to each. They then who brought much could not for shame refuse to partake that which was set before the whole company, and in return to put their own food. They put therefore their own food before the whole company. And, since they had nothing more than they who brought little, they ceased bringing much food." Probably from this Greek custom arose the practice of church-members bringing their own food to the Lord's Supper; and from this arose, even in a Christian church, the abuse which Socrates corrected. Paul condemns both (#1Co 11:21a) the custom, as a mode of keeping the Lord's Supper, and (#1Co 11:21b) its abuse. Whether this custom prevailed in other churches, we have no means of judging. At Corinth both the custom and its abuse were fostered by the worldliness of the church.

Ver. 23.-34. After condemning this double abuse, Paul narrates the facts and words of the institution of the Lord's Supper, #1Co 11:23-25; explains them, #1Co 11:26; draws from them a practical and general inference about the proper spirit and manner of partaking the Supper, #1Co 11:27-32; and a special inference about the above-mentioned abuses at Corinth, #1Co 11:33, 34.

Verse 23-25. Reason why he cannot praise them. In contrast to their misconduct, Paul tells what he has learned from Christ.

**I received:** not "we received." This implies that in some way peculiar to Paul, not by ordinary tradition, *the risen Lord* made known to him His own words at the Last Supper. Cp. #Ga 1:11f. The mode of this revelation, whether by angel, or direct voice of the Spirit, or a divinely-sent human messenger, is quite unknown to us. [Had the words come from the actual lips of Christ, another preposition would probably have been used, as in #1Th 4:1, etc.] But the fact is plainly asserted here. Nor need we wonder that words so important were specially communicated to the one prominent apostle who was not present at the Last Supper. The close verbal similarity of #1Co 11:24f to #Lu 22:19f, by no means implies that Paul learned from Luke, or from the same source as he. That Luke learned from Paul, (cp. #Lu 1:2,) is much more likely. Notice here an account of the Last Supper unquestionably apostolic, and which an apostle declares that he received from Christ.

**I also delivered:** (#1Co 11:2; 15:3;) emphatically directs attention to the communication, as well as the reception, of these facts. That Paul found it needful to repeat what he had said before, suggests to the readers that the abuses arose from their forgetfulness.

**In the night:** graphic picture.

**Bread:** or a loaf.

**Gave thanks:** #Mt 15:36; #Joh 6:11. That this is mentioned in all four accounts of the Last Supper, suggests that there was something in our Lord's demeanor while giving thanks which deeply impressed all present.

**Which is for you:** i.e. "My body exists for your good. For you it was created: and for you the historic facts of my earthly life took place." But the broken bread was a silent and touching witness that Christ had specially in view the fact of His death.

**Do this:** break and distribute the bread: spoken probably while Christ was giving the bread to His disciples. #Mt 26:26.

**For the remembering of ME;** by the disciples present and by His followers to the end of time. This was to Christ a definite object of thought; and was the aim of the Lord's Supper. The word denotes both *remembering* and *bringing* to others' *remembrance*, ideas closely associated.

**In the same way:** i.e. He *took* and *gave thanks*.

**After having taken supper;** #Lu 22:20; directs attention to the fact that with the eating of the broken bread the Supper was finished.

**The New Covenant:** see under #2Co 3:6.

**In my blood.** Because Christ's *blood* was shed, we have the *Covenant* with God of which the *cup* is a symbol and condition. The *blood* is the link between the *cup* and the *Covenant*.

**As often as you drink it:** only here. These words assume that the Supper will be repeated, and point out the spiritual purpose of it which must ever be kept in view.

The essential agreement of the four accounts (#Mt 26:26ff; #Mr 14:22ff; #Lu 22:19f\* (\* See Appendix B.)) of the institution of the Lord's Supper is a complete proof, apart from the authority of Scripture, of their historic correctness. That in all four, otherwise varying, accounts we have the words *This is my body* and *The New Covenant*, proves indisputably that these very words or their Aramaic equivalents were actually spoken by Christ. But, that each account was altogether verbally exact, is hardly possible. For it would involve a repetition unsuited to the solemnity of the occasion. But this does not disprove that the New Testament is, as Paul held the Old Testament to be, (see my *Romans*, Dissertation iii. 4,) the word and voice of God. For we can well conceive that the Holy Spirit, who, if Paul's view be correct, preserved the sacred writers from theological error and exerted upon them a directive influence which we cannot measure exactly, nevertheless forebore to save them from trivial verbal inaccuracies, and aided them only so far as His aid was needful for the ends He had in view. Indeed these trifling variations are a gain to us. For each supplements the others: and each is, if Paul's view of the authority of the Bible be correct, God's voice to us expounding the meaning of the Lord's Supper. In view of this gain we can afford to be in doubt about the exact form and order of the words which fell on that memorable night from the lips of Christ.

We may perhaps reverently suggest that Paul's account is the more likely to be verbally exact. For the variation "This is my blood" (Mt. Mk.) may be accounted for by the similar words preceding, *This is my body*. Whereas, the changed form *This cup is the New Covenant* (Paul and Luke) cannot be accounted for except as being genuine. And we shall see that this change guards from abuse the words *This is my body*. Therefore, among four accounts, all which have for us divine authority, we may give a preference to that which Paul says he received specially from the Risen Saviour.

How these words of Christ were likely to be understood by those who first heard them, we will now inquire. We place ourselves in thought among the assembled disciples. At the close of the supper the Saviour takes a loaf or cake of bread, breaks it, and gives the broken pieces to the disciples, saying, *This is my body, which is for you*. They could not possibly conceive Him to mean that the bread was actually His own body. Else He would have two bodies visible in the same room, each to be given for his disciples. And the body crucified the next day was then living and uninjured: whereas the bread was already broken. They could only understand His words to mean that the bread was symbolical, and the breaking and distribution of it prophetic, signifying and announcing that the body now living before their eyes was to die, for their spiritual nourishment. Cp. **#Isa 20:2ff**; **#Ho 1:4**. Just as we point to a picture and say, without fear of being misunderstood, This is my father, or my house, so the disciples would naturally understand our Lord's words. And their interpretation of them would be confirmed by the words following. For the cup was not even practically identical with the Covenant. A cup given and received denoted that the Covenant was ratified: whereas the New Covenant was not ratified till the actual blood of Christ was shed. But the poured out wine was a prophetic symbol of the blood soon to be shed. And, therefore, the cup given and received was a silent announcement of the Covenant of which that blood was the pledge. This interpretation, which would naturally suggest itself at once would be confirmed by the repeated words, *For the remembrance of Me*. For the symbol of the broken body and of the Covenant ratified in blood would recall forcibly to those who in after years broke the bread and drank the wine the memory of Him who died that they might live.

This exposition does not assume that the disciples as they gathered on that night round the Saviour understood the full import of His words and actions. How these were understood by Paul, we must gather from his own exposition of his own narrative, and from **#1Co 10:16-21**, etc. This will enable us to test, and will supplement, the exposition just given of the words spoken by Christ.

Ver. 26. Explains and justifies **#1Co 11:25b**, by showing how the Supper is a memorial of Christ.

**You announce:** either by the very act of breaking and eating, or by concurrent word of mouth. Probably the former. For the word *announce*, used elsewhere only for verbal announcement, is very appropriate to remind us that the silent rite of the broken bread and poured out wine has a voice, and declares in plainest language that Christ died for us. And this silent announcement makes the rite a memorial of Christ.

**Till He come:** for a memorial is needful only while the remembered one is absent. These words teach us to eat the Supper in faith and hope, knowing that He who died still lives, and will return; and imply plainly that the rite is to be kept up till the end of time.

Ver. 27. Practical inference from the words of Christ in **#1Co 11:24, 25**, as explained by Paul in **#1Co 11:26**.

**Unworthily**: without self-examination, **#1Co 11:28**; or contemplation of the crucified body of Christ, **#1Co 11:29**. Doubtless Paul refers specially to those who made his solemn rite an occasion of ostentation. All are unworthy. But they who receive the Supper as sinners for whom Christ died do not *eat it unworthily*.

**Guilty of the body etc.**: more fully, "liable to penalty for sin against the body and blood of Christ." So **#Jas 2:10**. This follows from **#1Co 11:24f** as expounded in **#1Co 11:26**. In the Lord's Supper we set before ourselves and others, in the most solemn manner, Christ crucified for us and for the world. And this setting forth of His death is a condition (see note below) on which, and therefore a channel through which, we personally receive the blessings which come through His death. Consequently, every misuse of the sacred symbols keeps back from us these blessings; and is thus an insult to, and a sin against, the body nailed to the cross and the shed blood. Similarly, an insult to the symbols of royalty is an insult to the king, and in its measure a revolt against his government. This is very conspicuous in countries under foreign rule. Notice the change from "and" in **#1Co 11:26** to *or* in **#1Co 11:27**. Whoever treats *unworthily* either symbol, sins thereby against Christ, and therefore against both *the pierced body and the shed blood of the Master*. But from this we cannot infer, as Estius does, that they who receive the bread only (according to the custom for laymen in the Roman Church) receive both the body and blood of Christ. For, that he who breaks one commandment breaks all, does not imply that he who keeps one has thereby kept all.

Ver. 28. Practical application of the foregoing solemn inference.

**Prove himself**: inquire into his own motives in coming to the Lord's table and his disposition in relation to the death of Christ.

**And thus**: i.e. having discovered that his motives are pure, or, having laid aside any impure motives he may detect. This Paul assumes.

**Eat and drink**; teaches plainly that it was usual for all Christians to do this. Estius simply denies it without proof; and expounds **#1Co 11:28b** to mean "either eat or drink."

Ver. 29. Supports **#1Co 11:28** by a modified restatement of **#1Co 11:27**.

**Eats and drinks for himself judgment**: i.e. by the very acts of eating and drinking he causes sentence (evidently God's sentence of condemnation) to be pronounced against himself. In other words, his unworthy reception will be followed by punishment. It is therefore, practically equivalent to "guilty of the body etc." in **#1Co 11:27**.

**Judgment**: cp. **#Ro 2:27**, and see notes.

**The body**: viz. that crucified for us. Further specification is needless.

**Recognize:** or *discern* or *distinguish*: perceive its real worth and thus distinguish it from others. Similarly we might say, pointing to a picture, This is my father: do you recognize him? Unless, when we receive the symbols we look through them to the great reality they represent, to the precious body nailed to the cross for us, and receive them in a fitting manner, by our very acts of eating and drinking we cause sentence to be pronounced upon ourselves. For we thus sin against (**#1Co 11:27**) the body and blood of Christ. For the various readings here, see Appendix B.

Ver. 30. Practical and actual outworking at Corinth of the foregoing general principle, supporting the warning therein implied.

**Among you:** emphatic. You can see the consequences in your own church.

**Sleep:** are dead, as in **#1Co 7:39**. These words refer probably to bodily sickness and death, inflicted by God as punishment for abuse of the Lord's Supper. For, though they might be correctly used of spiritual weakness and loss of spiritual life (cp. **#Eph 5:14**) as consequences of such abuse, yet we must not, without any hint or any reason in the nature of things, set aside their simplest meaning. In the apostolic church the power of God manifested itself before men's eyes both in works of mercy and in punishment. Cp. **#Ac 5:5; 13:11**, with which this verse is a coincidence. The severity of the punishments proves how great was the sin. Whether before receiving this letter, the Corinthian Christians knew the spiritual cause of this sickness and death, we cannot now determine.

Ver. 31.-32. A double comment on the facts of **#1Co 11:30**. These penalties may be avoided; and are inflicted in mercy.

**Recognized** ourselves: same word as in **#1Co 11:29**, and cognate to *judge* and *condemn*.

**Judged:** the sentence which they who (**#1Co 11:29**) eat and drink without recognizing the body bring upon themselves, and which was followed in some cases by the penalties of **#1Co 11:30**.

**We:** Paul puts himself by courtesy among the sick and weak ones. "If we recognized our own true character as compared with others and with what we ought to be, (and thus pronounced sentence upon ourselves,) sentence would not be pronounced upon us by God." i.e. the condemnatory sentence implied in the punishments of **#1Co 11:30**.

**Chastised:** by the above mentioned punishments. This word is expounded in **#Heb 12:6-11**.

**Condemned with the world:** final sentence of eternal death. Paul says that the penalties of **#1Co 11:30** were inflicted by the Master, in order to lead the smitten ones to repentance, and thus save them from the severer condemnation which will fall upon the unsaved world; (cp. **#1Co 5:5**;) and that, if they had recognized the true nature and impropriety of their own conduct, they would have escaped even this lighter sentence. Thus Paul discovers a purpose of mercy in the severe punishments of **#1Co 11:30**. If the death of those who "sleep" was preceded by sickness which gave opportunity for repentance, even this (cp. **#1Co 5:5**) might be in mercy. And the tone of **#1Co 11:31, 32** suggests this. Otherwise, bodily death would be, as in **#Ac 5:5**, itself a final condemnation.

Ver. 33.-34. Practical inference from **#1Co 11:23-32**, in reference to the special abuse at Corinth.

**Come-together** (twice) marks the conclusion of the matter introduced in **#1Co 11:17**. That the words *to eat* are sufficient to specify what Paul refers to, suggest that they did not *eat* together except at the Lord's Supper.

**Wait one for another**: let each refrain from appropriating food till all are ready to do so together, in contrast to "take beforehand his own supper." The context implies that, when the united meal is ready, the whole food, by whomever brought, must be eaten by all in common. Paul thus corrects the second abuse mentioned with astonishment in **#1Co 11:22**.

**Let him eat etc.**: i.e. do not make the Lord's Supper a meal to satisfy hunger. This corrects the first and broader abuse of **#1Co 11:22**.

**That you may not etc.**: belongs to both abuses.

**For judgment**: parallel with "for the worse" (**#1Co 11:17**) in the form assumed in **#1Co 11:29**. Paul bids his readers, instead of taking before others are ready the food they have themselves brought, to wait for the united meal; and, again, not to make the sacred rite a means of satisfying hunger, which ought to be done at home; lest their meetings tend to bring upon them condemnation and punishment.

**The remaining matters**: perhaps those implied in the word "first" in **#1Co 11:18**. If so, these also pertained to church-meetings.

**Whenever I come**: **#1Co 4:18ff**.

**I-will-set-in-order**; implies Paul's apostolic authority as a ruler in the church. This purpose implies that in various churches he left unwritten directions, which would naturally assume the form of the apostolic traditions of **#1Co 11:2**. But we cannot now say with certainty that any particular direction or teaching, not found in his epistles, came from his lips.

REVIEW. Paul has heard, and has reason to believe, that at Corinth the Lord's Supper has degenerated into a mere meal to satisfy hunger and thirst; and that the church-members take back for themselves the food they have brought, thus erecting barriers between brethren meeting together in one place. He rebukes these abuses by narrating and expounding the facts and words of the institution of the Supper as revealed to him by Christ. From this we learn that they who misuse the sacred symbols are guilty of sin against the body nailed to the cross and the shed blood; and that to them participation of the bread and wine brings condemnation and punishment. Indeed, upon some of their number bodily punishment of sickness and death has already fallen. This, the guilty ones would have avoided, had they understood the meaning of their own conduct. And it was inflicted in mercy, to save them from a more terrible condemnation. Paul therefore urges each one to put to the test, when coming to the Lord's Table, his own motives and disposition. And, in reference to the special abuses at Corinth, he bids them supply their bodily needs at home, and wait till all are ready

to share together the sacred meal. The other matters which need attention may wait till his arrival at Corinth.

THE LORD'S SUPPER: its primitive mode of celebration, and its significance.

That the excesses corrected in § 21 occurred at the sacramental Supper, is quite certain. For, the *Lord's Supper* in #1Co 11:20 can be no other than *the bread* and *the cup of the Lord* in #1Co 11:27. And Paul's argument in #1Co 11:21, viz. that to take beforehand each his own supper made it impossible for the meal to be the Lord's Supper, implies that the food thus taken was not merely eaten in connection with the sacred symbols, but was actually that food and drink which ought to be received by all together as a supper provided by Christ. This proof is confirmed by the solemn warning in #1Co 11:27, supporting the reproof in #1Co 11:22, that they who eat and drink unworthily are guilty of the body and blood of Christ. This warning Paul applies expressly in #1Co 11:33 to the abuses at Corinth. We cannot therefore accept the opinion of Chrysostom, Estius, and others, that these abuses occurred at a semi-spiritual repast connected with the Lord's Supper.

If these abuses occurred at the Lord's Supper, Paul's reference to them is our earliest and most valuable source of information about the primitive mode of its celebration. That private members were able to appropriate beforehand the food designed for the communion, implies that they were not in the habit of receiving the bread and wine from the officers of the church. That Paul did not reprove them for not receiving the elements thus, and did not even recommend it, although it would have effectually prevented the abuses in question, shows clearly that he did not look upon the reception of the elements from the hands of the church officers as essential to the validity of the sacrament. And the same is confirmed by the absence of any censure on the officers of the church, who, if the distribution of the sacred symbols had been committed to them only, would have been chiefly to blame. From this we infer with certainty that when Christ instituted the Supper, He did not direct, and that at the time when this Epistle was written the apostles had not directed, that it should be administered only by the officers of the church. Nor have we in the New Testament any hint that the apostles afterwards gave this direction.

That the sacred feast was looked upon as a means of satisfying hunger and that drinking to excess was possible, reveals how widely different was the mode of its celebration then from that of succeeding ages. Contrast Justin, 1st *Apology* § 65: "After the prayers we greet one another with a kiss. Then there is brought to the leader of the brethren [*τῷ προεστώτι τῶν ἀδελφῶν*] a cup of water and mixed wine [*κραματος*] and he, having taken it, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe through the name of His Son and the Holy Spirit, and to some length makes thanksgiving for having been counted worthy of these things from him. When he has finished the prayers and the thanksgiving all the people present confirm them by saying, Amen. The deacons, as we call them, give to each of those present to partake of the bread, wine, and water, over which thanks has been given; and for those not present we take them to their houses." Also Tertullian, *On the soldier's crown* ch. iii.: "The sacrament of the eucharist we receive from the hands of none but those who preside."



The force of the above arguments is felt, and put very clearly, by Estius. To evade it, he is compelled to suppose that the abuse in question occurred, not at the Lord's Supper, but at a repast partaken in connection with it. This opinion I have already attempted to disprove.

The mode of celebrating the Lord's Supper during the latter part of the apostolic age, we have no means of tracing. Consequently, the limitations of its administration to the officers of the church cannot claim undoubted apostolic authority. But it has been, as a matter of church order, the universal, or nearly universal, practice of the entire Church of Christ in all its sections and in all countries, from the second century to the present day. From so general a practice, as a matter of church order, few will have, without very special reasons hardihood to dissent.

The spiritual meaning and purpose and operation of the Lord's Supper, now claim attention. Already, under **#1Co 11:25**, we have endeavored to expound the words of institution as they would be understood by those who first heard them. These words we will now study again in the light of the great doctrines of the Gospel assumed and taught in the Epistle to the Romans. And the results thus obtained we will compare with the references to the Lord's Supper in this Epistle.

Paul taught (see my *Romans*, Dissertation i. 3) that God accepts as righteous, i.e. He pardons the sins of, all who believe the Gospel; that this pardon could not have been, had not Christ died; and that by the inward presence and activity of the Holy Spirit believers are so united to Christ that His purposes and life and love are reproduced in them. And this we accepted as the teaching of Christ.

These doctrines will explain **#Joh 6:33-59**, which is a link connecting them with Christ's words at the Supper. Christ could correctly call Himself in **#Joh 6:35** "the bread of life:" for just as bread nourishes (and without such nourishment we must die) only by its own destruction, so Christ (see **#Ro 3:26**) could give us life only by His Own Death. And that, to give us life, His body must needs be bruised and His blood shed, justifies abundantly, and fully accounts for, the strong words of **#Joh 6:53**: "Except you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, you have no life in you." How His hearers were to eat and drink etc., i.e. how they were to appropriate the results of His death, Christ tells them plainly in **#Joh 6:35, 40, 47**, viz. by coming to Him and believing Him. And He tells them in **#Joh 6:56** that the spiritual results of this will be an inward, spiritual, mutually interpenetrating contact of themselves and Christ. We see then that in **#Joh 6:33-59** Christ does but assert the great doctrines of the Epistle to the Romans, and asserts one of them, No. 2, under the most forceful image possible. And in no other sense but this can I conceive men to eat and drink practically the body and blood of Christ.

We come now, prepared by our study of **#Joh 6:33-59**, and of the Gospel as taught by Paul, to listen again to the words of Christ as recorded in **#1Co 11:24f**. In **#1Co 11:26** Paul tells us that (just as the Gospel is a verbal announcement that through the shedding of Christ's blood God covenants to pardon sin and to give eternal life to all who believe so) the Lord's Supper is an announcement of Christ's death by visible emblematic action. And this is given as an explanation of the words of Christ. We infer then that "the remembrance of Me" is chiefly a memory that Christ by dying gave, and now gives, us life; and that Christ ordained the Supper in order to keep this great doctrine before the mind and in the heart of His people. And for this end no more effective means could be devised. For this doctrine is the only conceivable explanation of the prominence given to Christ's death both

by the institution of the Supper and by the words of institution. We therefore cannot doubt that it was instituted in order to be an abiding monument in the Church of the truth and importance of this doctrine.

Again, the proclamation of this truth is the divinely chosen means of conveying, to those who believe it, the life which results from Christ's death. And, to those within sound of the Gospel, the Truth is the only channel through which this life flows. Now the preached word gives life only through the presence and agency of the Spirit of Christ, who breathes life and power into what would otherwise be empty sound. Cp. **#1Co 2:10ff**. The universality of this principle compels us to apply it also to the Truth as set forth visibly in the sacred emblems. Therefore, just as in the preached word, in some sense to all who hear it and in the fullest possible sense to those who receive it by faith, we have the real, living, active, objective presence of the Crucified and Living Saviour, so we need not hesitate to say that in the same sense we have His presence in the Lord's Supper.

Again, Christ has bidden us expressly, at the most solemn period of His life and in the most solemn manner possible, to keep the sacred feast; and Paul's exposition in **#1Co 11:26** makes this command binding to the end of time. This command of Christ makes participation in the Supper an essential condition of salvation. For, not to eat and drink would be direct disobedience to Christ; and, therefore, a renunciation of the covenant of which the cup is an emblem. Consequently, with exceptions noted below, only by eating and drinking the bread and wine can we share the results of Christ's pierced body and shed blood. Now, practically, in our thought, we cannot distinguish between a condition performed in order to obtain that which depends upon it and an instrument with which we lay hold of something we desire. Consequently, we cannot but look upon both faith and the Lord's Supper (both being simply conditions of salvation) as instruments by which we lay hold of Christ. We may therefore say correctly, as in **#1Co 10:16**, that by receiving the material elements we become sharers of the body and blood of Christ; and that our entire spiritual life, (cp. **#1Co 10:17a**,) each moment received from Christ, is a result of our reception at intervals of the bread and wine.

Yet the Lord's Supper is not another condition of salvation beside faith. Rather, Christ's command has made intelligent faith impossible without participation in the Supper; just as it is impossible to exercise faith without repentance or to retain it without confession. Cp. **#Lu 13:3**; **#Ro 10:9**. For we cannot believe that we enjoy Christ's favor while we deliberately disobey His word. Moreover, circumstances may prevent us from partaking the Supper: and our reception of it is at intervals. Under all circumstances and each moment we live by faith.

The suitability of the Lord's Supper as a condition of salvation, and the relation of this condition to faith, the one inward condition are not difficult to trace. The Lord's Supper is the most searching test of our faith that Christ is actually and supernaturally present and active in the hearts of His people. And, that Christ is thus objectively present in us, is an essential truth, and the great characteristic truth, of Christianity. Little faith is required to believe that a preached word may do good: for the connection between the means and end is evident. But, to expect spiritual good from material bread and wine, implies reliance upon the presence and infinite power of Him who fed the five thousand and made water into wine, and who has promised to be in His people as their life to

the end of time and through eternity. Thus the sacramental feast tests, develops, and testifies, our faith in the supernatural presence and activity of Christ in His Church.

Another purpose of the Lord's Supper is suggested in **#1Co 10:17**; viz. to give formal and visible unity to the followers of Christ. Such visible unity was of infinite importance for the continued existence of Christianity in the face of the hostile and powerful influences which beset its early course. And we cannot conceive any means so likely to secure visible unity as this simple rite. To perpetuate the rite and thus to give corporate form to His followers, Christ instituted it at the most solemn period of His life, and, by bidding us observe it in remembrance of Himself, made it practically a condition of salvation.

Again, that Christ commands, as a condition of salvation, a bodily reception of material bread and wine, gives to these elements a mysterious and unique dignity. (Similarly, God's choice of a spoken word as the channel of salvation gives to the human voice an incomparable dignity.) Since the eating and drinking which Christ requires are real, we may say that His command makes our reception of the spiritual, and ultimately material, benefits purchased by the death of His body and the shedding of His blood conditional, with exceptions marked below, on our reception into our own bodies of the material bread and wine. Christ has thus placed these elements of food in a unique relation to Himself. Remembering this, as we look at them we may almost forget the material food produced by nature and by human manipulation, and think only of the pierced body and shed blood, without which there had been no bread and wine on the sacramental table and of the spiritual nourishment we derive therefrom. To the eye of faith the symbols disappear, and the infinite and amazing reality alone remains.

We shall understand now all that Paul says about the Lord's Supper. Well might Christ say "this is my body." For, had not the Eternal Son assumed a human body to be pierced for our life, there had been no broken bread in His hands then. Had not that body died, there would be no bread upon our sacramental table now. And, but for the pouring out of His blood, and but for the New Covenant between God and us (virtual in that night, ratified now) through His blood, there would be no poured out wine. Therefore, as setting forth and implying the most amazing event of all time, and as a solemnly appointed condition of sharing its eternal results, the broken bread is the body of Christ, and the full wine-cup is the New Covenant in His blood. And, as setting forth and implying and bringing about (as an essential condition and in some sense an instrument) a participation in the results of His death, the bread and the cup are (**#1Co 10:16**) "fellowship in the body and blood of Christ." In the same way all manifestations of the Christian life are results of the sacred feast. Therefore, the outward and visible unity of believers (**#1Co 10:17**) is a result of their joint reception of the same symbolic food. Since the Supper was ordained by Christ, it is, with all its consequent blessings, (**#1Co 10:21**) "a table of the Lord." Since it is a visible symbol of Christ crucified and a solemnly ordained means of consolidating and extending His kingdom, any indignity done to the feast is done to Christ, and specially to the body and blood bruised and shed for us. Such indignity arises from oversight of the awful reality, even *the crucified body* of Christ, which the sacred symbols are designed to bring to mind. On this indignity sentence was already pronounced by Christ: and at Corinth upon many persons penalty was already inflicted. Consequently, they who receive the elements without a spiritual view and apprehension of Christ Crucified, receive thereby judgment. Thus Paul's entire teaching about the Lord's Supper (and to his teaching the New Testament adds

nothing) is but a development of the words of institution in the light of the great principles asserted and expounded in the Epistle to the Romans.

I cannot overlook the fact that some godly men, I refer chiefly to the Society of Friends, set aside altogether the outward and visible celebration of the Lord's Supper. How they reconcile this with Christ's words, "Do this," and with Paul's explanation of them in **#1Co 11:26**, I do not know. That they lose much by refusing, even in ignorance, to obey the express and solemn command of Christ, I cannot doubt. But, if their refusal arises from sincere, even though mistaken, loyalty to Christ, God will not refuse them a part in that New Covenant of which they refuse the visible pledge and condition. And for the loss they sustain by absence from the Lord's table, no small part of the blame rests upon those who by their misrepresentation and misuse have brought it into contempt. But, were I to absent myself as they do, I should thereby exclude myself from the Covenant. For I should refuse to do what I believe Christ has expressly and solemnly bidden. It is worthy of notice, in view of **#1Co 10:17**, that the united influence upon the world of the Society of Friends bears no proportion to the personal excellence of its members.

In the New Testament the Lord's Supper is never said to be a sacrifice. But its connection with the Jewish Passover reminds us that it is in some sense a sacrificial act. The analogy of the Jewish rites and the Christian rite is very close. The Jewish sacrifices set forth in symbol the truth that man's salvation comes through the death of the innocent: and, as solemnly ordained by God at (**#Ex 24:8**) the ratification of the Old Covenant, they were a condition on which its benefits were obtained. Consequently, after disuse in times of spiritual declension, the sacrifices were restored (**#2Ch 29:7ff**; **#2Ch 29:20ff**) in times of revival. Now the Lord's Supper is the one recurring rite of the New Covenant. Of this Covenant, the most conspicuous benefit is forgiveness of sins: **#Mt 26:28**; **#Heb 8:12**. Therefore, while receiving the Supper in faith, we claim from God the benefits of the Covenant, and especially the forgiveness of our sins. We thus present to God, for our own sins, in our hearts and by faith, the pierced body and shed blood of Christ: for we hide us beneath His cross from the penalty of our sins. And, while we do so, the blood of Christ saves us from the anger of God: for (**#Ro 3:25**) "in His own blood" Christ becomes through our faith a propitiation for our sins. Thus, in the Lord's Supper we do a spiritual act analogous to the sprinkling of the blood by the High Priest once a year in the Most Holy Place. But, since we do but present to God as a propitiation for our own sins the blood already once for all shed on Calvary, it is better to speak of the Sacrament as a sacrificial act rather than as a sacrifice.

We conclude then that Christ ordained the Supper in order to give great prominence, in the eyes of even the humblest believer, to the great truth that our life comes through His death; also as a means of testing, developing, and confessing to the world, our belief that salvation is an outworking of a power which cannot be explained by, and is altogether above, the laws of mind and morals; and as a means of giving to His people corporate and visible unity in face of the world. In order to secure, to the end of time, the observance of the rite by all His followers, and thus to secure the aims just mentioned, Christ made the Supper, by expressly commanding it, an indispensable condition of salvation. And, since in the kingdom of God there are no useless conditions. He determined to make it a channel through which, by His own presence and activity, He would pour the spiritual benefits therein set forth. We infer that, as in the preached so in the symbolic word, the designed benefits are received only by those who believe. And, since unbelief in those who partake the Supper implies

resistance to the truths therein conspicuously and forcefully portrayed, and great dishonor to Him who died even for those who reject Him, we infer that in a very terrible sense the sacred rite is, to those who misuse it for their own base ends, an thus betray their ignorance of its true significance, "an odor (#2Co 2:16) from death tending to death."

About the Lord's Supper the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH teaches, (*Council of Trent*, Session xiii. canon 1,) together with much important gospel truth, that "in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist is contained, truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and accordingly the entire Christ;" that (Session vii. canon 7) "Grace is conferred by sacraments of this kind always and to all, so far as God is concerned, if they receive them with correct ritual;" and that (Session xiii. ch. 4) "By consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a conversion of the entire substance of the bread into the substance of the body of our Lord Christ and of the entire substance of the wine into the substance of His blood. This conversion is conveniently and appropriately called Transubstantiation." The Roman Church guards (Session xxi. ch. 3) this doctrine by teaching that the entire Christ is present both in the consecrated bread and in the wine.

The LUTHERAN CHURCH is fairly represented in the following extract from the *Lutherische Dogmatik* of Kohn, § 21. 6. "Luther's teaching is this. When Christ said, "Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you," He said, in the form of synecdoche, That which I give you to eat is my body which is given for you, i.e. is here imparted to you, for the forgiveness of sins, i.e. as sign, warrant, and medium, of the forgiveness of sins for believing receivers. According to the conception of a sacrament, which is a visible word, the chief matter in the Lord's Supper is the word of the forgiveness of sins. Thereby the promise of the Lord's supper is suspended on the condition of faith. But independent of faith is the reception of the body of Christ, which in, with, and under, the bread and wine is distributed." Also the *Apology for the Confession of Augsburg* declares: "We defend the opinion received in the entire church that in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present, and are truly offered with those things that appear, viz. with the bread and wine." Luther rejected Transubstantiation. But he and the Lutheran Church assert strongly that Christ is locally present in the bread and wine; and is thus received, as Saviour or as Judge, by all who receive the sacred symbols.

But no hint is given, in the words either of Christ or of Paul, of any change in the substance of the consecrated elements. Indeed, even after the blessing we read in #1Co 11:26 "eat this bread." The words "This cup is the New Covenant" warn us not to infer such change from the words "This is my body:" and we have seen that Paul's argument is complete without it.

As proof that in the Lord's Supper Christ is actually received (to their condemnation) even by unbelievers, Lutherans appeal to the arguments of #1Co 10:16ff, and #1Co 11:27ff. But it is always perilous to assume an important doctrine not expressly taught in Scripture because it seems to be implied in a Scripture argument. That Paul's argument does not imply this doctrine, and that #1Co 10:21 directly contradicts it, I have in my notes endeavored to show. And we notice that in the New Testament Christ is never said to be spiritually present except to bless. We have also seen that, although the words of Christ imply a real and special presence of Christ in the sacred ordinances, they do not imply His local presence in the bread and wine and in the stomachs of those who receive

them. Thus, in my view, the Lutheran doctrine falls to the ground. For, its advocates appeal in support of it only to Scripture: and Scripture does not teach it. But Roman Catholics appeal not only to Scripture but to the authoritative teaching of the Church; and thus introduce into the question before us an important and far-reaching element which cannot be discussed here. All that can be required from me as a commentator is, to show that the doctrines in question are not taught in the Bible.

In absolute opposition to both the Roman and the Lutheran churches, ZWINGLI taught (*Confession to Charles V.* Art. 7) "I believe, indeed I know, that all the sacraments are so far from conferring grace that they do not even distribute it;" and that the Lord's Supper was nothing but a mode of recalling the death of Christ and of confessing faith in Him. How far this teaching falls below the great and solemn significance of the rite, my exposition has already shown. Yet we need not wonder that to this extreme and rationalistic view Zwingli was driven by the assumptions of the papacy.

CALVIN asserted (*Institutes* bk. iv. 17. 10, etc.) in opposition to Zwingli the supernatural and life-giving presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, making the ordinance to be a special channel of spiritual blessing; and, in opposition to Luther, denied His local presence in the bread and wine, and asserted that only those who receive the elements with faith thereby receive Christ. His teaching has been accepted, to speak generally, by the Reformed Churches of the Continent, and in the articles of the Anglican Church. And it agrees in the main with the above exposition of the words of Christ and of Paul. I notice, however, that Calvin and many Anglican writers cling to the teaching that in some sense believers actually though spiritually receive in the Supper the body and blood of Christ. But to these words I can give no meaning except that believers receive the spiritual benefits which result from His incarnation and crucifixion: and, to express this by the words "receive the body of Christ" seems to be very inappropriate.

The teaching of the Lutheran, and of the Reformed, Churches is ably set forth in the *Lutherische Dogmatik* of Kahnis and the *Christliche Dogmatik* of Ebrard, each of which writers has given special attention to this matter. The Roman Catholic doctrine is defended with great ability, candor, and devoutness, in the *Symbolik* of Moehler. This last work I strongly commend to Protestant theologians. Only by a study of the best writings of those who differ from us can we understand their opinions and correctly estimate our own.

After all, the differences between the Roman, Lutheran, and Reformed teaching, as discussed above, are not so great as at first sight they appear; and are indeed rather verbal than real. Each doctrine contains important elements of truth. Many godly Roman Catholics cling to transubstantiation as being the strongest protest they can make against prevalent materialism. And even Zwingli, in his strong rebound from papal assumptions, still upheld the divine institution and perpetual obligation of the sacred feast. Luther and the Roman Church assert that, though all who receive the Lord's Supper therein receive Christ, it nevertheless depends upon themselves whether Christ comes into them to save or to condemn. And Calvin taught that, even to those who receive it unworthily, the Lord's Supper has terrible reality, a reality of condemnation. So far then the differences are not serious.

But I am compelled sorrowfully to believe that around and in close connection with the Lord's Supper are taught doctrines not only false but exceedingly hurtful. The Roman Church (*Council of Trent*, session xxii.) lays great, and not altogether improper stress, upon the sacrificial aspect of the Supper. Now sacrifice implies priesthood: and the universal priesthood of believers is plainly taught in **#1Pe 2:5**. But, for this priesthood, the Roman Church practically substitutes a priesthood in the Christian Church similar to that of Aaron in Israel. In other words, it claims for its ministers the sole right of distributing the symbols which Christ commands His people to receive. And it requires, before the distribution of the bread, which only it gives to the laity, confession to a priest, and such confession as shall satisfy the priest. So *Council of Trent*, session xii. ch. 7; session xiv. 3, 6. By this claim the Roman Church places itself practically between the sinner and Christ; and claims virtually, for the support of its authority, the very solemn words of Christ and of Paul about the sacred Supper. I am compelled to say, in spite of my sincere affection for our brethren of the Roman Church I hope to spend eternity in the One Universal Church above, and while acknowledging our deep obligation to that Church for preserving the light of Christianity, often obscured but still burning, during the long night of the dark ages-I am compelled to believe that the claim of the Roman hierarchy to be the sole ordinary depositary of the benefits conveyed by Christ to His people through the Supper, has produced, directly and indirectly, terrible and wide-spread injury.

So far as the New Testament teaches, this claim is met by the proof given above (p. 199) that neither Christ nor His apostles claimed for the officers of the church the exclusive distribution of the elements. They preferred the risk of the abuses mentioned in **#1Co 11:21f**; and even when these abuses actually existed, refrained from limiting the distribution of the elements to the church officers, rather than permit sacerdotal assumptions to have the smallest foothold in Scripture. It is right to say that the priestly monopoly of the right to administer the Lord's Supper is utterly rejected by both Luther and Calvin. This places an infinite distance between the otherwise similar teaching of Luther and of the Roman Church.

It must not be thought that I look upon the foregoing arguments as sufficient to overturn the Roman claims. For these claims rest ultimately upon the authority of the Church, an authority resolutely maintained with increasing clearness and boldness by a succession of the greatest fathers of the Church and by a general consensus of the Church during many centuries. I have merely endeavored to show that these claims have no basis whatever in Scripture. The question whether we are bound to concede to the Catholic Church the authority which Cyprian and Augustine and others claimed for it, and the immense issues involved in this question, lie beyond the scope of the present work.

The priestly monopoly of the administration of the Lord's Supper, which Luther resisted, is claimed for the ministry of the Anglican Church by Anglo-Catholics. Their views are set forth with ability and fairness in Sadler's *Church-Doctrine*. With almost all he says in the long chapter on "Holy Communion," I heartily agree. Indeed this chapter is little more than an able defense of Calvin's teaching. But in his chapter on the "Christian Priesthood," an element is introduced which changes completely the aspect of the Lord's Supper. He reminds us that the "commission to celebrate the Lord's Supper was not given to the whole church gathered together, but to the twelve alone." But from this we might infer as easily that the Supper was designed for the apostles only as that its administration was limited to them. Mr. Sadler then says that the apostles must have committed to

others the power to administer the Supper; because, otherwise, apart from the apostles themselves the Supper could not have been held at all. But this takes for granted the chief point, viz. that the supper cannot be duly received except from the hands of a church-officer. And of this he gives no proof. Christ must have given, either verbally or through the guidance of His Spirit, directions about the details of the Supper fuller than His recorded words. What these directions were, we can learn only from the writings of the apostles and from the practice of the primitive church as portrayed in the New Testament. But here not one word is said limiting the administration of the Supper to church-officers. And we have found (#1Co 11:21f) church-members actually receiving the Lord's Supper without official administration, and doing so without a word of reproof from Paul, even when reproving them for other irregularities in the same matter. Thus the claim to the sole right to administer the Lord's supper in this country, a claim made by Anglo-Catholics for the ministers of the Anglican Church, and involving most serious consequences, finds in Scripture no support whatever and finds there a clearly implied contradiction.

See further, from myself and various others, in a volume containing a *Symposium on the Lord's Supper*. (Hodder and Stoughton.)



# I CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION VI

### ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS

#### CHAPTERS XII-XIV

##### *SECTION XXII*

##### *THE ONE SPIRIT GIVEN TO ALL IMPARTS TO EACH A SPECIAL GIFT*

##### CH. XII. 1-11

About the Spiritual Gifts, brothers, I do not wish you to be ignorant. You know that when you were Gentiles, men led away you were after the voiceless idols, as it might be that you were led. For which cause I make known to you that no one speaking in the Spirit of God says, Anathema\* (\*Or, Accursed.) Jesus. And no one can say, Lord Jesus, except in the Holy Spirit.

But varieties of gifts of grace there are; but the same Spirit. And varieties of ministries there are; and the same Lord. And varieties of works done there are; but the same God who works all things in all.

But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit, with a view to profit. For, to one through the Spirit is given a word of wisdom; to another, a word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: to a different one faith, in the same Spirit; to another, gracious gifts of healing, in the same Spirit; to another, workings of miracles†; (†In Greek, powers.) to another prophecy; to another discernings of spirits: to a different one, kinds of tongues; and to another, interpretation of tongues. All these works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one individually, according as He pleases.

An entirely new subject, occupying DIV. VI. Compare #1Co 7:1; 8:1. At the close of it Paul corrects two abuses in church-meetings, each connected with this subject, in addition to those corrected in DIV. V. But the cursory, though appropriately placed, mention of them, suggests that they were not the chief motive for this important Division of the Epistle. And the matter-of-fact introduction of the subject, taken together with #1Co 7:1, suggests that it was mentioned in the letter from Corinth.

Ver. 1. **Spiritual gifts**, or *spiritual-things*: #Ro 1:11; 15:27; #1Co 2:13; 9:11; 10:3f; 14:1; etc: things pertaining to, i.e. bestowed by, the Spirit of God, #1Co 12:3f. The lists in #1Co 12:7ff, 28ff, show that the word is used here as a technical term for the special and various capacities for Christian work, ordinary or extraordinary, with which the Spirit enriches those in whom He dwells. This technical sense was very appropriate. For, these capacities were a conspicuous proof that they who possessed them were animated by a spirit higher than their own.

This new subject suggests to Paul, by contrast, the powerlessness of idolatry, **#1Co 12:2**. He begins it by stating the relation between inward spiritual gifts and the historic Jesus, **#1Co 12:3**; and the variety and the one source of these gifts, **#1Co 12:4-6**; of which he gives examples, **#1Co 12:7-11**. As in the human body various powers, all needful, are variously allotted, **#1Co 12:12-27**; so in the church, **#1Co 12:28-30**. Yet some gifts are greater than others, **#1Co 12:31**: and love is both the best way to the greater gifts and itself greater than the greatest of them, 1Cor. 13. Prophecy is more useful, and therefore more to be desired, than speaking with tongues, **#1Co 14:1-25**. The possession of gifts is no excuse for disorder, **#1Co 14:26-39**.

Ver. 2. The new powers, far surpassing man's natural power, possessed by the early Christians, remind Paul, by contrast, of the worthless images of heathendom, whose unreasoning votaries his readers formerly were.

**Voiceless**: a conspicuous proof of worthlessness, (**#Hab 2:18f**; 3 Macc. 4:16,) in contrast to the new powers of speech so characteristic of early Christianity. That idols cannot speak, proves that they cannot hear and understand.

**Led, led away**; graphic picture of the unreasoning action, and the bondage, of idolaters, While frequenting the temples, and following the processions, of heathenism they were really surrendering themselves to the guidance of an unseen power operating upon them as circumstances or events might determine. Men are idolaters usually not by their own choice, but by circumstances. In **#Eph 2:2f** we have a similar contrast of past and present.

Ver. 3. Their unfavorable former position moves Paul to instruct them in the matter before us. This suggests the disadvantage, for understanding Christianity, of converts from heathenism as compared with those who, like Paul and Timothy, had been trained from childhood in the Jewish Scriptures.

**Speaking in the Spirit of God**: moved, guided, and controlled by the Spirit, as in **#Ro 8:15**; **#Mt 22:43**. Cp. **#2Sa 23:2**.

**Anathema**: as in **#Ro 9:3**. The Spirit never moves a man to say that Jesus is under the curse of God. Cp. **#1Jo 4:2f**.

**No one can say etc.**: It is absolutely impossible for any one not moved by the Spirit to look up to Jesus and call Him "Master," meaning what he says; i.e. to look at Jesus with the feelings with which we look at earthly masters, waiting for commands and expecting reward.

**Jesus**: appropriately used, twice, to designate our Lord as a man among men.

This verse embodies two important principles already asserted in **#1Co 2:10-16**, viz. that inward spiritual life is always in harmony with historic Christianity, i.e. that the Spirit of God, who is the animating principle of all devotion to God, ever leads men to recognize the claims of the carpenter of Nazareth; and that without the inward presence of the Spirit none can recognize rightly these claims. This latter principle implies that every one who looks up to Jesus and from the heart calls

Him Master (cp. **#1Co 1:2**) possesses the inward presence of the Spirit, and therefore possesses a measure of capacity for Christian work. Upon this broad basis rests the whole teaching of 1Cor. 12.

Ver. 4.-6. Variety in the just-mentioned unity, and emphatic reassertion of the unity.

**Gifts-of-grace:** technical use, as in **#1Co 12:9, 28, 30f, #Ro 12:6; #1Pe 4:10**; corresponding with the technical use of *spiritual things* in **#1Co 12:1**. See **#Ro 1:11**. Instead of giving to one man the whole round of the capacities which His favor prompts Him to bestow, the One Spirit who dwells in all believers gives different capacities to different men.

**Ministries:** see under **#Ro 12:7**: the various positions and kinds of work allotted by the One Master to His various servants, requiring from each some work for the common good. The technical sense "deacon" is forbidden here by the breadth of the statement. Cp. **#1Pe 4:10**.

**Lord**, or *Master*; correlative to *ministry*, and pointing to "Lord Jesus" in **#1Co 12:3**. See under **#Ro 1:4**.

**Works-done:** results produced, corresponding to *works all things*. Whatever is done *in* any one is done by the Father, who sent His Son to be our Master, and His Spirit to be the motive principle of our life. Thus, as usual, Paul leads us up to the presence of the Father; and lingers there. Moreover, that the gifts are from the spirit and that the ministries are service to Christ, is evident: but it is needful to say expressly that the results achieved are wrought by the Father.

Notice the rising climax, revealing the relation of these various gifts to the three persons of the Trinity, and culminating in the presence of Him who is Supreme even in the Godhead. Cp. **#Eph 4:4ff**. Paul has already said that the Holy Spirit, who dwells in all believers, ever moves them to call Jesus their Master. But their capacities are different, fitting them for different kinds of service, and producing different kinds of results. Yet all the capacities come from one Spirit: the different kinds of service are for the same Master: and the different results are produced by the same First Cause.

Ver. 7. **Each-one:** emphatic, repeated in **#1Co 12:11**, and leading on to "all" (three times) in **#1Co 12:12, 13**. Not only (**#1Co 12:3**) does every servant of Christ possess the Spirit, but amid various gifts, kinds of service, and results produced, every one has some capacity for usefulness.

**Is-given:** i.e. day by day; not once for all as bodily capacities are given. Only so far as each moment the Spirit works in us can we do spiritual work.

**Manifestation of the Spirit:** (**#2Co 4:2**, see under **#Ro 1:19**;) the Holy Spirit dwelling in each believer and made apparent by the capacities for usefulness which He imparts.

**With a view to profit:** i.e. benefit to the church arising from gifts possessed by each member. This leads towards the argument of **#1Co 12:21-26**. Each has a capacity for usefulness, an outflow of the Spirit, given to him for the general good.

Ver. 8.-10. List of gifts, in support of **#1Co 12:7**, making very prominent that all come from the One Spirit. The list is broken up, by a slight verbal change, into three series: intellectual gifts, *wisdom* and *knowledge*, **#1Co 12:8**; gifts conspicuously miraculous, under the heading of *faith*, **#1Co 12:9, 10a**; gifts connected with *tongues*, **#1Co 12:10b**.

