

# *The Book of 1 Corinthians*

## Table of Contents:

### 1 Corinthians 1

Paul's Opening to the Church (1:1-9)

Mending the Nets - The Call for Unity in the Church (1:10-18)

The Wisdom of the World, versus the Wisdom of God (1:18-31)

### 1 Corinthians 2

Nothing but the Cross – Part 1 (2:1-2)

Nothing but the Cross – Part 2 (2:1-2)

Eye has not Seen – Nor Ear has Heard (Easter 2011) – (2:1-16)

### 1 Corinthians 3

The Carnal Christian versus the Spiritual Christian - Part 1 - (3:1-15)

The Carnal Christian versus the Spiritual Christian - Part 2 - (3:16-23)

### 1 Corinthians 4

The Minister of God (4:1-21)

### 1 Corinthians 5

The Worse Day of Ministry for the Minister of God (5:1-13)

### 1 Corinthians 6

Not of this World (6:1-20)

Part 1 (6:1-8)

Part 2 (6:9-20)

### 1 Corinthians 7

Marriage is the Same: Yesterday, Today, and Forever

Part 1 (7:1-9) - Intimacy

Part 2 (Now that you Date)

Part 3 (7:10-40) – Live as You are Called

### 1 Corinthians 8

Like Him (8:1-13)

### 1 Corinthians 9

Paul – A Man after God's Own Heart (9:1-27)

### 1 Corinthians 10

And They Forgot (10:1-13)

The Cup of Blessing (10:14-33)

### 1 Corinthians 11

Men, LEAD! (11:1-16)

It is Holy Communion (11:17-34)

### 1 Corinthians 12

Seeking and Serving (12:1-31)

### 1 Corinthians 13

The More Excellent Way (13:1-13)

### 1 Corinthians 14

Decently and in Order (14:1-40)

### 1 Corinthians 15

The Stones Been Rolled