**Word of wisdom:** not the same (cp. **#1Co 1:5**) as wisdom; mentioned specially here because it is in the utterance (cp. **#1Co 2:13**) of wisdom that the Spirit within is manifested to those around.

**Wisdom and knowledge:** found together in **#Ro 11:33; #Col 2:3; #Ec 1:16, 18; 2:21, 26; 9:10**. Cp. **#Col 1:9; #Php 1:9**. The difference is difficult to mark in exact detail; but, in broad outline, is quite clear. *Knowledge* is mere acquaintance with things past present, or future. *Wisdom* is, from the Christian point of view, such a direct grasp of underlying principles and eternal realities as enables a man to choose the right goal and the best path in life. See note under **#1Co 2:5**. Paul's readers were rich in knowledge: and (**#1Co 8:2**) it tended to inflate them. But he could not (**#1Co 2:6**) speak to them *wisdom*: nor does wisdom ever inflate. *Wisdom*, as the highest mental excellence may be distinguished, as here, from *knowledge*: from "understanding," (**#Col 1:9**), a capacity for interpreting the details of daily life; and from "prudence," (**#Eph 1:8**), a thoughtful capacity for choosing the best means for any ends we have in view. [For the distinction as understood by the Greeks, Aristotle, *Nicom*, *Ethics* bk. vi. 5-10 is very instructive.]

**Through according to, in the Spirit:** three aspects conspicuously put, of the relation of these gifts to the Spirit. He is the channel through which they come, the standard with which they agree, and the element in which they are possessed and used. Only by the operation of the Spirit, can we understand the words of spiritual men, and thus take up *knowledge*, i.e. learn what they knew before us: and this communication of knowledge accords with the nature of the spirit; as does the revelation of the deeper mysteries of *wisdom*.

Ver. 9.-10a. Second series of gifts.

**Faith:** belief, not of the Gospel, (for this is, to all Christians, the one source of all Christian life and usefulness, **#Ro 12:3**), but of some special revelation not given to all. Its position at the head of the second series, suggests a connection with the gifts which follow. And **#1Co 13:2** suggests a special relation to the next pair of gifts. Power to work miracles was probably, according to an abiding principle (**#Mt 9:29**) of the Gospel, conditional on faith. We can conceive that God revealed to a man His will to work a miracle through his hands; and that, if the revelation was embraced with confident assurance, the miracle followed. In **#2Ki 2:14** the effort of such faith, and in **#Ac 3:6** its confident assurance, find voice. Probably, as in the latter case, the faith of the worker was usually a conspicuous accompaniment of the miracle. Hence the special mention of faith here.

**In the same Spirit:** as the surrounding element and the divine source of confident assurance that God will fulfill His promise, i.e. in this case, His promise to work a miracle through the believers agency. See under **#Ro 12:3; #2Co 4:13**.

**Gifts of healings:** in the plural, because each cure was a special and fresh gift of God.

**In the One Spirit:** is the one source of the many cures wrought by many persons. These words are not repeated, because it is quite evident that they are true of all the following gifts.

**Workings of powers:** any other supernatural manifestation of God's power, beside the healing of diseases. Probably cures were mentioned first as being the most common kind of miracle.

**Prophecy:** an utterance of truth under a special, and probably temporary, influence of the Spirit. See note, #1Co 14:40.

**Discernment:** power to distinguish the Holy Spirit's voice from that of evil spirits. Akin to "discern" in #1Co 14:29; 11:29, 31; and in the same sense. Cp. #1Jo 4:1.

**Spirits:** a general term, as in #1Jo 4:1. When men spoke under the influence of a spirit other than their own, it was needful to determine its nature.

It is not unlikely that this second pair of gifts was, like the first pair, a manifestation of *faith* in a special and personal revelation; that God first revealed to a man His purpose to make him a mouthpiece of the Spirit or a judge of the professedly inspired words of another man, and then fulfilled His purpose in proportion to the man's faith. *Faith* is not conspicuously at the head of this second series of gifts, probably because these were occasional manifestations of the spirit, preceded by belief of a special revelation; whereas, in the *word of wisdom* etc., as a more abiding endowment, faith was less conspicuous though doubtless always present as an essential condition. The gift of tongues possibly was not preceded by a special revelation.

Ver. 10b. A third series.

**Gifts of tongues etc.:** see note under #1Co 14:40.

Ver. 11. Repeats, after a survey of the different kinds of gifts, the chief thought of #1Co 12:4-10, viz. that the various capacities for usefulness have one source, the Holy Spirit.

**Dividing:** cognate to "varieties" in #1Co 12:4-6, marking the end of the matter there introduced.

**Individually:** so that each has a gift of his own.

**As He likes;** asserts emphatically that the distribution of the gifts springs simply and only from the sovereign choice of the Spirit.

**He:** or *It*: see #Ro 8:16. The original has no pronoun.

That *the Spirit* has a *will*, and is yet in #1Co 12:4ff distinguished from and placed side by side of, the Father and the Son, implies clearly that He is a Person distinct from Them, and that the words Spirit of God are not a mere description of the Father as animating men. For to have a *Will* is the essence of personality. Still more clearly is this implied in the words of Christ recorded in #Joh 16:13: "He will not speak prompted by Himself; but as many things as He may hear He will speak."

For He who can listen to the Father must be a person distinct from Him. Again, since the Spirit possesses the entire knowledge of God, as our spirits know all that we know, (#1Co 2:10f,) He must be infinite and therefore divine. For the finite cannot comprehend the Infinite.

The matter of spiritual gifts is now fairly before us. We have learned that the Spirit ever prompts men to bow to Jesus; and that His presence is an indisputable condition of service of Jesus. We have had a list of various capacities for usefulness possessed by the early church; and have been taught emphatically and repeatedly that all these are from the One Spirit of God, who fits us for service of the One Master and produces results wrought by God in us. The way is now open for the wonderful parable of § 23.

With #1Co 12:7-11 compare Homer's *Iliad*, bk. xiii. 730ff.

"To one God gave warlike works  
To another, dancing; to a different one harp and song.  
In another's breast far-seeing Zeus puts  
A noble mind, of which many men reap benefit."

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XXIII

*AS IN THE HUMAN BODY THERE ARE MANY MEMBERS, ALL NEEDFUL  
FOR THE GENERAL GOOD, SO IN THE CHURCH*

### CH. XII. 12-30

For, just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body; so also is Christ. For indeed in one Spirit we all were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether servants or freemen. And we all were made to drink one Spirit. For also the body is not one member, but many. If the foot say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body; it is not on this account not of the body. And, if the ear say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body; it is not on this account not of the body. If all the body were eye, where would be the hearing? If all were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has put the members, each one of them, in the body, according as His will was. And if all of them were one member, where would be the body? But now are there many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, No need of thee have I: or again the head to the feet, No need of you have I. But much rather the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those which we think to be less honourable parts of the body, these we clothe with more abundant honour: and our unseemly parts have more abundant seemliness. But the seemly parts have no need. Yes, God has mixed together the body, to that which falls short having given more abundant honour; that there may be no division in the body, but that the same care the members may have on behalf of each other. And both if one member suffers, there suffer with it all the members: and if one member is glorified, there rejoice with it all the members.

**And you are Christ's body, and members part with part.**

**And some indeed God placed in the church—first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miraculous powers, then gracious gifts of healings, helpings, governings, kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all miraculous powers? have all gracious gifts of healings? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?**

This section explains the Spirit's allotment of different gifts to different church-members, by the analogy of the human body. The analogy is asserted in **#1Co 12:12**; and justified in **#1Co 12:13** by the spiritual facts of the church. Its lower side is expounded practically in **#1Co 12:14-26**: **#1Co 12:27** reasserts the analogy: **#1Co 12:28-30** develop its higher side.

Ver. 12. A comparison closely interwoven (cp. **#1Co 6:15**; **#Ro 12:4**; **#Eph 1:23**; **4:16, 25**; **5:30**) into the mind of Paul; and among the sacred writers, peculiar to him.

**Is one**: as having one interest, and being instinctively conscious of this. See below. A living body is the most wonderful instance on earth of oneness amid variety. With great emphasis Paul says that

*all the members, though they are many, not only belong to, but are, one body. Just as we have many bodily members which together make up one undivided body, so also it is with Christ.*

Ver. 13. Proof of "so also is Christ."

**We all:** emphatic, in contrast to the human body.

**Baptized into**, or *for one body*: see note, **#Ro 6:3**. It denotes either the aim or the result of baptism; perhaps here the latter. They were made by baptism members of an outward and visible community which has a oneness similar to that of a human body. Nothing suggests any but the common sense of water-baptism. For the baptism of the Spirit (**#Mt 3:11**; **#Mr 1:8**; **#Lu 3:16**; **#Joh 1:33**; **#Ac 1:5**; **11:16**) is never mentioned by Paul: and here *body* in contrast to *Spirit* suggests an outward and visible community, and an outward rite of admission to it.

**In One Spirit**: put prominently forward as the invisible source of the oneness of the visible community of the baptized. Just as the oneness of the human body flows from the one living spirit which animates, and moves in harmony, all the members. This oneness, a dead body has lost. Consequently, baptism is an effective union only when administered *in the Spirit* as its surrounding and life-giving element. In this sense Paul's readers *were in one Spirit baptized into* and made members of *one living body*. This assumes, as does **#1Co 6:11**, that all were genuine believers; and that in all such the Spirit is, **#1Co 3:16**; **6:19**; **12:3**. If at Corinth there were false brethren, these are left out of view.

**Jews or Greeks etc.**: national distinctions and the widest social distinctions being completely broken down.

**And we all etc.**: gives further prominence to the great teaching of **#1Co 12:13a**, which permeates 1Cor. 12, and lies at the base of the comparison before us, viz. that every genuine member of the church has received into himself, henceforth to be to him the source of a new life, the One Spirit who makes the many members into one living body. Notice here two aspects of the Spirit's relation to us. We receive Him into ourselves; and we are ourselves in Him. For He both permeates our being, moving and filling us from within, and by so doing raises us into a new element in which we henceforth live.

This verse does not imply that Paul's readers received the Spirit in the moment of their baptism. Cp. **#Ac 10:44-48**. Baptism, like the Lord's Supper, was commanded by Christ, and thus made a condition of salvation indispensable in all ordinary cases; and for the same reason, viz. to give to, and maintain in, His people a visible and united front before the world. There was, therefore, no way to the blessings of the Gospel except through baptism. And Paul could correctly say (**#Tit 3:5**) that God saved His people "through the laver of the new birth, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit;" and Ananias (**#Ac 22:16**) could say, "Have thyself baptized and wash away thy sins." Consequently, without a purpose to be baptized there could be no intelligent and sustained faith; and therefore no reception of the Holy Spirit. But, nevertheless, the spirit is received by faith when we believe: **#Ga 3:14**; **#Joh 7:39**. In this verse Paul simply links together, as necessarily connected in all ordinary cases, the outward rite and the spiritual element which alone gave it reality.



Ver. 14. Parallel with **#1Co 12:12a**, developing for use the comparison there introduced. Paul accounts for the differences of nationality and rank in the church animated by one Spirit, by reminding us that *also the human body* is not all alike but consists of *many* members. This is made very clear in **#1Co 12:15, 16** by the evident absurdity of inferring that because one member is unlike some other it therefore does not enjoy the privilege of belonging to the body. This inference might be drawn not merely by the lowest members but by those next to the highest; and with equal absurdity. Notice that the members mentioned compared themselves, as men do, with others resembling, though superior to, themselves.

Ver. 17.-18. Not only is difference from others no proof that a member does not belong to the body, but it is a real gain to the body, which otherwise would be seriously defective. For the greater abundance of the best faculties would in no way supply the lack of the lesser ones.

**But now:** as things actually are, in contrast to all the members being alike.

**God has put:** the existing arrangement is His work.

**According as He willed:** when He formed the eternal purpose to make man. Paul strengthens his appeal to the Creator by pointing to His sovereign and deliberate determination.

**Each one of them;** suggests God's special forethought about each member, and thus rebukes those who would have chosen otherwise.

Ver. 19.-20. The absurdity of the objections in **#1Co 12:15, 16**, already exposed by the question **#1Co 12:17**, which evoked the contrary statement of **#1Co 12:18**, is still further exposed in **#1Co 12:19** by another question, making with those of **#1Co 12:17** a climax. Not only would a body in which the whole was endowed with the same faculties, even with the noblest faculties be seriously defective, but it would be no body at all, i.e. it would lack that which we all conceive to be the very essence of a living body. For a body is something composed of many and various parts endowed with widely different and mutually-supplementing capacities, all animated by one spirit and having one interest which all subserve. Therefore, to conceive all members to be equally endowed, would destroy our conception of a living body, a conception which we all feel to be not only very good but divinely wonderful. **#1Co 12:20** is parallel with **#1Co 12:18**; and repeats the statement of **#1Co 12:14** and **#1Co 12:12**, after showing the absurdity of the contrary supposition.

Ver. 21. Continues the description, begun in **#1Co 12:20**, of the human body, by adding a fact implied in **#1Co 12:17** and bearing very broadly on the Church of Christ. Without the labor of *the hand*, the lustre and the sight of *the eye* would perish. For, all the members *need* that which each one contributes to the general good, which is also its own good.

**The head, the feet:** widest extremes. Probably Paul thought only of the human body, not of Christ, the Head of the Church. As divine Christ needs (**#Ac 17:25**) no one. Yet perhaps we may say reverently that as incarnate He needs, for the purpose and according to the purpose for which He became man, the services and even the sufferings (**#Col 1:24**) of those whom He joins to Himself as members of His body. The argument of Estius that, since Christ does not need man's help, *the*

*head* here must be the pope, is overturned by his own words a few lines below: "The metaphorical body is not bound to square with the human body in all points, but in those only for which the reference or comparison was chosen."

Ver. 22.-24a. **But etc.:** in contrast to "No need of you have I."

**Much rather:** we are much more ready to say what follows than what goes before. To which *weaker members* Paul refers, it is needless to determine. Many members, *necessary* to the body, are incapable of self-defense: and the strength of the strong members is ever ready to protect them. A special reference to the eye, is made unlikely by **#1Co 12:21**.

**Less-honoured:** viewed by us with less pride. For these we show our esteem by *clothing* them, for their well-being and comfort, carefully and it may be luxuriously and beautifully.

**Unseemly:** stronger than less honoured, completing the triple climax.

**Seemliness:** respectable in appearance, because suitably clothed. The face has *no need* of the care bestowed upon, and the expensive covering provided for, the feet. Nor do we adorn the eye. Thus we treat the members of our body, not according to their excellence or our esteem of them, but according to their *need*.

Ver. 24b.-25. **But God etc.:** parallel to **#1Co 12:18**; as, in some sense, are **#1Co 12:21-24a** to **#1Co 12:15-17**.

**Mixed together:** He has so joined the members as to make them *one body*.

**Having given etc.:** represents the honor paid to the less conspicuous parts of the human body as ordained by God. And rightly so. For God has put the members of the body in such relation to each other that the stronger and more beautiful are compelled for their own good and indeed for their existence to defend and care for, and thus to honor, the weaker members. Consequently, by God's design, *in the body* there is *no schism*; i.e. no member seeks its own good to the disadvantage of others, thus separating itself and its aims from the other members.

**Have the same care:** a bold personification. Each member acts as though moved by anxious care for the well-being of the others. And it was in order to evoke this harmony and mutual care that God 80 joined the members together that they are compelled to pay special honor to the less honored ones. In other words, God has so linked our bodies together that we are compelled to treat our members not according to their beauty but their need; and has done this that there may be complete harmony in the body, and that each of our members may put forth its peculiar powers for the general good, thus securing for every part of our body the benefit of all the various powers with which its various members are endowed.

Ver. 26. Instinctive recognition, by the members, of this common interest. Pain to any member at once affects all, thus moving them to joint action for its alleviation.

**Suffer with:** the Greek original of our word "sympathize."

**Rejoice-with it:** a bold personification prompted by the intense feeling of oneness which pervades the human body.

Ver. 27. Sudden transition from the human body, to which our attention has been for a time exclusively directed, to Paul's readers, to remind them that, as proved in **#1Co 12:13**, a human body is a picture of their relation to Christ and to each other.

**Part with part:** each having only a part needing to be supplemented by the other parts.

Ver. 28. That believers are "Christ's body," inasmuch as they are a visible community animated by the one Spirit of Christ, was proved in **#1Co 12:13**. Paul will now prove, by evident matters of fact, that they are "members part with part;" and that therefore the mutual relation of the members of a human body has a counterpart in them.

**God put;** corresponds with the same words in **#1Co 12:18**. Same word *put* (R.V. *made*.) in **#Ac 20:28**.

**In the Church;** corresponds with "in the body"; **#1Co 12:18**. The word *apostles* proves that Paul refers, not to the church at Corinth, but to the entire Christian community. So **#Php 3:6**. Of this universal Church, each local church is a miniature pattern. Instead of continuing "some to be apostles, others prophets etc.," Paul breaks off the construction (cp. **#Ro 5:12; 7:12**) to say that *in the Church* the *apostles* hold the *first*, and the *prophets* the *second* rank. This would remind the readers that no one at Corinth stood in the first rank of the servants of Christ; and that the useful, but underestimated (cp. § 25,) gifts of prophecy and teaching were next in worth.

**Apostles:** see under **#1Co 15:7; #Ro 1:1**: to be discussed under **#Ga 1:19**.

**Prophets:** see note, **#1Co 14:40**.

**Teachers:** probably men who communicated knowledge acquired (under guidance of the Spirit) by ordinary methods, and held as a constant mental possession: the *prophets* spoke, apparently, under extraordinary and temporary impulses of the Spirit. In choosing elders or bishops, the church would naturally select for the more part men endowed with this gift. Cp. **#1Ti 3:2; #Tit 1:9**. But the words *God put* directs attention, not to an official position, but to a divinely-given capacity for church work. Same order in **#Eph 4:11**.

**Then etc.:** conspicuous mark of inferiority. By endowing certain men with miraculous powers, God *put the powers in the Church*.

**Gracious-gifts of healings:** converse order to **#1Co 12:9**, descending here from the general to the particular. The inferior position of these brilliant gifts is explained in § 25.

**Helpings:** probably assistance to the sick and poor. (Same word in 2 Macc. 8:19; 3 Macc. 5:50, for miraculous help from God in time of need.) Cp. **#Ac 20:35**, where the cognate verb is used.

**Tongues etc.:** last pair here, as in **#1Co 12:10**.

Ver. 29.-30. By question after question Paul compels his readers to acknowledge how many capacities for usefulness each of them lacks and how much they need their own powers to be supplemented, as in a human body, by others. He thus completes his exposition of **#1Co 12:4**. Compare, in **#1Co 12:8ff**, the repetition of "to another."

To rebuke murmuring or contempt prompted by the lack of the possession of the more conspicuous gifts, "to each one according as He pleases," **#1Co 12:11**; viz. that the Church may be a living body, in which each member both needs and helps the others and shares their joys and sorrows, that thus each member may be raised above the little circle of his own immediate interests to care for the general good. Consequently, our lack of certain brilliant gifts is no proof that we do not belong to Christ. For we possess other gifts incompatible with those we lack and needful for the highest good of the community. An allotment of various gifts to various men is by the thoughtful care of God, and is needful for the welfare of the Church. All the members have capacities of usefulness; and all need to be supplemented by others. The human body is, therefore, both a picture of our relation to each other, and a pattern for our treatment of others. So far as a church imitates the action of a healthy human body, it attains its ideal and realizes the purpose of God. For then the endowment of each becomes an enrichment to the whole; and the church becomes the noblest embodiment of what is found in all God's works, viz. Harmony amid infinite Variety.

That the Church is the *Body of Christ*, follows logically from the great fundamental doctrine of **#Ro 8:1-11** in connection with the obvious fact that the members of the Church, which in Paul's day was one community throughout the world, are endowed with different capacities.

Indeed this analogy is suggested by the word "Spirit." For, of this word the central idea is, an inward invisible principle permeating visible organized matter and giving to it unity, life, intelligence, power, and activity. See note, **#Ro 8:17**. The analogy thus suggested is the most wonderful known to us. And its deep mark on the mind of Paul may be traced in **#Ro 12:4**; **#1Co 6:15**; **12:12-27**; **#Eph 1:23**; **4:12, 16, 25**; **5:30**; **#Col 1:18, 24**; **2:19**.

In man we find, joined in most intimate and wonderful partnership, two elements absolutely different and belonging to different realms of being. The body is akin to the earth from which it came and with which it will soon mingle: the spirit is akin, not only to the immortal spirits around God's throne, but to God Himself. Bodily life is the mysterious link binding together these elements. When this link is broken, each element returns (**#Ec 12:7**) whence it came. The body is the living dwelling place kept from corruption and kept alive and erect by the presence of the spirit; the instrument with which the spirit lays hold of, and uses, and enjoys, the material world, and the medium through which it reveals itself to other kindred spirits. The spirit is the animating principle giving to its material abode life, unity, intelligence, and power.

Now Paul has taught (**#Ro 8:1-11**) that in each believer dwells the Spirit of Christ, as the source of immortal life and moral uprightness and the main-spring of new activity. Consequently, the Church is the material and living dwelling place of the Spirit of Christ, and the medium through which Christ manifests Himself to the world and works out His purposes of mercy. Through His people He smiles upon men, speaks words of life, and saves the lost. Therefore, since the spirit is One and believers many, and the many believers were joined in one outward and visible community, Paul could correctly speak of the Church as the body of Christ.

Again, in the Church as in a human body, each member is designed and fitted to do service for the whole, a service which can be rendered only so far as each member is animated by the one spirit. This service corresponds with the natural constitution of each member. But just as without life the eye cannot see, so, apart from the Spirit of Christ, the noblest human powers are powerless to do the work of God. Consequently, these various powers are gifts of the Spirit.

We notice also, as matter of fact, that in the church various men are endowed with various capacities, wealth, rank, learning, intellectual power, eloquence, administrative tact; and that these capacities seldom found together in one man, may be used for the good of the entire community. Even the helpless ones, by their cheerful patience reveal to those around the grace and glory of God.

Once more. The whole church, both the universal family of God on earth and any portion of it large or small, has one interest. Whatever develops or lessens the spiritual life of an individual is gain or loss to the whole community: for his influence will directly or indirectly affect the whole, for good or ill. And each church is a gainer or loser (cp. **#Ro 11:14**) by the progress or the imperfection of neighboring churches. And all this is true, whether individuals and churches recognize it or not. We cannot benefit or injure others without thereby affecting ourselves. This wonderful oneness results from the presence of the One Spirit of God in the whole people of God. Therefore, by giving His Spirit to each believer, God has bound together the whole company of believers into one body having one interest.

From the foregoing analogy we may learn our relation to Christ and to each other. In a healthy human body each member is completely controlled and guided by the one spirit: and each member is instinctively conscious that the interest of the body is its own interest and puts forth all its powers for the general good. And so far as we are in spiritual health shall we be controlled by the Spirit of Christ, animated by desire for the general good, and in harmony with all other members. We cannot despise others; nor they despise us. We need, and may be enriched by, even the humblest: and it is our privilege if Christ abide in us, to be a benefit to all around. Again, just as every man defends every part of his body with his whole strength, so will Christ defend with His infinite power every one of His people. And just as a man's body shares his fortunes, for good or ill, so we shall share the fortunes of Christ and shall sit down with Him, clothed in His royal raiment, upon His throne.

It is evident to all that the community of believers is not one in outward and visible form in the same sense now as in Paul's day. This is to Catholics an argument against Protestantism. And this argument, which has some force, I cannot discuss here. But very strong reasons now keep back both individuals and churches from submitting to the sway of that great Church which is the lineal descendant of the apostolic Church. And the felt presence and life-giving activity of the Holy Spirit

in these individuals and churches is to them complete proof that their separation from the See of Rome does not involve separation from Christ.

It is worthy of note that the important comparison of this section is peculiar, among the sacred writers, to Paul; but is found in the Latin writers. It is embodied in a well-known fable of Menenius Agrippa (B.C. 493) narrated by Livy, bk. ii. 32; and is found in Seneca, *On Anger* bk. ii. 31;\* (\* "It is wrong to injure the Fatherland: therefore, a citizen also; for he is a part of the Fatherland.... What if the hands wish to injure the feet? the eyes to injure the hands? How all the members agree among themselves, because it is the interest of the whole that each be preserved.") and elsewhere. That the analogy was observed by heathens, need not surprise us. For society was ordained by God; and is, even in its fall, a rough outline of the kingdom of God. It is therefore an unconscious prophecy of the Church. We need not doubt that the comparison was suggested to Paul by modes of thought current among heathens. And, that this classic conception is reproduced only by the apostle who came most in contact with Greeks and Romans, is a mark of genuineness. The same metaphor is found (see Appendix A) in ch. 37 of Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians; but is evidently a reference to the Epistle before us, which in other places Clement quotes expressly.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XXIV

### LOVE IS BETTER THAN THE BEST GIFTS

#### CH. XII. 31-XIII

Be emulous for the greater gifts. And, further, a surpassingly good way I show you.

If with the tongues of men I speak, and of the angels, but have not love, I am become sounding bronze or a noisy cymbal. And if I have prophecy, and know the mysteries, all of them, and all the knowledge, and if I have all the faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, nothing am I. And if I give as food all my possessions, and if I give up my body that I may be burned, but have not love, I am nothing profited.

Love is longsuffering, is kind. Love is not jealous: love does not vaunt itself, is not puffed up, is not unseemly, does not seek its own, is not moved to anger, does not reckon the evil, does not rejoice at unrighteousness but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never falls. But both if there be prophecies they will come to nought; and if tongues, they will cease; and if knowledge, it will come to nought. For, in part we know, and in part we prophesy: but, when the fully developed have come, that which is in part will come to nought. When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, I used to think as a child, I used to reckon as a child: when I became a man I made as nought the things of the child. For we see now through a mirror, in a dark saying; but then face to face. Now I know in part: but then I shall understand, according as also I have been understood. And now remain faith, hope love; these three. But the greatest of these is love.

After asserting the broad foundation truth that in the Church, as in a human body, the various members are endowed by God with various gifts, all useful and all needful for the general good, Paul now says that we must, nevertheless, make these gifts objects of desire and effort, and that some of them are greater than others and therefore more worthy of pursuit. But, instead of naming at once *the greater gifts*, (see 1Cor. 14.,) he interposes 1Cor. 13. to show us the best *way* of pursuing them. And, in so doing, he gives us a standard by which to measure their relative worth. (Similarly, in 1Cor. 8., before discussing his subject from the point of view of knowledge, he proves that love is better than knowledge.) He then, in 1Cor. 14., repeats the exhortation of **#1Co 12:31** and goes on to show that prophecy is more worthy of pursuit than the gift of tongues.

Ver. 31. **Be-emulous-for**: one Greek word combining the sense of "zealous" and "jealous," both which are English forms of it. It denotes an emotion aroused in us by superior worth, whether it be earnest desire to gain for ourselves a like superiority, or a jealous care to keep for ourselves alone the object of desire, or mere idle vexation. Same word in **#1Co 13:4; 14:1, 12, 39; 3:3; #2Co 7:7,**

**11; 9:2; 11:2; 12:20.** The capacities for usefulness possessed by others ought to rouse us to seek the same.

**Greater gifts:** producing greater results. This exhortation implies that these gifts of God's grace were to be obtained by human effort. How the extraordinary gifts were thus obtained, is not clear to us now, because of their cessation in the early dawn of church history. But we may suppose that the Spirit gave them only to those who had some natural and spiritual fitness for them as He now bestows His ordinary gifts. If so, by earnest desire to obtain and develop this fitness, men might *be emulous for the greater gifts*. Their effort, for both ordinary and extraordinary gifts, would include cultivation of the corresponding natural powers, prayer and faith for the Spirit's presence and activity, and use of the spiritual power already possessed. Paul goes *further* than mere exhortation to pursue these gifts, and adds (in 1Cor. 13.) an indication of *a way* along which his readers may find them, a way *surpassing* all others.

Chap. XIII. This better "way" Paul begins to point out by asserting abruptly and solemnly that even a combination of the most highly prized gifts, each in its highest degree, is worthless apart from love: **#1Co 13:1-3**. The worth of love, he shows by describing its various manifestations in human conduct, **#1Co 13:4-7**; and show its superiority to spiritual gifts, by proving that they will become worthless like the toys of childhood, whereas love abides, **#1Co 13:8-13**.

Ver. 1. The word rendered *love* is unknown, as its significance was unknown, in classic literature. In a few places, oftener of things than men, its cognate verb is found. In the LXX. the verb is frequent, the substantive very rare. This word has the unique honor of being the only substantive noting a moral attribute which is predicated, simply and without explanation or limitation, of God Himself: for God is *Love*. Paul here teaches that this unique attribute of God is also the one moral quality which is itself all we need to be. All this was obscured by the old rendering *charity*, which cannot be predicated of God and has no corresponding verb, and conveys to most Englishmen a sense quite different from that intended by Paul. Of this a bad example is found in (A.V.) **#Ro 14:15** which receives its force from **#Ro 13:9, 10**. Unfortunately, the word *love* has with us lower associations from which the Greek word is quite free. But it is our best rendering.

From *the tongues of men and of angels* we cannot infer anything about the nature of the gift of tongues. For these words refer, not to actual fact, but to mere supposition. Nor does the words *tongues* necessarily denote "languages." Paul means, "If I utter every kind of voice which rises from the lips of men and of angels." So Homer *Iliad* bk. ii. 489: "Not even if I had ten tongues and ten mouths."

**Of the angels:** separated for emphasis from *of men*, and making the summit of possibility in this gift.

**Love:** to our fellow-men, as proved by **#1Co 13:4-7**. So usually when not otherwise defined: **#1Co 8:1; 16:14; #Ro 12:9; 14:15**.

**Bronze:** a word denoting always in the Bible copper, either pure or containing as usual a small proportion of other metal generally tin. Just so, with us "gold" denotes both the pure metal and the



alloy used for jewelry and coinage. Copper was wrought (#Ge 4:22) in very early times, probably (Hesiod, *Works and Days* 1. 151) earlier than iron; and for hardness and fusibility was alloyed with tin. Brass, i.e. an alloy of copper and zinc, has not, I believe, been found among the many metallic relics of the past.

**Sounding bronze:** pieces of metal, manufactured or crude, giving forth any kind of sound.

**Cymbal:** an instrument consisting of two half gloves, mostly of bronze which the performer struck together. Same word, (LXX.,) #1Ch 13:8; 15:16; #2Ch 5:12, etc.

**Noisy:** giving forth any loud unmeaning sound. Since those who spoke with a tongue merely gave forth, under impulse of the Spirit, a sound which in some cases (#1Co 14:14ff) neither they nor any one else understood, they were, unless *love* gave them moral worth, only like pieces of bronze, or at best instruments of music, struck by a player.

Ver. 2. **Prophecy:** the gift most like that of tongues, but (see § 25) superior to it.

**All the mysteries:** see note, #1Co 3:4: all the truths revealed by God to man through the secret teaching of the Holy Spirit.

**All the knowledge:** evidently different from, and not implied in, *the mysteries*; but not necessarily, or probably, superior. Probably *the mysteries* and *the knowledge* here correspond with "wisdom" (see #1Co 2:7) and "knowledge" in #1Co 12:8. If so, *all the knowledge* denotes whatever the mind of man has acquired by ordinary methods of study, these not excluding (#1Co 12:8) the special assistance of the Spirit. Such knowledge would neither include, nor be included in, *all the mysteries*. Paul's supposition is that all the secrets of the divine purpose and all the knowledge possessed by man were known to one person. That the conspicuous word *if* (5 times in #1Co 13:1-3) is not put before *know*, suggests that *mysteries* and *knowledge* were closely related to *prophecy*; but does not prove that they were necessarily included in it. The prophet's words always conveyed knowledge; and, since he spoke under impulse of the Spirit, his words frequently announced (#1Co 2:10) "the deep things of God." But *prophecy* was a voice caused apparently by an occasional impulse of the spirit: *mysteries* and *knowledge* were abiding intellectual possessions.

**The faith:** an assurance that through the believer's agency God is about to work a miracle. Such faith arose "in the Spirit" (#1Co 12:9) and was a condition (#Mr 11:22) of the exercise of miraculous power. The close coincidence of *faith so as to remove mountains* confirms the testimony of #Mt 17:20; 21:21; #Mr 11:22, that similar words fell from the lips of Christ. Notice that effective faith is a belief, not of anything, but of that which God has promised. It presupposes, and cannot extend beyond the word of God. Consequently, #Mr 11:23f is limited, by the gospel use of the word "believe," to benefits actually promised by God. And it has no other limit.

**Nothing am I:** (differently used, #2Co 12:11:) "my character has no real worth." This suggests, (the hypothetical form of the sentence forbids us to say that it proves,) and the cases of Balaam and Samson prove, that a man may have superhuman gifts and yet be destitute of spiritual life. A solemn warning to the Corinthians, who (#1Co 1:7) "fell short in no gift."

Ver. 3. **Give away as food:** an action highly esteemed (#Mt 6:2) by the Jews.

**Give up my body:** same words in Josephus, *Wars* bk. vii. 8. 7; where, by the example of the Indians who, "*having given up their body to fire that most pure they may separate the soul from the body, die singing hymns,*" Eleazar urges his companions besieged at Masada to a similar self-sacrifice. Dr. Lightfoot suggests (*Colossians* p. 394) that this highest possible grade of self-sacrifice and of supposed merit was suggested to Paul by a boastful inscription on a tomb at Athens (see Strabo, bk. xv. 1. 73) which he may have seen, in memory of a fanatic who in the time of Augustus publicly devoted himself to death there by leaping with a smile on the funeral pyre: "Here lies Zarmanochegas an Indian from Bargose, who according to the paternal customs of Indians immortalized himself." Such cases enable us to conceive not only gifts to the poor but self-immolation without *love*, and with real excellence.

**Nothing profited:** no reward from God, #Mt 6:1. By these extreme cases Paul makes us feel that actions have no intrinsic value, that their worth, both as manifestations of character and as spiritual gain to the actor, depends entirely upon their motive, and that the one motive essential to reward is love. On the variation *that I may glory*, see Appendix B.

Notice in #1Co 13:2, 3 an appropriate change of expression. Without love, they who "have" prophecy and miracle-working faith "are" nothing: for these gifts do not of themselves enter into, and ennoble, the inner man. And, without love, they who give up not only their goods but their bodies are no gainers: for spiritual wealth cannot be purchased even at this price. (Cp. #Ga 5:6.) The supposed combination of various merits in one man is made conspicuous by the recurring words *and if*; but is ruined by the melancholy refrain in each verse *but have not love*.

In #1Co 13:1-3 love stands apart from all other virtues as an essential element of all human excellence. For Paul's words imply that without it, not only knowledge and almsgiving, but righteousness and truth are valueless, or cannot exist. With this unique dignity of love in man corresponds its unique position (#1Jo 4:8, 16) among the moral attributes of God. In other words, human excellence is not, as many think it is, composite; but, like all great principles and like the moral nature of God, absolutely simple. This Paul makes us feel by portraying a man in whom are accumulated all sorts of supposed excellences except love, and by placing beside him (in #1Co 13:4-7) a man whose whole being is an impersonation of love. The one portrait we recognize at once as the most perfect we have seen. From the other we turn in disgust as utterly worthless.

The assertion of #1Co 13:1-3 receive, if not complete proof, yet considerable support from the delineations of character therein contained. For absence of love implies selfishness; it may be an intelligent and respectable, or even spiritual, selfishness. But a selfish man, even though used by the Spirit as a medium of wonderful utterances, is morally no better than a trumpet giving forth an inarticulate sound. Nor does his knowledge or his liberality ever command real respect. For the one is used to advance, and the other is prompted by, unworthy purposes.

The above teaching guards from abuse, and is guarded by, the teaching of #Ro 1:16; 3:22. We venture to believe that we are now forgiven, even though we be nothing and have no merit, simply because in the Gospel God proclaims righteousness through faith for all that believe. And, since love

is the one measure of Christian stature, we venture to believe that God will work in us even this gift by revealing to us through the Spirit His own love to us and to all men. According to our faith it is done to us. And the love to our fellows which we find in our hearts confirms the faith with which, when conscious of nothing but sin, we dared first to believe the promise of God. But the ultimate ground of our confidence is our consciousness, not of our own love, but of God's love to us revealed on the cross, and in the words, of Jesus.

Ver. 4.-7. The excellence of love, asserted negatively in **#1Co 13:1-3**, will now be made apparent by a description of its various manifestations in human conduct: positive description, **#1Co 13:4a**; negative description, concluding with a positive contract **#1Co 13:4b-6**; final positive description **#1Co 13:7**. That these verses say nothing about spiritual gifts, and retain their full force even though gifts be absent, proves that, whereas gifts without love are worthless, love even without gifts retains its value undiminished. No stronger proof of the value of love can be given. Thus the contrast of **#1Co 13:1-3** increases the force of **#1Co 13:4-7**.

Verse 4a. **Love is longsuffering**: i.e. continues in spite of conduct likely to quench it. This continuance often, but not always, shows itself in restraining anger. Hence, in the Bible, the word is often (**#Ro 2:4; 9:22** etc.) used in this connection.

**Kind**: gentle in conduct, so that a man is pleasant to deal with. In both these qualities the man of love is like God, (cp. **#Ro 2:5**,) who is an impersonation of infinite love.

Verse 4b.-6. **Jealous**: evidently an idle vexation at the superiority of others. See under **#1Co 12:31**. We are never vexed at the excellence or success of those whom we love. Nor do we *vaunt* ourselves: i.e. parade before them any supposed superiority of our own. For boasted superiority separates; whereas love unites.

**Puffed-up**: as in **#1Co 8:1**. In view of those we love, we never indulge inflated opinions about ourselves. And we are thus saved, in reference to them, from *unseemly* conduct.

**Does not seek her own**: exemplified in Paul himself, **#1Co 10:33**. Contrast **#Php 2:20f**.

**Anger**: not here a simple purpose to punish, as in **#Eph 4:26**, but the vindictiveness which so often accompanies it. To this, love never prompts; though it often compels us to punish.

**Does not reckon etc.**: **#2Co 5:19; #Ro 4:8; #Phm 1:18**: does not calculate injury as a debt to be paid off.

**Does not rejoice in unrighteousness**; reveals the moral worth of love. We are not pleased at the wrong-doing of those whom we intelligently love. For we feel instinctively that by wrong-doing they injure themselves. E.g., many a bad father is sorry to see his children walking in his steps.

**Rejoices with the truth**: similar to **#Ro 7:22**, "I am pleased together with the Law." The truth, (**#Ro 1:18**,) here impersonated, rejoices when it realizes itself in human conduct, i.e. when men do that which corresponds with the eternal reality, viz. the nature of God. Now love is the essence of

God: and truth is love manifested. Therefore, whatever conduct gratifies, i.e. agrees with, the one, gratifies also the other.

Ver. 7. **Bears all things**: is not shaken by any sort of ingratitude. And we are ever ready to *believe all things* from those we love; and to cherish all sorts of expectations of good about them.

**Endures**: see **#Ro 2:7**. Love prompts us to continue doing good to those we love in spite of difficulties and perils. Paul's own example: **#2Ti 2:10**. The word *bear* refers probably to ungrateful conduct in the person loved, and is thus parallel to "longsuffering" in **#1Co 13:4**; *endures* refers to any hardship involved in helping those we love.

**#1Co 13:4-7** define clearly Paul's use in 1Cor. 13. of the word *love*. It is a principle of action prompting us to use our powers and opportunities for the good of others, and to draw them to us that we may share, and thus remove, their sorrow, and that they may share our good. This principle appears, more or less perfect and intelligent, in all true human love. It is the mainspring of the entire activity of God. And so far as it rules our conduct are we like God. Of this principle, these verses are the strongest commendation. For the man in whom these traits of character meet commands, even though he have no special gifts, our highest respect. And all these traits of character are a natural outworking of the one principle of love. For a lack of any one of them proves that love is deficient. This practical picture of love also makes us feel by contrast the worthlessness of the character described in **#1Co 13:1-3**.

For shorter, but similar, personifications of love, see **#1Co 8:1**; **#Ro 13:10**. In Clement's Epistle, ch. 49, (see appendix A,) is an evident copy of these verses. Compare also the praise of "wisdom" in Prov. 8. and 9.

Ver. 8.-13. After portraying in **#1Co 13:1-3** a man with various gifts in the highest conceivable degree but without love, and pronouncing him worthless, and portraying in **#1Co 13:4-7** the excellent practical outworking of love, even apart from gifts, Paul now shows that love surpasses gifts in that while they will pass away love abides.

**Falls**: as in **#Lu 16:17**: loses its position of dignity, by ceasing to be an active principle ever working out fresh results. For this is implied in the contrast of **#1Co 13:8b-12**. The gifts so highly prized will all pass away.

Verse 8b.-12. **Will-come-to-nought**: become inoperative, cease to produce results. Same word in **#1Co 1:28**: see also **#Ro 3:3**.

**Knowledge**: i.e. the special gift of knowledge, **#1Co 13:2**; **12:8**. Notice that the gift of tongues *will cease* absolutely, when the tongue is silent in death; the gifts of *prophecy* and *knowledge* will cease practically. Of this last assertion **#1Co 13:9, 10** are a proof. That tongues will cease, needs no proof.

**In part**: in contrast to *the fully developed*. Our knowledge now embraces only fragments. This is true universally; but refers here to the special gift of knowledge.

**In part we prophesy:** we announce under the special influence of the Spirit only a part of the truth.

**The fully-developed:** the complete or *full-grown*, in contrast to the fragmentary. See note, **#1Co 2:6**. **#1Co 13:10** states a universal principle; but refers specially to **#1Co 13:9**. It proves *will-come-to-nought* in **#1Co 13:8**. *Knowledge* and *prophecy* are but torches giving amid general darkness a partial light. Therefore, when dawns the eternal Day they will become useless. They who now know most and speak most fluently will then have no advantage over others.

Ver. 11. Illustrates and confirms **#1Co 13:8b-10**.

**I thought:** formed conceptions.

**I reckoned:** drew inferences. The *child* first speaks, then gives evidence of observation, and then of reasoning.

**When I became:** or "now that I-am-become," "have-set-aside." [The Greek perfects assert the permanence of the change from childhood to manhood, and the permanent dismissal of childish things.]

**I-made-as-nought:** as in **#1Co 13:8, 10**: laid aside as useless the toys or schoolbooks which once I prized and used. This comparison, suggested probably by the word "full-grown," (cp. **#Eph 4:13**), is an argument from the greater to the less. For the things of eternity are much more completely above and beyond our present thought than are the things of manhood to a child. Yet the mature knowledge of manhood makes schoolbooks etc. quite useless.

Ver. 12. Proof that the comparison of childhood applies to the matter of **#1Co 13:8**; and thus parallel to **#1Co 13:9**.

**Mirror:** **#Jas 1:23**; **#2Co 3:18**: known in the earliest times, **#Ex 38:8**; Wisdom 7:26; Sirach 12:11. They were usually circular plates of metal, with a handle. Their imperfect reflection suggested this metaphor. The Gospel is a mirror (**#2Co 3:18**) showing us as in a camera obscura, but imperfectly, the things of eternity.

**Dark-saying:** the Greek original of our word "enigma." It explains the foregoing metaphor. Our knowledge of eternity comes through the Gospel, which is, compared with the full light of eternity, a riddle difficult to solve: in other words, *we see now through a mirror*.

**Face to face:** **#Ge 32:30**; cp. **#Nu 12:8**. We shall stand before God, and look upon His face; (**#Mt 5:8**; **#Heb 12:14**;) and, seeing Him, we shall see all things.

**Now I know etc.:** continues the contrast, which is individualized and thus intensified by the change, as in **#1Co 13:11**, from *we* to *I*. The change was prompted by Paul's intense and personal conception of his own thought.

**Understood:** an intelligent comprehension which looks down upon and through a matter. Same word in #1Co 14:37; 16:18; #2Co 1:13f; #2Co 6:9; 13:5; #Ro 1:28, 32; 3:20; 10:2.

**I-have-been-understood:** a silent reference to Him by whom all things are fully known. Cp. #1Co 8:3.

**According as etc.:** corresponding with God's perfect knowledge of him. In other words, the light of eternity, which is the outshining of the mind of God, will reveal fully and accurately to each man his own inner self.

Those who now know most, and, moved by the Spirit, proclaim most fully the things of God, know and speak only a fragment of what will in that Day be known universally. Consequently, their gifts, so valuable now, will then be of no worth. For, compared with that time, our present life is but childhood; and the gifts we prize now will then be thrown aside as useless, like the toys we have already thrown aside. If so, knowledge and prophecy have only a passing value. And the gift of tongues will evidently cease soon in the silence of death.

From #1Co 13:12 it is quite clear that the light which will supersede the gifts of knowledge and prophecy is that of eternity. Consequently, #1Co 13:8 refers, not to the cessation of extraordinary gifts in the later ages of the Church, but to the end of the present life, either at death or at the coming of Christ. But it would be unfair to infer from this that Paul expected these gifts to continue till Christ comes. For, about this he says nothing; but declares only that sooner or later, to the individual and to the race, these gifts will pass away.

Ver. 13. **But now etc.:** as contrast to #1Co 13:8b-12, as in #1Co 12:18. While prophecy etc. will pass away, *faith, hope, love, remain*. This is evidently equivalent to "never falls," in #1Co 13:8; and therefore denotes continuance in the life to come. For it is a clear contrast to "will be set aside" in #1Co 13:8; which declares, as we have seen, that the partial knowledge of time will be displaced by the perfect knowledge of eternity.

**Faith:** assurance that God's word will come true, as a general principle. This will remain, although the special application of it in #1Co 13:2 will pass away.

**Hope:** that which looks forward to, and grasps before hand, things to come. Paul leaves us to test for ourselves the assertion of #1Co 13:13a. But the contrast of knowledge and prophecy enables us to do so. For it is evident that the change which will make these valueless will not set aside faith, hope, love. That our happy state will continue for ever, we shall know simply because God has promised it, i.e. by a faith similar to our present belief of the Gospel. And we shall have the joy of looking forward to a further and ceaseless and infinite development of happiness and glory. Thus, amid glory already seen and possessed there will still be further glories not yet seen, (#Ro 8:24,) and matter of continued *faith* and *hope*. And mutual *love*, animating and binding together the many members of that glorified family, will shine through every face and breathe in a thousand ever recurring words and acts of heavenly kindness.

**These three**; seems to imply that these are in some sense a complete description of our abiding state. Among *these three* continuing gifts *love* stands out as *greater* than the others. This is implied in "but have not love," **#1Co 13:1-3**; and is proved by **#1Co 13:4-7** which surpass anything that can be said of faith or hope. The passing mention of these strengthens the contrast between love and spiritual gifts. For these last, as passing away, are evidently inferior to faith and hope; which nevertheless are inferior to love.

The argument of **#1Co 13:8-13** involves the important truth that the continuity of human character is not broken either by death or judgment, any more than it is now broken by change of circumstances. For we are told explicitly that when human knowledge fades in the light of eternity even then love will abide. Now *knowledge* refers, not to the abstract principle, which will never pass away, but to the superiority of knowledge possessed now by an individual. And, to give force to Paul's argument, *love* must refer to the degree of Christian love attained here by each individual. Only thus can the permanence of *love* be a motive for the pursuit of it. Moreover, what is true of knowledge and prophecy is true of all other capacities for usefulness, wealth, rank, learning, eloquence, mental power. We learn, therefore that although before the gates of death we shall lay down for ever the various weapons with which God has armed us to fight for Him, we shall carry through those gates the moral character which the conflict of life has developed within us. And this gives to moral excellence an infinite superiority over the most brilliant powers for usefulness.

With love, which in **#1Co 13:1-3** had a place absolutely unique, are now associated, though in a subordinate place, faith and hope. Yet, though subordinate, they are here mentioned before love. Notice a similar association in **#Ro 5:1-5**. All this suggests that *faith*, the entrance (**#Ro 5:1**) into the Christian life, and *hope*, the immediate result (**#Ro 5:2**) of faith, are designed to lead to *love*; and that the degree in which they do this is the measure of their abiding and practical worth.

That Paul says nothing about the eternal results of a right use of knowledge and prophecy, results which seem at first sight to place these gifts on a par with love, suggests that these results will be of eternal worth to us only so far as they have been an outcome of Christian love. And if so they do not in the least degree lessen the superiority of love.

# **I CORINTHIANS**

## *SECTION XXV*

### *PROPHECY IS MORE USEFUL THAN THE GIFT OF TONGUES*

#### CH. XIV. 1-25

**Pursue love. And be emulous for the spiritual gifts; but especially that you may prophesy. For he that speaks with a tongue speaks, not to men, but to God. For no one hears: but in spirit he speaks mysteries. But he that prophesies speaks to men edification and exhortation and consolation. He that speaks with a tongue edifies himself: he that prophesies edifies a church. I wish all of you to speak with tongues, but rather that you may prophesy. And greater is he that prophesies than he that speaks with tongues, except he interpret, in order that the church may receive edification.**

**Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless to you I speak either with revelation or with knowledge, or with prophecy or with teaching? Even the lifeless things when they give voice, whether pipe or harp, if they do not give distinction to their notes, how will that which is played with pipe or with harp be known? For indeed if an uncertain voice a trumpet give, who will prepare himself for war? So you also, if with the tongue you do not give a significant word, how will that which is spoken be known? For you will be men speaking to air. So many, it may be, kinds of voices there are in the world, and not one is voiceless. If then I do not know the force of the voice, I shall be, to him who speaks, a barbarian, and he who speaks a barbarian with me. So you also, since you are emulous for spirits, with a view to the edification of the church seek that you may abound.**

**For which cause, he that speaks with a tongue, let him pray in order that he may interpret. For, if I be praying with a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is without fruit. What then is it? I will pray with the spirit; and I will pray also with the mind. I will sing a psalm with the spirit; and I will sing a psalm also with the mind. Else, if thou bless with the spirit, he that occupies the place of the private member, how will he say the Amen after thy thanksgiving, since he knows not what thou art saying? For thou indeed givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. I give thanks to God that more than all of you I speak with a tongue. But in church I prefer to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, than ten thousand words with a tongue.**

**Brothers, do not become children in your minds. Yet in wickedness be infants: but in your minds become full grown men.**

**In the Law it is written "that in men of other tongues and with other men's lips I will speak to this people: and not even thus will they hear me," (#Isa 28:11,) says the Lord. So that the tongues are for a sign, not for those that believe, but for the unbelievers. But prophecy, not for the unbelievers but for those who believe.**



**If then the whole church come together to the same place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in private members or unbelievers, will they not say that you are mad? But, if all prophesy, and there come in some unbeliever or private member, he is convicted by all, he is placed under examination by all, the hidden things of his heart become manifest: and thus, having fallen upon his face he will worship God, announcing that in reality God is in you.**

Ver. 1. **Pursue love:** practical application of 1Cor. 13. It implies that love, like spiritual gifts, (#1Co 12:31,) may be obtained by persistent effort; and thus only. We *pursue love* by watching against and resisting everything contrary to it, by prayer and by the effort to believe that what we ask God will give, by pondering God's love as manifested on the cross of Christ that thus we may experience its transforming power, and by endeavoring to (#Ro 14:15) "walk according to love."

**Be emulous for etc.;** takes up #1Co 12:31.

**But especially etc.:** specific matter of § 25, viz. that prophecy is better than the gift of tongues.

In #1Co 12:31, after urging us to pursue the greater gifts, instead of saying which they are, Paul shows us a way (of pursuing them) surpassing all other ways. He then unfolds the exceeding worth of love, and exhorts us to pursue it. And that this is quite consistent with pursuit of spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy, he now proves by again urging us to pursue these gifts. It is therefore evident that to pursue love is the "excellent way" of #1Co 12:31. And this we can understand. For love prompts us to seek powers which will make us useful to others, and specially those powers which are most useful, rather than such as merely attract attention to ourselves; and quickens our intelligence to distinguish the more useful gifts, and prevents our pursuit of these from degenerating into self-seeking. To cultivate love is, therefore, the best preparation for a pursuit of the various gifts with which the Spirit is ready to enrich us.

Ver. 2. Begins a proof, occupying § 25, of the just-asserted superiority of prophecy.

**With a tongue:** see note under #1Co 14:40.

**But to God;** suggests that the miraculous tongues were used chiefly in prayer or praise. So #1Co 14:13-16; #Ac 2:11; 10:46.

**For no one etc.:** proof of *not to men*.

**Hears:** as in #Mt 13:15; #Mr 4:33. Others hear a sound: but they no more hear what is said than if they heard no sound. As Paul is here comparing only tongues and prophecy, he leaves out of sight the separate gift of interpretation which is mentioned expressly in #1Co 14:5. His words imply clearly that, apart from this additional gift, no one understood the speaker; and thus prove that to speak with a tongue was not to speak in a foreign language. For, in that case, the possible presence of some one who understood it could not be overlooked. The word "unknown" inserted in #1Co 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27 (A.V.) is therefore altogether incorrect and misleading.

**In spirit:** in his own spirit, (cp. #1Co 14:14,) in that side of his being which is nearest to God and on which the Spirit of God directly acts. Cp. #Ro 1:9.

**Mysteries:** see note, #1Co 3:4: here specially appropriate. For, in the inmost and uppermost chamber of his being, he speaks secrets understood only by those to whom God has revealed them.

Ver. 3. Prophecy, in contrast to the gift of tongues.

**To men:** emphatic, in contrast to "not to men" in #1Co 14:2.

**Speaks edification:** his words build up the spiritual structure God is erecting in their hearts. The added words *and exhortation etc.* limit the word *edification* here to spiritual instruction.

**Exhortation:** #Ro 12:1: words prompting to action.

**Consolation:** for the down-hearted. Same word in #Joh 11:19, 31. Both words together in #1Th 2:11.

Ver. 4. Develops, and sums up in compact form, the argument of #1Co 14:2, 3.

**Edifies himself:** constant result of "speaking to God," #1Co 14:2. This implies, as do #1Co 14:5, 18, that to speak with a tongue was spiritually profitable to the man himself.

**A church:** in superior contrast to *himself*. The one does good to a man; the other, to an assembly of men.

Ver. 5. Though God in His wisdom has allotted these various gifts to various persons, yet Paul, so far as he is concerned, would like all to possess this gift which he himself possesses in so great measure and for which in #1Co 14:18 he thanks God.

**That you may prophesy;** is not only Paul's wish but the purpose for which he writes § 25. Cp. #1Co 14:1.

**And greater etc.:** adds to the just expressed preference the important lesson that usefulness to others is the measure of our real greatness. This agrees exactly with #1Co 13:13: for love ever prompts us to do good to others. It also justifies #1Co 12:31a.

**Except he interpret;** implies that sometimes but not always the same man had the gifts of tongues and of interpretation. Notice that the repeated appeals, "speaks to men edification," "edifies a church," *the church receive edification*, gain great force from 1Cor. 13. For, if love animate us, we shall most desire that which will make us most useful to others. Thus, to pursue love, is the best way (#1Co 12:31) to obtain "the greater gifts."

Ver. 6. First proof of the uselessness of the public exercise of the gift of tongues. "Supposing I come to visit you, and in your midst do nothing but speak with tongues, what good shall I do you?"

Paul's pre-eminence (#1Co 14:18) in this gift, so highly prized at Corinth, justified this personal argument: and its force is overwhelming.

**Come to you, profit you, speak to you:** emphatic repetition, giving prominence to the chief point in #1Co 14:6.

**Profit;** keeps before us the edification (#1Co 14:3, 5) of others, as the only right aim of those who speak in church. So #1Co 14:12, 17, 19, 26, 31.

**Speak with revelation:** cp. #1Co 14:26: "unless I have some truth made known to me by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation," #Eph 1:17. Cp. #Eph 3:3, 5.

**With knowledge:** with some truth acquired by ordinary methods. Probably it differs here from *revelation*, as in #1Co 12:8 from "wisdom," and in #1Co 13:2 from "mysteries." For these last three are closely connected: #Eph 1:17; 3:3, 5. We have here two pairs, the former giving the inner source, and the latter the outer form, of two kinds of profitable speaking. In each pair the first member denotes extraordinary, the second denotes ordinary knowledge and speaking. Paul might have said "except I interpret," as in #1Co 14:5. But he prefers words which remind us that the gift of tongues, otherwise quite valueless in public, is when accompanied by interpretation only at best equal to the gift of prophecy, or even the lesser gift of knowledge. "Unless my words are accompanied by special inward enlightenment or acquired knowledge, i.e. unless they assume the form of prophecy or teaching, what good shall I do you?"

Ver. 7.-9. Second argument, supporting that of #1Co 14:6.

**Voice:** any kind of sound. Same word, #Re 14:2; 18:22, etc. Chosen probably because Paul here compares musical notes to the human voice.

**Pipe:** a very common musical instrument. It was either a cane pierced with holes for notes, or wood, especially boxwood, bored out; and was played like a flageolet.

**Harp:** in Greek, *Kithara*, from which we have "guitar": an instrument with not more than seven strings, and akin to the lyre.

**Give distinction etc.:** i.e. notes such as can be distinguished from other sounds.

**That which is played with pipe etc.:** the sense to be conveyed by the pipe; as proved by the *trumpet* (#1Co 14:8) quoted in addition to the *pipe* and *harp* in explanation and proof of *how shall it be known etc.*

**Uncertain:** not conveying clear thought to the hearer. Cp. #1Co 9:26.

**Voice;** keeps up the comparison with the human voice. Of all lifeless sounding bodies, a military trumpet is most significant. For, at its sound, armies march forth to battle. But this they would not do, as Paul's question reminds us, if the trumpet's note did not convey to them a clear meaning. And,

for the meaning to be clear, the notes of the trumpet must be different from other sounds. Now **#1Co 14:8** is given to explain **#1Co 14:7**. We must, therefore, think of the pipe or harp as used to convey intelligence, as in **#Da 3:5**. In this case, unless the music had given a sound plainly understood, and different from other sounds floating over the plain of Dura, the multitudes would not, at its bidding, have bowed to the image of gold. Paul mentions the pipe and harp, instead of going at once to the war-trumpet, to remind us that this last belongs to a large class of sounds given by lifeless objects yet conveying intelligence. But in order to do this they must give a sound clearly distinguished from other sounds, and of which the meaning is known. The word *distinction* in **#1Co 14:7** was chosen probably in contrast to the indistinguishable sounds uttered by those who spoke with tongues. We may extend the argument to any signal by sound. All such are useless unless the sound is different from others, and has a known meaning.

**So you also:** "your case is like that of the trumpet."

**With the tongue:** graphic addition to *you*, suggesting how superior is a man to a trumpet.

**Significant:** conveying a meaning, like a military trumpet.

**How will be known:** i.e. "your words will not convey knowledge." So **#1Co 14:7**. The question of **#1Co 14:9a** is explained and justified in **#1Co 14:9b**, which tells what will be the actual state of things in the supposed case.

**To air:** cp. **#1Co 9:26**.

The argument of **#1Co 14:7-9** would have much more force for Paul's readers, who were practically familiar with the gift of tongues, than it has for us. But its general scope is evident. The sounds given forth even by lifeless bodies convey sometimes intelligence; it may be, of the utmost importance. Of this the military trumpet is a conspicuous example. But in these cases the sound must have a definite meaning; and must, therefore, be quite distinct from other similar sounds. Else it is useless. Now the gift of tongues (when not accompanied by the different gift of interpretation) gave forth only indistinguishable and unmeaning sound; and was, therefore, of no more use than a trumpet whose notes could not be distinguished from other sounds on the field, or than a toy blown by a child to make a noise.

Ver. 10.-11. A third argument.

**Kinds of voices:** i.e. languages.

**So many**, suggests that the number is great; *it may be* (cp. **#1Co 15:37**) implies that the precise number does not affect the argument.

**Voiceless:** without meaning, and therefore no language at all.

**If then:** i.e. since all the innumerable languages of men have a meaning.

**The force of the voice:** the meaning it is able to convey to those who understand it.

**I shall be a barbarian:** (see #Ro 1:14:) words well understood by every one who has been in the company of men speaking a language unknown to him. The mixture of nationalities at Corinth would give great force to this argument. But these words do not imply that he who spoke "with a tongue" spoke in a foreign human language. The analogy of foreign languages, Paul adduces to dissuade his readers from a public exercise of the gift of tongues by reminding them that such exercise reproduces in the church the estrangement felt by men ignorant of each other's language, an estrangement increased by their consciousness that the words which are to them unmeaning have nevertheless a meaning. Just so the words spoken "with a tongue" have a meaning, but one unknown to the hearers. Therefore, he who speaks in public with a tongue sets up between himself and his brethren a barrier similar to that of nationality.

Ver. 12. **So you also;** applies the argument of #1Co 14:10, 11, (as does #1Co 14:9 the argument of #1Co 14:7, 8,) but in a form applicable to all three arguments of #1Co 14:6-11 and leading up directly to the chief argument of § 25 which is stated in #1Co 14:2-5. Although all these powers had one source viz. the One Spirit of God, yet, since they were various and each was evidently an outworking of an animating principle higher than man's own spirit, Paul could for the moment leave out of sight the oneness of the origin and speak of those who desired these powers as *emulous for spirits*. Similarly, the One Spirit is in #Re 1:4; 3:1; 4:5 called "the seven Spirits which are before the throne." The phrase is chosen here perhaps because the Corinthians, in their desire for mere supernatural inspiration, forgot sometimes that the various gifts had one source. Their aspiration was, therefore, only an emulation for spirits.

**Emulous:** as Paul wished them to be, #1Co 14:1; 12:31.

**The edification of the church;** brings the foregoing subordinate argument, and arguments, to bear upon the great argument of #1Co 14:2-5. For it is quite certain that a barbarian's unknown words edify no one.

**Abound:** be rich in spiritual gifts. To this Paul exhorts his readers, thus sanctioning their acknowledged emulation; but bids them seek these gifts in order to help forward the spiritual life of their brethren. He is thus directing them to those "greater gifts" which are (#1Co 12:31) most worthy of their emulation.

Ver. 13. A specific direction resulting from the general direction of #1Co 14:12. It also keeps before us #1Co 14:5 which completes the chief argument, viz. #1Co 14:2-5, to which argument those of #1Co 14:6-12 are subordinate.

**Pray;** denotes all speaking to God, and includes the blessing and thanksgiving of #1Co 14:16f. And, since #1Co 14:14 is given in proof of #1Co 14:13, the word *pray* must have the same reference in both verses, viz. public prayer in church-meeting. Consequently, *that he may interpret* is not the matter of prayer but an end kept in view while praying in public. The word pray is therefore equivalent to *speak with a tongue*; and reminds us that such speaking is speaking to God. Cp. #1Co 14:2. Since edification of the church is the purpose of all spiritual gifts, he who in an assembly prays

with a tongue must do so with a purpose of afterwards *interpreting* his own inspired but unintelligible prayer. If he be unable to do this, this verse enjoins him to keep silence in church, unless (**#1Co 14:28**) an interpreter be present. This specific direction is thus a forerunner of § 26. And, that the gift of tongues needed to be supplemented by interpretation, proves its inferiority to prophecy; which is the main thesis of § 25.

Ver. 14.-15. Proof that speaking with a tongue must needs be followed by interpretation.

**My spirit:** Paul's own spirit, as in **#1Co 2:11; 5:4; 16:18; #2Co 2:13; 7:13; #Ro 1:9; 8:16**. Cp. **#1Co 14:2**.

**Without fruit:** good results which are the organic outworking of the mind. Cp. **#Mt 13:22; #Tit 3:14; #2Pe 1:8**. The *mind* is the organ of perception and reason. So **#Ro 1:28**. The *spirit* is that inmost and uppermost chamber of our nature on which the Holy Spirit acts directly, sometimes, as this verse proves, exerting an influence which the mind cannot comprehend and therefore cannot transmit to others. In other words, there may be operations of the Holy Spirit which reach only the highest element of man's nature and do not permeate and enlighten his intelligence.

**What then is it?** "Since this partial operation is possible, how do matters stand?" This question Paul answers by saying what he himself will do.

**With the spirit;** as in **#1Co 14:14**. His prayer shall be an outflow of the activity both of the highest element of his being and of his intelligence: i.e. the prayers he offers with a tongue moved by the Spirit of God, he will also interpret. In this way, both spirit and mind will be at work. And the contrast *without-fruit* suggests that Paul's mental activity will be useful.

**A psalm:** **#Eph 5:19; #Col 3:16**: a hymn of praise to God similar to the book of Psalms; **#Lu 20:42; 24:44; #Ac 1:20; 13:33**. It refers here probably to an impromptu utterance of sacred song under a special influence of the Spirit. The argument seems to be that the gift of tongues without interpretation is defective, because limited to a part of our being, a limitation which makes it not profitable to others. And this defect of the mere gift of tongues is a reason why its public exercise should always (**#1Co 14:13**) be in view of subsequent interpretation.

The first person, **I will pray etc.**, directs our attention, as in **#1Co 8:13**, to Paul's own purpose which all must commend.

Ver. 16.-19. Argument in support of the foregoing purpose; and a second argument (in addition to that of **#1Co 14:14**) in support of the direction in **#1Co 14:13**. Paul turns suddenly to his readers and shows the consequence if they do not follow his example.

**Bless:** speak good of God. See under **#Ro 1:25**. It was suggested probably by the word "psalm." Cp. Pss. 144-150.

**With the spirit:** as in **#1Co 14:14f**: in the upmost element of their being, on which the Holy Spirit directly works.

**Private-member:** same word in #1Co 14:23, 24; #2Co 11:6; #Ac 4:13. In Philo's *Life of Moses*, bk. iii. 29, it denotes Israelites generally in contrast to the priests. It is opposed both to officers and to those who have special capacity or training. Since we have in this Epistle no mention of church officers, it refers here probably to those not possessing the gifts of tongues or prophecy.

**Occupies the place etc.;** vivid picture of the scene, where private members have a place apart from him who is speaking with a tongue.

**The Amen:** (see under #Ro 1:25:) the well-known Amen, said by the assembly at the end of a public prayer. This is the earliest trace of something like Christian liturgical worship.

**Thanksgiving:** implied in *bless*. To *bless* makes prominent the good things we say about God: to *give thanks* tells our gratitude.

**Thy:** emphatic. To the thanks of others the private member may assent: to *thine* he cannot. For, that *he knows not what thou sayest*, would make the customary *Amen* an empty form. Thus the very saying Amen proves the need that what is said with a tongue be interpreted.

Ver. 17. An admission, in view of #1Co 14:16, of the real worth of the gift of tongues. Cp. #1Co 14:2b.

**Gives thanks well:** for he who speaks with a tongue, speaks (#1Co 14:2) to God.

**Edified:** the purpose of public thanksgiving, as of all joint worship. For the thanks of others evokes our own gratitude to God. But the man who cannot say intelligently the customary Amen is evidently *not edified*. This last word, which leads up to the argument of #1Co 14:5, marks the completion of the argument of #1Co 14:6-16.

Ver. 18.-19. Fuller development, in reference to Paul himself, of #1Co 14:17. His *thanks* proves the real worth, to the possessor, of the gift of tongues, by revealing the spiritual gain derived therefrom.

**More than all of you:** a rebuke to boasters.

**In church:** as in #1Co 11:18.

**With my mind:** words which my mind understands; and in the utterance of which therefore, my mind is active.

**Others also;** as well as myself receive benefit. From #1Co 14:19 we infer that in words spoken with a tongue the mind is inactive, and that such words, be they ever so many, do not (apart from interpretation) *instruct others*. Notice the force of Paul's frequent appeal to his own purpose and practice. Cp. #1Co 6:15; 8:13; 10:33. As he speaks, we feel the attractive power of his moral earnestness and of his pure motive.

The argument subordinate to that of **#1Co 14:5**, "that the church may receive edification," is now complete. Paul has proved that to speak with a tongue cannot edify, by referring (**#1Co 14:6**) to himself visiting the Corinthian church, to (**#1Co 14:7-9**) musical instruments used as signals, and to (**#1Co 14:10-12**) foreigners who know not each others' language. He therefore repeats in **#1Co 14:13** the injunction implied in **#1Co 14:5** that the public use of the gift of tongues be always with a view to subsequent interpretation. This injunction he further supports in **#1Co 14:14, 15** by reminding us that without interpretation the gift of tongues does not permeate the entire man, and therefore cannot (**#1Co 14:16, 17**) produce intelligent joint-worship. Consequently, in **#1Co 14:18, 19**, while acknowledging the worth of the gift of tongues, Paul expresses a preference which all will approve for five intelligible words rather than an infinite number which no one can understand.

Notice that, by dwelling upon and proving by argument after argument, the uselessness of a parade of the gift of tongues, Paul greatly strengthens our conviction of the folly of such parade.

Ver. 20. A sudden and brotherly appeal, suggesting that the Corinthians indulged in a childish parade of their gifts. Paul's own previous argument against it forces him from this reproof.

**Do not become:** as though their folly were only beginning, but increasing.

**But in wickedness etc.:** Not all the characteristics of childhood are inappropriate to the Christian life. Cp. **#Mt 18:3**.

**Infants:** **#Eph 4:14; #Heb 5:13**: stronger term than *children*.

**Full-grown men:** as in **#1Co 2:6**. The repetition of the exhortation of **#1Co 14:20a** suggests that Paul refers to the difficult Old Testament quotation of **#1Co 14:21**.

Ver. 21. Free quotation of **#Isa 28:11**, suggested perhaps by "children" and "infants."

**In the Law:** the Old Testament; see **#Ro 3:19**.

**Other:** i.e. foreign. The people complained that Isaiah spoke to them in childish words. He declares that in men of stammering lip and in another language God will speak to them: i.e. by the presence of foreign soldiers, whose speech will seem to them nonsense, God will announce His anger against them. The form of the words *not even thus etc.* seems to be derived from the end of **#Isa 28:12**: but their real justification is the entire context, which teaches that even the warning given by the invasion of foreigners will be in vain. In other words, to people who thought themselves too wise to need God's plain and intelligible teaching, and who therefore disbelieved the prophet's words, God declares that he will speak through the unknown language of foreign soldiers; and that even this mode of divine utterance will be neglected by them.

Ver. 22. A general principle inferred from **#Isa 28:11**. That God speaks to men in an unknown language, is meant to be a sign, a sign given not to believers but to unbelievers; and therefore a mark not of the reward which follows faith but of punishment for unbelief. The correctness of this principle to the men of Isaiah's day, is at once evident. For it was Judah's disregard of the prophet's



plain words which moved God to send the foreign armies. And the stubbornness of this unbelief is seen in the people's refusal to take even this new warning. Therefore, the foreign language heard in the land was a mark, given to unbelievers, of their coming punishment. Now, with the strange talk of the Assyrian soldiers the gift of tongues at Corinth had this in common, that it was not understood by those to whom it was sent. It was therefore a mark, not of God's nearness, but of His distance; i.e. not of full favor, but of low spiritual life. Consequently, the gift of tongues unaccompanied by that of interpretation was no fit matter of boasting. It was a proof that the inward presence of the Spirit had not yet permeated their entire being. This is not inconsistent with Paul's own thankfulness for the gift of tongues. For in his case (**#1Co 14:15**) it was accompanied by interpretation. Moreover, as he admits, it brought spiritual profit to its possessor: and all such, even in its most undeveloped forms, is matter, not for boasting, but for gratitude. And it was a proof (**#Ac 10:46**) that its possessor was accepted by God. That Paul does not mean that the gift of tongues was designed to lead unbelievers to faith, is proved plainly by the last words of **#1Co 14:21**; and by the contrast of **#1Co 14:23** and **#1Co 14:24**.

**But prophecy etc.;** leads us up, after abundant proof of the uselessness to others of the mere gift of tongues, to the chief matter of § 25, viz. the greater value of prophecy.

**Not for the unbelievers:** suggested perhaps by **#Isa 28:11**, which intimates that the prophet's voice will cease, to make way for the speech of the foreign soldiers.

Ver. 23.-25. **If then etc.:** accepting the general principle of **#1Co 14:22**, Paul proceeds to show its practical operation.

**The whole church;** implies that such united gatherings were usual at Corinth.

**All speak with tongues:** not necessarily all together. For this would cause confusion even in (**#1Co 14:24**) the case of prophecy. Paul supposes that one after another speaks with a tongue, and no one speaks otherwise.

**There come in;** implies that the admission of strangers was allowed. Of this **#1Co 14:25** shows a good and possible result.

**Private-members:** as in **#1Co 14:16**. perhaps from other churches. For all the church-members at Corinth are supposed to be present, all speaking with tongues.

**Unbelievers:** heathens or Jews.

**Will they not say etc.:** cp. **#Ac 2:13**. If so, the speaking with tongues would do them no good.

**If all prophesy:** one after another. The apparent contradiction of **#1Co 14:22** suggests that the second *unbeliever*, like many at Corinth, had not heard in its power the word of God; whereas the first had heard and rejected it, like the Jews of Isaiah's day.

**Some unbeliever;** depicts the effect of prophecy in the heart of a solitary and casual stranger. In **#1Co 14:23** several spectators express to each other their astonishment. There the private members are mentioned first, as noticing first the ridiculousness of a form of worship which separated them from their brethren in Christ. Here the unbeliever stands first: for the effect of the Gospel on him is specially depicted.

**Convicted by all:** each succeeding speaker, uttering the Spirit's words, increases his consciousness of guilt, sifts his inner life, and brings before him in their true character the secret thoughts and purposes of his heart. Thus: sifted by speaker after speaker.

**Announcing:** to any who may be within hearing. That your words reveal the secrets of his heart, proves to him *that* your words come from *God dwelling in you*. And, that God is thus present in the hearts of men, fills him with awe of God, and moves him to worship. With such results of prophecy Paul's readers were probably familiar. Cp. **#Ac 2:37**. And with this graphic description of the effects of prophecy even upon unbelievers, Paul concludes his proof of its superiority to the gift of tongues. Of this we have an illustration in **#Ac 2:13** and **#Ac 2:37**.

For the ARGUMENT of § 25 Paul prepares us by proving in 1Cor. 13. that we are truly great (cp. **#1Co 14:5b**) in proportion as love is the mainspring of our life. Now love ever prompts us to seek the good of others; and will, therefore, prompt us to seek the gift of prophecy, which enables us to instruct, exhort, and encourage others, rather than the gift of tongues which does good only to our selves. The uselessness to others of the mere gift of tongues, he proves and enforces by suggesting that he might himself speak thus to the Corinthians, and by referring to musical instruments used as signals and to men speaking a foreign and unknown language. Therefore, after placing before us the good of others as the object of all speaking in church, he urges that the gift of tongues be used in public only with a view to subsequent interpretation. This he supports by a fourth and a fifth argument, viz. that, apart from interpretation, to pray with a tongue puts into activity only a part of our immaterial nature, and that it makes intelligent joint worship impossible. Therefore, while admitting the real worth of tongues, Paul repeats in strong terms his preference for prophecy. The evident folly of preferring the gift of tongues calls forth a brotherly rebuke. And he reminds us that to speak with tongues in the midst of brethren is to play the part of the Assyrian soldiers through whom God declared His anger against ancient Judah. In contrast to the uselessness of an uninterpreted tongue, Paul depicts the value, even to heathens, of the gift of prophecy.

In § 25 we learn, from Paul's frequent and emphatic repetition of the word *edify*, that the purpose of church meetings is not so much an approach of the individual to God as the spiritual progress of hearers by means of the voice of a speaker. Consequently, in the mode of our services we shall do well to consider the impression they will make upon the least gifted and upon unbelievers. We learn also that the various extraordinary powers with which the Spirit enriched the early church might be obtained by human effort; i.e. that they were given by the Spirit to those who diligently sought them. This is illustrated by Daniel studying the writings of Jeremiah. Cp. **#Da 9:2**; **#Jer 25:12**. Therefore, among the various gifts of the Spirit men could choose which should be their chief aim. And it was important to know which gifts were the most worthy of their pursuit. Since in this choice only Christian love can guide aright, Paul interposes between **#1Co 12:31** and **#1Co 14:1** a proof of its supreme excellence, and points to it as the best way to a correct choice.

This last lesson has, although these special gifts have passed away, an abiding and all-important bearing upon us. Now as then various powers may be obtained by human diligence; e.g. wealth, social influence, knowledge, eloquence, etc. Now as then we may choose whether we will pursue those powers which most benefit others or those which attract attention to ourselves. And the choice thus made is an almost infallible measure of spiritual stature. For both our aim and the strength of our preference and the intelligence of our selection will be determined by the degree of our Christian life, and by the brightness of that light which love sheds within and around its happy possessors.

Again, if Christian love animate us, we shall use in secret those gifts which, though useful to us, will not profit others by their public display. Otherwise we shall expose ourselves to arguments similar to those of **#1Co 14:6-21**. E.g., nothing is more helpful to the spiritual life than a knowledge of those languages in which God has been pleased, through the pen of the writers of the Bible, to speak to man. But we shall be kept back from parading such knowledge by remembering that to do so will make our hearers feel (**#1Co 14:11**) like barbarians and that others (**#1Co 14:6**) might treat us similarly. In our private communion with God we shall thankfully (**#1Co 14:18**) use this precious gift that thus we may hear His voice as distinctly as possible. But to our brethren we shall speak in such words as they can best understand.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XXVI

### *THE EXERCISE OF GIFTS IS NO EXCUSE FOR DISORDER*

#### CH. XIV. 26-40

**What then is it, brothers? Whenever you are coming together each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. If any one speaks with a tongue, let it be by two or at most three, and in turn; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him be silent in church. But to himself let him speak, and to God. Of prophets, let two or three speak; and let the others judge. But, if to another a revelation be given while sitting, let the first be silent. For you are able, one by one, all to prophesy, that all may learn and all may receive exhortation. And spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. For not a God of confusion is God, but of peace.**

**As in all the churches of the sayings, let the women be silent in the churches-for it is not permitted to them to speak-but let them be in subjection, according as also the Law says. And if they wish to learn something, at home let them ask their own husbands. For it is shameful to a woman to speak in church. Or, was it from you that the word of God went forth? Or, to you only did it reach?**

**If any one thinks himself to be a prophet or a spiritual man, let him recognize the things which I write unto you, that they are a command of the Lord. But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. So then, my brothers, be emulous to prophesy: and do not hinder speaking with tongues. But let all things be done becomingly, and according to order.**

After asserting, and applying to the case of prophecy and the gift of tongues, the general principle that we should prefer, and in public use only, those gifts which are profitable to others, Paul gives now specific directions about the exercise of these gifts, and about another kindred matter. In view of the actual conduct of the Corinthians, he reasserts, in **#1Co 14:26**, the general principle; and applies it, in **#1Co 14:27, 28**, to the gift of tongues, and, in **#1Co 14:29-33a**, to prophecy. He then forbids (**#1Co 14:33b-36**) women to speak in church. He concludes his specific directions by asserting in **#1Co 14:37, 38** his apostolic authority; and in **#1Co 14:39, 40** sums up 1Cor. 14. in two exhortations.

Ver. 26. **What then is it?** as in **#1Co 14:15**. "Admitting the foregoing, how do matters actually stand?"

**Come-together:** in an ordinary church gathering. Cp. **#1Co 14:23; 11:17, 18, 20**.

**Each-one:** every church-member. Cp. "all . . . all" in **#1Co 14:23f**.

**Psalm:** a hymn which he has composed or learned and wishes to have sung in church. Cp. **#1Co 14:16; #Eph 5:19**.

**Teaching:** as in **#1Co 14:6**: some truth acquired by ordinary means which he wishes to put before the assembly.

**Revelation:** **#1Co 14:6; #2Co 12:1, 7**: a truth unveiled to his mind by an extraordinary influence of the Spirit.

**A tongue:** he comes into the assembly under an influence which prompts him to "speak with a tongue."

**An interpretation:** **#1Co 12:10, 30**: he is ready to say in plain words what another has uttered with *a tongue*. Notice that the *psalm* and *teaching* are ordinary, the *revelation*, *tongue*, and *interpretation*, extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. But the same principle applies to all. This description, perhaps specially (cp. **#1Co 1:5**) characteristic of Corinth, is a vivid picture of the free and spontaneous church life of the early Christians. The Holy Spirit given to all moved all to speak. Yet this new life must not be uncontrolled; but must be directed, according to § 25, with a view to the *edification* of the members of the church.

Ver. 27.-28. Specific directions about speaking *with a tongue*.

**Two or at the most three:** at one meeting. In turn, suggests that sometimes many together begin to speak.

**One-man interpret:** for all three. A new interpreter for each would cause greater confusion. Paul takes for granted that he who could interpret for one could do so for all. This suggests that the gift of interpretation was a real power, similar to that possessed by ordinary interpreters, of giving the sense of the not-understood but significant words of him who spoke with a tongue. Perhaps (cp. **#1Co 14:5, 13**) one of the speakers with a tongue might himself interpret. Paul does not mention the case (perhaps because unlikely) in which each who spoke with a tongue had also the gift of interpretation.

**Be silent etc.:** in agreement with **#1Co 14:13**, and with the general principle of **#1Co 14:26b**. **#1Co 14:28b** is a positive injunction and a corrective to **#1Co 14:28a**. Even without interpretation, to speak with a tongue is profitable (**#1Co 14:4**) to the speaker; and must therefore not be forbidden because there is no interpreter, but done in private.

Ver. 29.-30. In reference to the more valuable gift of prophecy, Paul does not add the strict limitation *or "at most" three*, as in **#1Co 14:27**.

**Judge:** cognate to "discernment of spirits" in **#1Co 12:10**. Same word in **#1Co 11:29, 31**. Cp. **#1Jo 4:1**. It is quite uncertain whether *the others* were the other prophets, or other church-members. Power to judge was a gift quite different (**#1Co 12:10**) from prophecy; and may or may not have been usually associated with it. These words suggest that, although as a special gift this power was

possessed only by some prophets or church-members, yet in a lower degree it was possessed by all. In our ignorance of exact details in the early church we may suppose that the members generally and especially those endowed with the gift of discernment were unitedly guardians of the correctness of the utterances of each individual. That the writings of the New Testament were then only in process of composition, and that false brethren (**#2Co 11:13**) already existed, made such guardianship very important.

**Revelation:** closely connected here as in **#1Co 14:6** with prophecy.

**While sitting;** implies that while speaking they stood. It also implies a sudden impulse of the prophetic Spirit. To such impulse Paul bids that precedence be given.

Ver. 31. Supports the last words of **#1Co 14:30**, by showing that they do not involve loss of what the interrupted one has to say.

**All to prophesy:** not necessarily at the same meeting. Paul means probably that the prophetic impulse was in no case so strong as to prevent this orderly and consecutive prophesying. Consequently, there was nothing to prevent every prophet from speaking in his turn to the church. The first *all* is naturally limited to those who had the special gift without which none could prophesy. But no such limitation attaches to the second and third *all*. And the change from 2nd to 3rd person suggests a reference to all the church-members. While writing **#1Co 14:29, 30**, Paul thought only of prophets: but when coming to the beneficial purpose of prophecy he thinks naturally of the whole church.

**May learn, receive exhortation;** keeps before us the general principle of **#1Co 14:26b**. These purposes of prophecy are mentioned because they are also motives for following Paul's direction. For certainly the consecutive preaching of all the prophets is most likely to edify all who hear.

Ver. 32.-33a. To the particular assertion of **#1Co 14:31**, **#1Co 14:32** adds a general principle on which it rests.

**Spirits of prophets:** their own spirits, on which the Holy Spirit acts directly. Cp. **#1Co 14:14, 15**; and **#Re 22:6**, "the God of the spirits of the prophets." The prophet's spirit, which is the source of all his ordinary activity and the medium of the extraordinary activity of prophecy, is even while under the special influence of the Holy Spirit still under his own control. In other words, prophets were not so carried away by the supernatural influence under which they spoke as to be unable to control themselves, and thus unable to take their turn in orderly consecutive prophesying. *Confusion* is no attribute of God but its opposite, *peace*, is. Notice that *peace*, which is characteristic of whatever belongs to God, is secured by each man's self-control. Thus Paul completes his direction about the exercise of spiritual gifts by leading us, as usual, into the presence of God. Notice that **#1Co 14:30-33a** correspond with, and develop, "in turn," **#1Co 14:27**. The greater importance of the gift of prophecy suggested this fuller treatment. It is an application of the general principle of **#1Co 14:26b**.

**#1Co 14:30-33a** teach us not to yield blindly even to influences which we know to be divine; but, while obeying them, to use our own judgment about time and manner, ever having in view the spiritual benefit of others, for which the influence was sent. In other words a consciousness that we are moved by God to do His work is no excuse for a disorderly way of doing it, or for a disregard of the work others are doing. For God loves harmony. And this can be obtained only by the intelligent self-control of Christian co-workers.

Ver. 33b.-34. These go together. For, whereas **#1Co 14:33b** would add no force to the calm assertion of **#1Co 14:33a**, it introduces suitably, by making it valid for all churches everywhere, the strong and strongly confirmed injunction of **#1Co 14:34**. Similar references to other churches in **#1Co 4:17; 7:17; 11:16**.

**Of the saints;** reminds us that church-members stand in a special relation to God.

**In the churches:** general assemblies of men and women. Compare "over the man," in the similar prohibition of **#1Ti 2:12**. Consequently, this verse is not inconsistent with **#1Co 11:5** where women are tacitly permitted to "pray" and "prophecy;" but limits these exercises to more private meetings consisting chiefly or wholly of women. Notice the coincidence of **#1Co 11:5**. The women who were ready to speak in public would be also ready to lay aside their distinctive female head-dress.

**It is not permitted etc.:** supports the prohibition by an appeal to a general law of the church of Christ.

**In subjection: #Eph 5:22.** The contrast implies that to speak in church is to throw off their subordination to the other sex.

**The Law says:** probably **#Ge 3:16**. Paul supports his prohibition to speak in church by enjoining general subordination; and supports this by appealing to God's words to the first pair. Compare carefully **#1Ti 2:11-14**.

Ver. 35. A possible excuse for speaking in church.

**At home:** emphatic. It is not wrong to wish to ask: but they must ask in the right place, and so as not to set aside the authority of the man to whom they are socially subject. The husband might, if needful, put his wife's question to the church. Even the wives of heathen husbands could, through female friends, obtain information in the same way.

**For it is shameful etc.:** parallel to "for it is not permitted" in **#1Co 14:34**. These two general principles, of which the latter is a development of the former, make us feel the importance of the injunctions which they severally support.

**Shameful:** see under **#1Co 11:5**. A woman's position of subordination is her place of honor. To desert it is therefore a disgrace. This was probably a rebuke to some who gloried in their public speaking.

Ver. 36. Other appeals, giving additional weight to the prohibitions. By permitting (as **#1Co 14:34, 35** imply) women to speak, the church of Corinth was setting aside the practice of the other churches; and was thus acting as though it were the mother church of Christendom, or the only people whom had been preached the Gospel which went forth from Jerusalem.

**Went-forth:** cp. **#1Th 1:8**.

Ver. 37.-38. **Prophet or spiritual-man**; shows that Paul no longer refers exclusively to the women of **#1Co 14:34ff**. He now sets the seal of apostolic authority to DIV. VI., and specially to the injunctions of § 26.

**Spiritual-man**: wider term than *prophet*, denoting any one under a special influence of the Spirit. Paul's confidence that in writing these words he is guided by the Spirit, answers him that all others moved by the same Spirit will *acknowledge* the binding authority of his words.

**A command of the Lord**: of Christ. Thus Paul claims for his own written words absolute and divine authority over the practice of his readers. Equal authority, in doctrine, he has already, in **#Ro 3:19**, conceded to the writers of the Old Testament. Their words, he calls "the Law;" his own, *a command of the Lord*. The man who does not acknowledge Paul's authority, **#1Co 14:38** marks as incurably *ignorant*. And incurable ignorance is always culpable. On the Revisers' marginal reading, see Appendix B. Notice that, though **#1Co 14:37, 38** do not refer specially to **#1Co 14:34-36**, yet, that Paul asserts his apostolic authority immediately after this express and emphatic prohibition, greatly increases the force of the prohibition.

Ver. 39.-40. Summary of 1Cor. 14.

**Be emulous**; takes up **#1Co 12:31; 14:1**, and marks the completion of the subject there introduced.

**To prophesy**; for reasons given in **#1Co 14:3-5, 24f**.

**Do not hinder etc.**; repeats **#1Co 14:5**. The contrast of *be emulous and do not hinder* reasserts the preference for prophecy which in § 25 Paul justified.

**Becomingly**: in contrast to "they will say, You are mad," in **#1Co 14:23**.

**According to order**: in an orderly manner, as enjoined in **#1Co 14:26ff**; and in obedience to the authority claimed in **#1Co 14:37**.

It may be questioned whether Paul's absolute prohibition to women to speak in a church-meeting is binding now. It may be said that it was based on a position of woman in the ancient world which has passed away; and that the commands of the apostle, binding upon his original readers, are binding now only so far as the original circumstances remain or as the commands are expressions of great universal principles. But the solemn emphasis and the assertion of apostolic authority, (so unusual to Paul,) and the appeal to the parents of our race with which in two epistles the same



prohibition sets forth a principle of universal and perpetual validity, and one resting upon the unchanging relation of the sexes. But this prohibition in no way touches the ministrations of women to women: and the gift in Paul's day of the prophetic spirit to women proved plainly that there was evangelical work for them to do. And there is abundance of such work now.

*PROPHETS* were men who spoke in ordinary language, under a special influence of the Spirit of God; and who were thus a mouthpiece of God to men.

For the Old Testament, see **#Nu 11:24-29; #1Sa 10:5-13; 18:10; 19:20-24; #Joe 2:28; #De 18:15-19; #Jer 1:4-2:2; #Eze 2:1-3:1; #Ac 28:25; #Heb 1:1**. The prophet's words, as being a voice of God, were matter (**#1Pe 1:11**) for his own study. In **#Ex 7:1f**, Aaron was to be the mouthpiece, but Moses the real speaker. We read (e.g. **#De 18:20**) of false prophets speaking in God's Name; and (**#1Ki 18:19, 40**) of prophets speaking in the name of false gods.

Similarly, in classic Greek, the prophet was an interpreter of the oracular voices of the gods.

In the New Testament, the Baptist, as being a "voice" of God is in **#Lu 1:76; 7:26** called a prophet. So also the Incarnate Word in **#Lu 4:24; 24:19**. In the apostolic church, prophecy was (**#1Co 12:10f**) on a special gift of the Spirit, which placed its possessors in the second rank (**#1Co 12:28; #Eph 4:11**) of the servants of Christ. It was practically the same as "revelation." Cp. **#1Co 14:6, 30. #Eph 3:5**. This latter word directs our attention to the inward "unveiling," by the Spirit, of truths before unknown: *prophecy* is the "speaking forth" to others the revealed truths. The Book of Revelation is called in **#Re 1:3; 22:7, 10, 18f** a *prophecy*. It was needful for others to judge (**#1Co 14:29**: cp. **#1Jo 4:1**) whether the impulse under which professed prophets spoke was really divine. To what extent the impulse saved the speaker from error, and thus gave to his words authority, we cannot now determine. The New Testament prophets seem (**#1Co 14:24, 26, 29**) to have been numerous. They are not mentioned (e.g. **#Php 1:2**; 1Tim. 3, Tit. 1.) as a regularly constituted order of church officers; but were probably an extraordinary class of men specially endowed by God for the good of the churches they belonged to or might visit. Their words were designed (**#1Co 14:3, 31**) to teach and encourage believers, and (**#1Co 14:24f**) to lead sinners to repentance. Some women prophesied: **#Ac 2:17; 21:9; #1Co 11:5**. Cp. **#Lu 2:36; #Jud 4:4**.

Since both Old and New Covenants ever point to the future, the prophets frequently spoke, especially in the old preparatory Covenant, of things to come. Of this in the New Testament Agabus (**#Ac 11:27f, 21:10f**) is a good example. But foretelling is not implied in the meaning of the word.

The Cretan poet Epimenides, as a teacher of truth, is called in **#Tit 1:12** a prophet. By Plato (*Laws* p. 642d) he is called "a divine man," and is said to have foretold the invasion by, and defeat of, the Persians.

To *SPEAK WITH TONGUES* was, like Prophecy, a special and extraordinary gift of the Spirit. It is mentioned by Paul only in 1Cor. 12.-14.; elsewhere in the New Testament only **#Ac 2:4-13; 10:46**, (cp. **#1Co 11:15ff; 15:8**), **19:6; #Mr 16:17**. That it was not a miraculous faculty of speaking one or more foreign languages, is made absolutely certain by Paul's taking for granted, (**#1Co 14:2-5, 13, 19, 28**), when comparing the gifts of prophecy and of tongues from the point of view of their

practical utility, that apart from interpretation the gift of tongues is of no use whatever to any but the speaker: whereas ability to speak in a foreign language would be an invaluable means of spreading the Gospel. Nor was it a miraculous utterance, in moments of special inspiration, of prayer or praise in a human language unknown to the speaker. Else Paul could not have left completely out of sight the possibility of the presence, especially at Corinth where many nationalities met, of some one who understood the foreign language. Words spoken "with a tongue" were evidently intelligible to others only when interpreted.

Yet the exercise of this gift was (**#1Co 14:4**) profitable to the speaker. The possession of it by Paul himself in large measure calls forth (**#1Co 14:18**) his gratitude to God. And even while forbidding the public use of it when no interpreter is present he urges (**#1Co 14:28**) that it be used in private. Probably its usual form was (**#1Co 14:2, 14ff: #Ac 2:11; 10:46**) prayer or praise. Although the words spoken with a tongue were (unless interpreted with the aid of another gift) altogether unintelligible, they nevertheless had a meaning for they were capable of interpretation. That the mind (**#1Co 14:14**) had no part in the utterance, and that the speaker was sometimes unable (**#1Co 14:13, 28**) to interpret to others his own words implies that, unless he had also the gift of interpretation, he did not himself understand them.

Of all this the simplest explanation is that in the apostolic church there were men on whose "tongue" the Holy Spirit exerted a direct influence, moving it to speak words which were neither prompted nor understood by the speaker's own mind; and that, like (**#Ro 8:15, 26**) the Spirit-prompted words were chiefly or wholly directed to God in prayer or praise. Such speaking might be called "with a tongue:" for only the tongue was at work, without conscious mental effort. But, since none but living tongues could thus speak, the man's own spirit, i.e. the principle of life within him, was an essential factor of the speaking: and Paul could say (**#1Co 14:14**) correctly, "my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful." Moreover, the speaker "with a tongue" would (**#1Co 14:2**) "speak mysteries." For his words contained the deep things of God, and truths known only by special revelation. Such speaking, though not penetrating the speaker's whole being and his consciousness, could not but be profitable, in a manner to us incomprehensible. For it came from the Spirit of God acting on man's spirit. And probably the spirit, as distinguished from the mind, is not only physiologically but morally that part of man which is nearest to the Great Source of animal and spiritual life. If interpreted, the words would give profit to others.

Paul's words in **#1Co 14:27** imply that men under this influence of the Spirit could so restrain themselves as to speak in turn, or be silent till they were alone with God. And we can also conceive different modes of speaking, under the influence of the Spirit: hence one person might have (**#1Co 12:10**) "kinds of tongues;" and (**#1Co 14:5f**) speak "with tongues."

To "speak with a tongue," implies articulate utterance. But we have no means of knowing the relation, if such existed, of the words thus spoken to the speaker's mother tongue or to other languages known or unknown to him. No safe inference can be drawn from **#1Co 13:1**, which is given merely as the highest conceivable grade of the gift.

With the foregoing, **#Ac 10:46; 19:6** agree exactly. We have the same phrase, "speak with tongues," denoting again a manifestation of the Spirit, in the form of praise to God, and associated with prophecy. Cp. **#Mr 16:17**; where "new" is probably spurious, and **#Mr 16:9-20** very doubtful.

With the same agrees **#Ac 2:4-13** in that the Spirit (**#Ac 2:4**) gave the utterance, in (**#Ac 2:11**) the form of praise to God. But in **#Ac 2:6, 8, 11** we are told explicitly that the assembled disciples spoke in foreign languages, recognized as such by natives who were present. Consequently, the gift of tongues at Pentecost was, according to **#Ac 2:4-13**, different from that about which Paul wrote to the Corinthians. Yet, in **#Ac 11:15ff**, the gift mentioned in **#Ac 10:46** in words the same as those in this chapter is said to have been "the equal gift . . . as on us at the beginning." Now, so clear are the proofs that the gift at Corinth was not a speaking in foreign languages, that the very able and godly scholars, Neander and Meyer, with others, have supposed that the tongues at Pentecost were really the same as at Corinth, but that in the confusion of the hour they were mistaken for foreign languages by those who heard but did not understand them, and that in this form the tradition had reached Luke and had been recorded in the Book of Acts. But Luke claims (**#Lu 1:3**) to have carefully investigated the facts he narrates: and he was (**#Col 4:14; #2Ti 4:11; #Phm 1:24**; see Dissertation II.) a "beloved" companion and fellow-worker of Paul, who was himself a colleague of the chief actors at Pentecost. Surely it is inconceivable that Luke would fall into so great an error about so conspicuous and well-known an event, during the lifetime of the chief actors in it. On the mere ground then of simple historic evidence, without reference to the authority of Scripture, (which is, however, seriously involved,) we are compelled to accept the narrative of **#Ac 2:1-13** as correct. Much easier is the supposition that the "tongues" at Pentecost were a higher grade, perhaps never repeated, of the gift spoken of by Paul. Not that the power to communicate thought in foreign languages was given. But God thought fit that His Spirit, the one source of human life and thought and speech, should inaugurate the Gospel dispensation by pouring through the lips of men words in human languages before unknown to them. This highest form of the gift was limited to the founding of the church. A lower form of the same lingered probably during the lifetime of those who witnessed its founding.

The similarity of phrase suggests that the "tongues" of **#Ac 10:46; 19:6** were the same as in 1Cor. 14, and different from those of **#Ac 2:4-13**. But in each case the significance of the gift was the same, viz. a proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit to be henceforth, in those who receive Him, the animating principle of a new life, a witness of reception into the family of God, and an earnest of an eternal inheritance. This Spirit, not the transient form of His manifestation was "the equal gift" (**#Ac 11:17**) alike to Jews and Gentiles. Consequently, without thought of the unimportant difference of mode, Peter could correctly say in **#1Co 14:15**: "The Holy Spirit fell upon them, as also upon us at the beginning." Cp. **#Eph 1:13f**.

DIVISION VI. gives us the noblest ideal of a Christian church, viz. a human body, 1Cor. 12; the one great principle which ought to animate all church life, viz. love, 1Cor. 13; and a valuable glimpse (in addition to those in 1Cor. 11) into the actual meetings of the apostolic church, 1Cor. 14.

In accordance with the liberty which permitted each member to take for himself (**#1Co 11:21**) the sacred bread and wine, we find each member ready to speak in public, and many moved by the Spirit to speak, and permitted to do in an orderly way. Even women, probably after laying aside (**#1Co**

**11:5)** their distinctive head-dress, were eager to address a promiscuous assembly. And we find traces of an empty and useless parade of influences flowing from the Spirit of God. All this agrees with the spiritual childishness of **#1Co 3:1-4**. Very remarkable, amid this confusion, is the absence of all reference, especially in 1Cor. 5, 11, 14, to church officers. These doubtless existed: cp. **#Ac 14:23; 20:17; #Php 1:1; #1Ti 3:1, 12** &c. They are unmentioned perhaps because in a church consisting only of new converts, they were probably in knowledge or experience little above the rest; and therefore not conspicuous. The absence of all reference to them, and the complete contrast of the church life depicted here and that depicted in the earliest sub-apostolic writings and even in the later epistles in Paul, are indisputable marks of the very early date, and therefore of the genuineness, of this Epistle. The whole chapter teaches clearly that church life was earlier than church order.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION VII

### ABOUT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

#### CHAPTER XV

#### *SECTION XXVII*

#### *THE GOSPEL PREACHED BY PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS PROCLAIMED THAT CHRIST HAS RISEN*

#### CH. XV. 1-11

I make known to you, brothers, the Gospel which I announced to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, by means of which you are also being saved, if you are holding fast the word by which I announced the Gospel to you, except in vain you believed. For I delivered to you among the first matters, which I also received, that Christ died on behalf of our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He is risen the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. Then He appeared to above five hundred brothers at once, of whom the more part remain until now, but some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James; then to the apostles all. And, last of all, just as if to the untimely one, He appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not sufficient to be called an apostle, because that I persecuted the Church of God. But by grace of God I am what I am. And His grace towards me did not prove vain, but more abundantly than they all I have labored: yet not I, but the grace of God with me. Whether then I or they, thus we preach, and thus you believed.

DIV. VIII., embracing 1Cor. 15, introduces suddenly a topic altogether new, viz. the resurrection of the dead. This is sufficiently accounted for by the fact that at Corinth some were saying "that there is no resurrection." And the tone of surprise of Paul's question in **#1Co 15:12** suggests (cp. **#1Co 6:1**) that this matter was not mentioned in the letter (**#1Co 7:1**) he had received. He prepares the way for his question in **#1Co 15:12** by asserting in § 27 that the resurrection of Christ was proclaimed in that Gospel which was saving his readers, and in the ancient Scriptures, and that it was vouched for by a large number of witnesses of whom the more part were still living. In § 28 he reminds his readers that to deny the resurrection of the dead is to deny that Christ has risen; and gives various proofs that there is a life beyond death, assuming that this implies a resurrection of the dead. In § 29 he uncovers and overturns a foundation of the denial of the resurrection, viz. the unfitness of our present bodies for the life to come; and concludes the whole matter in § 30 with a shout of triumph.

Ver. 1.-2. **Make known to you the Gospel:** as though they needed to be told (cp. **#1Co 12:3; #Ga 1:11**) what it was they had already believed. Of this virtual promise, § 27 is a fulfillment. Cp. **#1Co 15:11**.

**The Gospel etc.:** "the good news which as good news I announced to you."

**Also . . . also . . . also:** proof after proof, from their own experience, of the worth of the Gospel. Long ago it so commended itself to them that they *received* it: today they find *in* it a firm ground on which morally and spiritually they *stand* (#1Co 10:12) erect; and by its means they day by day experience deliverance (#1Co 1:18, 21; #Eph 1:13) from sin and its consequences. (Notice that we stand also (#Ro 5:2; 11:20) in the grace of God and by faith: for by faith we receive the good news, which reveals God's favor towards us.)

**Holding-fast etc.:** condition on which hangs the truth of the words *you stand, are being saved*. It is therefore a warning suggesting self-examination; and is an appeal to the readers; inner consciousness that their spiritual erectness and victory are in proportion to the firmness with which they hold fast Paul's teaching.

**The word with which etc.:** the verbal form in which Paul preached the Gospel to them.

**Except etc.;** supports the assertion that, unless they have relaxed their hold upon Paul's teaching, they now stand firm and are now in the way of salvation: for otherwise, the faith they formerly exercised is an empty thing. And, that it is not such, their inmost heart proclaims. This argument is developed in #1Co 15:17.

**Believed:** as in #Ro 13:11.

Ver. 3.-4. Reason for the broad statement of #1Co 15:1, 2, showing its bearing on the matter in hand. Paul appealed to the effect of the gospel he preached because the resurrection of Christ was a part of it.

**Delivered:** as in #1Co 11:2; see note.

**The first things:** first in importance probably. For this is the chief point: and in what follows there is no reference to time. Paul *received* the historic details, some of which he gives here, doubtless from the apostles (e.g. #Ga 1:18) and other human witnesses; the spiritual meaning of the great facts, from (#Ga 1:12) Christ Himself. But of all this he says nothing here; except that his teaching was no invention of his own, that he was but the channel through which it came to the Corinthians.

**On-behalf-of our sins:** i.e. to save us from them. Same preposition in #Heb 5:1; 7:27; 9:7; 10:12. See under #1Co 15:29. Cp. "because of our trespasses," #Ro 4:25. Each of these passages is meaningless unless we accept the great doctrine of the Atonement as I have endeavored to expound it under #Ro 3:26. Cp. #Heb 9:26ff; 10:12.

**According to the Scriptures:** e.g. #Isa 53:9-12

**Buried:** the link between Christ's death and resurrection. These words suggest that the historic details of the death of Christ were put prominently forward by the early preachers, as we find them made prominent in the four Gospels.

[**Is-risen:** the Greek perfect as in **#1Co 15:12**. The addition *the third day* is no incongruity. See *Expositor*, vol. xi. p. 301.]

Whether *according to the Scriptures* refers also to *was buried*, (cp. **#Isa 53:9**), is unimportant. It probably does not refer to the *third day*: for this is not clearly mentioned in the Old Testament, and is an unimportant detail. But **#Isa 53:10-12** implies fairly the resurrection of Christ. The words *according to the Scriptures*, which receive emphasis from their repetition, support strongly the teaching of Paul. For they show that it was not only a means of salvation to the Corinthians but was in harmony with the very ancient books held sacred even by the enemies of the Gospel. We have here an important coincidence with the Epistle to the Romans, which we may take to be an epitome of Paul's teaching, and in which he shows that the Gospel is through-out in harmony with the Old Testament.

Ver. 5. Further statement of what Paul had said to them.

**To Cephas:** a very important coincidence with apparently casual words in **#Lu 24:34**; **#Mr 16:7**.

**To the twelve:** further coincidence with **#Lu 24:36ff**, which is confirmed by **#Joh 20:19ff**. *The twelve* had so thoroughly become a technical term for the original apostles both before and after (**#Ac 6:2**) the death of Christ that it is used here although one had fallen from the ranks. This makes it possible and likely that Paul refers to the appearance in **#Joh 20:19** when Thomas also was present.

Ver. 6. The change here from indirect to direct narration is no proof that Paul had not spoken at Corinth about the facts which follow. For he must have spoken of (**#1Co 15:8**) Christ's appearance to himself. The change was prompted by the number of the facts mentioned; and gives reality to the narration by pointing us to the facts themselves rather than to Paul's mention of them. This gathering of *above five hundred brethren* and Christ's appearance to them are not mentioned elsewhere, and the circumstances are quite unknown: but it is easily conceivable, and Paul's word is sufficient evidence of the fact. (The 120 names of **#Ac 1:15** were but the enrolled disciples at Jerusalem.) It may have been in Galilee, (cp. **#Mt 28:7**, confirmed by **#Joh 21:1**), where Christ had labored long; or near to Jerusalem before the Passover pilgrims went home. The size of the assembly, however called together, and the appearance of Christ to so many *at once*, each of whom would compare his view of the Risen One, made this event an indisputable and conspicuous proof of the resurrection of Christ. Its omission from the Gospels is no more remarkable than the silence of the first three about the raising of Lazarus; and is in harmony with **#Joh 20:30**. That after the lapse of about twenty-five years *the more part* were still living, seems to imply that Christ chose young men chiefly to be witnesses of His resurrection, who might live long to testify it to others. That Paul knew that the majority were still alive, proves that those who had actually seen the risen Lord were marked men in the early church. Cp. **#Jos 24:31**, "the elders that overlived Joshua."

Ver. 7. **James**: "the Lord's brother;" who when these epistles were written had a position so prominent that in **#Ga 2:9** he is mentioned before Peter and John. He was probably not the same as "the son of Alphaeus" in **#Mt 10:3**. See further under **#Ga 1:19**. This appearance is not mentioned elsewhere. That in the autumn before His death (**#Joh 7:25**) the brothers of Jesus did not believe in Him, and yet were found with His disciples immediately after His ascension, suggests that this appearance to His oldest brother (probably, see **#Mt 13:55**; **#Mr 6:3**) led to the conversion of him and perhaps of the others. This verse is thus a link between **#Joh 7:5** and **#Ac 1:14**.

**All the apostles**; seems at first sight to have a compass different from "the twelve" in **#1Co 15:5**. But this would involve difficulties nearly or quite insuperable. The apostles held (**#1Co 12:28**) the first rank in the church. During our Lord's life this title belonged specifically to the twelve; and in the Gospels is given to none else: see **#Mt 10:2**; **#Mr 6:30**; **#Lu 6:13**; **22:14**. Only **#Lu 17:5** is open to doubt. And the presence of the twelve only at the Last Supper implies that they held a rank shared by no others. In **#Lu 24:10**, referring to the day of the Resurrection, "the apostles" are evidently "the eleven" of **#Lu 24:9**. Now if *to all the apostles* be not equivalent to "the twelve" in **#1Co 15:5**, we must suppose that during the forty days Christ added to the first rank of His official servants a definite number of new members, and that He appeared to these, either singly or together. And since *all* is a definite term, we must suppose either that He then appeared to *all* who afterwards were called *apostles*, (yet Paul would be an exception,) or that He first called these additional ones to be apostles and then appeared to all whom He had thus called. Both these suppositions are very unlikely. Moreover, after the ascension we find the Eleven still occupying a unique position in the church: as is proved by the record of their names in **#Ac 1:13**, and by the formal addition (**#Ac 1:26**) of Matthias to their number. This makes it still more unlikely that during the forty days Christ had given to some others the name and rank of Apostle. He did this, however, in later days to Paul; and perhaps to Barnabas, Silvanus, James, and others. **#Ac 14:4**; **#Ga 1:19**, and especially **#1Th 2:6**. In view of all this it is perhaps least difficult to suppose that **#1Co 15:7** refers to the eleven surviving original apostles, and possibly to the appearance narrated in **#Joh 20:26**. If this latter supposition be correct, "the twelve" in **#1Co 15:5** would be a general term for the apostolic band, consisting in this case of only ten persons: whereas *all the apostles* in **#1Co 15:7** would denote the entire eleven.

Notice Paul's accuracy in stating even the order of these appearances. The exact details were evidently known to him. Of the appearances mentioned, the first (**#Lu 24:34**) was to Peter; the second (**#Lu 24:36**) to the assembled apostles; the third, to a gathering of 500 persons; the fourth, to His brother James; and the fifth (perhaps **#Joh 20:26**) to the entire apostolic band. To all these well-known persons Paul appeals as witnesses that Christ has risen.

Ver. 8. **Last of all**: of all the apostles, probably; or of those persons to whom the Risen One showed Himself. At the time of the above-mentioned appearances Paul was an enemy. But that he might take rank equal with the rest, long after appearing to the others, Christ *appeared also* to him.

**The untimely-one**, in LXX., **#Nu 12:12**; **#Job 3:16**; **#Ec 6:3**: an abortive offspring born at the wrong time and not reckoned among the children. With deep humility Paul says that among the apostles he was the untimely birth: not that his apostolic birth was a failure, but abnormal in its circumstances. That Paul does not speak between **#1Co 15:7** and **#1Co 15:8** of the ascension, is no proof that he did not believe that it occurred as narrated in **#Ac 1:9**. For he speaks here simply of the



fact of the resurrection, of which the appearances to others and to himself were clear proof, a proof not strengthened by Christ's departure to heaven.

Ver. 9.-10. **#1Co 15:9** justifies "the untimely one."

**The least etc.:** cp. **#Eph 3:8**.

**Sufficient:** same word in **#Mt 3:11**; **#2Co 2:16**; **3:5**.

**To be called:** to bear the honored name of Apostle. Although pardoned by God, Paul evidently felt deeply and constantly how sinful, and how perilous to himself, was his former war against Christ; and wondered that such a rebel should be permitted to take any place among the servants of Christ. And he felt that among these, and especially in the apostolic band, such a one must ever put himself in the lowest place. Cp. **#1Ti 1:13-16**. It would be well if similar humiliation were manifested by all who after notorious sin have become Christian workers. In **#1Co 15:10**, after speaking of himself as the least of the apostles, Paul remembers that in labors and success he is the greatest of them. And for the glory of Him who has conferred such honor on one so unworthy he cannot pass over this in silence.

**What I am;** sums up Paul's entire toil and success: all this he says he owes to the undeserved favor of God. These words all Christians can use touching all that belongs to them except the consequences of their own unfaithfulness.

**And His grace etc.:** an addition to the foregoing which both explains and proves it.

**Did not become vain:** so literally; in colloquial English, "did not turn out vain."

**But more etc.:** the exact opposite of being *vain* i.e. without result.

**All of them;** may, but does not necessarily, mean "all put together." How far his own labors surpassed those of others, Paul leaves his readers to judge.

**The grace of God with me.** Although the results were wrought altogether by God, in undeserved favor, yet they were wrought through the instrumentality and *with* the concurrence of Paul. Now, what a man has done determines his spiritual stature. Therefore, since all that Paul had done had been wrought in and through him by the favor of God, he could say, *By the grace of God I am what I am*.

Ver. 11. Summary of § 27, in a form prompted by Paul's comparison of himself with the other apostles. Although he was the untimely birth and they were born in due time, and although he labored more than they, yet he and they were alike in that all proclaimed that Christ had risen. And what he and they proclaimed his readers had accepted; with what results, they knew.

**Preach:** see under **#Ro 2:21**.

**Thus we preach;** recapitulates **#1Co 15:3-10**, and corresponds with "I make known . . . preached to you" in **#1Co 15:1**.

**Thus you believed;** corresponds with "which also you received . . . in vain believed." Paul thus prepares the way, by stating well-attested facts which his readers had themselves accepted, for the argument of § 28.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XXVIII

### *SINCE CHRIST HAS RISEN, HIS PEOPLE WILL RISE*

#### CH. XV. 12-34

But if Christ is preached, that He is risen from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of dead men? But if there is no resurrection of dead men, not even Christ is risen. And if Christ is not risen, empty then is our preached word, empty also your faith. And we are found to be also false witnesses of God, because we have borne witnesses against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, we should infer, if dead men are not raised, For if dead men are not raised, not even Christ is risen. And if Christ is not risen, vain is your faith; you are still in your sins.

We infer then that they also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we are only men who in this life have hope in Christ, more pitiable than all men are we.

But now Christ is risen from the dead, a firstfruit of the sleeping ones. For since through man is Death, also through man there is Resurrection of dead ones. For just as in Adam all die so also in the Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order. As firstfruit, Christ; then they that are Christ's, at His coming. Then the end, when He gives up the Kingdom to the God and Father, when He shall have brought to nought all principality and all authority and power. For it must needs be that He reign as king till when He have put all the enemies under His feet. As a last enemy, Death is brought to nought. For, all things He has made subject under His feet. But whenever He shall say that all things are made subject, it is evident that it is with the exception of Him who made all things subject to Him. And, when all things have been made subject to Him, then also the Son will be made subject to Him who made all things subject to Him; that God may be all things in all.

Else what will they do who are being baptized on behalf of the dead ones? If, to speak generally, dead men are not raised why are they being baptized on their behalf? Why do we also incur danger every hour? Day by day I am dying; as witness, the exultation about you, brothers, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord. If with human aim I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what is the gain to me? If dead men do not rise, "Let us eat and let us drink: for to-morrow we die." (#Isa 22:13.) Be not deceived. "Bad companionships corrupt good dispositions." Rouse up righteously: and do not sin. For, ignorance of God some have. To awaken shame, to you I speak.

By a question Paul now reveals his reason for stating the facts of § 27, viz. that at Corinth some were saying *that there is no resurrection of dead men*. The precise intention and ground of this last assertion are discussed at the end of § 28 and of DIV. VII. In #1Co 15:12-17 Paul refutes it by developing the facts of § 27 and then refuting a necessary, though not expressly asserted, consequence of it. viz. that Christ has not risen: in #1Co 15:13-34 he refutes a second and avowed

inference from the same chief error, viz. that there is no life beyond death. Thus, by refuting two necessary logical consequences, Paul overthrows the error itself. And in § 29 he dispels a misconception on which in part the chief error rests.

Ver. 12.-13. **Preached**; takes up the same word in **#1Co 15:11**, which recapitulates **#1Co 15:3-10**. Paul does not assume here that Christ is actually risen, but merely that this is proclaimed, as described above. From this proclamation and its results he will prove the fact of the resurrection. *Christ is preached*. To proclaim that He rose is to proclaim HIM as Prince and Saviour. [The conspicuous perfects in **#1Co 15:12-14, 16, 17, 20** call attention to the abiding effect of Christ's resurrection.]

**How say etc.**: question of astonishment, like **#1Co 6:1**. The present tense implies that they continued to spread their opinions.

**Some among you**: evidently church-members. Yet instead of requiring their expulsion as in **#1Co 5:4f**, Paul reasons earnestly with them.

That the inference *neither is Christ risen* is stated, and in **#1Co 15:16** repeated, without proof but with perfect confidence, implies that it was unmistakably involved in the assertion *there is no resurrection of dead men*. Consequently, this assertion must be taken as denying in the widest sense that a departed spirit can return to the body. For, in a narrower sense we might deny that a body dissolved in the grace can rise without denying that He rose Whose "flesh saw no corruption." But the argument implies that no such limited denial was intended by the men referred to here.

Ver. 14.-17. Proof, from the facts of § 27 summed up in **#1Co 15:11**, that the concluding words of **#1Co 15:13** are false. *Our preached-word* (developed in **#1Co 15:15**) takes up "we preached" in **#1Co 15:11**: *your faith* (developed in **#1Co 15:17**) takes up "you believed." Both the word preached by Paul and the assurance with which the Corinthians received it would, if Christ had not risen, *be empty*, i.e. destitute of reality. Of these two assertions, the former is developed in **#1Co 15:15**. If Christ be not risen, the apostles are *found* out to be acting under false pretences and giving *false testimony* even about God.

**Because we etc.**; proves this, and carries it a step further. Since God has done all that is wise and good, to say that He has done what He has not done, is to *bear witness against God*.

**Whom He did not raise . . . not even Christ is risen**: forceful repetition of the argument of **#1Co 15:13**.

Ver. 17. Develops "empty also is your faith" in **#1Co 15:14**. For a belief which is "empty," i.e. destitute of reality, must also be vain, i.e. barren of results.

**In your sins**: your former sins, as the element in which you still live and walk. Cp. **#Eph 2:2**; **#Joh 8:24**. This is better than to expound "under the penalty of sin." For Paul evidently supposes that, without further disproof from him, these words will be at once contradicted by his reader's inner consciousness, which would testify that they are no longer committing their own former sins. To the

same conscious victory over sin he appeals in **#Ro 8:13f**. His readers knew well that they were no longer in their former bondage to sin. Consequently, their faith was not without result. And, if so, it could not be empty credulity; nor could the men whose word they had believed with results so good be false witnesses against God. Yet these men had proclaimed as an essential element of the Gospel that Christ had risen. Therefore, the inward deliverance from sin enjoyed by the Corinthians was itself a proof that Christ had risen. Notice that here, as in **#Ro 6:17ff**; **#Eph 2:2f**, Paul assumes that all men have been sinners; and with great confidence and courtesy assumes that his readers have been saved from sin.

That Paul took so much pains to prove the first link of the argument of **#1Co 15:13**, viz. that Christ has risen, and no pains at all to prove the second link, viz. that His resurrection disproves the assertion that there is no resurrection, shows that the second point was so clear that it would be admitted at once, whereas the former might be doubted. But, that no mention is made of denial that Christ had risen, suggests that, though some at Corinth had denied the resurrection in a sense which, as they could hardly fail to see, excluded the resurrection of Christ, yet they had not thought fit to express their denial to its logical issue. Notice that Paul does not speak directly to the deniers, but to the members generally whom he wishes to protect against error taught in their midst, and with whom he reasons from spiritual facts of their own inner life.

Ver. 18. Another inference, in addition to that of **#1Co 15:13**, logically involved in the assertion "that there is no resurrection." The mere statement of this inference proves it to be false; and thus disproves the statement which involves it. If the dead are not raised, then not only are you in your sins but *also they who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished*.

**Fallen-asleep**: frequent metaphor of death, **#1Co 7:39**; **11:30**; **#1Th 4:13ff**; **#Mt 27:52**; **#Joh 11:11**; **#Ac 7:60**; **13:36**; **#1Ki 11:43**; 2 Macc. 12:45. So Homer, *Iliad* bk. xi. 241: "He fell down and slept a sleep of brass." It is specially suitable here: for we expect sleepers to awake. The metaphor is suggested so naturally by the appearance of the dead that it is utterly unfair to infer from it that they are unconscious. See **#2Co 5:8**. But they are at rest.

**Fallen-asleep**; directs attention to the event of death.

**Perished**: hopelessly ruined. Same word as *destroyed*, and *lost*: see Review of DIV. VII. and note under **#Ro 2:24**. If dead men do not rise, and if consequently our hope of eternal happiness depends upon our surviving till Christ comes, then our departed brethren have lost their share in that happiness, and have thus lost everything and lost themselves. That this is absolutely impossible, Paul leaves his readers to judge. For it could not be conceived that they who had lived in Christ and gone down to the grave trusting in Him, whose very death had been an evident victory over death, had by the hand of death been separated from Him.

Grammatically we might connect **#1Co 15:18** with the foregoing words, and take it as proof that we are not "still in our sins." But to a Christian man this needs no proof. And, as expounded above, **#1Co 15:18** is a complete and additional argument in support of the main thesis of § 28, viz. that there is a resurrection of the dead. A similarly abrupt argument in support of this thesis, we find in **#1Co 15:29**.

Ver. 19. An argument supplementary to the last. It implies that some who denied the resurrection were, or might be, nevertheless looking forward with hope to the coming of Christ and to the endless happiness He will bring. Now, if dead men be not raised, i.e. if they "who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished," the realization of these hopes depends upon our surviving till Christ comes. And, if so, we and all our hopes are at the mercy of death: for they may be overturned at any moment by its approach. Our hopes, like worldly hopes, depend upon continuance *in this life*.

**We are only men who in this life have hope of Christ.** If so, men like Paul, whose life was one long peril of death, are in a position most pitiable: and their conduct in braving such perils (**#1Co 15:30**) is inexplicable. For hopes most glorious hang upon a thread most slender. The correctness of the foregoing exposition is confirmed by an important coincidence in **#1Th 4:13ff**, where we learn that similar doubts existed at Thessalonica.

Ver. 20. Triumphant assertion *that Christ is risen*, prompted by a deep consciousness how far from true were the suppositions involved in a denial of it; followed by an assertion that His resurrection is a pledge of ours.

**But now:** as in **#1Co 12:18**: "as things actually are."

**First-fruit:** **#Ro 8:23; 16:5**: the first-ripe ears, which are a pledge and a part of the coming harvest. Cp. **#Col 1:18; #Re 1:5**; and, in Appendix A, the Epistle of Clement, ch. 24.

Ver. 21. Justifies the expression *first-fruit*, by explaining the connection therein implied between Christ's resurrection and ours.

**Through man, death:** explained in **#Ro 5:12**.

**Through;** denotes constantly Christ's relation to us and our salvation. See under **#Ro 1:5**. The conspicuous repetition *through man . . . also through man*, embodies an important principle. God has linked men together so closely that each one receives good and ill through his fellows. This abiding relation revealed itself first in the father of our race, *through* whom comes *death* to all. And, that this relation might be a channel not only of ill but of surpassing good, Christ became man and made His humanity a channel of life to all who receive Him.

Ver. 22. Explains and develops **#1Co 15:21**, thus continuing the justification of **#1Co 15:20b**. The whole race and its fortunes were so wrapped in the one father of the race that the punishment inflicted upon him falls upon us: and *all* of us *die* because *Adam* died. We die now in virtue of our relation to one who died long ago.

**So also etc.:** triumphant parallel.

**In Christ:** in virtue of our relation to Christ. Since never once are unbelievers said to be in any sense *in Christ*, since the future state of the lost is never once called *life*, and since in the foregoing ("firstfruit of the sleeping ones") and following ("they that are Christ's") verses Paul limits his view to believers, we must understand the words *all . . . all* in this limitation. Only within these limits is

**#1Co 15:43** true. See note under **#Ro 5:18**. That *made-alive* is perhaps sometimes used in the simple sense of "restore to natural life," does not weaken this proof. For all men on earth are said to be *alive*: but never those who are dead and lost. [Hence the absence of *ανθρωποι*, a word conspicuous in **#Ro 5:12, 18**, which refer (**#Ro 5:14**) to the whole race.] It is true that "all men" die in Adam. But in this chapter Paul thinks only of believers. Similarly, he leaves out of sight, as not affecting the argument, those who survive till Christ comes. In consequence of his readers' relation to Adam, every one of them will be laid in the grave: in consequence of their relation to Christ they will all be raised from the grave.

This doctrine rests, as do all the great doctrines of the Gospel (see under **#Ro 3:22**, and Dissertation i. 3) simply and only on the authoritative word of God. That both good and bad will rise from the dust of death, was revealed to Daniel (**#Da 12:2**) in his last prophetic vision. It was solemnly announced by Christ, **#Joh 5:28**: and the resurrection of believers is announced by Paul to the Thessalonians "in the word of the Lord," **#1Th 4:15**. The abundant teaching of the New Testament makes us absolutely certain that it was taught by Christ. Our belief of it rests therefore upon the sufficient authority of Him Who will judge the world. Therefore, to deny the general resurrection, is to dispute this authority and thus practically to deny that God raised Christ from the dead. Consequently, we believe that we shall rise because we believe that He rose. And the connecting link between these beliefs is the express word of Christ. But to this express teaching Paul does not refer in this chapter. For he is dealing with an objection so sweeping that it includes a denial that Christ has risen. Perhaps also Paul knew that this objection to the resurrection of believers was really a covert attack on the resurrection of Christ.

Ver. 23.-28. The words "will be made alive" open to Paul's gaze a vision of the future consummation he now describes. In doing so he traces further the relation between the resurrection of Christ and our own resurrection; and thus supports his assumption in **#1Co 15:20** that the one is a pledge of the other.

Verse 23. **Each in his own order**: found twice word for word in the Epistle of Clement, chs. 37, 41; in reference to military array, and to church order. In the *order* in which the army of the redeemed marches forth from the gates of death each one keeps the place appropriate to his rank, i.e. the Captain marches first and His followers afterwards.

**They that are Christ's**: **#1Co 3:23**; **#Ga 5:24**: evidently the saved, including those of the Old Testament and of the heathen world. These last, Christ claims expressly in **#Joh 10:16**, "Other sheep I have;" and declares that they shall be brought into the "One flock." Cp. **#Ro 2:26**. That we are Christ's, confirms the teaching that Christ's resurrection is a pledge of ours.

**At His coming**: **#1Th 2:19**; **3:13**; **4:15**. It gives vividness to the picture by pointing to its most conspicuous feature, the visible return of Christ. This verse does not contradict **#Joh 5:28f**, viz. that good and bad men will rise together. For throughout 1Cor. 15, (cp. **#1Co 15:43**) Paul speaks only of the saved. Here, without denying that all the dead will rise at the same time, he says that Christ's people will rise later than Himself; as in **#1Th 4:16** that dead believers will rise before the living ones are caught up to Christ. **#Re 20:4** refers only to the martyrs, who for Christ's sake went down

into the grave before their time, and who will have the honor of rising before the rest of the people of God.

Ver. 24. **The end:** of the redemptive reign of Christ, as suggested by the words immediately following, and proved by the emphatic and prolonged reference in **#1Co 15:25-28** to the *end* of Christ's reign and to His submission to the Father. It is the "completion of the age," **#Mt 13:39; 24:3; 28:20**. Meyer's exposition, that *the end* is the resurrection of the unjust, cannot be allowed. For this, not being referred to in the whole chapter, would require specific mention. The word "each" in **#1Co 15:23** does not necessarily imply more than two orders, i.e. Christ and His people. Of a third order, viz. the unsaved, not a word is said.

**Gives up:** as though Paul, in prophetic vision, saw Christ *giving up the Kingdom*.

**When He gives up;** expounds *the end*. After raising His people from death and thus completing their deliverance, Christ solemnly presents His finished work to the Father, the work which the Father gave Him to do: and this presentation will be the last act, *the end*, of His redemptive reign.

**The God and Father:** of Christ and of us. He is the Supreme Ruler of the universe and the Loving Parent of the whole family of heaven.

**Brought to nought:** same word in **#1Co 2:6; #Ro 3:3**.

**Principality, authority, power:** **#Eph 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; #Col 1:16; 2:10, 15; #Tit 3:1**: evidently hostile powers ("enemies," **#1Co 15:25**) human and superhuman. To the men of Paul's day the hostile human powers were a terrible reality: the hostile spiritual powers are terrible now. *Principality*, suggests the first rank; *authority*, control over others; *power*, ability to produce results. The rank, as the most conspicuous feature, is mentioned first: from this flow the authority and power. **#1Co 15:24b** suggests that till these exalted adversaries are overthrown the Son cannot give up the kingdom to God.

Ver. 25. Proof that the giving up of the kingdom will be preceded by the overthrow of all hostile powers, by an appeal to a necessity resting on the immovable purpose of God as revealed in ancient prophecy.

**Must-needs:** same word in **#Mt 16:21; 17:10; 24:6; 26:54; #Lu 24:7, 26, 44; #Joh 3:14; 20:9; #Ac 1:16; 3:21; 17:3**, etc.

**Reign-as-king:** in contrast to "give up the kingdom."

**He have put etc.:** viz. Christ. For nothing suggests a change of subject.

**All the enemies:** of him and us. This is an almost exact quotation of **#Ps 110:1**. The similar quotations in **#Mt 22:44; #Mr 12:36; #Lu 20:42; #Ac 2:34; #Heb 1:13**, prove how familiar it was to the early church, as a prophecy about Christ, from the lips of David. And to Christ, Psa. 110 certainly refers. For it speaks of One who is both David's king and a priest of an order of Aaron. Now



this prophecy declares that on the right hand of God Christ shall sit, ruling among His enemies, until their power shall be utterly destroyed. Therefore, not till then can He give up to God His redemptive reign. For not till then will His redemptive work be complete, or this prophecy fulfilled.

Ver. 26. This simple assertion unfolds a truth implied in the just quoted prophecy.

**Is-brought-to-nought**; portrays the overthrow of death as though now taking place. "All the enemies" in **#1Co 15:25** certainly includes death. For death silences lips which once gave praise to Christ, and binds hands which gladly did His bidding. And, if an enemy, death must, according to the prophecy, be conquered. To Paul's eye of faith the conquest is already taking place. And when this foe is conquered, all are conquered. It is therefore the *last enemy*.

Ver. 27a. Another proof, viz. an exact quotation of **#Ps 8:6** (quoted also in **#Heb 2:6**), that *death is set aside*. In the creative purpose of God, the entire universe was put under man's power. By man's sin this has been reversed: and man is now in some sense at the mercy of material forces over which he was originally destined to rule. But the purpose of the Creator cannot in the end be set aside. It will be accomplished through Christ; who became man that He might claim its accomplishment, and recover for Himself and for His brethren their lost rule over the universe. And, therefore, until all things are put under the feet of Christ and of His people, His work will not be complete. Now, of all forces in the world, material and spiritual, least under the control of man is death. Before that dread conqueror all men bow. Therefore, the original creative purpose of God, which Christ came to accomplish, implies the overthrow of death.

**He has put etc.**: probably God, as in the passage quoted, and in **#Eph 1:22**. For in **#1Co 15:27b** God is said to put all things under Christ. But Paul is not careful to specify this: for it is a victory equally of the Father and the Son. Cp. **#Php 3:21**. It is, however, better to attribute the victory to the Son in **#1Co 15:25** and to the Father in **#1Co 15:27**, because of the prominence given to each in each of these verses respectively.

Both **#Ps 110:1** and **#Ps 8:6** are virtually proofs that the people of God will rise from the dead. Cp. **#Php 3:21**. For their death is death's victory over them, and in some sense over Christ, whose they are. As long as their bodies are in the grave the temple of God is a prey to corruption; and their souls are exiles from the world which God created to be their dwelling and their throne. Now this thwarting of the purpose of God cannot be for ever. The grave must give up its prey: and man clothed once more in a body, human though glorified, must reign over a renewed world. And all this will be Christ's work, and a result of His resurrection. Thus, from ancient prophecy, Paul has made good his assertion that Christ is risen as a first-fruit of the sleeping ones.

Verse 27b. After justifying "when He have brought to nought etc.," Paul now develops "when He gives up etc.," in **#1Co 15:24**. Thus, as usual, he rises from the Son to the Father. And, in doing so, he strengthens, as we shall see, the argument involved in **#1Co 15:25ff** that Christ's people will rise.

**When He shall say**: when God shall declare that the ancient prophecy is now accomplished, and that all things are at length put under the dominion of man as represented in, and united with, Christ.

[The Greek perfect, *are-made subject*, directs our attention to the abiding effect of God's subjecting all things to Christ.]

**It is evident etc.:** conspicuous declaration that when the universe will bow to Christ there will be One who will not bow, one exception to the universal homage. This is *evident* from the words "Thou has put," (as quoted by Paul, "He has put,") which are solemnly and conspicuously repeated at the end of **#1Co 15:27**, and which imply that the subjection of all things to Christ is a work, not of Christ, but of One other than He.

Ver. 28. Having thus prepared the way, Paul now states in another form what he has already stated in **#1Co 15:24**, viz. that in the moment of His supreme triumph the Son will bow to the Father.

**Will-be-made-subject:** a suitable expression; for the Son's submission, though embraced willingly and cordially by Him, does not originate in His will, but is obedience to the law of His own eternal existence and corresponds with His essential relation to the Father. This verse suggests that Christ will then become subject to the Father in a sense in which He is not now; and in this it is confirmed by **#1Co 15:24a**. We are also told that *the Son will be made subject to the Father in order that God may be all things in all*. This suggests that the Son's submission is needful for the complete restoration (cp. **#Col 1:20**) of the universe to its right relation to the Father. *All things in all* persons, probably: i.e. in the inner subjective life of each one, God is to fill up the whole place and be recognized as the one source of all we have and are, the one ruler directing our entire conduct, and the one aim of our entire activity. Cp. **#Col 3:11**.

The bearing of these last words on the final destiny of those who die unsaved, I hope to discuss elsewhere. That Paul does not say "all men," (as in **#Ro 5:12, 18**), and does not refer in 1Cor. 15 to those who die without Christ, warns us not to assume that this purpose embraces them.

In this view of the mysterious words of **#1Co 15:24, 28** touching the relation of the Eternal Son to the Eternal Father, rather than speak, the expositor would prefer to bow in silent adoration. But what God has spoken we cannot forbear to re-echo. These verses teach the absolute and eternal submission of the Son to the Father. And, even when receiving the homage of the Son, the Father is spoken of by Paul, not as we should say God the Father as distinguished from God the Son, but simply as *God*. And to Him the Son bows with the express purpose that thus the Father may be everything in the eyes and thought of all His servants. This absolute subordination of the Son has been already clearly marked in **#1Co 3:23** and **#1Co 8:6**; and is recognized throughout the New Testament. But its most complete expression is in this verse.

That from the moment of His final triumph the Son will bow to the Father in a sense in which he does not now, must be expounded in harmony with **#Lu 1:33**, "Of His kingdom there will be no end;" and with **#Re 11:15**, "The kingdom of the world has become our Lord's and His Christ's: and He will reign for ever and ever." In this latter passage the united reign of the Father and Son is described by the remarkable words, "He will reign." Perhaps the following imperfect human comparison may help to harmonize these apparently contradictory assertions. Conceive a king who never leaves his palace, but commits all public acts of royalty to his son, who performs them in the name, and at the bidding, and according to the will, of his father, whose will his son always

approves. Such a son we might call a sharer of his father's throne; and, in another sense, the sole ruler of his father's realm. Conceive now that a province is in rebellion, and that, to bring it into submission, the king invests his son, for the time of rebellion with full royal authority. The son begins in person the war against the rebels; but before its completion he returns to the capital in which his father reigns and directs thence the way until order is completely restored. Even in the presence of his father he exercises the full regal authority given to him for the suppression of the revolt. While the rebellion lasts he seems to be an independent ruler; though really ruling only at the bidding, and to work to the will, and restore the authority, of his father. But, when order is restored, the son gives back to the father this delegated royalty: and even the apparent independence of the son's rule ceases. Henceforth the father reigns with undisputed sway.

The difference between the special authority delegated to the Son for the suppression of the revolt and afterwards laid down and the abiding authority of the Son as the Father's representative, I cannot define. Probably it is connected with the fact that in consequence of sin the Son did what the Father never did, viz. became man and died. May it not be that in consequence of this he exercises now an authority which is specially His own, and which will continue only for a time?

In **#1Co 15:25-27a** we found an argument for the resurrection of the people of God. Of this argument Paul has now shown the full force by setting it in the light of that day when Christ will give up to the Father His finished work. For that work cannot be pronounced complete while bodies which were once the temple of God are still held fast by the grave and while the spirits of the saved are still exiles from the world which was created to be their home.

Ver. 29. Another argument against the teaching (**#1Co 15:12**) "that there is no rising up of dead men." Since it deals with the chief topic of § 28, we need not suppose any special reference to the foregoing words. The force of this argument, we cannot now reproduce with certainty. For, not only is it directed against an error unknown to us except through Paul's refutation, but it rests upon a custom also unknown. We may provisionally accept the hypothesis that the opponents referred to taught that there is no life beyond the grave and that the hope of immortality rests upon the hope of surviving the coming of Christ. See end of § 28. And we can only guess at a custom in the Corinthian church which might be described by the words **being baptized on behalf of the dead ones**, and to which Paul could point as a witness against the teaching he combats.

Chrysostom tells us in his homily on this passage that the followers of the heretic Marcion, "when a catechumen dies among them, hide a living man under the bed of the dead one, and come to the dead man and ask whether he wishes to receive baptism. Then, when he answers nothing, the hidden man says from beneath, instead of him, that he wishes to be baptized. And so they baptize him instead of the deceased." Epiphanius says (*Heresies* xxviii. 7) that the followers of Cerinthus "baptized others in the name of those who died without baptism, lest when they rose in the resurrection they should be punished for not having received baptism." Now we can well conceive that this custom, which lingered only in small sects, was a perversion, both in practice and doctrine, of an innocent and appropriate custom existing at Corinth in Paul's day. We may suppose that, for those who died in faith but not yet baptized, others, either baptized members or catechumens, received the rite, perhaps in some cases at the request of the dying man, as a testimony to the church of his faith; that thus he might have, though dead, a name and a place in the church. If death-bed

baptism were not practiced in the apostles' days, (and we have no proof that it was,) this custom of vicarious baptism might easily arise; and would naturally fall into disuse as death-bed baptism became common. Such a custom might easily be described, without supposing any spiritual benefit to the dead man from the rite, as *being baptized on behalf of the dead ones*. For the rite was performed to supply an omission on their part; and sometimes at their request. And it would be a strong testimony on the part of the dying man, of those who took part in the rite, and of those who approved it, that a happy life beyond death awaits those who died in Christ. For if, as some (**#1Co 15:12**) said, a place in the future kingdom of God depends on surviving to His coming, the dead believer's faith is made vain, and himself destroyed, by his death. For one who has thus failed by the failure of his earthly life surely no sacred rite would be performed. Such a rite might easily degenerate into the foolish form ridiculed by Chrysostom, and into the false teaching mentioned by Epiphanius. But in itself it would be innocent and appropriate; and might be mentioned by Paul without disapproval. If it was sanctioned by the church at Corinth generally, Paul's argument would be an appeal to the faith of the whole church, as against a minority probably small.

**Else**; introduces a *reductio ad absurdum*, as in **#1Co 5:10; 7:14**. In thought Paul sees men receiving the rite, *being baptized on behalf of the dead ones*; and asks what they are going to do, what result they will obtain. He gives force to his question by repeating it.

**If dead men are not raised**, states in full what is implied in *else*.

**To-speak-generally** declares (cp. **#1Co 5:1**) that the words following state a universal truth. Paul asks why men go so far as to be baptized for dead men if these do not rise. No reason can be given. For, as Paul and his readers assume, (see review of DIV. VII.) if dead men do not rise there is no life beyond death. Consequently, the dead are lost. And their faith has been vain: for by death they have been (**#1Co 15:18**) separated from Christ. But, if so, to commemorate their faith by receiving baptism for them, is absurd. Thus the custom in question, sanctioned probably by the whole church, attests the faith of the church that their departed brethren are safe and that the dead in Christ will rise. Similarly, Cicero appeals (*Tusculan Disputations* bk. i. 12) to funeral rites as proof of the general belief of mankind that there is a life beyond the grave.

[Canon Evans, in the *Speaker's Commentary*, denies to ὑπερ any meaning more definite than that conveyed by περι; giving to these words practically the same sense. But this is very unlikely, especially as in the N. T. we never find the local sense of ὑπερ with genitive. He confuses the matter by combating in the same breath the wholly different meanings "on behalf of" and "instead of." This latter sense, I believe, in the N.T. the word never has. But it is always associated with the idea of assistance or benefit or furtherance, an idea suitably conveyed by the rendering *on behalf of*, cognate with "help." This idea distinguishes the prepositions. In the N.T. the "mental bending over" is never "mere contemplation and nothing more," but has always reference to benefit or furtherance.

This ever-present idea accounts for the much greater frequency of this preposition with persons than with things or abstract of this preposition with persons than with things or abstract terms. But even with these last the same idea is easily traceable. So in **#1Co 15:3**; where Canon Evans has no right to impute inconsistency to Meyer, who renders "on account of our sins, i.e. in order to atone for them." For Christ thus renders us infinite benefit, by saving us from our sins. (So we sometimes

say "Do my cough good," to denote relief from it.) In **#Ro 4:24** our sins are differently represented, viz. as a motive (**διὰ** with acc.) prompting God to surrender His Son. The idea of assisting and promoting is prominent in **#2Co 12:15**, "on behalf of your souls," i.e. to save them; **#2Co 12:19**, "of your edification;" **#2Co 1:6**, "of your exhortation and salvation"; **#1Th 3:2**, "of your faith," i.e. to strengthen and widen it; **#Ro 1:5**, "of the Name of Christ," i.e. to make it honorably known; **#Joh 11:4**, "of the glory of God " explained by the following words. Hence we have thanks on behalf of (**#2Co 1:11**) benefited persons, or of (**#1Co 10:30**) benefits received: and hope (**#2Co 1:6**) for benefits to come. Paul's boasting on behalf of his readers (**#2Co 7:4, 14**) is represented as a tribute of honor to them. In **#Phm 1:13** Paul courteously suggests that by caring for him in prison at Rome, Onesimus would carry out the wishes of Philemon. And in **#2Co 13:8** **ὑπερ** is itself a sufficient contrast to **κατά**. The constancy of this idea compels us to interpret **#1Co 15:29** as meaning that in some way the persons referred to rendered service to, or carried out the wishes of, the dead ones on whose behalf they were baptized.

Canon Evans, following Chrysostom and the Greek Fathers, supposes that **ὑπερ τῶν νεκρῶν**, *on behalf of the dead ones*, means **ὑπερ ἀναστατεως νεκρῶν**, *on behalf of resurrection of dead ones*; and that in baptism express confession was made of the resurrection of the dead. If Paul meant this, these very words would have been the most appropriate, and a very crushing, mode of stating it. The repetition *on behalf of the dead ones, of them*, makes very conspicuous the persons in whose interest, in contrast to those upon whom, the rite was performed. Whereas, practically, the exposition before us makes these identical. For, the hope of resurrection was primarily a hope that the baptized will themselves rise. Moreover, as thus expounded, this would be an appeal to the whole church: for all had been baptized. The third person suggests that Paul refers only to a part of the church. Lastly if there had been, as Chrysostom says, an express confession at baptism of belief in the resurrection, it is not likely that those who denied it would retain their place in the community of the baptized. For their denial would be an explicit disavowal of their baptism.

The exposition of the Greek Fathers does not seem to me to account for, and justify, Paul's words. My own exposition is, in the absence of historic proof, simply a suggestion which would account easily for all the facts of the case. Among these last must be counted the customs ridiculed by Chrysostom and Epiphanius. For they must have had an origin. And it is much more likely that heretics would pervert an existing custom than invent a new one. If the custom in question was suggested by the words before us, this would only prove that, in the mind of Greek-speaking Christians of the second century, the words were not fairly accounted for by the existing and ordinary rite of baptism. And this I now say. Certainly the many-sided and far reaching heresy of Marcion cannot be said to have been "founded on this text!"

The exposition I have given is slightly modified from one found in Ambrosiaster. Tertullian twice (*Against Marcion* bk. v. 10, and *On Resurrection* ch. 48) quotes this verse; but does not expound it.

Ver. 30.-31. **Why do we also:** in contrast to "why are they also baptized etc.," introducing a new appeal, viz. to the conduct of Paul and his colleagues, in proof of life beyond death. He thus appeals to the respect for himself, which, he knows, still lives, in spite of a factious minority, in the hearts of his readers.

**We;** cannot be exactly defined. It simply indicates that what Paul says applies to others besides himself. Cp. **#Ro 1:5**. If there be no resurrection of the dead, and therefore no life beyond death, Paul's exposure of himself to peril is infinite folly. For he thus risks in the same moment both the present life and the life to come. If eternal happiness depends upon living till Christ comes, then deadly peril must above all things be avoided.

**Every hour:** vivid picture of the apostle's constant danger. Cp. **#Ro 8:36**. This danger, **#1Co 15:31** depicts in still darker colors.

**I-am-dying:** same as "we are always being given up to death," in **#2Co 4:11**. Not that each day he actually dies, but that the process of death is ever going on; as though every day the executioner were already at work putting him to death. In proof of this he appeals to his own *exultation* (see under **#Ro 2:17**) about the Corinthians. The very joy and gratitude evoked by his thought of them recalls the peril he has endured for their salvation.

**Which I have:** as though his exultation about them were an enrichment to himself.

**In Christ Jesus:** only in the inner spiritual life which he lives in contact with his Master Christ, does Paul exult above the Corinthians. Notice the force of this appeal to the heart of his *brethren*. In spite of many defects, they are precious to him. As he stands before his Master, the thought of them gives him joy. And this joy reminds him, and will remind them, of the peril with which it has been purchased.

Ver. 32a. Another question parallel to, and supporting, that of **#1Co 15:30**.

**With human aim:** taking as a standard of conduct men with their purposes and practices. Same words in **#1Co 9:8; 3:3; #Ro 3:5; #Ga 3:15**. If Paul had ever been cast into the arena to fight with actual *wild beasts*, his deliverance must have been little less than a miracle; and so terrible an event would not have been omitted in **#2Co 11:23ff**. We therefore infer, as would his readers unless they knew he had actually fought in the arena, that these words describe deadly enemies encountered during Paul's long sojourn at Ephesus. They are a terrible picture of the perils which culminated in the uproar of **#Ac 19:23**. He was surrounded by men thirsting for his blood, men against whose fury he was as powerless to defend himself as were the captives thrown to lions in the amphitheater. Cp. **#Tit 1:12; #2Ti 4:17**. So Polycarp, (*Ep. to the Romans* ch. v.), after speaking of being literally thrown to wild beasts, says: "From Syria to Rome I am fighting with wild beasts, by land and by sea, night and day, being bound to ten leopards, i.e. a band of soldiers." Also *Ep. to the Smyrnans* ch. iv.: "Guard against the wild beasts in human form." Notice the climax, "incur danger," "die," and the most terrible kind of death, hopeless conflict with lions or panthers. Paul asks "If my voluntary exposure to this deadly peril be from the worldly motives common to men, what is the worldly *gain* for which I look?" No such gain can be conceived. Consequently, his self-exposure was not from worldly motives. In other words, it was a proof that he believed in a life beyond death. And, that this belief was correct, the admiration which his heroism evoked bore strong testimony. The force of the argument that unless there be a life beyond death moral heroism has often no reward has been felt in all countries and ages.

Verse 32b. In contrast to his own conduct which is reckless folly if there be no resurrection, Paul now depicts conduct which a denial of the resurrection would justify. And, to reveal the gross impropriety of such conduct, he puts it in the form of advice. "If this teaching be true, it would be right for me to advise you to enjoy the present: for the present is all we have to enjoy." And the readers would recognize in the words *Let us eat . . . we die* an exact quotation of **#Isa 22:13**, a description of conduct in Jerusalem which, the prophet declares will be punished with death. That the teaching Paul combats is utterly destructive of a heroism which claims our admiration, and that it prompts to conduct condemned by both man's moral instinct and by the Scriptures, proves the teaching to be untrue.

Ver. 33.-34. **Be not deceived:** in a similar connection, **#1Co 6:9**. The solemn earnestness of these words suggests that some at Corinth actually accepted, though perhaps unconsciously, the foregoing practical and immoral inference from this false teaching.

**Excellent dispositions, bad companionships corrupt:** a line of poetry found in the surviving fragments of the Athenian comic dramatist Meander, who died B.C. 291. Paul rebukes the immoral inferences from the false teaching at Corinth by quoting the words of a pagan. He thus confirms the voice of God (in **#Isa 22:13**) by the general moral sense of man. Whether he had read the comedies of Meander, or only quoted this line, as many quote Shakespeare now, from hearsay, we cannot determine. An important coincidence is found in **#Ac 17:28**, where a similar quotation is attributed to Paul. So **#Tit 1:12**.

**Bad companionships:** intercourse from time to time with bad men. He refers probably, as **#1Co 15:32** suggests, to those who denied the resurrection.

**Rouse-up:** as though overcome by sleep or intoxication. Same word in **#Joe 1:5**, "Rouse up, drunken ones." Like *be not deceived*, it is an appeal to the whole church, whose spiritual sense had become stupefied.

**Righteously:** in a manner corresponding with the principles of right.

**Sin not:** result of rousing thus.

**For some etc.;** justifies the exhortation by pointing to the need for it.

**Some:** evidently church-members. Otherwise the mention of them would not put the church *to shame*.

**Ignorance of God:** interesting coincidence with **#Mt 22:29**. It leads both to a denial of the resurrection and to practical immorality. *Arouse righteously* is parallel to *be not deceived*; *ignorance of God etc.*, to *bad companionships*. Paul wishes his readers not to be deceived: and then, fearing that deception has already begun, he urges them to arouse from its influence. The men against whom he warns are bad company; because they know not God.

**To awaken shame:** that they have such men in their midst. This suggests that they ought to be expelled from the church.

The earnestness of **#1Co 15:33, 34** implies that the denial of the resurrection was already producing immoral results. There were men in the church whose presence was a shame to it, because they knew not God. Paul therefore exhorts his readers sharply to arouse from stupor and avoid sin, and warns them that bad company injures even the well-disposed. The immoral maxim in **#1Co 15:32** suggests that the false teachers were bad men. And Paul's concluding rebuke implies that they ought to be no longer in the church. He does not command their expulsion; but leaves this to the Christian sense of the community.

SECTION 28 presents special difficulties. Like all refutations, it can be understood only by understanding first the teaching refuted: but this is known to us only through the arguments we are now seeking to understand. We will therefore attempt to gather from § 28 itself all indications about the false teaching it combats: and we will then build up in our own words its various arguments.

We notice that, although Paul proves at great length that Christ has risen, he simply asserts, and asserts twice, with perfect confidence but without proof, that Christ has risen. From this we infer with certainty that the denial at Corinth was an absolute denial of the possibility of bodily life for those who have died. For, a denial merely based on the dissolution of the body would not cover the case of Christ. The argument of § 29 suggests that some denied the resurrection because our present bodies are unsuitable to the future life. That Paul contents himself with simply asserting that the Corinthian denial involves a denial that Christ has risen, suggests that this logical consequence must have been so clear that it could not escape the deniers themselves; and that, at least in their hearts, they were prepared to accept it. But Paul's silence about any express denial that Christ had risen suggests that this consequence had not been formally stated. That Paul meets the denial by arguments of which some do not prove expressly that the dead will rise, implies that both he and the false teachers held that without resurrection there can be no abiding life beyond death. With this agrees **#Lu 20:37**, where Christ disproves the Sadducean denial of the resurrection by proving that the dead servants of God still live. Contrast the *Phaedo* of Plato and the *Tusculan Disputations* of Cicero, where life beyond death is strongly asserted but no hint given of resurrection. Paul and his readers evidently assumed that for beings consisting of spirit and body and created to dwell on earth there could be no abiding future life without a return to earth and a reclothing of the spirit in a human though glorified body. That Paul does not speak expressly of denial of life beyond death, but only of denial of the resurrection, suggests that the former denial was based upon the latter, in some cases probably upon the essential unsuitability of our present bodies for a future life. The assertion that dead men cannot rise, and that therefore there is no life beyond death, Paul meets in § 28 by proving that Christ has risen and by direct proofs that there is a future life; and by showing in § 29 that future bodily life does not imply bodies exactly like we now wear. Probably many Corinthians believed, as did some Greeks in Plato's day, (see quotation in Review of DIV. VII.,) that at the moment of death the spirit ceases to be.

Since the deniers of the resurrection were members of a Christian church, we must suppose that, just as the Sadducees of **#Lu 20:27** were followers of Moses, so they believed in part the Gospel of Christ. We may conceive that they believed that God accepts as righteous through the death of Christ



all who believe and gives to them His Holy Spirit, and that Christ will return to judge the world and to receive His people into glory; but that, since resurrection is inconceivable, our hope of glory depends upon surviving to the coming of Christ. Thus they had (**#1Co 15:19**) hope in Christ, but a hope contingent on present bodily life. That these were their views is made probable by **#1Th 4:13ff**, where we find similar views prevalent in another Gentile church. In this latter case, however, the doubts about the resurrection of dead believers did not involve (see **#1Co 15:14**) doubt that Christ had risen: nor had it led to immoral consequences. It was honest doubt, producing sorrow; not confident and outspoken denial, as at Corinth.

That the denial we are studying was perilous to morals, suggests that in the deniers even the expectation of Christ's coming had lost power. For this expectation was itself a sufficient motive for sobriety; and is so used in **#1Th 5:4ff**. Probably, they were Christians only in name.

In disproof of teaching which clearly involves a denial that Christ has risen, Paul expounds the significance of the facts, historical and spiritual, stated in § 27. He and others had asserted that Christ has risen: and their preaching had been the means of saving many at Corinth from the dominion of their former sins. If Christ had not risen, their testimony was a lie against God. And it could not be conceived that a lie would save men from their sins. Again, the Corinthian denial involves, as all admitted, a denial of life beyond death. Therefore, if true, it implies that those who have died trusting in Christ have, by their peaceful and heroic death, lost all; and that the men who cherish hopes of endless glory, hopes liable to be at any moment destroyed for ever by the hand of death, are indeed to be pitied. Since death is evidently an enemy to the Christian, it is destined by ancient prophecy to be trampled under the feet of Christ. And till this enemy is compelled to give up its prey the Son cannot present to the Father His finished work. The church at Corinth has itself condemned this error, by favoring the vicarious baptism of those who have died unbaptized. And the perils to which the apostle daily and willingly exposes himself are a loud expression of his own belief. In absolute contrast to these perils, a denial of the resurrection would justify immoral maxims condemned both by the Old Testament and by heathen writers. In view of this, Paul bids his readers examine whether the presence in their midst of deniers of the resurrection is not already producing immoral results.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XXIX

### OUR RESURRECTION BODIES WILL BE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM OUR PRESENT BODIES

CH. XV. 35-53

**But some one will say, How are the dead ones raised? and with what kind of body do they come? A senseless man! Thou, that which thou sowest is not made alive unless it die. And that which thou sowest, not the body which will come into being dost thou sow, but naked grain, of wheat it may be, or of some of the others. But God gives to it a body according as His will was; and to each of the seeds a body of its own. All flesh is not the same flesh. But there is one of men, and another flesh of cattle, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes. And heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. But of one kind is the glory of the heavenly ones, and of another kind that of the earthly ones. One glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. For star from star differs in glory.**

**So also the resurrection of the dead ones. It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour: it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness: it is raised in power. There is sown a soul-governed body: there is raised a spiritual body. If there is a soul-governed body, there is also a spiritual one. So also it is written, "The first man Adam became a living soul," (#Ge 2:7.) The last Adam, a life-giving Spirit. But not first is the spiritual, but the soul-governed, then the spiritual. The first man is from earth, a man of dust: the second Man is from heaven. Such as the man of dust, such also the men of dust and such as the heavenly one, such also the heavenly ones. And according as we have worn the image of the man of dust, let us wear also the image of the heavenly one.**

I mean this, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit God's kingdom; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. See, a mystery I tell you. All of us will not sleep: but all of us will be changed; in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For, one will blow a trumpet: and the dead will be raised incorruptible; and we shall be changed. For it must need be that this corruptible thing put on incorruption, and this mortal thing put on immortality.

Ver. 35. Adverse questions which Paul knows *some one will ask*.

**With what-kind-of body:** expounds *how are the dead ones raised*, by giving the special point of difficulty in the process of the resurrection.

**Are raised, do they come:** vivid description, as though we saw them now rising and coming out of the grave.

**They come:** from the standpoint of living men, of those who are coming back to the land of the living. "A senseless one!" in **#1Co 15:36** suggests that these questions are not for information but

to raise an objection. That the objection is made, not to Paul's proofs, but to the doctrine proved, viz. that the dead will rise, suggests that this objection had been actually brought and was perhaps one ground of the assertion that there is no resurrection. The objectors evidently thought that resurrection implies that our present bodies or others like them will continue into the future life. This they could not conceive; and therefore said that "dead men do not rise." But Paul, after disproving this denial in § 28 by proving that Christ has risen and that there is a life beyond death, truths inconsistent with the denial, will now show that the just uncovered ground of the denial is itself a misconception of the nature of the resurrection.

In #Mt 22:23ff we have a similar objection to the fact of the resurrection, based on the same crude notion, common even in Christian ages, that the raised bodies will be exactly the same as those laid in the grave. Our Saviour, like Paul, meets it by proving that there is a life beyond the grave, assuming that this implies a resurrection of the dead; and by showing how incorrect are the common ideas about the life of the risen ones.

Ver. 36.-38. **A senseless one! Thou etc.;** rebukes the folly of the objection underlying these questions by pointing the man to a matter belonging to his own daily life.

**Made-alive, die:** appropriately chosen to suggest the analogy between the dead Christian and the seed hidden from sight in the ground and there perishing as a seed that it may pass into a more abundant life. This analogy teaches that there may be a continuity and a development of life in spite of the dissolution of its outward form; and that death may itself be the only possible way to a higher life. Thus in the very plants under our feet we have a pattern and a prophecy of our own resurrection, and a rebuke to those who deny its possibility. #1Co 15:37 adds to the analogy pointed out in #1Co 15:36 a proof from it that continuity of life does not imply continuity of bodily form.

**Body;** keeps before us the analogy of a dead man.

**Naked grain:** in contrast to the beautifully clothed plant which will grow from it.

**Wheat, or some of the others;** suggests the variety of seeds, thus preparing the way for *to each of the seeds* in #1Co 15:38. Verse 38 solemnly introduces God as the Maker of the body which will grow.

**His-will-was:** literally, *has-willed*: same words and teaching in #1Co 12:18.

**According as etc.** The purpose of God, formed in the eternal past, is the eternal archetype with which correspond even the plants growing today. That God *gives* to the wheat from His Own infinite resources *a body* corresponding to the mystery of His Own eternal will, is the strongest contrast to *sowing the body which will come to be*.

**Each of the seeds;** suggest the immense variety of seeds. Each of these will have *a body of its own*, a body appropriate to itself. Consequently the variety of vegetable bodies is as great as the variety of seeds.

Ver. 39.-41. Paul now develops a thought suggested by "each of the seeds," viz. the immense variety, and variety of kinds, of living bodies.

**Cattle:** useful domestic animals, horses, oxen, sheep, etc. Same word in **#Ac 23:24; #Re 18:13; #Lu 10:34.**

**Heavenly bodies;** might denote in itself, the glorified bodies of the inhabitants of heaven. But here it can only denote the *sun, moon, and stars*. For *the glory of the heavenly ones* can be no other than the *glory of the sun etc.* Thus Paul himself defines the *heavenly bodies*. As in English so sometimes in classic Greek inanimate substances are called bodies. And the vegetable "body" given in **#1Co 15:38** to a grain of wheat opens the way for inorganic *bodies* here.

**Earthly bodies;** may, in itself, include all material objects. But **#1Co 15:39** directs and confines our attention to living bodies: just as **#1Co 15:41** limits *heavenly bodies* to the stars etc. The word *bodies* puts in comparison the objects which live and move on earth with those brilliant objects which move or seem to move above our heads and infinitely beyond our reach. Paul thus reminds us that not only is there an infinite variety of material and living forms around us but that far above us there are other bodies; and then goes on to say that these heavenly bodies, which by their splendor awaken our rapt admiration, are *of altogether another kind*, differing entirely from every one of the endless varieties of earthly bodies.

**Glory:** admiration, or the objective quality which evokes it; see under **#Ro 1:21**. The splendor which excites our admiration of the sun, moon, and stars, is altogether different from the manifold beauty which evokes our admiration of the works of God on earth.

**One glory of the sun etc.;** carries the proof of variety still further. Not only is there infinite variety in the objects which surround us on earth, and not only are all these entirely different from those which shine in the canopy of heaven, but even in these latter the law of variety is seen. All are glorious: but their glories differ. One step further. If the *stars* were all alike Paul would probably have written, according to Greek idiom, "another glory of the star," naming one as representative of all. He therefore justifies the plural *stars*, by saying that the law of variety holds good even to the utmost limit of the visible creation, and that even stars differ among themselves. This is much better than taking the word *stars* to include *sun* and *moon*. Thus by a graphic delineation Paul has taught us that endless variety is a law of creation; and that amid this endless variety there is nevertheless an infinite distance between the endless varieties around us and the endless varieties above us.

Ver. 42a. Applies the foregoing facts to the matter in hand. Cp. **#Da 12:3.**

**So also etc.;** refers only to the difference between earthly and heavenly bodies. Of differences among resurrection bodies, we have no mention in § 29. The endless variety of earthly bodies is mentioned only to show that this variety does not preclude the possibility of an altogether different order of risen bodies, in which all will be glorious but infinitely diverse. At the same time, the careful assertion of the difference between star and star suggests, perhaps with design, different degrees of heavenly brightness.

Verse 42b.-44a. Expounds "so also," by four powerful contrasts between the body laid in the grave and that raised from it.

**It is sown;** recalls the metaphor of **#1Co 15:37f**, which overthrew the objection that our present bodies are unfit for the world to come. Conversely, the word "body" in **#1Co 15:37f** kept before us the matter for which the metaphor was used.

**In corruption:** dissolution actually going on while the body is being laid in the grave.

**Incorruption:** a state which abides undimmed for ever; see under **#Ro 2:7**.

**Dishonour:** as if of no value. It was a technical term, in the days of free Athens, for a kind of outlawry involving loss of the rights of citizenship and of state protection. And this meaning would doubtless occur to Paul's readers and was perhaps designed by him. Funeral pomp is but a mask hiding the truth that the body carried to the grave has lost the rights of humanity. Instead of the kind attentions rendered to it a few days ago, it is left alone in the dark and silent grave, as the meanest living body would not be. In absolute contrast to this is the splendor, exciting universal admiration, in which Christ's people will rise from the dead.

**In glory:** see **#Col 3:4**.

**Weakness:** the absolute powerlessness of the corpse, so that the once powerful arm can no longer do the slightest work.

**In power:** the wonderful and various capacity of the resurrection body.

**Soul-governed:** literally *soulish*, an adjective bearing the same relation to "soul" as *Spiritual* to "spirit." Cp. **#1Co 15:45**. Same word in **#1Co 2:14**. See note below. Paul no longer contrasts the conditions *in* which the body is buried and raised, but the constitutions of the dead and the rising bodies, derived from the first and the Last Adam. He thus introduces new ideas which he at once develops.

Ver. 44b. **Soul-governed;** describes the human body not only when dead but, as the quotation from Genesis 2 proves, as it sprang from the Creator's hands. It is therefore independent of man's conduct, and even of sin. Our present bodies and their action are subject to the laws of the *soul*, i.e. of bodily or animal life, which in turn depends upon food, temperature, etc., and is exposed to disease and mechanical injury. We are therefore not absolute masters of our own bodies. At least physically our animal nature rules us, i.e. determines what we shall do. And such a body, ruled by forces he could neither control nor fully understand, was given to Adam in Paradise. Our future bodies will be entirely permeated and controlled by our spirits, the seat of our intelligence. Consequently, the resurrection body, instead of limiting the spirit, will be a perfect manifestation of its nature and a passive instrument of its will. Then will our deliverance from, and conquest of, the material world be complete. And our submission to God, complete. For the human spirit, while ruling with undisputed sway over the body and the emotions, will itself be animated wholly by the

Spirit of God. The body to be laid in the grave is subject to the laws of animal life: the raised body will be subject only to spirit.

**There is also:** in the unchangeable purpose of God.

Verse 44b repeats for emphasis the assertions of **#1Co 15:44a**, in a form which declares that the former assertion implies the latter. The soul-governed body is imperfect: and in the works of God all imperfection is a prophecy of its own consummation. Again, although our *body* is *soul-governed*, *we ourselves are spiritual*: **#1Co 2:14, 15**; contrast **#Jude 1:19**. And the soul-governed body of those set free from the moral sway of the animal life reveals the change awaiting their body.

Ver. 45. **So also etc.**; adds to the assertion of **#1Co 15:44b** a quotation from **#Ge 2:7** in harmony with it.

**First:** inserted by Paul to give prominence to the fact that Adam was the beginning of the human race.

**Adam:** the Hebrew word rendered man in **#Ge 2:7**. It is added here to direct attention to him who bore it as his proper name. By God personally inbreathing the principle of life into a lifeless but organized body, *the man*, who before was only a lifeless body, became a living soul. The soul was a result of the entrance of the principle of life into a mortal body. That the word *soul* is used in **#Ge 2:7** to designate the entire man who thus sprang into being, implies that of man thus created the soul, i.e. the animal life, was the distinctive name-giving element. This designation therefore proves that the body of man as first created was a soul-governed body.

**The last Adam:** Christ, as being, like Adam, head and representative of the race, on whom hang the fortunes of the whole. Ancient Jewish writers give the same title to the expected Messiah. See quotations from Schoettgen given on page xix. Its use here is explained and justified by **#Ro 5:12-19**, with which it is a remarkable coincidence.

**The last:** because after Him there will be no other head of the race; or, more probably, because Paul has in view the final appearance of Christ.

**Life-giving:** an attribute of *spirit*, the principle of life; as is *living* of *soul*, an individual manifestation of life. We may supply either "has become" or "will become:" for the *life* which Christ will *give* results from His death and resurrection which have already taken place. **#1Co 15:45b** is but a repetition of **#1Co 15:22b**. For *spirit* is the one and only principle of "life." Therefore, that Christ's return to earth will clothe us in living bodies, proves him to be a *life-giving spirit*. And the body He will give can be no other than spiritual. For a soul-governed body is imperfect; and therefore inconsistent with final victory.

**#Ge 2:7** was quoted to prove, by his very designation, that Adam as created was imperfect. This imperfection, by its contrast with what we know will be a perfect state, proves the difference asserted in **#1Co 15:44a** between the body laid in the grave and that to be raised from it. Hence, after the quotation Paul simply adds an assertion of his own.

Ver. 46. **The spiritual:** wider than "spiritual body." Paul asserts a principle, possibly as broad as creation, viz. that God does not begin by creating matter completely under the control of spirit, but under control, more or less, of natural forces and animal life. To conquer matter thus swayed by other forces, and to bring it under its own absolute rule, is the task set before spirit. It was Adam's work to bring into subjection to his own spirit not only (**#Ge 1:28**) the world around him but his body and its appetites.

**Then the spiritual:** emphatic statement of the true order.

This verse casts important light on the story of Paradise. Adam was not created full-grown in moral and spiritual life, so that all he had to do was to retain his position. He was fully equipped for conquest: but the victory was not yet won. Paul tells us that it is so always. The task of our life is to gain complete control of our bodies and bodily life. Our reward will be to have resurrection bodies completely controlled, physically and morally, by the spirit within.

Ver. 47.-48. Further contrast of the two heads of the race, determining the nature of the bodies we receive from them respectively.

**From earth, a man of dust:** so **#Ge 2:7**, literally rendered, "formed man dust from the earth." *Dust* is the finest inorganic material. Adam was a man of dust.

**From heaven:** whence Christ will come (**#Php 3:20**) with all the powers of heaven to be Head of the glorified human race; in contrast to Adam who came from the earth beneath us, with all material infirmities, to be the beginning of a race which could not of itself rise above its source. What Adam was, *a man of dust*, they are who live a life inherited from him. And what Christ is, such are they who partake His life. This comparison pertains only to those elements which come from the heads of the race. Because Adam's body was soul-governed, so are ours. Christ's glorified body, which will some day return to earth, is purely spirit-governed. And since He, equally with Adam, is Head of the race, we shall have bodies like His.

Ver. 49. **Image of the man-of-dust:** our present human body.

**Image of the heavenly one:** our resurrection body, which will "be conformed to the body of His glory," **#Php 3:21**.

**Let us wear:** so read by all recent editors, except that *we shall* (A.V. and R.V. text) is in Westcott's margin: a various reading similar to **#Ro 5:1**. The change is in a single letter. In both cases the subjunctive reading is the more difficult, but is supported by preponderate documentary evidence. "We shall wear" would simply announce the coming glory. *Let us wear*, (or better, *let us put on for wear*,) reminds us that it depends upon ourselves whether we share that glory, and exhorts us so to act now as to obtain it. Such exhortation is an appropriate corrective to the absolute assertions of **#1Co 15:43-48**. *The image of the heavenly* cannot be the moral image of Christ. For, *the image of the man-of-dust* can be no other than bodily likeness to Adam: and the whole context refers to the resurrection.

Ver. 50. **I mean**, or *assert*: same word in same sense in **#1Co 10:19**. Paul now puts into plain words the practical meaning of his teaching in **#1Co 15:44-49** about the soul-governed body of dust, etc.

**Flesh and blood**: **#Mt 16:17**; **#Ga 1:16**; **#Eph 6:12**; **#Heb 2:14**. Bodies such as we now have, consisting of *flesh and blood* and therefore subject, to the laws of animal life, *cannot inherit the kingdom of God*: i.e. while wearing them we cannot obtain the royal inheritance (see **#1Co 6:10**) belonging to us as sons of God.

**Cannot**; marks the absolute incompatibility of a natural body with the kingdom in which matter is wholly controlled by spirit. After the concrete, *flesh and blood*, Paul mentions the abstract quality, *corrupting*, (never absent now where flesh is,) which prevents our present bodies from entering the kingdom of God; in absolute contrast to *incorruption*, (**#1Co 15:42**,) which marks all that pertains to that kingdom. Thus **#1Co 15:50b** gives a reason for the fact asserted in **#1Co 15:50a**.

Ver. 51. **Mystery**: something unknown had not God revealed it. See note under **#1Co 3:4**; cp. **#Ro 11:25**; also **#1Th 4:15**, "This we say to you by the word of the Lord." This *mystery*, contained in **#1Co 15:51, 52**, explains how we who now dwell in flesh and blood may, in spite of **#1Co 15:50**, "inherit the kingdom of God."

**All of us will not sleep**; (see Appendix B) cannot mean that *all* will live till Christ comes. For, with death all around, Paul certainly could not say this. Had he meant this, the error at Thessalonica (**#1Th 4:13**) would have been his own express teaching. The word *not* negatives *all*, not *shall sleep*. [See Moulton's good note in Winer's *Grammar* p. 695.] Paul denies that *all*, an *all* including himself and his readers, will die; but asserts that, although some will escape death, not one will escape a total bodily change.

**All of us**; covers in both places the whole race; as suggested by the general term "flesh and blood." The repetition lays emphasis on the absolute universality of the change.

Ver. 52. **In a moment etc.**: cp. **#1Th 5:3**; **#Mt 24:44**; **#Lu 17:26ff**.

**Twinkling of an eye**: dwells upon, and intensifies, the idea of suddenness. In the midst of the world's busy life and without any previous warning, Christ will lay His hand upon the wheels of time and they will stop at once and for ever. This warns the readers that the absence of all signs of Christ's coming is no proof that it is not near.

**Trumpet**: so **#1Th 4:16**; **#Mt 24:31**. As at Sinai (**#Ex 19:16**) so the last coming of Christ will be announced by an appeal to the ears of men.

**The last trumpet**: the last of the many signals during the present age of probation, marking the end of the age. This mention of a trumpet Paul supports, in face of those who denied the supernatural, by declaring that *one will blow* it, and that then *the dead ones will rise* and the living *be changed*.



**Incrruptible**; keeps before us the difference (#1Co 15:43) between our present and future bodies.

**We**: #1Th 4:15: the living, in contrast to *the dead ones*. It implies clearly that Paul did not know that long ages would pass before Christ's coming. But, that he confidently expected to survive the Day of Christ, we cannot fairly infer. For, in rhetorical figure he frequently identifies himself with that which he describes: so #1Co 6:15; 10:22, 29; #Ro 3:7; 7:14ff: cp. #Jas 3:9. Probably, in this matter hope and fear alternated with his circumstances and his frame of mind. In #2Co 5:6-8 he certainly ponders the possibility of his own death. Still, finding himself preserved from day to day amid peril, and not knowing how soon Christ will appear, he would naturally look upon himself as "being left for the coming of Christ," in contrast to those who had fallen asleep; and might speak of himself, as here, in contrast to those who will die before Christ comes.

**Shall-be-changed**; refers here only to the survivors: for the dead are already mentioned. But it is true (cp. #1Co 15:51) of all, both dead and surviving. For the word simply denotes *change*, whether by death and resurrection or without them. It is used here because *change* is all that can be asserted of those who will not die. This change is the chief part of the "mystery" which harmonizes #1Co 15:50 with our entrance into the kingdom of God.

Ver. 53. **Must-needs**: since "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

**This corruptible thing**: the body. Cp. #1Co 15:43.

**Put-on**: clothe itself as with a garment. So #2Co 5:3f. The contrast of *corruptible* and *incorruption* marks the greatness of the needed change.

**This mortal**: so #2Co 5:4: more definite, and therefore more forceful, than *corruptible*. Paul lingers, in repetition, over the coming change. The body doomed to decay will clothe itself with absence of decay: and the body doomed to death will clothe itself in deathlessness. He thus concludes § 29 with its chief thought, viz. the necessary difference between our present and future bodies.

SECTION 29 is introduced by a question uncovering an objection to the teaching in § 28 that the dead will rise, an objection based on the supposed impossibility of the process of resurrection. The objection was perhaps prompted by the crude teaching of some Jews that the resurrection body will be exactly the same as that laid in the grave. This objection Paul rebukes by pointing to God's works in nature, to the difference between the seed sown and the plant which perpetuates its life, and between the endless variety of living bodies on earth and the objects which shine and move above us in the sky. He declares that there is a similar difference between our present and future bodies, a difference of which he gives four powerful parallel descriptions. He thus shows that against his teaching the objection of #1Co 15:35 has no force. The story of Genesis tells us that the human body, even as at first created, and according to a constant divine order, is imperfect. But through our relation to Christ we shall receive bodies like His. In other words, a change is absolutely necessary before we can attain the goal of our being. And it will come. Though all will not die, every one will

pass through the needful change from mortality to immortality. Of this teaching **#Php 3:21** is an epitome.

This section rebukes the teaching, common in all ages, that our future bodies will consist of the same material particles as those we now wear; and thus removes the objection to the resurrection based on this error. In harmony with this section we must interpret **#Ro 8:11**. Yet our future bodies will have some definite ("each his own body") but now inconceivable relation to our present bodies. We learn also that Adam as he sprang from the Creator's hands, although unstained by sin, was not, even touching his body, perfect. With him as with us maturity of manhood is the prize of battle and victory.

The word *SOUL* now claims attention. For the argument of **#1Co 15:44-46** turns evidently upon the difference between *soul* and "spirit." (see note under **#Ro 8:17**.) These verses teach that *soul* is inferior to "spirit," and bears to our present mortal bodies received from Adam a relation similar to that of spirit to the resurrection body we shall receive from Christ; and that the order in time of our present and future bodies accords (**#1Co 15:46**) with the nature of soul and spirit respectively. Unfortunately the true sense of the word *soul* is much obscured by the necessity of rendering it by various English words.

In both Testaments and in classic Greek the word *soul* denotes usually that in which a lifeless object differs from a living one. It is the *life*; not as a life-giving principle (the spirit) but as that which itself lives. It is rendered *life* in **#Mt 16:25; 2:20; 6:25**, and numberless cases. Consequently, the various manifestations of life are attributed to the soul, especially in the Old Testament; e.g. hunger, thirst, need and satiety of food, sensation, desire, and all kinds of emotion. Cp. **#Pr 10:3; 27:7; 25:25; #Ps 31:10**. It also denotes living creatures, as themselves manifestations of life. This use is conspicuous in **#Ge 1:20-30**, where the words "living soul" (A.V. "living creature") designate the lower creatures, especially fishes and quadrupeds. Similarly, as being the basis of individual life, human as well as animal, it denotes an individual man: **#Ge 2:7; 46:18**. Very strangely it is used for a corpse: **#Nu 6:6**. In **#Re 6:9** we have the disembodied souls of murdered men.

We may therefore define the *soul* to be the life common to men and animals; the "spirit," in contrast to the soul, that which is very rarely (e.g. **#Isa 1:14**) used of God and the word "spirit" very rarely (**#Ec 3:21**) of animals, Spirit is declared to be the essence of God. Spirit is that principle which, entering into an organized material form, gives it life; and thus itself assumes an individual, and in man a personal, existence: the soul is the actual individual life resulting from the entrance of the life-giving spirit into a material form, a life conditioned in its nature and its development by the material form it animates. Hence the order in **#1Th 5:23**. The soul is that which is nearest to the body and in great part ruled by the body, the seat of bodily emotions, sensations, desires. The spirit is that which is nearest to God, and which thinks and knows. On man's spirit the Spirit of God, Himself the bearer of the mind of God, directly acts. The spiritual man is he who obeys the influences which through his own spirit the Spirit of God exerts upon him. The soul-governed man (**#1Co 2:14, #Jude 1:19**) is he who obeys the emotions which the material world, acting on him through his body, evokes in his soul. So far as we obey the Holy Spirit, He imparts to our own spirit (which in the unsaved is very weak) power to control the emotions which arise in the soul, and thus to rule our own body and defy the influences of the world. Thus our whole being becomes spiritual

and holy. But, so far as we obey the emotions of the soul, our own spirit, the seat of thought and knowledge, falls under their sway, which is practically the sway of the body, and under subjection to the material world around us. Cp. **#Jas 3:15**. Animals are altogether soul-governed. For their entire action is determined by emotions excited either by simple sensation, or sensation joined with something like memory. And so far as man is soul-governed does he sink towards the level of animals.

Of the use of the word "spirit" to denote the highest part in man only faith traces (e.g. Aristotle, *On the World* ch. iv.) are found in classic Greek. Consequently, the word *soul* there covers the entire domain of man's immaterial nature. But Aristotle, in a most instructive passage, *Nic. Ethics* bk. i. 13, distinguishes three elements in the human soul, of which the first two and the third correspond very nearly to the soul and spirit in the New Testament. The lowest of these elements man has in common with vegetables, viz. the life which is nourished and grows. Similarly and popularly, in the New Testament "body and soul" denotes sometimes the entire man: **#Mt 10:28**. In these cases the soul is the whole immaterial part of man, including the spirit. But this popular use does not set aside the plain distinction, here, and **#1Th 5:23**; **#Heb 4:12**, of soul and spirit.

The clumsy rendering "soul-governed" is due to our lack of an adjective corresponding to *soul*, as "spiritual" corresponds to "spirit." the control of the soul over the body justifies the imported idea "governed."

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XXX

### VICTORY!

#### CH. XV. 54-58

**And when this corruptible thing shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal thing shall have put on immortality, then will take place the word that is written, "Death has been swallowed up in victory." (#Isa 25:8.) Where, Death is thy victory? where, Death, thy sting? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the Law. But to God be thanks who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, my beloved brothers, become firm, immovable, abounding in the work of the Lord always, knowing that your labor is not vain in the Lord.**

Ver. 54. **And when etc.:** full and majestic reiteration of the change described in **#1Co 15:53**, as of something on which Paul loves to linger.

**Then;** gives definiteness to the hoped-for moment.

**Will-take-place:** what is now a *written word* will *then* become fact.

**Swallowed-up:** put completely out of sight.

**Into victory:** when the victory has come, death will have disappeared. This is a quotation, exact in senses. from **#Isa 25:8**: "He has swallowed up death for ever." The word *victory* was suggested to Paul by an Aramaic word of that meaning similar to the Hebrew word rendered "for ever." It also recalls **#1Co 15:26**. In this quotation lies an argument. For Isaiah's words imply clearly a complete and eternal undoing of the work of death: and this can be only by resurrection of the dead. In the moment when the change from mortality to immortality is complete, and not till then, will Isaiah's words be fulfilled. The latter part of the same prophecy is also quoted in **#Re 7:17**, with a similar reference.

Ver. 55. A shout of victory evoked by the just quoted prophecy, which to Paul's faith is already accomplished.

**Where?** as though looking round for something which has disappeared. So **#1Co 1:20; #Ro 3:27**.

**Death:** vivid personification.

**Thy victory:** once apparently so complete and universal, and so universally acknowledged and dreaded.

**Sting:** of an animal, **#Re 9:10**; 4 Macc. 14:19: also a human weapon, especially (**#Ac 26:14**) an ox- or horse-goat. The once deadly serpent has lost its sting; and is therefore harmless. These words were evidently suggested by **#Ho 13:14**, which in LXX. reads "From the hand of Hades I will rescue, and from death I will redeem them. Where is thy righteous claim, O Death? Where is thy sting, O Hades? This ancient prophecy foretells complete deliverance from death. Thus, in what seems to be merely a shout of victory, Paul adds another Scripture proof to the arguments of this chapter. The passage in Hosea accounts for the mistaken reading of the Authorized Version.

Ver. 56.-57. Thoughts suggested by the sting and the victory. Sin is *the sting of death* in that but for sin even death (the abstract power personified) could not have pierced us. For death is the punishment of sin. By committing sin we gave our enemy a weapon with which he slew us. But death cannot hurt those saved from sin. For to them death is gain. To them, therefore, death is a serpent which has lost its sting, retaining its outward form but powerless to injure.

**Power of sin:** interesting coincidence with **#Ro 7:7ff**. But for the Law sin would have been powerless to pierce us. For, had there been no law, the abstract power of sin could not have compelled us to break it and thus to incur its penalty. That the mention of *death* recalls *sin* and *the Law*, shows how deeply inwoven in the mind of Paul was the teaching of Rom. 7. In the moment of victory he remembers that death's terrible weapon came from man's sin, and that but for the Law, in which many Jews trusted for salvation, the power of sin would have been unknown.

Ver. 57. **To God be thanks:** sudden transition (cp. **#2Co 2:14**; **#1Ti 1:17**; **#Ro 9:5**; **16:25**, etc.) from things around to "God who is over all." As usual, the divine Name is placed first, to make the transition.

**The victory:** the last victory over death. But this implies all earlier victories. For, only those who conquer sin and the world now will "attain to the resurrection from the dead," **#Php 3:11**.

**Gives the victory,** over death, by giving us day by day victory over sin and the world. For the one victory implies the other.

**Through our Lord etc.:** **#Ro 1:5**. In **#1Co 15:56, 57** we have an epitome of the Gospel: sin, the Law, death, the gift of salvation from God, through Christ. Similar shout of victory in **#Ro 8:37ff**, summoning up the result of the whole chapter.

Ver. 58. Practical bearing of the results summed up in **#1Co 15:57**.

**Firm:** better, *firmly-seated*.

**Immovable;** suggests forces tending to carry them away. These words refer to unshaken belief of the Gospel, without which there can be no stable Christian character. A close parallel in **#Col 1:23**,

**Work of the Lord:** **#1Co 16:10**: the work given us by Christ to do.

**Abound:** #Ro 15:13; #2Co 8:7. Christ's servants must be always at work.

**Knowing etc.:** motive for Christian firmness and for abundant work. It thus expounds *so then*.

**Labour;** suggests the weariness frequently involved in work for Christ.

**Vain:** empty of results.

**In the Lord;** supports *not in vain*. For Christ is the element in which we toil: and nothing done in Him can be without result. This verse reminds us how often doubts about doctrine lessen the abundance and the constancy of gospel work. For such work appears useless to those who are not firmly convinced of the truth of the Gospel. All Christian activity flows from fully believed Christian doctrine. Of this, negative proof had probably been already given by the church at Corinth.

The ERRORS at Corinth about THE RESURRECTION, and Paul's ARGUMENTS against them, we will now try to reproduce.

The opinions of the Pagan Greeks about the dead are known to us by various allusions in classic writers.

HOMER, (*Odyssey* bk. xi. 489,) in a graphic picture of the departed, which doubtless helped to perpetuate the opinions therein embodied, describes the dead as leading a worthless shadow life, which the greatest of the heroes, Achilles says he would change for the very meanest place on earth. PLATO teaches again and again the endless existence of all souls, in happiness or misery according to their action on earth. See, especially *Apology* p. 40, *Phaedo* p. 108, *Georgias* p. 523. But he says expressly, and the seriousness of his argument implies, that very many around him disbelieved in a future life, while others believed that although the soul might survive the body yet it would ultimately cease to be. So *Phaedo* p. 70a: "Touching the soul men have much unbelief; fearing lest when it has left the body it is no longer anywhere, but in that day it corrupts and perishes whenever the man dies; and as soon as it is removed from the body it goes forth, scattered like breath or smoke, and goes away flying in different directions and is no longer anywhere." CICERO (*Tusculan Disputations* bk. i.) argues at length, but with less confidence than Plato, that the soul exists for ever; yet admits that many believed it to be extinguished at death, and that the Stoics taught its final extinction. Cicero, however, only faintly indicates, while Plato teaches most explicitly, that a man's future happiness or misery depends upon his present conduct. Cp. also Josephus, *Wars* bk. ii. 8. 11. The arguments both of Plato and Cicero suggest that the common people believed that death was either an extinction of the soul or an entrance into a worthless shadow life. And these views were probably current at Corinth in Paul's day.

The Greek and Roman writers seem to have had no conception whatever of a resurrection of the body. Plato taught that sometimes departed spirits return to earth to animate other human or animal bodies. See his *Phaedo* p. 81 etc., *Timaeus* p. 42 etc. But this he regarded as but a lengthening of their bondage, and taught that at death the purer spirits were free for ever from material clothing. Of a spiritual body, i.e. one over which the spirit will have complete control and which will be a perfect

organ for self-manifestation of the spirit, he had no conception. So complete a victory of spirit over matter was utterly beyond his thought.

From **#Mr 12:18** we learn that the Sadducees, though followers of Moses, denied the resurrection of the dead. In reply to them Christ proves from **#Ex 3:6**, as Paul proves here, that the dead servants of God still live. That a denial of this was implied in the Sadducean denial of the resurrection, we are told expressly in **#Ac 23:8**; in Josephus, *Antiq.* bk. xviii. 1. 4, "The souls disappear with the bodies;" and *Wars* bk. ii. 8. 14.

A very instructive parallel to 1Cor. 15 is **#1Th 4:13-18**. Paul's earnest announcement that the dead believers, raised from the dead, will in company with the survivors meet Christ in the air, implies that his readers feared that their dead brethren had by their death lost their share in the kingdom Christ was coming to set up, and had fallen into non-existence or into a worthless shadow life. Yet of the piety of the Thessalonians he speaks in highest terms. Their ignorance is just what we might expect in a church from which Paul was suddenly torn (**#Ac 17:2, 9**) after less than a month's teaching; and is therefore a valuable mark of genuineness. In their case all that was needed was "to supply the deficiencies of their faith," **#1Th 3:10**. The argument in **#1Th 4:14** is practically the same as in **#1Co 15:13**; except that to the Thessalonians Paul had no need to adduce proof that Christ had risen.

That in reply to men denying the resurrection Paul brings arguments proving for the more part only that there is a life beyond death, shows that this denial was meant to be a denial of future life. For against Plato's teaching that all souls will exist in happiness or misery without bodies, the arguments of **#1Co 15:19, 29-34** have no force. We must therefore suppose that these Corinthians denied, like the Sadducees, all future existence; or, like Homer, all existence worthy of the name.

Yet they were members of the church. Perhaps, like the Thessalonians, they were looking (**#1Co 1:7**) for the return of Christ, and thought that their share in the happiness to come depended on their surviving to His coming. At the same time, the warnings of **#1Co 15:32ff** seem to imply that even their expectation of Christ's return was losing its moral influence over them. For, even if death were extinction, the prospect of His early appearance was a motive sufficient to restrain men from sin. As such it is used in **#1Th 5:4ff**; **#Mt 24:44**. The men referred to here were, probably, (cp. **#1Co 15:34**.) Christians only in name, ignorant of God, and a disgrace to the church.

That Paul speaks of them as denying, not a future life, but resurrection of the dead, suggests that they assumed, as Paul did, that without resurrection there could be no future life worthy of the name; and that they denied a future life because to them resurrection was incredible. They seem to have had no conception of Plato's doctrine of a bodiless but blessed life to come.

Again, that Paul meets their denial of the resurrection by proofs that Christ has risen and by saying that if He has risen so shall we, implies that their denial of the resurrection was so broad that it involved clearly a denial that Christ has risen. Paul's long proof that He has risen suggests that these skeptics, though they had not expressly denied the resurrection of Christ, (else Paul would certainly have said so,) were not unprepared for this logical result of their own denial. This is another indication that they were Christians in little more than name.

The argument of **#1Co 15:35ff** suggests that some denied that God's people rise again because they supposed that, if so, they would rise in bodies exactly the same as those laid in the grave, and because the present body seemed to them utterly unfit for the life to come.

These denials and objections Paul meets, not by excommunication, but, for the sake of honest doubters, by careful argument. He adduces abundant proof that Christ has risen; leaving his readers to perceive that the presence in heaven of the now glorified bodies cannot pass into the life to come. And he proves by various arguments that there is a life to come. He then cuts away one ground of the denial at Corinth by declaring that the Christian doctrine is, not that our present bodies pass unchanged into endless life, but that in every case, whether or not we survive the coming of Christ, our bodies must be completely changed before they can put on immortality. The completeness and the glory of this change, and the complete victory over death which it implies, force from the apostle a shout of victory. But this gives place at once to practical exhortation to do, unmoved by doubt or contradiction, the work of Christ.



# I CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION VIII

### PERSONAL MATTERS

#### CHAPTER XVI

#### SECTION XXXI

#### THE CONTRIBUTION FOR JERUSALEM, AND PAUL'S OWN MOVEMENTS

#### CH. XVI. 1-9

**About the gathering for the saints. Just as I gave direction to the churches of Galatia, so do you also. Each first day from the Sabbath let each of you lay by him, treasuring up whatever success he may have; in order that when I come there may not then be gatherings. And whenever I arrive, whomever you may approve, these with letters I will send to bear your favour to Jerusalem. And if it be worth my going also, with me they shall go.**

Moreover, I will come to you whenever I have gone through Macedonia. For, Macedonia I go through: but with you perhaps I shall remain, or shall even spend winter, that it may be you who send me forward wherever I be going. For, you I do not wish to see now in passing. For, some time I hope to spend with you, if the Lord permit. But I shall remain at Ephesus till Pentecost. For, a door has been opened for me, great and effective: and there are many adversaries.

Ver. 1. This cursory mention of *the gathering for the saints* suggests that it was already understood at Corinth. And this suggests that Titus, whom Paul sent (#2Co 12:17f) on this business and who began it (#2Co 8:6) at Corinth, was to arrive there before this letter. See under #2Co 9:5. It may or may not have been referred to in the letter from Corinth. In any case its immediate and pressing importance sufficiently accounts for its mention here.

**For the saints:** "for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem," #Ro 15:26. See note. But this does not imply that to the Christians at Jerusalem the title *saints* was specially given. For Paul's readers knew to what saints he referred. Whether Paul *gave direction* personally on the journey of #Ac 18:23 or on a journey during his sojourn (#Ac 19:10) at Ephesus, or by messengers, or by letter, we have no means of knowing. He refers apparently to the direction recorded in #1Co 16:2. The mention of *Galatia* would remind the Corinthians that other churches were joining in the collection, and that whatever Paul said about it to them he said also to others.

Ver. 2. **First day from the sabbath:** a Jewish mode of describing the day. For the week was unknown to the early Greeks. In Greece now Saturday is called *the sabbath*, Sunday, the Lord's day; Monday and Tuesday etc., the second, third day, etc.

**Each of you:** supposing that all will give something.

**Lay by him:** at home. Consequently, this was no public offertory.

**Whatever success he may have:** whatever surplus money he may have. This Paul asks them to retain so that they will not need to go after debtors or turn goods into cash, thus causing delay, when he comes. Consequently, this is not a general principle for all Christian giving, but a special "direction" for this present matter.

This verse (important coincidence with **#Ac 20:7**) suggests that already special importance was given to this day; as is plainly implied in the title "the Lord's Day" in **#Re 1:10**. A century later Justin (*Apology* i. 67) wrote: "On what is called Sunday there is a coming together of all who live in cities or country places." The day which recalls Christ's love was specially suited for this work of mercy to fellow Christians.

Ver. 3. **You may approve:** pays respect to the rights and judgment of the church by leaving to it the choosing of the messengers.

**Approve:** discover excellence by testing. For such proving of men living at Corinth, no *letters* would be needed. These must therefore (R.V. margin) have been written by Paul. How many such there must have been!

**I will send;** asserts Paul's apostolic authority, but declares that it shall be used according to the choice of the church. Their delegates shall have Paul's written sanction.

**Letters:** probably to different persons at Jerusalem.

**Your favour:** literally *grace*, (see under **#Ro 1:5**), and therefore illustrative of the grace of God. The contribution for Jerusalem is represented here (contrast **#Ro 15:27**) as an act of undeserved favor. Cp. **#2Co 8:4, 6, 19**.

**If it be worth etc.:** if the collection be large enough to make a personal journey desirable. Paul's apostolic self-respect forbade a special journey for a small contribution. But, even if he go, the chosen messengers shall go also. An important coincidence is found in **#Ac 19:21**, where Paul at Ephesus contemplates a journey to Achaia and then to Jerusalem. See further about the collection under **#2Co 9:15**.

Ver. 5.-7. Further information about Paul's purpose of coming to Corinth.

**When I have passed etc.:** He had formerly intended (**#2Co 1:15**) to go direct to Corinth, then to *Macedonia*, and then back to Corinth. But, for the reason given in **#2Co 1:23**, he changed his plan. In **#1Co 16:5b, 6** Paul contrasts with his passing visit to Macedonia his intended longer sojourn at Corinth. This whole purpose was accomplished: see **#Ac 20:2f**.

**Send me forward:** give the help needed for the journey. Cp. **#1Co 16:11; #2Co 1:16**.

**That it may be your etc.:** an end to be gained by, and therefore a reason for, Paul's purpose to come to the Corinthians last. It was a courteous acknowledgment of their ability and readiness to help him for the longer journey he had in view.

**Wherever I be going.** Perhaps his mind fluctuated between Jerusalem and Rome; **#Ac 19:21**. In **#1Co 16:7** he lingers upon, and thus emphasizes, his intended longer stay at Corinth, revealing a special wish for it and suggesting there were special reasons. Hence the prominent position of *you* in **#1Co 16:7a**. It is unsafe to infer from the word *now* that Paul had already once seen them *in passing*, e.g. in his unmentioned journey during (**#Ac 19:1**) his sojourn at Ephesus. The word was perhaps suggested by the present state of the Corinthian church, which made an immediate visit undesirable. And his *hope to remain some time* was a reason for his not wishing to come at once.

**The Lord:** Christ. Cp. **#Jas 4:15**; **#Ro 1:10**.

From **#2Co 1:15f, 23** we learn that Paul's original purpose was to come first to Corinth, then go to Macedonia, and back to Corinth; and the reason of the change, viz. to avoid the severity with which, if he came at once, he would be compelled to act towards some of the Corinthians. To avoid this he wrote the letter before us. **#1Co 4:18** suggests that his change of plan was already known and misunderstood. A bold misinterpretation of it evoked **#2Co 1:15ff**.

Ver. 8.-9. But I remain, in contrast to future journeys.

**At Ephesus;** indicates that there he wrote this letter.

**Till Pentecost;** suggests that it was written in the spring; and that the tumult (**#Ac 19:29**) was not later than Pentecost. With this **#Ac 20:6** agrees well. We may suppose that during the summer, after passing through Troas, Paul was travelling about in Macedonia, that in the autumn he arrived at Corinth where he remained most of the winter, and that after again passing through Macedonia he sailed for Troas the following Easter.

**A door great and effective:** **#2Co 2:12**; **#Col 4:3**; **#Ac 14:27**; **#Re 3:8**: opportunities for great usefulness, already fruitful in results. An important coincidence with **#Ac 19:10**. That Demetrius found it so easy to gather (**#Ac 19:24**) a tumult against the Christians, proves how large an entrance Christianity had made, and that there were *many adversaries*. To Paul no motive for prolonged sojourn could be so strong as great opportunities, actual results, and many opponents.

# I CORINTHIANS

## SECTION XXXII

### SUNDRY DIRECTIONS AND SALUTATIONS

#### CH. XVI. 10-23

**If Timothy come, see that in his intercourse with you he may be without fear. For, the work of the Lord he works, as I also do. Then let not any one despise him. And send him forward in peace, that he may come to me. For I wait for him with the brothers.**

**About our brother Apollos: much have I exhorted him that he might come to you with the brothers. And not at all was it his will to come now: but he will come whenever he have a good opportunity.**

**Keep awake: stand in the faith act like men: become strong. All your matters, let them be done in love.**

**Moreover, I exhort you, brothers-you know the house of Stephanas; that it is a firstfruit of Achaia, and that for ministry to the saints they set themselves- that also you may submit to such persons, and to every one that joins in the work and labours.**

**I rejoice at the presence of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaiacus; because the lack of you they supplied. For they gave rest to my spirit, and to yours. Recognize then such.**

**The churches of Asia greet you: Aquila and Prisca greet you much in the Lord, with the church in their house. All the brothers greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.**

**The greeting by the hand of me Paul. If any one does not love the Lord, let him be Anathema Maran atha. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. My love is with you all in Christ Jesus.**

Ver. 10.-11. **If Timothy come:** see under **#1Co 4:17; #2Co 1:1**. Why Paul was uncertain about this, and whether Timothy actually arrived before Paul, we do not know. He started from Corinth with Paul (**#Ac 20:4**) on the return journey. This verse suggests that this letter was likely to arrive before Timothy. Perhaps the bearers went direct by sea from Ephesus to Corinth: whereas Timothy went first to Macedonia.

**Without fear:** a coincidence with **#2Ti 1:7**, suggesting that Timothy was of timid disposition. But that to this was joined real worth, is proved by the commission (**#1Ti 1:3**) afterwards entrusted to him. Paul bids his readers not to give him, by rude resistance, occasion for fear; and supports his warning by reminding them that to make Timothy afraid is to embarrass and hinder one who is doing (**#1Co 15:58**) the work of Christ, the great work in which Paul is himself engaged. For the same reason (*then let not*) they must not *despise* him. Many are ready to despise the timid. This warning

not to terrify or despise men who are doing God's work is needed today. That some six years later Paul urges (#1Ti 4:12) Timothy so to act that no one will despise him because he is young, suggests that this was one possible cause of his *fear*.

**Send him forward:** as in #1Co 16:6.

**In peace:** the opposite of fear and contempt.

**That he may come etc.** "That Timothy is to *come to me*, and that *I am waiting for him*, is a reason why you should give him the help needed for the journey."

**With the brothers:** probably companions of Timothy on this mission. That he had at least one companion, we learn from #Ac 19:22.

Ver. 12. This mention of *Apollos* proves, and was perhaps designed by the apostle to prove to the Corinthians, his perfect accord with Paul. And, if so, the faction called after Apollos was without his sanction. This supports our inference from #1Co 4:6 that the real leaders of the factions were men at Corinth whose names are unknown to us.

**Exhorted him much:** thinking perhaps that his presence in company with Paul's beloved companion Timothy would be a strong rebuke to those who wrote the names of Paul and Apollos on the banners of contending parties.

**With the brothers:** those mentioned in #1Co 16:17, who had brought the letter from Corinth and were now returning with the letter before us.

**Now:** emphatic. For reasons unknown to us, either the state of things at Corinth or his own circumstances, Apollos did not consider the present a *good opportunity*. When such arises, he will come. This verse suggests that Apollos, who was at Corinth when (#Ac 19:1) Paul arrived at Ephesus, was not living at Ephesus. That there is no greeting from him, suggests that he was temporarily absent when Paul wrote.

Ver. 13.-14. Parting exhortations, as though the letter were finished.

**Keep awake:** in contrast to sleep, #Mt 26:40; #1Th 5:6, 10, i.e. spiritual insensibility. Let your spiritual senses be in full exercise, lest the enemy surprise you unawares. So #1Th 5:6; #1Pe 5:8; #Re 3:2f. Another motive for watchfulness is the coming of Christ: #Mt 24:42; #Lu 12:37.

**Stand:** as in #1Co 10:12; #Ro 5:2; 11:20.

**In faith:** practically the same as "stand in the Gospel, #1Co 15:1. Belief of the good news is the element *in which*, (and the means by which, #Ro 11:20; #2Co 1:24,) we maintain spiritual erectness.

**Act like men:** so 1 Macc. 2:64, "And you, children, be strong and act like men touching the Law."

**Become strong:** receive strength which (#**Eph 3:16**) the Spirit is waiting to impart from time to time.

Notice the military tone of these words. We are sentinels on guard, and must not yield to sleep. In face of the enemy we must maintain our position: and we do so by abiding in faith. We must show moral courage. To this end we must accept the strength provided for us. This fourfold description of our attitude towards spiritual foes is followed by a description in one word of our attitude towards our fellow-Christians and fellow-men. Love must be the one element of our entire activity.

Ver. 15.-16. After what seemed to be a parting exhortation, #**1Co 16:13, 14**, Paul remembers other matters which claim mention. Cp. #**Ro 16:17**. In #**1Co 16:10ff** he spoke of his own associates, Timothy and Apollos. He now commends to the Corinthians some members of their own church.

**I exhort etc.;** betrays something which, not knowing the circumstances, we cannot now understand. Apparently, the church members had failed to treat this worthy family with due respect.

**You know etc.;** breaks off the exhortation, to give a motive for acceding to it.

**Firstfruit of Achaia:** cp. #**Ro 16:5**. The conversion of this family was doubtless an important step in the founding of the church at Corinth. Perhaps it was for this reason that Paul, deviating from his usual custom, baptized (#**1Co 1:16**) them personally. Since the province of Achaia included Athens, this conversion must have been earlier than (#**Ac 17:34**) that of Dionysius and Damaris, i.e. than Paul's first arrival at Corinth. See Introd. § v.

**Ministry:** #**Ro 12:7**. There is nothing to limit *the saints* to those at Jerusalem, as in #**Ro 15:25**. Probably it refers chiefly to members of their own church, with whom they would come most in contact. Stephanas and his family deliberately resolved to render what service they could to their fellow-Christians.

**That you may submit etc.:** both purpose and contents of the exhortation.

**That also:** to the service rendered by Stephanas must be added due recognition of it by the church.

**To such;** raises this exhortation into a universal principle for all men.

**Submit:** #**Eph 5:21**. Not that they are to have their will in everything, but that we yield them the deference which befits their services to the church.

**And to every one etc.:** To those who, like Stephanas, render help to their fellow-Christians, Paul now adds every one who joins with others in Christian *work*.

**And labours;** suggests the weariness which frequently accompanies Christian work. To every toiler for Christ we must give the deference due to his work.

Ver. 17.-18. **The presence:** or *arrival*. In **#1Co 15:23** and often the same word denotes the second coming of Christ. We cannot doubt that these men brought to Paul the letter from Corinth, and took back the Epistle before us, which was Paul's reply to it.

**Stephanas:** the good man mentioned above.

**Fortunatus.** A man of this name was one of the three bearers of the epistle of Clement of Rome (ch. 65) to the Corinthian church. He and Achaiacus are quite unknown.

**Because etc.:** special cause of Paul's joy.

**The lack of you:** your absence. By coming as delegates, and expressing the feelings, of the whole church, they in some measure made up for the absence of those they represented. In them Paul seemed to welcome the whole church. Cp. **#Php 2:30**. Had they come only as private persons, his joy in receiving them would not have been so great. This cause of Paul's joy is further explained in **#1Co 16:18a**.

**Rest to my spirit:** **#2Co 7:13**; cp. **#Phm 1:7, 20**.

**My spirit:** **#Ro 1:9**: the noblest element of his being. These words suggest that before the coming of these men Paul was in restless anxiety about the Corinthian church, perhaps because of the very bad news brought by the household of Cloe and by others. This anxiety would seem to have been somewhat allayed by the more exact information given by these messengers. But the letter before us was, nevertheless, written (**#2Co 2:4**) with "many tears." The words *and yours* suggest that as Paul was anxious about the Corinthians so they were anxious to communicate to him; and that it was a relief to them to be able, through the coming of these men, to express to the apostle their feelings. The journey of the messengers was therefore a service both to Paul and to his readers. This suggests that underneath the factions there lay genuine loyalty to the apostle. Of this we shall find abundant proof in the Second Epistle.

**Recognize etc.:** similarly, **#1Th 5:12**: "take note of the service they have rendered."

**Such:** as in **#1Co 16:16**.

Ver. 19.-20. **Asia:** the Roman province, as in **#2Co 1:8**; **#Ro 16:5**; **#Re 1:4**; **#Ac 2:9**; **16:6**. Its capital was Ephesus, whence (**#1Co 16:8**) Paul wrote this letter. That there were other *churches* in *Asia*, agrees with **#Ac 19:10, 26**. And a few years later we find (**#Col 4:13**) churches at Hierapolis, Laodicea, and Colosse, in the extreme east of the same province. These churches were probably a result of Paul's labors during the three years preceding the writing of this letter, although at least two of them (**#Col 2:1**) had not been visited by him personally. In **#Re 1:11** we find other churches in the same province, which may have been founded at the same time. We can well conceive that, as suggested in **#Ac 19:10**, men from all parts of the province heard Paul preaching at Ephesus, and thus various churches were formed, which kept up communication with the great apostle. And in writing to the Corinthian church, he conveys, in accordance probably with the expressed wish of some churches and with the known sentiment of all, this brotherly greeting. That *Aquila* and *Prisca*

(see **#Ro 16:3**) were now with Paul at Ephesus, accords **#Ac 18:19**. And their *much greeting* accords with their long connection (**#Ac 18:2, 11, 18**) with Corinth.

**In the Lord.]** This greeting was an outflow of their union with the one Master.

**Church in their house:** interesting coincidence with **#Ro 16:5**.

**Holy kiss:** **#2Co 13:12; #Ro 16:16; #1Th 5:26; #1Pe 5:14**. Cp. Justin, *Apology* i. 65: "We salute one another with a kiss when we have concluded the prayers." The kiss is still retained in the worship of the Coptic church.

Ver. 21.-23. **By the hand of me Paul:** **#Col 4:18**: a mark of genuineness, **#2Th 3:17**. It implies that the earlier part was not by his own hand. So **#Ro 16:22**. Doubtless he wrote also **#1Co 16:22, 23**. The words "Jesus Christ" in A.V. of **#1Co 16:22**, but not in the four oldest MSS., are a good example of a correct explanatory gloss which was very early copied into the text and thus found its way into many MSS., and Versions.

**Does not love etc.:** an appeal to the conscience of many church members at Corinth, revealing the hidden source of the various misconduct (cp. **#Joh 14:23**) which in this letter Paul has condemned. Against this root of all the disorders, viz. absence of love to the common Master, he now pronounces his most tremendous sentence, a sentence the more emphatic because written by his own hand.

**Anathema:** as in **#Ro 9:3**.

**Maran atha:** "our Lord has come," in Aramaic, the vernacular of Palestine. See *Romans*, Introd. § iii. 5. Of the word *Maran*, the chief part, *Mar*, "Lord," is found in **#Da 2:47; 4:19**, etc., written in the same language; and is now used as a title of dignity by the Nestorians. In **#Da 7:22** the exact word *Atha* is used, as here, for the second coming of Christ. The presence of these Aramaic words here implies that they were understood by the readers. And this suggests that they were common among the mother churches in Palestine, and thus passed in their original form to Gentile Christians. That these words are used as a warning implies that *has come* refers to Christ's coming in judgment. In prophetic vision the church looked upon the moment of His appearance as though it had already come. This anticipation of the coming of Him who comes to destroy (**#1Th 5:3**) those who love Him not, Paul uses to support the curse just pronounced.

**My love etc.:** suitable conclusion of a letter containing so much reproof and ending with so tremendous a curse. For every word had been prompted by genuine love for every one of the readers. Thus Paul is himself an example of that which in **#1Co 16:14** he prescribed for others. His affection goes out after, and rests upon, and remains *with, all* of them. And it is no worldly affection, but an offspring of his union with *Christ Jesus*.

REVIEW OF THE EPISTLE. During the latter part of his sojourn at Ephesus, a sojourn marked by great opportunities, great success, and the hostility of many foes, Paul was filled with anxiety by tidings about the church at Corinth. He heard from reliable persons that the whole church was



divided into parties; and that of these parties the two largest had inscribed on their respective banners the names of himself and of his friend Apollos, while another made use of the name of Cephas, and a fourth used the sacred name of Christ. A case of incest worse even than heathens committed had occurred among them: and the offender was tolerated by the church. Christians not only quarrelled but brought their disputes into heathen lawcourts. The Lord's Supper was made an occasion of ostentatious display and of revelry. And some church members asserted that resurrection of dead men is impossible, some on the ground that bodies of flesh are not fitted for the world to come; meaning by this assertion to deny that there is a life beyond the grave, regardless of the immoral practical consequences of such denial. It had also, apparently, been reported to Paul that some female members, casting aside their distinctive and modest head-dress, ventured to speak in the assemblies. Probably also, in spite of an earlier, but now lost, letter from the Apostle, some taught that the Gospel which broke down the Mosaic restrictions about food had also removed all restrictions on the intercourse of the sexes.

Amid the anxiety caused by this sad news, arrived at Ephesus three members of the Corinthian church, bearing to Paul the greeting of the whole church and a letter asking for information on sundry matters. He welcomed them with joy; and found in them some alleviation of the anxiety the rumors had caused him. The letter they brought asked whether Paul would advise or dissuade from marriage; what was to be done about food offered in sacrifice to idols; and sought information, probably, about the exercise of spiritual gifts. Possibly, it also contained a reference to the public speaking of women.

Paul writes in reply. In spite of their gross disorders he remembers that his readers are a church of God, men whom God has solemnly claimed to be His own. And he recognizes their firm belief of the gospel and their general knowledge and intelligence. But before he can answer their questions he must deal with the far more serious matters which have come to his ears. Of these, the factions claim first attention, as being a universal disorder and one which was sapping the life of the entire church: Paul deals next with the case of incest and its toleration by the whole church; and with the lawsuits, and the grasping spirit which they revealed: he then refers generally to the matter of sensuality, a sin for which some endeavored to find excuse. After these more pressing matters, the apostle answers his readers' questions about marriage, and about meat sacrificed to idols. Improprieties among women next receive attention; and then the disorders at the Lord's Supper. After these matters Paul treats at length the whole subject of spiritual gifts, thus answering his readers' last question. He discusses next the false teaching about the resurrection put forward by what was probably a small minority of the church. In view of his purposed visit, he gives directions about the collection for Jerusalem, and speaks of his own movements. Sundry directions about his colleagues, Timothy and Apollos, and about the family of Stephanas and the deputation from Corinth, with salutations and a final warning, close the Epistle.

Throughout the whole we notice that Paul traces each matter of detail to some broad principle from which he deduces a rule of conduct. He thus gives to passing details an abiding worth as illustrations of principles bearing upon all men in all ages and all circumstances. Of this method, Rom. 14 furnishes another example. It is the only correct method of Christian ethics.

The effects of the letter we have just studied, we shall be able to trace in the second letter, which now lies open before us.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DISSERTATION I

### *THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS COMPARED WITH THOSE TO THE CORINTHIANS*

1. In a former volume I endeavored to show that the Epistle to the Romans is a logical and orderly development of five great doctrines assumed by Paul without proof but with perfect confidence; that he accepted them because they were proclaimed by Christ, because Christ claimed to be the Son of God, and because as Paul believed Christ rose from the dead. With this analysis we now hasten to compare the Epistles to the Corinthians.

Each of these fundamental doctrines, and no other broad general principles, we shall find assumed with equal confidence in the Epistles now before us as matters universally believed in the early churches even by Paul's enemies: and we shall find them brought to bear on the many and various details discussed in the First Epistle, and on the very delicate personal matters of the Second Epistle. This various application of these great principles to practical life will enable us better to grasp them in their full compass, and will also reveal even more than does the Epistle to the Romans how closely they were inwoven into the mind and thought of Paul. But, inasmuch as the same doctrines are assumed in every book of the New Testament, (a proof how confidently they were accepted by the entire early church,) these great foundation stones of gospel teaching are not in themselves proof that the Epistles to the Corinthians were from the author of the Epistle to the Romans. Careful comparison, however, will reveal in this last Epistle a mode of stating, and a development of, these great fundamentals which is found only in the epistles which bear the name of Paul; and will reveal, in both Epistles to the Corinthians, the same mode of statement, and further developments which are the true complement of the developments already noted in the Epistle to the Romans. These further developments, on the lines already marked out, would be an irresistible proof, if such were needed, that the three Epistles are a product of one mind.

This superabundant evidence will be still further conformed by the picture of the emotional and moral and spiritual nature of their writer presented in these Epistles, a picture much fuller and containing lines not noticed before, but nevertheless an harmonious and almost necessary complement of the self-delineation given in the Epistle to the Romans.

In our comparison, the total difference of tone and feeling between each of these epistles and the two others, a difference corresponding to the total difference of Paul's surroundings and aims while writing will greatly aid us. For it will throw into strong relief the one mind and one heart which thinks and beats in every page of each epistle.

2. In letters not treating of abstract doctrine and written to men already familiar with Paul's teaching, the great fundamental doctrine of salvation by faith has naturally a place less conspicuous than in the formal exposition given in the Epistle to the Romans. But, that *they who believe* are those whom God is pleased *to save by the gospel proclamation*, is expressly asserted in **#1Co 1:21**; a verse wonderfully in harmony with the main argument of the Epistle to the Romans, and revealing by its

early place in the Epistle how prominent in the mind of Paul was the thought it embodies. Of **#Ro 1:16; #1Co 1:18, 24** are emphatic restatements. That the Gospel is a divine summons, a doctrine conspicuous in **#Ro 8:28, 30; 9:24**, finds echo immediately after the doctrine of salvation by faith in **#1Co 1:24, 26**. The doctrine of election, which like the gospel *call* is a corollary of salvation by faith, finds not only echo but development in **#1Co 1:27, 28**; verses implying that the objects of salvation were chosen by God to be His instruments, and asserting that they were selected with the further purpose of putting to shame the pride of man. This development of the doctrine of election deserves careful study. That faith is designed to save us from our sins, is implied in **#1Co 15:2, 14, 17**. And, that it is the source of Christian stability and of fortitude in face of danger, is implied in **#2Co 1:24; 4:13; 5:7**: cp. **#2Co 4:18**.

The word *justified* in **#1Co 6:11** is, in spite of its peculiar sense, a close harmony with **#Ro 5:9; 6:7**: for, only in **#Lu 18:14** and the epistles of Paul do we read of justification as already received. The word *reconciled* in **#2Co 5:18-20** recalls **#Ro 5:1, 10, 11**.

3. That our salvation comes through the death of Christ, a doctrine asserted and expounded in **#Ro 3:24-26**, is the only conceivable explanation of the importance given throughout these epistles to the death of Christ. *The cross of Christ* (**#1Co 1:17**) must not be *made an empty thing for the word of the cross is a power of God*. *Christ crucified* (**#1Co 1:23**) Paul preaches; and desires (**#1Co 2:2**) to know nothing else. That *Christ has been sacrificed*, as *our Passover*, (**#1Co 5:7**), links His death with the Mosaic sacrifices: and we remember that the innocent paschal lamb, by dying, saved the firstborn from death. Christ died for the finally lost: for (**#1Co 8:11**: cp. **#Ro 14:15**) there is danger lest *a brother for whom Christ died, perish*. Unless salvation comes to us through the death of Christ I can conceive no meaning in **#1Co 10:16**, *partnership in the blood of Christ*: nor can we explain **#1Co 11:25**, *the New Covenant in My blood*, and the importance given to the Lord's Supper. The *price* with which we *were bought* can be no other (**#Mt 20:28**) than the blood of Christ, in whom (**#Ro 3:24**) there is redemption. The repetition in **#1Co 6:20; 7:23** suggests that these words were a common phrase of Paul, if not of the early church. As in **#Ro 4:25** so in **#1Co 15:3**, Christ's death is placed in special relation to *our sins*. In **#2Co 5:15** we have a most important development of the doctrine before us, a combination of Doctrines 2 and 3, (see under **#Ro 8:39**), viz. that Christ died not only to save us from the due penalty of our sins but to create in us a life altogether new. This is stated to be a purpose of the death of Christ; because only so far as we now live for Christ do we now, and shall we for ever, enjoy the benefits purchased for us by His death.

In **#1Co 15:22** we have the rudiments of the argument developed in **#Ro 5:12-19**.

4. The deeply significant phrases *in Christ, in the Lord*, found by us first at the foot of the cross in **#Ro 3:24**, and in **#Ro 6:11, 23**, etc. are found in the epistles before us in various connections in **#1Co 1:2, 4f; #1Co 1:30; 3:1; 4:10, 15-17; 7:22, 39; 9:1f; #1Co 11:11; 15:18, 22, 31, 58; 16:19, 24; #2Co 2:12, 14, 17; 3:14; 5:17, 19; 12:2, 19**. This phrase receives an elucidation, useful though very imperfect, from its counterpart in **#1Co 15:22**, *in Adam*.

That God designs us to live by union with Christ a life altogether new, a life of which Christ is Himself the one aim (cp. **#Ro 6:10f**) and that for this end God gave Christ to die, is expressly asserted in **#2Co 5:13-17**. The purity from all defilement which this devotion to Christ involves,

Paul (**#2Co 7:1**) bids us claim. The intimacy of the believer's union with Christ, in virtue of which Christ lives and speaks and acts in him, is wonderfully set forth in the teaching of **#1Co 12:12-27** that the church is the body of Christ; of which teaching, peculiar to Paul, we have the rudiments in **#Ro 12:4-6**. A practical application of this teaching is given in **#1Co 6:15**; followed in **#1Co 6:17** by an important explanatory addition. Upon the subjective holiness which ought to be the aim of the people of God, light is cast by **#1Co 7:34**, *that she may be holy in her body and in her spirit*; and by the parallel in **#1Co 7:32** *how he may please the Lord*. The phrase "sanctification in Christ," which under **#Ro 8:39** I used as a concise statement of Doctrine 3, has an exact counterpart in **#1Co 1:2**, *sanctified in Christ Jesus*.

5. The fifth fundamental doctrine of the Epistle to the Romans viz. that the Holy Spirit is the agent of our sanctification, is not only implied and asserted again and again in the epistles before us but receives there important development. Paul expects his readers to know (**#1Co 3:16; 6:19**: cp. **#2Co 6:16**) that the Holy Spirit dwells in all believers, and therefore presumably in all church members; and that His presence makes their bodies to be the *temple of God*. Apart from the Holy Spirit we cannot (**#1Co 12:3**) even look up to Jesus and call Him, Master. The Spirit is the element in which (**#1Co 12:13**) the baptized ones were united into the one *body of Christ*. For, the oneness of every living body is derived from the one animating spirit which moves harmoniously its various and variously endowed members. Indeed, this far-reaching and significant analogy, so dear to Paul but unknown to the other writers of the New Testament, is but a logical development of the great doctrine that in all believers the Holy Spirit dwells, reproducing in them the life of Christ to be their life.

Not only have the Apostles (**#1Co 2:10-3:1**) received the Spirit of God as a source of higher intelligence, but church-members are also expected to be *spiritual men*. *The earnest of the Spirit* in **#2Co 1:22** is practically the same as the *firstfruit of the Spirit* in **#Ro 8:23**. In complete harmony with **#Ro 8:2-27**, Paul declares himself (**#2Co 3:6**) to be a *minister of the Spirit*. Consequently, to turn (**#2Co 3:17**) *to the Lord* is to turn to *the Spirit*. In harmony with **#Ro 12:3**, *to each one God has allotted a measure of faith*, the abiding faith of the servants of God is attributed (**#2Co 4:13**) to *the Spirit of faith*. A close coincidence with **#Ro 15:19** is found in **#2Co 12:12**. That the Spirit allots His gifts (**#1Co 12:11**) *according as He pleases*, and that He is placed in **#1Co 12:5f** and in **#2Co 13:14** beside *the Lord Jesus Christ and God*, both these being Persons, suggests or implies that the Spirit of God is a Divine Person, distinct from the Father and the Son.

6. Thus all the five great doctrines assumed without proof and made foundation stones of argument in the Epistle to the Romans are assumed with equal confidence in the Epistles to the Corinthians. The frequent appearance of these doctrines, in various forms and variously developed, in practical details and even in outbursts of emotion, reveals their deep root in the mind of Paul. The confidence with which he assumes them, as matters needing no proof and not open to question, proves that they were universally accepted both by Paul's faithful converts and his bitter and unscrupulous enemies. And the modes of stating these doctrines and the logical development and practical application in the Epistles to the Corinthians of the subordinate doctrines found in rudiment in the Epistle to the Romans, of all which the above is a very imperfect exposition, will be to the careful student a proof excluding all doubt, even if it stood alone, that all three epistles are an outflow of one profound mind.

7. As in the Epistle to the Romans so in those now before us, Paul bows with humble reverence in the presence of One whom he counts it an honor to call his Lord. Whatever we there learned about Paul's conception of Jesus is also found and is supplemented here.

Paul calls himself (**#1Co 4:15**) the father of the Corinthian church in contrast to others who were only tutors. But the infinite difference between the relation to the church of himself and of Christ provokes (**#1Co 1:13**) the indignant question *Paul, was he crucified for you?* All the apostles (**#1Co 3:22f**) belong to the church: but the church belongs to Christ. Even Paul's guileful enemies make it their boast (**#2Co 10:7; 11:23**) that they are Christ's ministers. The unique relation of Christ to the church is seen in Paul's desire (**#2Co 11:2**) to present to Him the church as a spotless bride; and in the teaching (**#1Co 12:12ff**) that the church is the body of Christ. Of every man (**#1Co 11:3**) He is head. He is the one foundation beside which no other can be laid. For Him, exist even (**#1Co 6:13**) the bodies of His people. The unique relation of Adam to the race which sprang from him reveals the unique position of Him who though Son of Man is yet called (**#1Co 15:45**) *the Last Adam*. And He died (**#2Co 5:15**) that He might be the aim of His people's life.

Although removed from sight, Christ is still present in His Church putting forth His *power* (**#2Co 12:9**) to help and to (**#1Co 5:4; 11:32**) inflict punishment. From Him (**#2Co 13:10**) Paul received his apostolic authority. Upon His will (**#1Co 4:19**) hang the uncertainties of the future. In **#1Co 4:5**, as in **#Ro 2:16**, Paul looks forward to the day when Christ will come to make known the secrets of men's hearts and to allot to each his due praise. In that day, *the day of the Lord*, (**#1Co 1:8; 5:5; #2Co 1:14**), all men will appear (**#2Co 5:10**) before *the judgment-seat of Christ*. Even under the Old Covenant He was the real source (**#1Co 10:4**) of the refreshment miraculously given to Israel in the wilderness. All this marks the absolutely unique relation of Christ to men, and raises Him absolutely above the whole human race.

As in **#Ro 1:7**, repeated in **#1Co 1:3; #2Co 1:2**, the name of *Christ*; and that of *the Holy Spirit* are placed beside the name of *God* in **#1Co 12:4ff; #2Co 13:13**.

The most important addition to our knowledge of the Son of God afforded by the Epistles to the Corinthians as compared with that to the Romans is the fuller teaching about the subordination of the Son to the Father. That He is Mediator between God and men, they holding a relation to Him in some points similar to His own relation to God, is very prominent. We belong (**#1Co 3:23**) to Christ, and Christ to God. Of every man (**#1Co 11:3**) Christ is the head; and of Christ God is head. In all these passages the simple name *God* distinguishes the Father from *Christ*. Even in His final glory (**#1Co 15:28**) and for ever *the Son* will bow to *God*. In **#1Co 8:6**, as distinguished from the One Lord, *the Father* is the *One God* as in **#Ro 5:1, 8, 10, 11**, etc., the Father is ever supreme, operating through the Son and reconciling men to Himself. That the Son, while possessing to the full the attributes of deity, but possessing them (**#Joh 5:26; 6:57**) as derived from the Father, bows to the Father in absolute and eternal and essential subordination, a teaching most conspicuous both with Paul and with John, is the only conceivable basis of the Unity of the Divine Trinity.

8. As in **#Ro 1:4; 4:25**, etc., so in 1 and 2 Corinthians Paul assumes with full confidence that God raised Christ from the dead. This he announced (**#1Co 15:4**) as part of his Gospel on his first visit to Corinth. And upon it rests (**#1Co 15:17f**) all Christian hope. Paul's list of witnesses suggests that

he had carefully interrogated those who had seen the risen Saviour. Christ both died and rose, **#2Co 5:15**. And, as in **#Ro 6:4**, etc., so in **#1Co 6:14; #2Co 4:14**, He was raised by God. Therefore (**#2Co 13:4**) the life which the *Crucified One* lives is by the power of God. This was not doubted by any church-party at Corinth. And Paul's silence implies that it was not questioned even by his bitter opponents, and that even the immoral men (**#1Co 15:33f**) whose bold denial of the resurrection involved logically a denial that Christ had risen did not venture to contradict this universal belief of the church. Thus even the dissensions at Corinth attest the firm and universal belief among Christians that Christ rose from the dead.

The great significance of this universal belief, I have in my *Romans*, Dissertation i. 10, endeavored to expound.

9. Naturally the doctrines so firmly held by Paul clothed themselves in appropriate and often recurring phrases, which everywhere reveal his hand in contrast to other writers of the New Testament.

As examples we note **#1Co 1:1, 2, 9, 24, 26**: *called apostle, called saints, etc.* The deeply significant words *in Christ* have been already mentioned. Compare and contrast **#1Jo 2:6, 24, 28**. Verbatim repetitions of **#Ro 1:7** are **#1Co 1:3; #2Co 1:2**. Each epistle, after a salutation, bursts into praise to God. The word *always* in **#1Co 1:4** recalls *how ceaselessly* in **#Ro 1:9**. The words *grace, grace given, gift-of-grace*, are conspicuous links binding together the three epistles. The contrast of *Jew and Greek* (**#Ro 1:16; 2:9, 10; 3:9; 10:12**) meets us in **#1Co 1:22ff**. The word *exult* or *boast* (**#Ro 2:17, 23; 3:27; 4:2; 5:2, 3, 11; 15:17**) is a conspicuous feature of the Epistles to the Corinthians. The phrase *I do not wish you to be ignorant* binds together **#Ro 1:13; #1Co 10:1; 12:1; #2Co 1:8**; while the word *ignorant* is very frequent. All these examples meet us at once on the threshold of the Epistles; and might be indefinitely multiplied. A careful study of the three epistles, and this only, will reveal the oneness of expression, an evident outflow of one mind, which pervades each epistle. This will be the more conspicuous if we compare any epistle which does not bear the name of Paul.

Intermingled with familiar words and phrases, we find in the Epistle to the Corinthians others quite new to us but full of meaning. Such are *sanctified in Christ*, **#1Co 1:2**; *Day of the Lord*, **#1Co 1:8; 5:5; #2Co 1:14**; *being-saved or perishing*, **#1Co 1:18; #2Co 2:15; 4:3**. The contrast in **#2Co 3:6** of Old and New Covenants in complete harmony with Paul's quotation in **#1Co 11:25** of Christ's words at the Last Supper, is an important theological element not found in Romans. This variety amid similarity proves that the epistles are no mere copies one from another, but living originals from one hand. Their likeness is that, not of a photograph, but of children whose faces reveal their common parentage.

10. Each member of this family of epistles has very marked features of its own. The differences are as conspicuous as the general similarity. The Epistle to the Romans is eminently theological and philosophical. Great truths are arranged in their natural order, without reference to any special application; and are theologically developed. Then follows a general application. The First Epistle to the Corinthians is intensely matter of fact. A long list of subjects is taken up in order, one by one, and discussed calmly. The Second Epistle is throughout a torrent of emotion.

These differences correspond exactly to the circumstances in which each letter was written. To the Roman Christians, whom he had never seen, Paul gives a connected outline of his general teaching. The First Epistle to the Corinthians is a reply to questions about certain matters of detail, and was written to men about whom Paul knew much and had lately received special information. The Second Epistle was written under great emotion caused by deadly peril and by unexpected rescue from it, strangely intermingled with emotions roused by news good and bad just received about the much-loved readers.

11. This diversity of circumstances, impressed so deeply on every page of each epistle, reveals more fully even than the similarity of phrase the oneness of their origin. For it gives us a deeper and clearer view of the underlying principles of the mind and moral life of the great Apostle. We know him better now than when we rose from our study of the Epistle to the Romans, because we have seen him dealing with other matters and amid totally different surroundings. We have thus seen another side of his character.

We notice as before the calm impartiality with which Paul looks at both sides of a question, and judges accordingly. This is as conspicuous in his advice about marriage and idol-sacrifices and the exercise of spiritual gifts as about the weaker brethren in Rom. 14. And in each of these cases he rises from a matter of detail to some broad principle involved therein; and, after discussing this principle in its general bearing, points out its bearing upon the matter in hand. This method occasions the apparent digressions so remarkable in all three epistles, which give to Paul's treatment of passing details abiding worth as examples of unchanging principles. This constant reference of details to broad principles, a mark never absent in human greatness, pervades and ennobles every chapter of each of these epistles.

The intense earnestness and the moral grandeur which in the Epistle to the Romans claimed our profound respect are equally present now. And the exultant joy which in **#Ro 8:31-39** burst into song at sight of the hardships and perils of the Christian life reaches its highest note in the epistle written by a hand still trembling for deadly peril from which a few weeks ago there seemed to be no escape.

Very conspicuous in the Epistle to the Romans is Paul's frequent reference to the Old Testament. Such references are less frequent in the epistles now before us, but not less conspicuous. There is no need now to prove by abundant quotations that the Gospel does not contradict the Old Covenant. But, by a remarkable coincidence, even when discussing ordinary topics of his own day Paul quotes the Old Testament expressly, or appropriates its words. The old phrases *according as it is written*, etc. are the more conspicuous because of their Gentile surroundings. So deeply woven in the mind of Paul is the comparison of the two Covenants that while showing the grandeur of the Gospel ministry he contrasts it with that of Moses; and warns converts from paganism against apostasy by a long series of references to the story of Israel in the wilderness. All this betrays the man who passed suddenly in mid-life from the Old Covenant to the New and reveals a mind steeped from childhood in Jewish thought.

12. The surroundings and history of Paul as reflected in these three letters are in complete accord. The collection for Jerusalem is a common matter binding all together. We do not wonder that writing from a church lately torn by dissension Paul warns (**#Ro 16:17**) the Roman Christians against those

who make dissensions. The terrible exposition in **#Ro 1:24ff** would be easily suggested by the sensuality at Corinth, even in the church, which caused Paul so much sorrow.

13. In the epistles now before us we not only trace the old familiar features of the Apostle but we notice others not seen before. In the Epistle to the Romans we saw Paul, and heard his kindly voice, only from a distance. We now see him close at hand, dealing with practical details of church life. So tender is his sympathy that the weakness and injury of others are to himself a weakness and a burning sorrow. Yet he writes words of severest condemnation and threatening; but writes them in tears, afterwards regrets them, and overflows with joy to find that his regrets were needless. In spite of the deep impression made upon him by recent peril just escaped, and without any human necessity, he plans fresh enterprises involving new and unknown perils. We find him toiling for a living, while preaching the Gospel: and, when the Gospel so occupies his time that he can no longer earn for himself a livelihood and is thus in actual want, he resolutely refuses to receive money from his converts at Corinth lest his motives should be misunderstood and the effect of the Gospel thereby lessened. Although the continued obstinacy of the impenitent will reveal the awful power with which he has been invested by Christ, Paul begs them to repent, that this his power may be unexercised and unknown. In short we have in the letters to Corinth as compared with that to Romans a nearer and fuller picture of the Apostle. But the new lines thus brought into view are in complete harmony with the noble outlines already seen. This harmonious development of so noble a portrait proves beyond possibility of doubt, not only that the three epistles are from the same pen, (and this increases immensely the difficulty of supposing that the epistles are forged,) but that the portrait is a reflection of real life. For, had not such excellence lived it could never have been conceived or portrayed. Nor could it have been portrayed by the skill of a mere literary artist.

14. To sum up. Our comparison of the three epistles has confirmed the correctness of our analysis which traced up the whole teaching of the Epistle to the Romans to a few great doctrines which Paul accepted with complete confidence from the lips of Christ, accepting in common with all His followers the authority of Christ because, as they all believed, He had risen from the dead. And, by showing us these great doctrines applied to details of practical life, our comparison of the epistles has given us a firmer grasp of them, both as abstract principles and as a moral and spiritual influence. Of the complete unanimity with which even in a disturbed church these all-important doctrines were accepted, the dissensions at Corinth are a clear proof.

The recurrence of familiar phrases and modes of stating these doctrines, and further developments of them on the lines already marked out in the Epistle to the Romans, assure us that the three epistles are from one author. And, that this one author is no other than the Great Apostle whose name they bear, is made quite certain by the harmoniously developed and evidently genuine self-portraiture which the epistles contain.



# I CORINTHIANS

## DISSERTATION II

### *THE BOOK OF ACTS COMPARED WITH THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS AND TO THE ROMANS*

1. The Book of Acts was accepted before A.D. 200 by all churches everywhere without a shadow of doubt as a true narrative, as of equal authority with the Four Gospels and the Epistles of Paul, and as written together with the Third Gospel by Luke, the companion of Paul.

"The Scripture of the Acts of the Apostles" is enumerated by Eusebius (*Church History* bk. iii. 25) as having an unquestioned place in "the Scriptures of the New Covenant." So ch. 4: "Luke, being by birth from Antioch, by profession a physician, having been associated for the most part with Paul, and with the others having had no little intercourse, has left us proofs of the art of healing souls which he obtained from these men, in two God-inspired (same word as in **#2Ti 3:16**) books; the Gospel which he professes to have written as it was handed over to him by those who from the beginning became eye-witnesses and servants for the word, all whom he declares that from the beginning he has followed; and the Acts of the Apostles which he composed not from hearing but having observed with his own eyes." We have a short fragment, quoting **#Ac 1:16**, of Origen's homilies on the Book of Acts. The Book is also quoted, as is the Third Gospel, as Luke's, by Tertullian, e.g. *On Fasting* ch. x., and *Against Marcion* bk. iv. 5; by Clement of Alexandria, e.g. *Stromata* bk. v. 12; and (e.g. *On Heresies* bk. iii. 10, 14, 15) by Irenaeus. Both works are enumerated as by Luke the physician in the Fragment of Muratori.

That these anonymous writings were thus universally accepted before the close of the second century as by Luke, and that so far as we know no other author was anywhere suggested, is clear proof that they were current early in the century, and affords strong presumption that they came actually from the pen of Luke. For it is not easy to account otherwise for this universal tradition. The value of this argument is illustrated by the various opinions and doubts about the authorship of the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews. Its force is not weakened by the fact that many centuries later, as we learn from the Questions of Photius who however himself accepted Luke as the author, the Book of Acts was by some attributed to Clement, by others to Barnabas, and by others to Luke. For, when the lapse of time had weakened the force of early tradition, the mere absence of the author's name sufficiently accounts for this diversity of opinion.

That the Book of Acts was written by a companion of Paul is strongly confirmed by the use of the first person in **#Ac 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16**. (This was observed by Irenaeus: see quotation above.) For this unobtrusive indication of the writer's presence is in the last degree unlikely to be the work of a deceiver. That no mention of the Epistles of Paul is found in the Book of Acts, is absolute proof of its very early date. For after Paul's death his letters became too famous to be omitted in a narrative of his life. Whereas while he was living they would seem less important.

2. The position of the epistles before us in the narrative of the Book of Acts, we shall now consider. The references to the collection for Jerusalem prove (see note under **#2Co 9:15**, and my

*Romans*, Introd. iv. 3) that in order of time the epistles stand 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians, Romans. But, when writing to Rome, (cp. **#Ro 1:13ff**; **#Ro 15:22ff**) Paul had not been there. Consequently, these epistles, written while Paul was free, were earlier than his arrest at Jerusalem. This places them not later (**#Ro 15:25**) than the arrival at Jerusalem mentioned in **#Ac 21:17**. Paul's reference to two earlier visits to Corinth implies that the two Epistles to the Corinthians were written later than his first arrival at Corinth, narrated in **#Ac 18:1**. Between **#Ac 18:1** and **#Ac 21:17** we must therefore seek for some reference to the events mentioned or alluded to in the epistles before us.

That 1 Corinthians was written from Ephesus some time before Whitsuntide, we infer from **#1Co 16:8**. And we find (Acts 19) Paul at Ephesus for (**#Ac 20:31**) some three years, intending (**#Ac 19:21**) to go through Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem, and actually (**#Ac 20:1ff**; **Ac 21:17**) doing so, after spending three months in Achaia. On his return journey he passed (**#Ac 20:6**) from Europe to Asia soon after Easter, in company with the writer of the Book of Acts, who thus claims respect as an eye witness. Consequently, the three months spent in Greece, probably at Corinth the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, were in winter, doubtless the winter following the Whitsuntide mentioned in **#1Co 16:8**. A comparison of **#1Co 5:7**; **16:8** suggests that 1 Corinthians was written about Easter, and that the time of year prompted the reference to Christ as the sacrificed Passover. And this we may provisionally accept as the date of the First Epistle. We must therefore place it about the time referred to in **#Ac 19:21**.

That 2 Corinthians was written from Macedonia, some time after Paul's arrival from Troas and after his meeting there with Titus who brought news from Corinth, we infer securely from **#2Co 2:12f**; **#2Co 7:5f**. That Paul speaks of unrest even in Macedonia, suggests an interval between his arrival there and his meeting with Titus. And since this letter was evidently (**#2Co 1:3**; **2:14**; **7:6**) written under influence of the good news brought by Titus, and since the liberality of the Macedonians moved Paul (**#2Co 8:6, 17**) to urge Titus to go to Corinth to complete the collection there, which he was eager to do, we may perhaps infer that Paul wrote this Second Epistle soon after the arrival of Titus. Again, since (**#Ac 20:1**) Paul left Ephesus suddenly, immediately after the tumult, he probably did not fulfil his intention (**#1Co 16:8**) of remaining there until Pentecost. We may suppose then that between Easter and Whitsuntide he came to Troas, and almost at once (**#2Co 2:13**) went across to Macedonia; that soon after his arrival there Titus came with news from Corinth; and that soon afterwards, probably about mid-summer, Paul wrote his second extant letter to Corinth. Its composition would thus fall within the journeys and evangelical labors in Macedonia mentioned in **#Ac 20:2**, which occupied probably most of the summer. That Phillipi was the first important city of Macedonia to one coming from Troas, that Paul spent the next Passover there, and his great love for the Philippian church make probable the suggestion that this was the exact place of writing.

We have already (*Romans*, Introd. iv.) seen that the Epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth near to the close of Paul's three months sojourn there mentioned in **#Ac 20:3**.

3. That these Epistles of Paul find for themselves so easily a place in the Book of Acts, where there is no express mention of them, testifies strongly to its historical trustworthiness. Other coincidences in narrative, circumstances, and personal characteristics, we shall now consider.

In agreement with **#1Co 4:15**, *I begat you*, we infer from **#Ac 18:1ff** that on his first visit Paul found no Christians at Corinth, and that therefore the founding of the church was his work. His evident (**#Ro 16:3**) affection and obligations to Aquila and Prisca accord with the statement in **#Ac 18:3** that on his first coming to Corinth he shared Aquila's toil in tent making. The persons who both at Rome and Ephesus (**#Ro 16:5**; **#1Co 16:19**) had Christian churches in their house were such as would welcome Apollos (**#Ac 18:26**) and teach him *more accurately the way of God*. They went with Paul (**#Ac 18:18f**) from Corinth to Ephesus: and there in **#1Co 16:19** we find them. Even the order of the names in **#Ro 16:3** *Prisca and Aquila*, (so **#2Ti 4:19**,) whatever be its cause, is a remarkable coincidence with **#Ac 18:18, 26**. That they left Rome, not for reasons of their own, but in obedience to an edict of the Emperor Claudius, removes all surprise that we find them again at Rome when Claudius was dead. That Silas and Timothy (**#Ac 18:5**) were with Paul during his first visit to Corinth, agrees exactly with Paul's own statement in **#2Co 1:19**. The description in **#Ac 19:22** of Timothy as one who ministered to Paul accords with the mission of Timothy in **#1Co 4:17; 16:10**. The Epistles reveal only a small Jewish element in the church at Corinth: and from **#Ac 18:6f** we learn that obstinate resistance compelled Paul to forsake the synagogue there. Since *Crispus* (**#Ac 18:8**) was *ruler of the synagogue*, and in turning to Christ was followed by his whole family, we wonder not that (**#1Co 1:14**) Paul made him an exception to his rule not personally to baptize his converts. The great number (**#Ac 18:8-11**) of Paul's converts at Corinth and his long sojourn there explain the deep anxiety for the welfare of the church which breathes throughout the Second Epistle and tore him away (**#2Co 2:12f**) from the promising opening for the Gospel at Troas. The Apollos faction at Corinth (**#1Co 1:12**, etc.) is explained by (**#Ac 18:24ff**) this fervent and scholarly teacher's arrival at Corinth and successful labor there in the glow of the deeper inspiration received from the teaching of Prisca and Aquila, during the interval between Paul's first and second visits. We find Apollos at Ephesus both in **#Ac 18:24** and later in **#1Co 16:12**. The great opening (**#1Co 16:9**) for usefulness and the many opponents at Ephesus are fully portrayed in **#Ac 19:10-20, 24-29**. The determined hostility of Demetrius removes all surprise that before Paul left Ephesus he was in deadly peril; although the exact nature of the peril is unknown to us. The sending of Timothy in **#1Co 4:17** (cp. **#1Co 16:10**) is probably that mentioned in **#Ac 19:22**. And Paul's thoughts then (**#Ac 19:21**) about Rome accord with his statement in **#Ro 1:13** that he had frequently purposed to go there. We have already seen that Paul's allusions in his letters to his journey from Ephesus to Corinth agree exactly with the short account of it given in **#Ac 20:1, 2**. And although the writer of the Book of Acts says nothing about the collection for Jerusalem, yet by a most interesting and unexpected coincidence we have in **#Ac 24:17** a clear reference to it.

We find also important coincidences between the Book of Acts and Paul's Epistles in their delineation of his character and conduct. The affectionate and earnest address to the Ephesian elders in **#Ac 20:18-35** is a true counterpart of 2 Corinthians. Even the *many tears* (**#2Co 2:4**) amid which he wrote to the Corinthians from Ephesus were mingled (**#Ac 20:19, 31**) with his work there. The fear about enemies at Jerusalem which breathes in his request in **#Ro 15:31** (cp. **#2Th 3:2**) finds utterance again in **#Ac 20:23**, and received dark confirmation in **#Ac 21:11**. Paul's constant habit (**#Ac 13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:2, 10; 18:4, 19**) of preaching Christ first in the synagogue is a practical comment on **#Ro 1:16; 2:9, 10**, *to the Jew first and then to the Greek*. In **#Ac 16:3; 21:26** we see him becoming (**#1Co 9:20**) *To the Jews as a Jew*. We wonder not that the man who recognized (**#Ro 2:27**) the superiority in God's sight of sincere Gentiles to faithless Jews gained the evident respect (**#Ac 19:31**) of the Gentile Asiarchs at Ephesus. In close agreement with **#1Co 9:12-18; #2Co**

**11:8-12; 12:14, 16** (cp. **#2Th 3:8**) we learn from **#Ac 20:31** that also at Ephesus Paul toiled to maintain himself and his companions: and **#Ac 18:3** tells us his trade. The escape in a basket (**#2Co 11:33**) and the one stoning (**#2Co 11:25**) are recorded in **#Ac 9:25; 14:19**.

The theological teaching of these Epistles as compared with that of the Book of Acts and with the teaching of Christ as recorded in the Gospels will be discussed in another volume.

4. The complete independence of the Book of Acts and the Epistles of Paul is as remarkable as their innumerable coincidences. The former work contains no reference to these all-important epistles, even while narrating the events amid which they were written; nor directly to the collection for Jerusalem, which occupies so prominent a place in them. This proves that the Book of Acts was written before the Epistles became famous. That they were not copied one from the other, receives minute but very conclusive testimony in the longer spelling of the name Priscilla and the shorter name Silas in the Book of Acts as compared with Prisca and Silvanus in the Epistles of Paul.

5. Taken in connection with this evident independence of origin, the various coincidences noted above confirm strongly, if confirmation were needed, the proof already given that the epistles before us came from the pen of Paul. For only by supposing that the actions and purposes alluded to in the epistles were real, and that they came to the knowledge of the writer of the Book of Acts, can we account for these various and minute and evidently undesigned coincidences. Just as in the stereoscope two pictures combine to show in relief the one object therein portrayed, so the double picture of Paul presented by his own letters and by the Book of Acts produces at once an irresistible conviction that we have before us a reflection of real life.

These coincidences bear testimony, not only to the genuineness of the Epistles, but to the truthfulness of the Book of Acts. They thus confirm the writer's claim (see p. 494) to have been in part an eyewitness of the events recorded.

These confirmatory proofs would not be invalidated by small contradictions, even were such detected. For errors about matters of fact, and especially about small details which do not come under their own observation, are easily accounted for even in reliable witnesses by the imperfection of all human observation and research. But frequently the concurrence of witnesses who singly are utterly unreliable produces complete conviction of the truth of that which they narrate; because not otherwise can their concurrence be explained. Of this, our courts of law afford daily examples. Consequently, in weighing up coincidences and apparent contradictions we cannot set one against the other. We must accept the hypothesis which best accounts for the whole case. And, when only one explanation of the facts is conceivable, we are compelled to accept this as true. Of the documentary facts now before us the only conceivable explanation is that these letters are genuine, and that when they were written the church at Corinth actually presented the features therein reflected.

It is right to say that the liability to error of all human writers, especially in details, forbids us to accept the foregoing argument as full proof that the Book of Acts is absolutely correct in all it narrates. It was confidently accepted in the second century as a true narrative, and from the pen of

Luke. But the question of its trustworthiness as a whole is beyond the scope of the present volume. I have referred to it chiefly as bearing upon the epistles now before us.

6. Our proof of the genuineness of the Epistles to the Romans and to the Corinthians is now complete. We found that each of these epistles was accepted with perfect confidence in the latter part of the second century as a genuine work of Paul, in places so far apart as Gaul and Carthage and Egypt, and by sure inference in Rome and Greece. And we found 1 Corinthians accepted as genuine by the churches of Rome and Corinth during the life of many who were born long before Paul died at Rome. The contents of each letter taken singly were such as no forger could or would dare to write. Consequently, had any one of these letters even stood alone, we should have accepted it with perfect confidence as a work of the great Apostle. But we found proof that the three Epistles were from the same mind and the same pen; and we felt that the triple fraud involved in the supposition that any one of them was spurious was immeasurably removed from the limits of possibility. Moreover, the deep underlying harmony of the three Epistles, amid much difference, was an additional mark of genuineness. And lastly, we found an independent witness bringing his own credentials from the early church, and bearing testimony which convinced us that the events alluded to in the Epistles had come within his own knowledge and that he had been associated with the professed author of these epistles. Evidence so complete and superabundant is not only sufficient to banish all doubt and has actually done so throughout all the ages of Christianity, but cannot be produced, I believe, for the genuineness of any other ancient documents. To doubt such evidence is to surrender all historical certainty. If these epistles be not genuine we have no sure knowledge about the ancient world.

The bearing of the foregoing argument upon the truth of the Gospel preached by Paul, and upon the reality of the Resurrection of Christ, is developed in my *Romans*, Dissertation i. To the great argument there developed the present argument is subordinate.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DISSERTATION III

### *THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE THREE EPISTLES*

1. Already we have obtained, by comparing these Epistles with each other and with the Book of Acts, several notes of time. These we will not recount, and supplement by other notes of time in the Book of Acts. Some of these last we shall be able to connect with events having a known place in secular history. And this will enable us to fix, within narrow limits and with some confidence, the date in the Christian era of these Epistles and of some of the events therein alluded to.

2. We have seen that nearly at the close of a three years' sojourn at Ephesus, in the spring and probably about Easter, Paul wrote his first extant letter to the Corinthians; that soon afterwards arose the tumult; that immediately after this Paul went from Ephesus to Troas and almost at once crossed over to Macedonia, and that from Macedonia and perhaps from Philippi, about midsummer, he wrote his second letter to Corinth. A few months later, probably about November, Paul arrived at Corinth, where he stayed three months. Instead of going as he intended (**#Ac 20:3**) direct from Corinth to Jerusalem, he returned through Macedonia, arriving at Philippi (**#Ac 20:6**) probably just before the Passover. After this festival he crossed over to Troas, and then went on to Jerusalem. His purpose was (**#Ac 20:16**) to arrive there in time for the great gathering at Pentecost. And, that he lingered a week at Tyre, instead of pursuing his way to Jerusalem by land suggests, but in our ignorance of details is very far from proving, that he arrived in Syria in time to accomplish his purpose. In any case he must have arrived at Jerusalem before midsummer. Within a fortnight (**#Ac 24:11**) of his arrival he was brought back to Caesarea and stood before Felix. Shortly afterwards (**#Ac 24:24**) he gave his famous discourse before Felix and Drusilla. After two years, which included probably Paul's frequent (**#Ac 24:26**) interviews with Felix, this latter was replaced as governor by Festus. Within probably little more than a fortnight of this (**#Ac 25:1, 6**) Paul appealed to Caesar: the hearing before Agrippa (**#Ac 25:13**) followed shortly: and probably within two months of the arrival of Festus as governor Paul started on his journey to Rome. For, the fast which was already past (**#Ac 27:9**) when the ship was near Crete must have been that (**#Le 16:29; 23:27**) of the great day of atonement, at the end of September: and some time (**#Ac 27:9**) before this, i.e. during the summer, Paul began his journey. (Thus the two full years of **#Ac 24:27** bring us to the most likely time of year for Festus to arrive in Judea: for the sea was impassable during winter.) Paul's ship, after drifting (**#Ac 27:27**) fourteen days, was wrecked on the island of Malta; where he stayed (**#Ac 28:11**) three months. He then went in a few days to Puteoli, and on to Rome, where we must suppose that he arrived early in the year.

To sum up our notes of time, Paul wrote 1 Corinthians in spring: the spring following he was on his way, after three months at Corinth, to Jerusalem, where before midsummer he was made prisoner and sent to Caesarea. Two years afterwards, also in summer, Felix was superseded by Festus: and Paul soon afterwards started for Rome; where he arrived early the next year. If, therefore, from secular history we can fix the date of any one of these events, the dates of all will thereby be fixed.

3. Our chief aids in searching for links connecting the story of Paul with general history are the *Annals* of Tacitus, which gives year by year the chief events of the Roman empire; and the contemporary narratives of Josephus.

4. Josephus says (*Antiquities* bk. xx. 8. 9) that Felix, after his recall, was followed to Rome, and accused, there, by the leading Jews of Caesarea; and would certainly have been punished but for his brother Pallas whom Nero then held in honor. From Tacitus (*Annals* bk. xiv. 65) we learn that Pallas died in A.D. 62, as was believed poisoned by Nero: and the order of the narrative suggests that this was not later than midsummer. Therefore, if these notes of time be correct, the summer of Felix's recall was not later than A.D. 61. That it was still earlier, has been suggested, on the ground that long before his death Pallas must have lost his influence over Nero. But Nero's waywardness forbids this inference.

Again, after narrating the recall of Felix, Josephus says that through the influence of Burrus two prominent Syrians of Caesarea gained from Nero a letter placing the Jewish residents there under disadvantage; and then goes on to speak of the arrival of Festus. But at the beginning (*Annals* xiv. 51) of his narrative of A.D. 62 Tacitus records the death of Burrus. That Josephus says that Burrus was tutor and Greek secretary to Nero, by no means implies, as Lewin suggests in *Fasti Sacri* p. 320, that he was a different man from Burrus whom Josephus calls in *Antiq.* xx. 8. 2 "general of the armies": for the description in 8. 9 was added to explain the influence over Nero which enabled Burrus to obtain the letter to Caesarea: and certainly (Tacitus, *Annals* xii. 42) Burrus the tutor of Nero was a soldier.

Once more. Josephus says (*Wars* bk. vi.5. 3) that during the feast of tabernacles at the end of September, and seven years and five months before the siege of Jerusalem, and during the rule of Albinus who (*Antiq.* xx. 9. 1) succeeded Festus, a peasant began to denounce woe to Jerusalem. Now the siege of Jerusalem began (*Wars* v. 3. 1, 2, vi. 9. 3; Tacitus, *Histories* bk. v. 10) at the Passover of A.D. 70. Consequently, late in September A.D. 62 Albinus must have been governor and Festus already dead. And, since (*Antiq.* xx. 9. 1) Nero did not send Albinus to Judea as governor till he heard that Festus was dead, the summer in which Paul stood before Festus could not have been later than A.D. 61. The concurrence of these three notes of time is fair proof that Felix was recalled not later than A.D. 61: and, if so, Paul was arrested not later than A.D. 59.

5. From **#Ac 21:38** we learn that some time before Paul's arrest an Egyptian made a sedition and led out into the wilderness some 4000 men. This incident is narrated by Josephus (*Wars* ii. 13. 5) as occurring in the time of Felix, after (13. 2) Nero had made him governor of Judea. Now Nero began to reign in A.D. 54. Consequently, the revolt of the Egyptian was later than this. Yet it was evidently some time before Paul's arrest. This must therefore have been some years later than A.D. 54. Again, when Paul stood before Felix, the latter had (**#Ac 24:10**) for *many years* been *judge to the Jewish nation*. Now Felix was appointed governor when (*Antiq.* xx. 7. 1) Claudius had reigned twelve years, i.e. in A.D. 53. These two notes of time make it unlikely that Paul's arrest was earlier than the summer of A.D. 57.

6. Josephus tells us (*Life* § 1) that he was born in the first year of Caligula, i.e. in A.D. 37; and (§ 3) that in his 26th year (i.e. we may suppose in the summer of A.D. 63: for only in spring and

summer was seafaring safe) he went to Rome to obtain the release of some friends whom Felix while governor had sent there in bonds. His words imply or suggest that when he went to Rome Felix was no longer governor. Now it is not likely that this journey would be delayed beyond two years after Felix' recall. And, if not, he must have been recalled not earlier than A.D. 61. Certainly, this note of time makes it extremely unlikely that Felix was recalled earlier than the summer of A.D. 60. Moreover, in the dates of his own birth and his journey to Rome Josephus' own words claim our confidence.

7. Another note of time has been appealed to in proof that Felix was recalled not later than A.D. 60. When Albinus arrived at Jerusalem in September 62, King Agrippa at once deposed (*Antiq.* xx. 9. 1) the high priest Annaus, after a priesthood of three months. He therefore became high priest in June. Now he was preceded by Joseph, whom Agrippa appointed when he heard of the success of the deputation sent to Rome with Festus' concurrence. Consequently, during spring at the latest news of this success must have reached Jerusalem. If so, it is almost certain that the deputation went to Rome the previous autumn: for in winter the sea was impassable. And, since Festus became governor about midsummer, to suppose that he became governor that year would leave but little time for the building of the Jewish wall to block out Agrippa's palace (xx. 8. 11) and for the contention which arose thereupon. This suggests therefore that Festus came not later than the preceding summer, i.e. in A.D. 60.

But Josephus gives no hint that either the palace of Agrippa or the Jewish wall was built after Festus' arrival; but only "about that time." The narrative leaves open the supposition that the wall was finished about the time of Festus' arrival; and that he at once took, with great vehemence, Agrippa's part in the quarrel about it. And if so, the deputation to Rome may have been sent soon afterwards and have arrived at Rome during the autumn: and news of its success may have reached Jerusalem, as we have seen it must have done, the following spring. Whether Festus was then alive, Josephus does not say. If he died not later than March, there would be abundant time for Nero to hear of his death and to send Albinus so as to arrive in Jerusalem in September. We also notice plain indications in both narratives of Josephus (*Antiq.* xx. 8. 10, and *Wars* ii. 14. 1) that the rule of Festus was very short. The only other event in it mentioned is an expedition against brigands; which may easily have taken place during the autumn after his arrival. Consequently, the foregoing notes of time do little or nothing to contradict the note afforded by Josephus' visit to Rome which suggests that Felix was recalled not earlier than A.D. 61.

The statement of Josephus that the success of the embassy was due to Poppaea, Nero's "wife," whom (Tacitus, *Annals* xiv. 60) he married in the spring of A.D. 62, cannot be relied upon to prove that we have no need to put Felix' recall earlier than A.D. 61: for, that she became his wife soon afterwards, would account for Josephus speaking of her as such.

The words to the *captain-of-the-pretorian-guard*, to which both Conybeare and Lewin appeal in proof that Felix was recalled not later than A.D. 60, are certainly spurious. Lewin's argument that A.D. 58 would give Paul more time to go from Philippi to Jerusalem between Easter and Pentecost is little better than trifling: for by his own showing A.D. 59 would give only one day less.



8. We found in art. 4 three indications that the recall of Felix and the arrest of Paul were not later than A.D. 61 and A.D. 59 respectively: and we have found no proof or reasonable presumption that these events were earlier than this. That they were not many years earlier, we found indications in art. 5. And in art. 6 we found a reliable note of time which made it almost inconceivable that Felix was recalled earlier than A.D. 60, and very unlikely that his recall was earlier than A.D. 61. Therefore, with such confidence as the scantiness and the liability to error, of our materials warrant, we may accept this latter date as the most likely. That Felix was recalled several years before the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and that Paul was arrested several years after the accession of Nero in A.D. 54, is open to no doubt whatever.

We may therefore suppose that Paul was at Ephesus, except occasional journeys, from A.D. 55, the year after Nero's accession, to the spring of A.D. 58; that at Ephesus about Easter he wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians, and soon afterwards went through Troas to Macedonia where about midsummer he wrote his Second Epistle, and arrived at Corinth about November; that early in A.D. 59 he wrote his Epistle to the Romans, and soon afterwards went to Philippi where he spent the Passover, and immediately afterwards started for Jerusalem where he arrived about Whitsuntide and was soon afterwards arrested and removed to Caesarea; that he remained there till the summer of A.D. 61, when, after appearing before Festus and Agrippa, he was sent towards Rome but was shipwrecked during the autumn on the island of Malta; and that he arrived in Rome early in A.D. 62, soon after the death of Burrus had weakened (Tacitus, *Annals* xiv. 52) the influence of Seneca and removed the only check to Nero's ferocity, and shortly before the Emperor's marriage with the malignant Jewish proselyte Poppaea and before the murder of his former wife Octavia.

9. The student will notice how much more liable to error are the historical data appealed to above in our search for the dates of these epistles than those which placed their genuineness beyond all possibility of doubt. That Paul actually wrote these three letters, is the only conceivable explanation of an innumerable multitude of indisputable facts. To deny it, would be to surrender all certitude about the events of the far past. But, in our search for the time when he wrote these letters, we have assumed the absolute correctness, even in details, of the Book of Acts and of the narratives of Josephus and Tacitus: and in our determination of the exact year of writing we have relied upon one note of time and upon what is at best only a strong probability. We notice, however, that our microscopic sifting of details has revealed several notes of agreement and not one clear discrepancy. It has thus in a remarkable manner confirmed the truthfulness and accuracy of the narratives we have used. Moreover, the time when these epistles were written is a matter of little practical importance: whereas, that they were actually written by Paul, is the foundation of the entire historic proof of Christianity. In each case in proportion to our need evidence has been preserved for us by the kind of forethought of God. Consequently, while various opinions have been current about the exact date of the epistles, their genuineness has been admitted in all ages by friends and enemies of all kinds.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DISSERTATION IV

### *PAUL AND THE CHURCH AT CORINTH*

1. The historical results attained in this volume, I shall now weave into a consecutive narrative. This will supplement the narrative of the church at Corinth already given in Introd. v. Since I shall but arrange in order results of former researchers, it will for the more part be needless to give proofs. These will be easily found in their proper places.

2. Early in the reign of Nero we find (#Ac 19:1-20) Paul at Ephesus, the splendid capital of the Roman province of Asia and the chief seat of Asiatic idolatry, superstition, and sensuality. There he had great success. From Ephesus as a center the Gospel was proclaimed throughout the whole province. Asiatic superstition was overpowered by the most remarkable miracles recorded of Paul. The impression thus made was widened and deepened by confusion which befell some who tried to use the names of Jesus and of Paul as a magical incantation. The whole city felt the power of the name of Jesus. Some converts who had in secret continued the magical arts of their earlier days could no longer hide themselves, and both confessed their conduct and destroyed its costly instruments. And the Gospel continued to spread and to increase in power. Thus in the great capital of the Asiatic Greeks the might of God opened for the Gospel an abundant entrance.

3. But amid this success and the widening prospect of still greater success Paul could not forget the church he had founded in the capital of Achaia. The frequent communication between the cities enabled him to visit Corinth (see under #2Co 13:2) during his long sojourn at Ephesus. The visit seems to have been short: and it was certainly painful and humiliating to Paul. In many of the church-members, sensual passions, nourished by the heathenism of former days and for a time stunned we may believe by the force of Paul's teaching, had again revived, as lapse of time had lessened the influence of that teaching; and had burst forth into actual and outward and gross sins. Yet even these erring ones Paul treated with leniency. Instead of inflicting bodily punishment as he did upon Elymas, or even excluding them from the church, he merely reproved them and threatened severe punishment if when he came again he found similar unfaithfulness. And with a sad heart, doubtless, Paul returned to his toil at Ephesus.

Naturally, Paul's anxiety about the Corinthian Christians continued after his return. It found expression in a letter now lost urging them to have nothing to do with immoral men. Paul meant, with immoral church-members. It would seem that some of them misrepresented him as forbidding thereby all intercourse with heathens, who were notoriously immoral: an injunction evidently impracticable.

4. Another matter now occupied Paul's attention. He felt that he was approaching a turning point in his career. His work in the East was nearly complete. In all the great centers he had planted Christian churches. And even in the City of the Caesars the Gospel had made converts. But as yet, probably, the far West was untrodden by messengers of the cross. And Paul resolved to leave his

beloved converts in Greece and Asia and to carry to the distant province of Spain the good news of life.

But before he goes West Paul wishes to crown the edifice he has erected in the East.

It had been his constant effort to bind together the Jewish and Gentile elements of the Church of Christ. For he felt that upon their cohesion depended its highest welfare, if not its permanence. He was anxious that the Gentile Christians should not break away from the historic people of God: for converts reared in heathenism needed the stability derived by the better Jewish Christians (cp. **#2Ti 1:5**) from early godly training. The newly engrafted twigs needed sap from the old root. But Paul opposed strenuously (**#Ga 2:5**) such legal restrictions as would make the Christian Church only the latest and best of the Jewish sects. Of the earnestness of Paul's effort to unite these diverse elements in the Church we have indisputable proof in his long and frequent journeys to Jerusalem and his evident wish to work in connection with the Apostles of the Circumcision. And he now resolved to crown his work among the Gentile by promoting an act of generosity which would both reveal the genuineness of the work and endear the Gentile converts to the Christians in Judaea.

That these latter were very poor, we have various proof. During Paul's early labors at Antioch (**#Ac 11:27, 30**) he was a bearer of a collection made there for the Christians at Jerusalem. At the conference in Jerusalem, when Paul and Peter shook hands (**#Ga 2:10**) in recognition of their different spheres of apostolic work, Peter begged Paul not to forget, while laboring among the Gentiles, the poverty of his fellow-countrymen at home. The promise then eagerly made Paul resolved now to fulfil on a scale surpassing all expectation. He resolved to make a collection in various provinces for the Christian poor in and around the mother-city of Christianity.

By some means unknown to us Paul gave directions in this matter to the churches of Galatia. And, probably in the autumn before these epistles were written, he sent Titus and another to Corinth to promote a collection there. The Corinthians took it up eagerly, and began at once to make the collection.

5. Early the next year unfavorable news about the Corinthian church reached Paul at Ephesus. During the interval between his first short visit to Ephesus (**#Ac 18:19**) and his long sojourn there, an eloquent Alexandrian Jew called Apollos, deeply versed in Holy Scripture, formerly a disciple directly or indirectly of John the Baptist but lately brought at Ephesus into the full light of the Gospel by the teaching of Prisca and Aquila, glowing with the fervor of a new and richer spiritual life, arrived at Corinth bearing a commendatory letter from the Christians at Ephesus. His labors at Corinth were very successful. Believers were greatly helped: Jewish disputants were publicly silenced: and converts were added to the church. This good work was not without some bad results. The enthusiasm thus aroused provoked some to proclaim themselves, in opposition to those who hung on the lips of Apollos, the followers of the great founder of their church. The partisan spirit, once kindled, soon spread and became universal. The men who boasted of the name of Paul were confronted by a party which inscribed on its banner the name of Apollos. Devotion to human teachers recalled to Jewish converts the apostle to whom Christ had personally given the keys of the kingdom of heaven and who was by Paul's admission apostle of the circumcision. Retaining the Aramaic name used probably by Christ in His solemn commission, they called themselves followers

of Cephas. Others, condemning superciliously the prevalent sectarianism, formed themselves into a fourth sect; and claiming a monopoly of that great Name which belongs to all who believe the Gospel, called themselves, in a sense which they denied to others, the followers of Christ. Into these four sects the whole church divided itself; the last two being probably small. All this was made known to Paul by members of the family of Cloe.

Paul's earnest wish (**#1Co 16:12**) that Apollos should come to Corinth proves that the latter was absolutely free from the party-spirit which sheltered itself under his name.

Other evil reports reached Paul. One church-member had sunk below the level of the heathen by marrying his step-mother while her husband was still living. There were lawsuits between Christians in heathen courts of justice. And a general spirit of rapacity and sensuality was in the church. Some women had laid aside the appropriate headdress of their sex. The Lord's Supper was made an occasion of ostentation and revelry. Some church-members whose conduct proved the hollowness of their profession, denied boldly the possibility of dead men rising again. And some were evidently disaffected towards Paul; and thought in their silly conceit that he would not, because he dared not, visit Corinth again. All this sad news reached Paul, according to our reckoning, early in A.D. 58.

6. It had been Paul's purpose to go direct from Ephesus to Corinth, to go on to Macedonia and back to Corinth; and then to go, perhaps in company with those who took the collection, to Jerusalem. This purpose was known at Corinth. But the bad news moved Paul to modify it. To go to Corinth now, would compel him to act with severity: for he could not allow his former disregarded threats to remain unfulfilled. And remembrance of his former sad visit made him in the last degree reluctant to have another painful meeting with his beloved though unfaithful converts.

In order to spare both himself and them, Paul resolved to go first to Macedonia and then to Corinth; thus leaving time for improvement. And, early in A.D. 58, he sent Timothy, who was at least in the early part of his journey accompanied by Erastus, to go to Macedonia, and to Corinth. (It is not likely that "Erastus being the steward of the city" (**#Ro 16:23**) would be called (**#Ac 19:22**) "one of those who ministered to" Paul. He may easily have had two friends bearing this not uncommon name.) But, for reasons unknown to us, Paul did not expect Timothy to reach Corinth before his First Epistle, which was written after or about the same time as Timothy started; and was not sure that he would go there. That he did not then go to Corinth, is probable. But he was there with Paul during the following winter.

7. About this time, i.e. about Easter in A.D. 58, Paul was saddened by the arrival at Ephesus of three excellent men, one of them known to us as an early convert and a faithful servant of the Church and worker for Christ, bringing a letter from the Christians at Corinth. The letter asked advice about marriage, about food offered in sacrifice to idols, and about the exercise of spiritual gifts; and possibly about other matters. That the coming of these men gave rest to Paul's spirit, suggests that their account of the state of the church was less unfavorable than that he had previously received; and that they somewhat allayed his anxiety.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians was Paul's reply to this letter; and was designed to prepare the way for his own visit. Before he can answer their questions he must first deal with some of the evils

in the church. He then discusses the questions proposed to him, and deals with other evils in the church; and concludes with references to the collection, to the movements of himself and of Timothy, to Apollos, and to the messengers from Corinth. The bad state of the church made this letter a severe condemnation. But its strong rebukes came from a loving heart; and were mingled with tears. And needful and salutary as they were, the tenderness of Paul regretted that he had written them. The messengers from Corinth took the letter back with them, as an invaluable recompense for the toil and cost of their journey.

About the same time Paul requested Titus by message or letter, unless possibly he had returned to Paul at Ephesus, to visit Corinth and then to meet the apostle at Troas with news about the church and especially about the effect of the severe letter just written.

8. We are not surprised to find in this letter a casual reference to enemies at Ephesus. In a city which prided itself in being sacristan of the goddess Artemis many would have vested interests in idolatry, gaining we may suppose an abundant livelihood from the superstition of the worshippers. And the whole population would be more or less enriched thereby. Now we can well believe that the success of Paul would interfere perceptibly with these impure gains. For the devotion which enriched the idol-mongers would by the preaching of the truth be weakened in many who were not prepared to accept Christianity. Consequently, an outburst of fury, prompted and fanned by those most deeply interested and taken up by the mass of the inhabitants, would be at any time likely, and in proportion to the success of the Gospel. Such an outburst occurred a few weeks after the First Epistle was written; probably during the month of May, all which was held sacred as a great festival to the patron goddess of the city and was called after her Artemision. (This is asserted in a decree on a marble slab found at Ephesus: see Lewin's *Paul*. And it is an interesting coincidence of time.) By the urgent kindness of some of the officers presiding over the festival Paul was persuaded to hide himself from the fury of the excited mob. Probably he was thus saved from death. But the peril to which he was at that time exposed made a deep mark in the brave heart of the veteran apostle. Immediately after the tumult, and only a few weeks earlier than he had for some time intended, Paul left the City of Artemis in which he had labored so long and so successfully, and went to Troas.

9. Paul's purpose was to preach the Gospel at Troas; and he found a good opportunity for doing so. But he did not find there Titus, whom he impatiently expected with tidings about his beloved converts at Corinth, and especially about the effect of the severe rebukes of his letter to them. Conscious of the greater importance of preserving old converts than making new ones, Paul bids farewell to the Christians at Troas and crosses to Europe, and is soon we may suppose in the bosom of the church at Philippi. Even here at first, apparently, he did not find or hear of Titus. And his anxiety seemed to know no bounds. Around him were conflicts: within were fears. But soon after his arrival in Macedonia anxiety was changed to exultant joy by the arrival of his trusted companion Titus with good news about the effect of his letter, and especially by the good impression which the Corinthian Christians made on the mind of Titus. All anxiety about the wisdom of the severe letter was at once removed: sorrow suddenly gave place to joy: and that joy revealed to Paul the grandeur of the ministry which God had committed to him, a grandeur in no wise dimmed even by the hardships and deadly perils amid which it was performed.

The news brought by Titus proved that much still needed to be done and to be corrected at Corinth. The collection undertaken and begun so readily last year, as Paul boasted to the Macedonians, was now evidently lagging; and he cannot bear to think that his generous boasting might be found to be untrue. Moreover, many church-members whom on his last short and sad visit he had reproved were still unrepentant. And, tolerated and favored by the church, were Jewish emissaries, determined enemies of the apostle, bad men doing under guileful pretext the work of Satan. The liberality of the Macedonians Paul accepts as a divine suggestion that Titus go back at once to Corinth to complete the collection before the apostle's own arrival. And, to assist him in this, to reveal to the Corinthian Christians the true character of the deceivers in whom they trusted, and to give a last warning to the guilty ones and thus avoid if possible the sorrow of inflicting punishment, Paul wrote, and sent by the hands of Titus, about midsummer we may suppose, the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. In writing it, Paul joins with himself Timothy, his colleague in founding the church; who was with him in Macedonia when Titus arrived from Corinth.

10. After writing this letter Paul spent some months in evangelical labors and journeys throughout Macedonia. In Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, the apostle's presence and counsel would strengthen and instruct many. About November, with feelings difficult to conceive and impossible to describe, Paul arrived at Corinth. He was the guest of his early convert Gaius; at whose house probably the church-meetings were held. From the intelligence brought to Macedonia by Titus and in part interwoven in the second Epistle, we infer with confidence that he would be welcomed by his children in Christ with enthusiastic devotion. The only direct record of this visit is in the Epistle to the Romans. From this we learn that early the next year the collection was complete. And the quiet thought which breathes throughout this epistle suggests that the storm of faction and insubordination in the church, and of consequent anxiety in the breast of Paul, had subsided into complete calm.

Early, perhaps in February, the next year, A.D. 59 according to our reckoning, Paul bid adieu, probably for the last time, except perhaps a passing visit after more than five years and near to the close of his life, to the church at Corinth about which he had thought and cared so much. This long separation was foreseen. For Paul had just said to the Romans (in remarkable agreement with **Ac 20:38**) that his work in the East was done, and that he was now to turn his steps towards the far West. And Paul's knowledge of the instability of the Corinthian Christians must have made this long farewell specially anxious and sad to him. Doubtless he found relief in commending them "to God and to the word of His grace." And with anxious thought about those he was leaving behind, with fears about the dangers awaiting him at Jerusalem, fears which he could neither dismiss nor hide, but which could not turn him back from a journey which he felt to be divinely directed, the great Apostle began his long and weary way, over land and sea, leaving behind him in every city of Greece and Macedonia and Asia Minor his weeping converts, towards the Father-land of his own beloved nation, and the Mother-City of Christianity, now become the citadel of his foes. And here for the present we too must bid farewell to illustrious teacher.

# I CORINTHIANS

## DISSERTATION V

### *SUMMARY OF RESULTS*

1. Our study of the credentials of the Epistle to the Romans brought us by secure steps into the presence of the foremost of the Apostles of Christ. From his lips we heard the great foundation doctrines of the gospel, arranged and developed in logical order: and we found them to be a necessary supplement, or the only conceivable explanation, of the commands and promises of the covenants with Abraham and Moses. Paul's exposition and application of these doctrines revealed to us his familiar acquaintance with the Jewish Scriptures, his wide and careful observation of men and things, his well-balanced judgment, and his firm grasp of broad principles. And we caught in some measure the absolute devotion with which Paul bowed humbly in the presence of Jesus of Nazareth.

2. Whatever we learned from the Epistle to the Romans, our study of the Epistles to the Corinthians has confirmed. It has given us innumerable and indisputable proofs that the three widely different epistles are from the same author. And comparison of them with others and with the Book of Acts has revealed the reality of the facts therein narrated or alluded to. Each of the great doctrines assumed in the Epistle to the Romans we found assumed in those to the Corinthians, and brought to bear on matters of practical life. And this various application of these doctrines gave us several important developments of them, which enabled us to grasp them more completely in their full compass; and revealed how firmly they had taken hold of, and how deeply they were inwrought into the mind of Paul. Lastly, the writer's portrait reflected in the Epistle to the Romans we saw reflected with equal clearness and much greater fullness in the Epistles to the Corinthians. We thus obtained a nearer view of the great Apostle.

3. This nearer view of Paul is one chief gain derived from the Epistles to the Corinthians. They bring us into the nearer presence of a man in whom the highest mental grandeur bows with unreserved devotion to Christ and burns with love to those for whom Christ died. Just rescued from what seemed to be certain death, the writer's hand trembles while he writes. But while trembling he goes forward to meet other perils already looming before him, and deliberately plans new enterprises involving new and unknown perils. His chief anxieties and sorrows are for those who are hasting to run. His highest joy is news of their repentance. And their ingratitude only strengthens his determination to spend and to be spent for them. Lifelong toil and hardship and peril are joyfully endured in order to serve Christ and save men. And in all this the unwearied toiler is unconscious of merit: for he knows that every sacrifice is God's gift to him, a forerunner of infinite reward. This picture is our noblest ideal of human excellence. And, as such, it is of priceless worth.

4. Another element of great value in the epistles before us is the picture here presented of an apostolic church, both in the character of its members and in its joint worship. But this picture is by no means an ideal of excellence. Indeed, it dispels rudely a pleasant dream that the early Christians were a pattern of purity and love. Transported to the midst we find, not love and order and maturity,

but spiritual childishness, a universal spirit of faction, blind self-conceit, resolute opposition to the great and loving Apostle, and gross sin.

Yet these imperfect Christians Paul recognizes as brethren in Christ, justified and sanctified, the living temple of God, and a living letter evidently written by Christ with the Spirit of God through the agency of Paul and therefore to him a source of thankfulness to God. This warns us to treat as worthless imperfect forms of Christianity; and not to shut out men, and still less churches, from the family of God because of imperfections or inconsistencies. Human nature is a strange mixture. Churches with bad men in their chief places have often contained true followers of Christ. And underlying much that is unchristlike there has often been genuine though infantile Christian life. There are both tares among the wheat and among many tares wheat which will be garnered in the eternal harvest.

This picture of an early church dissipates fears for the churches of today. Possibly Paul trembled when he thought how soon these children in the faith would be left orphans in a wicked and stormy world. Certainly, had we stood by his side and seen the feebleness of the soldiers of the cross and the divisions in their camp, and thought that to them alone must soon be committed the royal banner and all the interests of the kingdom of God on earth, we should have feared that the church itself would not long survive the departure of its founders. But the feeble Christianity of that day overspread the Roman Empire, overthrew the gods of Greece, and became the religion of the civilized world. In view of this triumph we cannot fear, as some seem to do, that the Christianity of our day will be ruined by the imperfections and disorders prevalent here or there. For underneath weakness, or even disease, in the body of Christ there breathes immortal life.

5. We have now studied the three longest epistles of Paul. All were written within a year; during his third missionary journey. There remains one other epistle written on the same journey-the Epistle to the Galatians. These four epistles are intimately connected, each supplementing the others. And their genuineness is proved by evidence indisputable; and such as cannot be brought for any other books of the Bible taken alone as we have taken these epistles. But, as we shall see, their genuineness involves the genuineness or trustworthiness of others. This Quadrilateral of St. Paul is thus the historical citadel of the Christian faith. On this as a base rests safely the historical defense of Christianity. And it contains within itself a full, though by no means exhaustive, exposition and development and application of the Gospel; with abundant proof that it came from the lips of Christ, that He claimed to be in a unique sense the Son of God, and that in proof of His claim God raised Him from the dead.

Within this impregnable and well-stored fortress, which our King and Saviour has built for our defense, we take secure refuge from the assaults of our foes; and from its gates go forth, armed with His might, to claim the victory which He has already won for us by His own struggle with and victory over the forces of evil in their most tremendous forms. TO GOD BE THANKS WHO GIVES TO US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.



# I CORINTHIANS

## APPENDIX A

### *THE EPISTLE OF CLEMENT OF ROME TO THE CORINTHIANS*

1. Eusebius, in his *Church History* bk. iii. 15, 16, says: "In the twelfth year of the reign of Domitian, (A.D. 92,) Anencletus, having been bishop of the church of the Romans twelve years is succeeded by Clement; whom the Apostle, writing to the Philippians, declares to have been a fellow-worker of his own, saying "with Clement also and my other fellow-workers whose names are in the book of life." Of this Clement, then, one acknowledged epistle is current, great and wonderful, which he composed as from the church of the Romans to that of the Corinthians, a dissension at that time having arisen at Corinth. That also in very many churches this has been commonly used for a long time and to our day, we know."

Origen, in his commentary on John, vol. vi. 36, refers to ch. 55 of the epistle of "the faithful Clement to whom witness is borne by Paul saying *with Clement and my other fellow-workers etc.*"

Eusebius says (bk. vi. 13) that Clement of Alexandria used in his *Stromata* "even testimonies from the contradicted Scriptures, viz. the so-called Wisdom of Solomon, and that of Jesus son of Sirach, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and that of Barnabas, of Clement, and of Jude." And in Clement's *Stromata*, bk. i. 7, after a quotation of **#Ps 118:20**, we read: "Clement in the epistle to the Corinthians says, setting forth the excellences of those approved in the church, *Let one be faithful etc.*" verbatim from ch. 48. Also *Stromata* iv. 17. "In the epistle to the Corinthians the apostle Clement says," with long quotations from, and references to, ch. 1 and chs. 9-12 of the epistle before us. So *Stromata* v. 12 quotes ch. 20. But in bk. vi. 8 part of a quotation from ch. 48 is, probably by oversight, attributed to Barnabas. and the rest to "Clement in the Epistle to the Corinthians."

Similarly Irenaeus (quoted by Eusebius v. 6) in bk. iii. 3. 3: "After Anencletus, in the third place from the apostles the episcopate (of Rome) is allotted to Clement, who also saw the blessed apostles and was associated with them. . . . Under this Clement then, no small dissension having arisen among the brethren at Corinth, the church at Rome wrote a most excellent letter to the Corinthians leading them to peace."

Of Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, an earlier contemporary of Irenaeus, we read in Eusebius, *Church History* bk. iv. 23: "Moreover, of Dionysius a letter to the Romans also is current, appealing to the then bishop, Soter . . . In this, mention is made also of the letter of Clement to the Corinthians, making it clear that from the first by an ancient custom, it was read in the church. At any rate he says, *Today then we have kept the Lord's holy day, in which we have read your epistle, reading which we shall always be able to receive instruction, as also that formerly written to us by Clement.*"

Another contemporary reference in a lost work is noted by Eusebius, *Church History* bk. iv. 22: "Hegesippus, in the five memoirs which have come to us . . . after some things about the letter of Clement to the Corinthians, adds, *the church of the Corinthians continued in the right word till Primus was bishop at Corinth.*"

There is no reference, I believe, to Clement of Rome in Tertullian or in any early Western writer, except the few who understood Greek.

The above quotations, and some other quotations and references, prove that before A.D. 180 this epistle was confidently accepted in the East, and even by some in the West, as written by Clement, Bishop of Rome, who was assumed to be the companion of Paul. Whether this last assumption be correct, the commonness of the name, and a natural wish to connect this well-known letter with a man commended by Paul, leave room for doubt. But it is possible. And this assumption itself, and the early and wide-spread acceptance of the epistle, prove its very early date. This is confirmed by the reference in ch. 5 to Peter and Paul as belonging to "our own generation." and in ch. 44 to elders appointed by the apostles as possibly still living; and is made quite certain by the synonymous use of elder and bishop, and the absence of any hint of an episcopal order. Contrast with ch. 42 Ignatius *To the Trallians* ch. 3: "Let them reverence the deacons . . . and the bishop . . . and the elders. . . . Without these nothing is called a church." So *To Polycarp* ch. 6: "those who submit to the bishop, elders, deacons." All this supports the testimony quoted above that the epistle of Clement was written in the first century.

The absence from Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians of any reference to elders or deacons, even when dealing expressly with church discipline, confirms the proof already adduced that they were written long before even the early date just assigned, as the latest possible, to the letter of Clement.

That this venerable document was placed by the early church altogether below the Epistles of Paul and the four Gospels and the Book of Acts, is at once evident to all who study the writings of the Fathers. And I think that this judgment of the early church will be confirmed by a comparison of the Epistle of Clement with those of Paul.

The interesting work known as the 2nd Epistle of Clement is not a letter, but an ancient homily. Its authorship is quite unknown. The easiest supposition is that it was preserved at Corinth, and was thus associated with the Epistle of Clement.

2. In the Alexandrian MS., after the Book of Revelation, follow the Epistle of Clement, chs. 57. 6-63 being lost, and part of the so-called second epistle. No other copy was known until in A.D. 1875 there was published at Constantinople by Bryennios, Metropolitan of Serrae, a cursive manuscript found in a library at Constantinople and containing entire among other ancient writings both Epistles of Clement. The next year, among some MSS. purchased from Paris for the Library of the University of Cambridge was found a Syriac MS. of the New Testament containing, after the Epistle of Jude and before that to the Romans, the two Epistles of Clement. The heading of the former is "the Catholic Epistle of Clement the disciple of Peter the Apostle to the Church of the Corinthians:" and at the foot we read "Here ends the First Epistle of Clement, which was written by him to the Corinthians from Rome." The latter is called simply "the Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians." The MS. bears a date corresponding to A.D. 1170.

A full account of both epistles and of the MSS. containing them, with an English translation, are found in Bishop Lightfoot's very excellent volume on *S. Clement of Rome*. There are also good

editions by Hilgenfeld and by Gebhardt. There is a cheap translation by the Religious Tract Society: but it is out of print.

3. The following extracts illustrate the matters discussed in the present work.

"The church of God which sojourns at Rome to the church of God which sojourns at Corinth, called ones sanctified in the will of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace from Almighty God through Jesus Christ be multiplied.

CH. I. Because of the sudden and repeated misfortunes and accidents which have happened (*or* which happen) to us, rather slowly we think that we have paid attention to the matters disputed among you, beloved ones, to the impure and unrighteous dissension, foreign and strange to the chosen ones of God, which a few persons, being rash and bold, have kindled to such a degree of folly as to cause your venerable and far-famed name, worthy of all men's love, to be greatly blasphemed. For who that has visited you has not proved your all-virtuous and firm faith? And has not wondered at your sober and forbearing piety in Christ? and has not proclaimed your magnificent disposition of hospitality? and has not pronounced blessed your mature and unfailing knowledge? For without respect of persons you did all things, and in the laws of God you went, submitting to your leaders and rendering the due honor to the older men among you. To young men you enjoined moderate and seemly thoughts. And to women you gave charge to perform all things in a blameless and seemly and pure conscience, loving as is meet their own husbands, and you taught them, being in the rule of submission, to do in a seemly way the affairs of the household, acting very discreetly.

CH. II. And all of you were lowly minded, in nothing boastful, submitting rather than claiming submission, more gladly giving than receiving, being content with the supplies of God. And paying attention you had His words carefully laid up in your hearts: and His sufferings were before your eyes. Thus peace deep and rich was given to all and insatiable longing for doing good: and a full pouring out of the Holy Spirit came upon all. Full of right purpose in good eagerness with pious confidence, you stretched out your hands to Almighty God beseeching Him to forgive if in anything you had unwillingly sinned. Conflict you had day and night on behalf of all the brotherhood that the number of His chosen ones may be in the way of salvation with fear and conscience. Secure and pure you were, not remembering evil one towards another. All dissension and all schism was abominable to you. At the transgressions of your neighbors you mourned: their shortcomings you judged to be your own. Without regret you were for all good-doing, ready for every good work. Adorned with the all-virtuous and honorable citizenship, you performed all things in fear of Him: the ordinances and the decrees of the lord were written on the tablets of your hearts.

CH. III. All glory and enlargement was given to you, and there was fulfilled the written word: *He ate and drank and was enlarged and was made fat and kicked, even the beloved one.* (#De 32:15.) Hence jealousy and envy, strife and dissension, persecution and confusion, war and captivity. In this way the men without honor were raised up against the honored men, the men without repute against the well-reputed, the imprudent against the prudent, the young men against the old ones. Because of this righteousness and peace removed far off, when each one forsook the fear of God and became dim-sighted in faith of Him, and does not go in the statutes of His ordinances and does not act as

citizen according to the desires of his bad heart, they have taken up unrighteous and ungodly jealousy, through which also death entered into the world.

CH. IV. For it is written thus: (**#Ge 4:3-8:**) *And it came to pass after some days, Cain brought from the fruits of the earth a sacrifice to God; and Abel also he brought from the firstborn of the sheep and from their fat parts. And God looked upon Abel and upon his gifts: but to Cain and to his sacrifices He did not pay attention. And Cain became very sorrowful: and his face fell. And God said to Cain, Why hast thou become all-sorrowful, and why has thy face fallen? Is it not, if thou do offer rightly? But if rightly thou do not divide, thou has sinned. Be quiet. Towards thee is his resort: and thou will rule him. and Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us go through into the plain. And it came to pass when they were in the plain, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.* You see, brothers, jealousy and envy wrought out fratricide. Because of jealousy our father Jacob ran away from the face of Esau his brother. Jealousy caused Joseph to be persecuted even to death and to come even to slavery. Jealousy compelled Moses to fly from the face of Pharaoh king of Egypt when he heard from his fellow-tribesman, (**#Ex 2:14,**) *Who set thee as judge or magistrate over us? To make away with me dost thou wish, in the way which thou madest away yesterday with the Egyptian?* Because of jealousy Aaron and Miriam were lodged outside the camp. Jealousy brought down Dathan and Abiram alive into Hades, because they had raised dissension against the minister of God, Moses. Because of jealousy David was envied not only by the aliens, but also by Saul king of Israel was persecuted.

CH. V. But that we may cease from the ancient examples, let us come to those who nearest to us have become athletes. Let us take the noble examples of our generation. Because of jealousy and envy the greatest and most righteous pillars were persecuted, and even to death fought as athletes. Let us take before our eyes the good apostles. Peter, who because of unrighteous jealousy endured not one nor two but more labors; and in this way having borne testimony he went to the due place of glory. Because of jealousy and strife Paul exhibited a prize of endurance. Seven times having worn bonds, having been put to flight, having been stoned, having become herald both in the East and in the West, he obtained the noble renown of his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world and having come to the boundary of the West and having borne testimony before the rulers, in this way he was removed from the world and went into the holy place, having become a very great pattern of endurance."

CHS. IX.-XII. quote the examples of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Lot and Rahab, e.g. "Because of faith and hospitality Rahab the harlot was saved."

CH. XIII. "Let us be lowly-minded, then, brothers, having set aside all boasting and conceit and folly and displays of anger, and let us do that which is written. For the Holy Spirit says: (**#Jer 9:23f:**) *Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches; but he that boasts let him boast in the Lord, to seek out Him and to do judgment and righteousness.* Most of all remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, which He spoke, teaching forbearance and longsuffering. For in this way He said: *Have mercy, that you may receive mercy. Forgive, that there may be forgiveness to you. As you do, thus it will be done to you. As you give, thus it will be given to you. As you judge, thus you will be judged. As you show kindness, thus, will kindness be shown to you. With what measure you measure, with it will measure be made for you.*

With this commandment and with these precepts let us make ourselves firm in order to walk in obedience to His holiness-befitting words, being lowly-minded. For the holy word says, *Upon whom shall I look, except upon him that is meek and quiet and trembles at my oracles?* (#Isa 66:2.)

CH. XIV. Just then and right it is, brothers, that we rather become obedient to God than follow those who with boasting and confusion are leaders in loathsome jealousy. No casual injury, but rather great danger, shall we suffer if recklessly we give ourselves over to the will of the men who launch out into strife and dissensions, in order to alienate us from that which is good. Let us act kindly one towards another according to the compassion and sweetness of Him that made us. For it is written, *Kind men shall be inhabitants of the earth: and innocent men shall be left upon it.* (#Pr 2:21; #Ps 37:9). . . .

CH. XV. Therefore let us be joined to those who with piety keep peace, and not to those who with hypocrisy wish for peace. For He says somewhere: *This people with the lips honors me; but their heart is far from me.* (#Isa 29:13.) And again . . .

CH. XVI. To lowly-minded ones belongs Christ, not to men who lift themselves up over the flock. The scepter of the greatness of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, did not come with noise of boasting nor of haughtiness, although able to do so, but lowly-minded, as the Holy Spirit spoke about Him. For He says, *Lord, who has believed etc.*" quoting verbatim the whole of Isa. 53.

CH. XXIV. "Let us consider, beloved ones, how the Master shows to us constantly the coming resurrection, a firstfruit of which He made the Lord Jesus, when He raised Him from the dead. Let us see, beloved ones, the resurrection which takes place according to season. Day and night declare to us resurrection. The night falls asleep; the day rises up: the day goes away; night comes on. Let us take the fruits. The sowing, how and in what way does it take place? *The sower went forth* (#Mt 13:3) and cast into the earth each of the seeds; which having fallen into the earth dry and naked are dissolved. Then out of the dissolution the greatness of the forethought of the Master raises them: and out of the one a larger number grow and bear fruit.

CH. XXV. Let us see the wonderful sign which takes place in the Eastern places, i.e. those about Arabia. For there is a bird called phoenix. This, being only-begotten, lives 500 years. And, having come now to dissolution for it to die, a coffin it makes for itself of frankincense and myrrh and the other spices, into which when the time is completed it enters and dies. But while the flesh rots a certain worm is begotten which being nourished from the moisture of the dead animal develops wings. Then having become noble it takes that coffin where are the bones of the before-existing one, and bearing these completes a course from the Arabian country as far as Egypt to the so-called Heliopolis; (City of the Sun;) and by day, while all are looking, having alighted upon the altar of the sun, puts them down, and having done this starts back. The priests then observe the records of the times, and find that it has come when the 500th year is completed.

CH. XXVI. A great and wonderful thing then do we think it to be if the Maker of all things shall make a resurrection of those who rightly have served Him in confidence of good faith, since even through a bird He shows to us the greatness of His promise? For He says somewhere: *And Thou wilt raise me up, and I will praise Thee.*"

CH. XXIX. . . . "*Behold the Lord takes for Himself a nation out of the midst of nations; (#De 4:34;)* just as a man takes the firstfruit of his thrashing-floor. And there shall go forth from that nation things holy of holies.

CH. XXX. Of a holy thing then being a portion, let us do all the things of the sanctification, (cp. #1Th 4:3;) let us fly from evil speakings. . . . Let us put on as clothing concord, being lowly-minded, self-controlled, from all whispering and evil-speaking far removing ourselves, by works being justified and not by words. . . . Our praise, let it be in God, and not from ourselves."

CH. XXXII. "Whoever may consider sincerely will recognize great things belonging to the gifts given by Him. For from Him are both priests and Levites, all who publicly-minister to the altar of God. From Him is the Lord Jesus, according to flesh, (cp. #Ro 9:5.) From Him, kings and rulers and leaders in the line of Judah. And his other tribes exist in no small glory, God having so promised: *Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven.* (#Ge 22:17.) All then were glorified and magnified not through themselves or their works or the righteous action which they worked out, but through His will. And we then, through His will in Christ Jesus having been called, not through ourselves are justified nor through our wisdom or understanding or piety or works which we have worked out in uprightness of heart, but through faith, through which all those from of old the Almighty God justified. To whom be the glory for the ages of the ages. Amen."

CH. XXXIV. "The good workman with boldness receives the bread of his work; but the slothful and careless dares not look eye to eye at his employer. Needful then it is that we be eager for doing good. For from Him are all things. For He says beforehand to us: *Behold the Lord, and His reward is before His face to give back to each according to His work.* (#Isa 40:10.) He urges us then, believing with all the heart upon Him, not to be idle nor careless for any good work. Our ground of boasting and our boldness, let it be in Him. Let us submit to His will. Let us consider the whole multitude of His angels, how standing by they minister to His will. For the Scripture says: *Myriad myriads stood by Him, and a thousand thousands ministered publicly to Him, and cried Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth. Full is all the creation of His glory.* (#Da 7:10; #Isa 6:3.) And we then in concord, having been brought together by our conscience, as from one mouth let us cry to Him constantly that we may become partakers of His great and glorious promises. For He says: (cp. #1Co 2:9:)*Eye has not seen and ear has not heard and upon man's heart there has not gone up how many things He has prepared for those who wait for Him.*"

CH. XXXVI. "This is the way, beloved ones, in which we found our salvation, even Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our offerings, the protector and helper of our weakness. Through Him we gaze into the heights of heaven. Through Him we behold reflected in a mirror (cp. #2Co 3:18) the blameless and most excellent visage of Him. Through Him were opened the eyes of our hearts. Through Him our void-of-understanding and darkened mind springs up into His wonderful light. Through Him the Master desired us to taste the immortal knowledge. Who, being an outshining of His greatness, is so much greater than angels by how much more excellent a name He has inherited. For it is written thus: *He who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.* (#Ps 104:4.) But of His Son the Master said: *Son of Mine art Thou, I this day have begotten Thee. Ask from Me, and I will give Thee nations as Thy inheritance and as Thy possession the ends of the earth.* (#Ps 2:7.) And again

He says to Him: *Sit at My right hand until I have put Thy enemies as footstool of Thy feet.* (#Ps 110:1.) Who then are the enemies? The bad ones and they who oppose His will.

CH. XXXVII. Let us serve as soldiers then, brothers, with all earnestness, in His blameless ordinances. Let us observe those who serve as soldiers to our rulers, how orderly, how submissively, how in subjection, they perform the things commanded. Not all are governors, nor leaders of a thousand, nor leaders of a hundred, nor leaders of fifty, nor so forth: but each in his own order performs the things commanded by the king and the rulers. The great ones apart from the small ones cannot be; nor the small ones apart from the great ones. A certain mixture there is in all: and therein is utility. Let us take our body. The head apart from the feet is nothing: so neither are the feet apart from the head. The least members of the body are necessary and useful to the whole body. Yes, all parts breathe together and with one submission act for the whole body to be in safety.

CH. XXXVIII. Let our whole body then be in safety (be saved) in Christ Jesus; and let each submit to his neighbor, according as also he was put, in the gift of His grace. Let the strong man take care of the weak one: and let the weak one respect the strong one. Let the rich man give supply to the poor man: and let the poor man give thanks to God that He has given to him one through whom his shortcoming may be supplied. Let the wise man show his wisdom not in words but in good works. Let the lowly-minded not bear witness to himself, but allow witness to be borne to him by another. Let him that is pure in the flesh not boast, knowing that it is another who supplies to him his self-control. Let us take account then, brothers, of what kind of material we were made, and what kind of persons and who we were when we entered into the world; out of what kind of grave and darkness He who formed and made us led us into His world, having before prepared His good actions before we were born. All these things then having from Him, we ought in all things to give thanks to Him; to whom be the glory for the ages of the ages. Amen."

CH. XL. "Clear to us then these things being, and we having looked down into the deep things of the divine knowledge, we ought to do all things in order, so many as the Master has commanded us to perform at set seasons. That the offerings and ministrations be performed (with care), and not be done at random or disorderly, He commanded; but at fixed seasons and times. And where and by what persons He wishes them to be done, Himself fixed by His most excellent will, in order that all things being done rightly in good pleasure they may be acceptable to His will. They then who are the appointed seasons perform their offerings are both acceptable and blessed. For following the enactments of the Master they do not miss their aim. For to the High Priest public-ministrations of his own are given: and for the priests a place of their own is ordained; and on Levites ministries of their own are laid. The layman is bound by the layman's ordinances.

CH. XLI. Each of you, brothers, in his own order let him give thanks to God, being in good conscience, not transgressing the appointed rule of his public ministration, in sobriety. Not everywhere, brothers, are there offered sacrifices, the perpetual one, or for vows, or for sin and trespass, but in Jerusalem alone. And there, moreover not in every place is it offered, but before the temple on the altar, the victim being offered having been inspected for blemish by the High Priest and the before said ministers. They then who contrary to the appropriate order of His will do anything have death as their penalty. You see, brothers, by how much we have been counted worthy of greater knowledge, so much the more are we exposed to danger.

CH. XLII. The Apostles announced to us good news from the Lord Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. Christ then is from God; and the Apostles from Christ. Both came then in orderly manner by God's will. Having then received charges, and having been fully assured by means of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and having been confirmed by the word of God with full assurance of the Holy Spirit, they went forth announcing as good news that the kingdom of God is about to come. Preaching then in countries and cities, they appointed their firstfruits, having proved them by the Spirit, for bishops and deacons of those who were about to believe. And this is no new way. For long ago it had been written about bishops and deacons. For in this way somewhere the Scripture says: *I will appoint their bishops in righteousness and their deacons in faith.* (#Isa 60:17.)

CH. XLIII. And what wonder if they who in Christ were entrusted from God with such a work appointed those before-mentioned? Since even the blessed *faithful servant in all the house*, (#Nu 12:7,) Moses, signified in the Sacred Books all the things ordained for him. Whom also the other prophets followed, bearing witness with him to the laws ordained by him. For he, when jealousy had arisen about the priesthood, and the tribes were in dissension what sort of tribe should be adorned with the glorious name, commanded the twelve chiefs of tribes to bring to him rods engraved with the name of each tribe:" expounding the story of Num. 17.

CH. XLIV. "And our Apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife over the name of the bishop's office. For this cause then, having received perfect foreknowledge, they appointed the beforesaid ones; and afterwards they provided continuance in order that if they fall asleep other approved men may succeed to their public ministry. Those then who were appointed by them or afterwards by other men of repute, the whole church having been well pleased, and who have ministered blamelessly to the flock of Christ with lowly mind, quietly and modestly, witness being borne to them for a long time by all, these we think are being unjustly cast out of the ministry. For no small sin it will be to us if we cast out those who blamelessly and uprightly have offered the gifts of the bishop's office. Blessed are the elders who went before, who had their departure fruitful and mature: for they have no fear lest some one remove them from the firm place set for them. For we see that you have removed some men, after having behaved nobly, from the public ministry blamelessly honored by them.

CH. XLV. Be contentious, brothers and jealous about the things pertaining to salvation. You have looked into the Scriptures, those given by the Holy Spirit. . . .

CH. XLVI. . . . Let us be joined then to innocent and righteous men. These are chosen ones of God. Why are there strifes and passions and separations and divisions and war among you? Or have we not one God and one Christ and one Spirit of grace, that which was poured out upon us, and one calling in Christ? Why do we pull apart and tear apart the members of the body of Christ and are in dissension towards our own body and come to so great folly as to forget ourselves that we are members one of another? Remember the words of Jesus our Lord. For He said: *Woe to that man: good were it for him if he had not been born than that he ensnare one of my chosen ones: better were it for him that a millstone be hung about him and he be sunk into the sea than that he ensnare one of my little ones.* (#Mt 18:6; 26:24.) Your division has turned aside many: many it has cast into faintheartedness, many into doubt, all of us into sorrow. And your dissension is abiding.



CH. XLVII. Take up the Epistle of the blessed Paul the Apostle. What at first did he write to you in the beginning of the Gospel? In truth in a spiritual way he wrote a letter to you about both himself and Cephas and Apollos, because of your having even then made parties. But that partisanship brought less sin to you. For you became partisans of testified apostles and of a man approved among them. But now consider who they are that have turned you aside and have lessened the dignity of your far-famed brotherly love. Shameful, beloved ones, and very shameful, and unworthy of behavior in Christ, that it is heard that the most firm and the ancient church of the Corinthians because of one or two persons is in dissension against the elders. And this report has reached not only to us but also to those differently disposed from us, so that even blasphemies are brought to the name of the Lord because of your foolishness; and to yourselves danger is being wrought.

CH. XLVIII. Let us take this away then quickly, and let us fall before the Master and weep, begging Him that looking with favor He may be reconciled to us and may restore us to the honored pure behavior of our brotherly love. For a gate of righteousness opened for life, is this, according as it is written: "*Open for me gates of righteousness. Let me, having entered by them, give praise to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord. Righteous men will go in by it. (#Ps 118:19.)*" Since then many gates are opened, this gate in righteousness is that in Christ, in which blessed are all who have entered and make their journey straight in uprightness and righteousness, performing all things without confusion. Let one be faithful, let him be able to speak forth knowledge, let him be wise in distinguishing words, let him be pure in works. For so much the more ought he to be lowly-minded as he seems to be greater, and to seek the common profit of all and not his own.

CH. XLIX. He who has love in Christ, let him do the commandments of Christ. The bond of the love of God, who can set forth? The greatness of His beauty, who is sufficient to speak forth? The height into which love leads up is unspeakable. Love joins us to God: love (cp. **#Jas 5:20**) *covers a multitude of sins*: love bears all things; is longsuffering in all things. Nothing coarse is there in love, nothing haughty. Love has no divisions: love makes no dissensions: love does all things in concord. In love have all the chosen ones of God attained to full growth. Apart from love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love the Master took us to Himself. Because of the love which He had towards us, His blood Jesus Christ our Lord gave on our behalf in the will of God, and His flesh on behalf of our flesh, and His soul on behalf of our souls.

CH. L. . . . *Happy are they whose breaches of law have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered. He is a happy man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin, and there is not in his mouth guile. (#Ps 32:1, 2; cp. #Ro 4:7.)* This happiness was pronounced on those chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord: to whom be the glory for the ages of the ages. Amen."

CH. LIII. "For you understand and understand well the Sacred Scriptures, beloved ones, and have looked down into the oracles of God. . . ."

CH. LIV. Who then among you is noble? Who is compassionate? Who is filled with love? Let him say, If because of me is dissension and strife and divisions, I retire, I go away wherever you wish, and I do the things commanded by the people. Only let the flock of Christ be at peace with the appointed elders. He who shall have done this will win for himself great honor in Christ: and every

place will receive him. *For the Lord's is the earth and the fullness of it. (#Ps 24:1.)* These things, they who live as citizens the citizenship of God which is not to be regretted have done and will do.

CH. LV. But, to bring also examples of Gentiles. Many kings and leaders, during some season of pestilence, taught by oracles, have given themselves up to death, that through their own blood they might rescue the citizens. Many have returned from their own cities that dissension might go no further. We understand that many among us have given themselves up into bonds that they might redeem others. Many have given themselves away for slavery and having received their price have fed others. Many women having been made strong by the grace of God have performed many manly things." (Then follow the examples of Judith and Esther.)

CH. LVII. "You then who made the foundation of the dissension submit yourselves to the elders, and be brought by instruction to repentance, having bent the knees of your heart. Learn to submit, having put away the boastful and haughty self-will of your tongue. For it is better for you to be found in the flock of Christ little and of good repute than while seeming to be superior to be cast out of His hope. For thus says the all-virtuous Wisdom: *Behold I will send forth to you a saying of my breath.*" . . . quoting **#Pr 1:23-33**.

CH. LVIII. "Let us then obey His all-holy and glorious Name, having fled from the threatenings before-spoken by Wisdom to those who disobey, that we may dwell in our tent trusting upon the most upright Name of His greatness. Accept our counsel, and you will have no causes of regret. For as God lives, and the Lord Jesus Christ lives, and the Holy Spirit, the faith and the hope of the elect ones, so he who in lowliness of mind with earnestness of kindness, without regret, has done the decrees and ordinances given by God, this man shall be enrolled and of repute among the number of those who are being saved through Jesus Christ, through whom there is to Him glory for the ages of the ages.

CH. LIX. But if some disobey the words spoken by Him through us, let them know that they entangle themselves in no small transgression and danger. But we will be innocent of this sin. And we will ask, earnestly making our prayer and supplication, that the Maker of all things may guard unbroken the number which has been numbered of His chosen ones in the whole world, through His beloved servant Jesus Christ, through whom He called us from darkness into light, from ignorance into understanding of the glory of His Name, to hope on Thy Name, the First Cause of all creation." . . . (Here follows to end of ch. lxi. a prayer of exceeding beauty.)

CH. LXII. "About the things which befit our religion, the things most profitable for virtuous life to those who wish piously and righteously to go in a straight path, we have sufficiently written by letter to you, brothers. For about faith and repentance and genuine love and self-control and soberness and endurance we have handled every point, calling to mind that you must needs be well-pleasing to the Almighty God uprightly in righteousness and truth and longsuffering, preserving concord without remembrance of evil in love and peace with earnestness of kindness; as also our fathers, mentioned conspicuously before, were well-pleasing, pondering with lowly mind the things pertaining to the Father and God and Creator, and to all men. And these things with so much more pleasure we called to your mind since we knew clearly that we were writing to men faithful and most highly reputed and who have looked into the oracles of the instruction of God.

CH. LXIII. It is right then, giving heed to such and so many examples, to submit the neck and to occupy the place of obedience, in order that having ceased from the vain dissension, apart from all blame we may attain to the goal set before us in truth. For joy and gladness you will afford us if becoming obedient to the things written by us through the Holy Spirit you break off the unlawful anger of your jealousy according to the entreaty which we have made with peace and concord in this epistle. And we have sent men faithful and sober, who from youth to age have conducted themselves blamelessly among us, who will be witnesses between you and us. And this we have done that you may know that all our thought both has been and is that you may quickly be at peace.

CH. LXIV. Finally, may the All-seeing God and the Master of the spirits and the Lord of all flesh, who chose the Lord Jesus Christ and us through Him for a people specially His own, give to every soul which is called by His worthily-great and holy Name, faith, fear, peace, endurance, long-suffering, self-control, purity and soberness, for good pleasure to His Name through our High Priest and Protector, Jesus Christ, through whom to Him be glory and greatness, power, honor, both now and for all the ages of the ages. Amen.

CH. LXV. The men sent from us, Claudius, Ephebus and Valerius Bito, with Fortunatus also, send back to us quickly they may announce to us the prayed for and longed for peace and concord that the more quickly also we may rejoice about your good state.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and with all men everywhere who have been called by God through him. Through whom to Him be glory, honor, power, and greatness, an eternal throne, from the ages and to the ages of the ages. Amen."

That this brotherly appeal was effectual, we infer from the quotations given above from Hegesippus and Dionysius. For a letter of correction thus treasured cannot have been in vain. The intercourse of churches revealed in the Epistle of Clement and the quotation from Dionysius is a beautiful feature of early Christian life.

# I CORINTHIANS

## APPENDIX B

### DOUBTFUL VARIOUS READINGS

A few readings open to doubt or of special interest I shall now discuss. See pages 7-10. {*PREFACE* and *NOTES AND REPLIES*}

In **#1Co 1:28**, documentary evidence slightly favors, I think, the omission of *and* before *the things which are not*. This would make the following words a thoughtful and forceful comment on those preceding; a comment easily overlooked: whereas the insertion of the word *and* is easily accounted for. It is marked as doubtful by Westcott and the Revisers, and is omitted without note by the earlier Editors mentioned on p. 6. {*PREFACE*}

In **#1Co 2:1**, the Sinai, Alex., Ephraim MSS., and the Syriac and the very valuable Coptic (Egyptian) Versions, read *mystery*; the Vat. and most later MSS. and the Latin Versions read *testimony*. The Editors above-mentioned give *testimony* without note. But, following Griesbach, Westcott and Hort and the R.V. read *mystery*, with the other in the margin. Their choice is I think the better attested reading, and is confirmed by the teachings in § 4. In **#1Co 2:10**, Westcott prefers, and Tregelles and the R.V. give in the margin, the reading *for God etc.*, with the Vatican MS. and the two Egyptian Versions, but against all other uncials and versions. This preponderance of documentary evidence, I do not see reason to reject.

In **#1Co 7:34**, the best documents are in hopeless confusion: and it is quite uncertain whether the word *divided* is required by those following as their predicate, or must be joined to the words foregoing. In the latter case it would denote a divided mind: in the former, different circumstances. The confusion of the evidence and the variety of opinion of the Critical Editors are fairly reproduced in the Revisers margin. Their second note, which is the reading of Tregelles and of Westcott, should be (cp. **#1Co 7:11**) *the woman* (or wife) *without a husband*. This reading is the best attested; and, apart from the singular verb *is careful* following a plural subject, would give a good sense, whether we read simply (R.V. margin) *the virgin* or (with Lachmann) *the virgin without a husband*. The repetition would emphasize the fact that the maiden and the separated wife were alike in not having a husband. Practically, the A.V. is retained by the R.V. and Tischendorf. Fortunately, the differences are as unimportant as they are perplexing. Whether the division be in the heart of the married man or in the lot of womankind, the teaching is practically the same.

In **#1Co 8:7**, *conscience of the idol* was read probably by Tertullian in A.D. 200 and afterwards apparently universally in the West, and is found in the Syriac Version and in most later Greek MSS. But, in deference to the Sinai, Alex., Vat. MSS. and the Coptic Version the reading *accustomed intercourse with the idol* is accepted without note by all recent Editors and by the Revisers. The A.V. reading is interesting as casting light (cp. **#1Pe 2:19**) on the exact meaning of the word *conscience*; and as a probable error which became nearly universal both in the Eastern and Western churches. In **#1Co 8:8**, the order of clauses is quite uncertain and unimportant.

In **#1Co 9:22**, the word *as* (*weak*,) is in nearly all the Greek copies except the Sinai, Vat., Alex. MSS., and in the oldest versions except the Latin. It was apparently omitted by Origen, the earliest commentator. The insertion is so easily explained by the same word three times in **#1Co 9:20, 21** that the omission confirms the trustworthiness of the oldest copies. An interesting coincidence with the true reading is found in **#2Co 11:29**. In **#1Co 10:20**, the word *Gentiles* is omitted in some very early Greek and Latin copies; but is sufficiently attested.

In **#1Co 11:24**, the word *broken* is almost certainly spurious.

The parallel passage **#Lu 22:19b, #Lu 22:20**, Westcott and Hort in their Appendix confidently reject, following the Beza MS. (6th cent.) and a Latin copy of 4th cent. and in part the oldest (Cureton's) Syriac Version, and influenced by various marks of confusion in what are called Western documents. The omission is noted in the Revisers' margin. The verses are found in the Sinai, Vat., Alex. MSS., (the Ephraim MS. is lost from **#Lu 22:19**,) to which elsewhere especially when agreeing these Editors pay the highest respect, in some very ancient versions and in various other witnesses. The rejection of evidence so preponderant needs certainly a justification more complete than that given in Westcott's note. The variation is interesting chiefly as bearing upon the relation between the accounts of the Supper given by Luke and by Paul.

In **#1Co 11:29** the four earliest uncials and the Sahidic (Egyptian) Version omit *unworthily* and *of the Lord*; and are followed without note by R.V. and all recent editors. The insertion of these words became universal in Latin, Greek, and Syrian copies. But it is easily accounted for by the word *unworthily* in **#1Co 11:27** and the apparent baldness of the words *the body*. It is an interesting example of early and wide-spread error in our N.T. documents.

In **#1Co 13:3**, the Sinai, Vatican, Alex. MSS. and probably the Coptic Version, for *that I may be burned* read that *I may glory*. That this reading was in some copies of his day, Jerome says. But the other reading was certainly known in the third century, and became universal. The difference is only one letter of one word. This is an interesting case of the best MSS. contradicting almost all other documents. For greater definiteness *may glory* might have been changed to *may be burned*: whereas the opposite change is not easy to explain. And the general excellence of the oldest MSS. claims our respect. But confident decision seems to me impossible.

In **#1Co 14:18**, except Tregelles' margin, the reading *with a tongue* is confidently accepted by the earlier Editors; and is in Westcott's margin. Westcott's text, and the R.V. without note, on evidence perhaps slightly preponderant, read *with tongues*. In **#1Co 14:37**, Tischendorf omits *a command*. But the Revisers' reading is well attested by the oldest Greek MSS. and the Coptic Version. In **#1Co 14:38**, the reading *he is not known*, in the Sinai, Alex., and Clermont MSS. and read apparently by Origen, is very difficult to expound. The reading *let him be ignorant* is in the Vatican MS. and some early versions, and became universal in the Greek Church. With documentary evidence fairly divided, I retain, with R.V. text, the familiar reading.

In **#1Co 15:14**, as in **#1Co 7:15**, the variation *us* and *you* is unimportant. In **#1Co 15:49**, the reading *let us wear* is in all uncials except the Vatican MS., in most cursives, and in the best versions; and was read by Tertullian and by most of the Fathers. Documentary evidence so preponderant, I see

no reason to set aside. Its rejection by the Revisers merely shows that not two-thirds of them were prepared to accept the change. In **#1Co 15:51**, the Sinai and Ephraim MSS. read *all of us will sleep: but not all of us will be changed*. And Jerome says that this reading was in some Greek copies of his day. The Clermont MS. (Greek and Latin) and the Latin Vulgate read *all of us will rise: but not all etc.* The Vatican MS., followed by the Syriac and Coptic Versions and the later Greek copies, and by all Editors except Lachmann and the margin of Tregelles, give the reading of the A.V. which the R.V. retains without note. In **#1Co 15:54**, the evidence for *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption*, though preponderant I think, is not such as to exclude doubt.

**#2Co 1:6** is variously arranged both in the best ancient documents and in modern Critical Editions: but the variations are unimportant. In **#2Co 1:15**, the Vatican MS. reads *a second joy*, as do the text of Westcott and the margin of Tregelles. It may have been suggested by the rather difficult reading *grace*, which differs only in one letter, and is found in the other early, and in most later, documents. In **#2Co 1:22**, the Revisers omit with confidence, following the Sinai, Alex., Ephraim MSS. and apparently the Syriac and Coptic Versions, but against the Vat. and Clermont MSS. and the Latin Versions, a word of one letter given in all Critical Editions without note, except that Westcott puts it in brackets. But the omission affects the sense very slightly.

In **#2Co 2:1**, following the Vat. MS., two cursives, and the Coptic Version, but against the other Greek and Latin MSS., Westcott in his text and Tregelles and R.V. in their margins give *For I determined*. This would give a good sense, and one likely to be overlooked by a copyist. But in face of such preponderant documentary evidence we can only surmise that it may possibly be correct. Similarly, in **#2Co 2:7**, following the Vat. and Alex. MSS. and the Syriac Version but against the mass of documents, Westcott puts the word *rather* only in the margin, and Tregelles and R.V. mark it as doubtful.

In **#2Co 3:3**, following all Greek MSS. earlier than the 9th cent. and all the Critical Editors, (but not Tischendorf's 7th Edition,) the R.V. reads without an alternative *tables* that are *hearts of flesh*. All the oldest versions and most later Greek MSS. read *fleshen tables of the heart*. The same is found in existing copies or translations of Irenaeus, Origen, and other fathers. But these last have been so often conformed, by copyists and translators, to their own copies of Paul's Epistles that we cannot confidently accept their evidence. This is an interesting case of a simpler reading replacing one more difficult, and passing into all the earliest versions and into most later Greek copies. In **#2Co 3:9**, the reading *to the ministry* has, I think, preponderant documentary evidence. But all Editors are in doubt about it. And the variation is unimportant.

In **#2Co 8:7**, following the Vat. MS. and some of the best versions, but against nearly all other Greek MSS. early and late and the Latin Versions and the other Critical Editors, Westcott gives in his text *from us to you* instead of *from you to us*. The former reading speaks of Paul's love as an enrichment to the Corinthians: the latter is a courteous acknowledgment of their love to him, as an enrichment to themselves. Each reading gives a correct sense. Certain decision is impossible.

In **#2Co 11:3**, the addition *and the purity* is rejected by Tischendorf, but accepted with some doubts by Tregelles and Westcott, and without note by the Revisers. It is attested, sufficiently I think by the Sinai and Vat. MSS. and (but placed before *simplicity*) by the Clermont MS. The Syriac

Version, but no very early Greek MS., omits it. In **#2Co 11:4**, the Revisers omit without note one letter, on evidence hardly decisive. But the change is merely from *you would bear* to *you bear*.

In **#2Co 12:1**, there is much confusion in the best documents. The reading *I must needs glory* in the text of R.V. and Westcott, and without note in the earlier Critical Editions, is well attested. The marginal reading of Westcott and the Revisers, *Now to glory is not etc.*, is that of the Sinai and Clermont MSS. and the Coptic Version. It is suspicious as being easily derived from the other reading. The difference is only one letter. In **#2Co 12:7**, following the Sinai, Vat., Alex. MSS. and the Greek part of two almost identical Greek and Latin copies of the 9th century, and the Latin part of one of them, but against the Clermont MS. and nearly all later Greek MSS. and the Latin and Syriac Versions, the Revisers and all editors except Tischendorf insert without note the difficult word *wherefore*, in Greek only three letters, which disturbs seriously the even flow of the verse. But, for this reason, it might easily have been omitted in the later copies; and, as we actually find, in nearly all versions and in the existing translations of Irenaeus and Origen, being almost incapable of translation. It lays rough, and therefore conspicuous, emphasis on the cause of Paul's thorn in the flesh. The concluding repetition, *that I be not overmuch lifted up*, is omitted in the Sinai, Alex., and Clermont MSS. and in the Vulgate Version; but is in the Vatican MS. and later uncials and nearly all Greek cursives, and the Syriac and Coptic Versions. The documentary evidence seems to be slightly in favor of the words, and so the internal evidence. They are accented by all editors except Tregelles who puts them in his margin. Lachmann brackets them. This is one of the few doubtful passages not noticed by the Revisers. But it is of slight importance. In **#2Co 12:15**, following the Sinai and Alex. MSS. and the two Egyptian Versions, with Tischendorf and with Westcott's text, the Revisers omit without note one important letter given without note by Tregelles, and in Westcott's margin, and found in the Vatican and most later MSS. uncial and cursive, and in Latin and apparently Syriac Versions. How good a sense the rejected reading gives, but one very likely to be overlooked by a copyist, I have shown in my notes. Certainly it should have had a place at least in the Revisers' margin.

In **#2Co 13:4**, the Revisers and all Editors retain the reading *in Him*; but, except Tischendorf, who has no margin, all put *with Him* in the margin. This last reading is well attested; but might easily have been copied from the same word soon afterwards.

Besides the above are many other variations without any appreciable bearing on the sense of the Epistles, or indisputably spurious. To the student of Textual Criticism these last are of great interest, as casting light on the affinities and the value of our documents, and on the ways in which error has crept into them. Indeed, for these purposes passages not open to doubt are our chief guides. And of such variations the most trifling are important. But to discuss them, does not fall within the scope of the present work.

For English readers, a good account of various readings is given in Queen's Printers' Bible.

# I CORINTHIANS

## APPENDIX C

### THE REVISED VERSION

1. That the Revised Version rests upon a text much purer than that underlying our Authorized Version, and that the corrections of the text are of considerable importance, I have in *Introd. iii.* already endeavored to prove. A few words now about the Revisers' rendering of their text into English.

2. Among others less conspicuous I notice as indisputable improvements **#1Co 1:18**, *them that are perishing and us which are being saved*, **#1Co 1:21**, *seeing that in the wisdom of God*; the article omitted before *Jews and Greeks* in **#1Co 1:22, 23**; in **#1Co 2:4**, *persuasive* instead of *enticing*; *knoweth* for *knew* in **#1Co 2:8**, noting an abiding fact; *through the fire* in **#1Co 3:15** instead of *by fire*; **#1Co 4:5**, *each man have his praise from God, already* in **#1Co 4:8**, more correct and more graphic than *now*; **#1Co 4:9**, *men doomed to death* instead of the unintelligible rendering *approved to death, imitators, for followers, of Paul* in **#1Co 4:16; 11:1; 5:9**, *in my epistle*, preserving Paul's definite reference; **#1Co 6:12**, *not all things are expedient*; the article omitted twice in **#1Co 6:15** before *members*; the clearer renderings in **#1Co 7:5**, *because of your incontinency*, and in **#1Co 7:6**, *by way of permission, not of commandment*; the more graphic form *sitting at meat*, in **#1Co 8:10; 9:7**, *what soldier ever serveth*, preserving the reference to the men composing an army; **#1Co 9:17**, *I have a stewardship entrusted to me*, a rendering which rescues the verse from utter obscurity; so **#1Co 9:25**, *every man that striveth in the games*; **#1Co 9:27**, *I buffet my body, with bruise* in the margin; **#1Co 11:26**, *proclaim the Lord's death*, reproducing well the force of the original; **#1Co 11:29**, *judgment for condemnation*, **#1Co 12:3, 9, 13**, *in the Holy Spirit*, recalling **#Ro 8:15; #Mt 22:43**; in **#1Co 13:1-13** *love* instead of *charity*; *mirror* instead of *glass* in **#1Co 13:12; #2Co 3:18**; **#1Co 14:16**, *the Amen*, suggesting the familiar response; **#1Co 15:45**, *life-giving* for *quickening*; **#1Co 16:22**, *Maran atha*, apart, and as two words.

In the Second Epistle I note **#2Co 1:12**, *we behaved ourselves for we had our conversation*; **#2Co 1:17**, *fickleness* for *lightness*; **#2Co 2:14**, *leadeth us in triumph*, a most important change; **#2Co 3:6**, *a new covenant*, (cp. **#1Co 11:25**,) recalling **#Jer 31:31**, and God's covenants with Abraham and Moses; **#2Co 3:7, 13**, *was passing away*; **#2Co 3:18** *unveiled face*, and **#2Co 4:3** *gospel veiled*, bringing to light an obscured, but very beautiful and important, train of thought; **#2Co 4:4**, *the gospel of the glory of Christ*; **#2Co 4:16**, *our outward man is decaying*; **#2Co 5:14**, *one died for all, therefore all died*, a most important correction; **#2Co 8:1**, *make known to you* instead of *do you to wit*; and, in **#2Co 12:10**, a comma after *distresses*, suggesting, as I believe, the correct exposition.

3. Some of the marginal notes are of great value. In **#1Co 2:6**, *full-grown and age* explain *perfect and world*: in **#1Co 2:14, 15; 4:3**, *examined* explains *judged*; and in **#1Co 3:9** *tilled land* explains *husbandry*. The note in **#1Co 3:16f; 6:19; #2Co 6:16** distinguishes, though not in the best way, two different and important words: and in **#1Co 10:16** *participation* in the margin sheds light on the meaning of *communion* in the text. In **#2Co 3:14**, the margin gives what is, I think, the right exposition. This case illustrates the use of the margin where the meaning of the original is open to



doubt. So **#2Co 11:3**; and **#2Co 11:5; 12:11**. Very useful are the explanatory notes to **#2Co 5:10, 17, 19; 7:2; 8:2; 12:15**. The note in **#2Co 8:23** casts light on the root meaning of the word usually rendered *apostle*.

The word *daughter* added in italics in **#1Co 7:36ff** makes the meaning quite clear: and the omission of the word *unknown* in italics (A.V.) in **#1Co 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27**, removes a misrepresentation which obscured greatly the nature of the mysterious gift of *tongues*.

4. Naturally, every one finds in the Revised Version renderings retained which he would like to see removed. In **#1Co 1:2**, the rendering given in these notes is not even recorded in the margin. In **#1Co 2:14; 15:44, 46**, the Revisers do not indicate the connection between the word soul and that rendered (A.V. and R.V.) *natural*, thus leaving Paul's argument in utter obscurity. In **#1Co 4:8**, the incorrect rendering *ye have reigned* is retained, merely omitting *as kings*, instead of *ye have become kings*. In **#Re 19:6**, we have another incorrect rendering of the same tense of the same word, *reigneth*. The aorist notes the beginning of the reign. So Kuehner, *Greek Gram.* § 386. 5. In **#2Co 2:2; 7:8f**, *sorry* corresponds to *sorrow*. But the ideas conveyed now by these words are very different. Much better is the rendering *sorrowful*, retained, with strange inconsistency, for the same Greek word in **#2Co 6:10; #Mt 19:22; 26:22, 37; #Joh 16:20**. In **#2Co 4:6** a mere schoolboy following the order of the Greek words would have avoided the Revisers' vapid rendering and have reproduced the exact force of Paul's picturesque words, *out of darkness light shall shine*. In **#2Co 5:16**, the word *him*, retained but now in italics, obscures the meaning of the verse. See note.

5. In a few cases I am compelled to believe that there are changes for the worse. Of these, the worst cases are **#1Co 3:16; 6:19; #2Co 6:16**, where the new rendering *a temple* implies as I think a serious theological error. See notes. In **#1Co 9:19**, the rendering *brought myself under bondage to all* is very ugly, and obscures the idea of work for others' good suggested by (A.V.) *servant to all*. This rendering retained, with the other in the margin, would have been much better.

6. The Revisers' treatment of the Greek aorist is not satisfactory. Although again and again compelled to render it, as I think with perfect accuracy, by the English perfect, yet in many other cases they have used for it the English preterite even where by doing so they have forced upon the "indefinite" Greek tense a definite reference quite foreign to it. In **#1Co 1:4, 5** we have (R.V.) *was given, were enriched*, as though Paul referred necessarily to some definite time; but in **#1Co 1:11** properly *it hath been signified*, in **#1Co 1:20** *hath not God made foolish*, and in **#1Co 2:16** *who hath known the mind of the Lord*. In **#1Co 4:8**, where the Greek has one perfect and two aorists, the R.V. suggests two perfects and one Aorist. The good rendering *already are ye filled* should have been followed by *already ye have become rich, apart from us ye have become kings*. But in **#1Co 5:7** we have a good change, *hath been sacrificed* for (A.V.) *is sacrificed*. In **#1Co 7:28**, the form *hast not sinned etc.*, which reproduces correctly the full sense of the aorist, is necessarily retained. So. **#1Co 12:18, 28**. In **#2Co 3:14** a definiteness not belonging to the aorist is imposed upon it by the rendering *were hardened*. Against this, the Revisers should have been guarded by their own rendering of **#2Co 4:2, 4**, *have renounced, hath blinded*. In **#2Co 5:13** the force of the aorist, *if we have become beside ourselves*, is missed both in text and margin. The full latitude of the tense is fortunately preserved in **#2Co 9:2**, *your zeal hath stirred up very many*.

7. A blemish of the Revised Version is the frequent but not uniform retention of the rendering of for two different Greek prepositions in addition to its proper use for the Greek genitive. Instead of *from him* we still read in **#1Co 8:6** *of whom are all things*; **#1Co 11:8, 12**, *the man is not of the woman*, **#1Co 15:47**, *the first man is of the earth*; **#2Co 5:18**, *all things are of God*. But with great gain the Revisers have changed *of* into *from* in **#1Co 7:7**, *his own gift from God*; **#2Co 2:16**, *savor from death . . . savor from life*; **#2Co 3:5**, *anything as from ourselves, our sufficiency is from God*; **#2Co 4:7**, *not from ourselves*; **#2Co 5:1**, *a building from God*; **#2Co 12:6**, *heareth from me*. Instead of *by*, which all Englishmen understand as denoting (so often in A.V. and R.V.) an agent, we still find in **#1Co 2:15** *judged of no man*; **#1Co 4:3**, *that I should be judged of you*; **#1Co 8:3**, *known of him*; **#1Co 11:32**, *chastened of the Lord*; **#2Co 1:4**, *comforted of God*; **#2Co 1:16**, *and of you to be set forward*; **#2Co 3:2**, *known and read of all men*; **#2Co 5:4**, *may be swallowed up of life*; **#2Co 12:11**, *commended of you*. Fortunately, but inconsistently, it is changed into *by* in **#1Co 2:12**, *given to us by God*; **#1Co 10:9f**, *perished by the serpents*; **#1Co 10:29**, *judged by another conscience*; **#1Co 14:24**, *reproved, judged, by all*; **#2Co 2:6**, *inflicted by the many*. In **#1Co 15:47**, perversely enough the A.V. *from heaven* is changed to *the second man is of heaven*.

Very bad is the retained rendering *unto* for εἰς when noting a purpose, and for the Greek dative of advantage: instead of the intelligible and accurate rendering *for* which is also often found both in A.V. and R.V. and might be used uniformly. We have still *unto our glory*, **#1Co 2:7**; *unto judgment*, **#1Co 11:34**; *unto God*, **#2Co 5:13**, and in **#2Co 5:15** *unto themselves, unto him who died*. In **#1Co 8:6**, neglecting the excellent marginal rendering of the A.V. *for him*, the R.V. gives the obscure jargon of *whom are all things, and we unto him*. In **#2Co 5:13**, the plain words *it is for your cause* are changed into the unmeaning form *it is unto you*. But in **#1Co 6:12** *all things are lawful unto me* is properly changed to *lawful for me*. And again and again both A.V. and R.V. use the rendering *for* in precisely the same connection: e.g. **#1Co 6:13**, *the body is not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body*.

8. The Revised Version I have further discussed in *The Expositor* 2nd series vol. ii. pp. 92, 205, and vol. iii. p. 380. When all strictures have been made it still remains by far the best production of Holy Scripture in English which has yet been published. And the use of a second version different from that in common use is of great value as a means of distinguishing between the familiar form of words and their underlying sense.

9. With the Revised and Authorized Versions it is interesting to compare the Roman Catholic Version\* (\*Reprinted, with the Latin Vulgate in parallel columns, in very cheap but beautiful form by Messrs. Bagster and Sons.) published at Rheims in A.D. 1582, twenty-nine years before the Authorized Version. It must be admitted that, although translated from the Latin Vulgate, it rests upon a purer Greek text than does our Authorized Version. Of the sixty corrections of the Greek text noted above on pp. 7, 8 {Preface, Introduction} as accepted by the Revisers and all recent Editors, forty-one were already incorporated in the Rheims Version. To these others of some importance might be added. Whereas the readings inferior (e.g. **#1Co 15:51**: see p. 534) to the A.V. are few or unimportant. But the rendering into English follows the Latin so closely that it is frequently obscure and to our ears unpleasant, with very little of the classic diction of the Authorized Version. Not unfrequently, technical terms are left untranslated: e.g. **#1Co 5:7, 8**. *Purge the old leaven, that you may be a new paste, as you are azymes. For our Pasche, Christ is immolated. Therefore let us feast,*

*not in the old leaven, nor in the leaven of malice and wickedness, but in the azymes of sincerity and verity.* But this is an unfair specimen of the translation as a whole. Here and there (e.g. **#1Co 12:9** *in* for *by* twice: so **#1Co 12:3**) our Revisers have with gain returned to its literal renderings. On the whole the Rheims Version, like our A.V. and Luther's German Version, is faithful; and with very few and doubtful exceptions, (e.g. perhaps **#1Co 11:24**, *this is my body which shall be delivered for you*,) as few as in the above Protestant versions, it bears no trace of ecclesiastical bias. Yet, while cheerfully admitting this, we cannot forget that to Protestantism directly or indirectly all the nations of the world owe the Bible freely circulated in their mother tongues. It is to their honor that from Protestants chiefly have come efforts to restore the Sacred Text to its original purity, and to elucidate its meaning; that in our day the three great Protestant nations are endeavoring to give to their peoples the most exact reproduction possible of that Text in their own languages; and that, eager to be corrected wherever error has crept into even our most cherished convictions, we joyfully submit all matters of difference to the arbitrament of the Book of God, and ever turn to its pages for that clearer light and fuller knowledge which day by day through His Written Word God gives and will give.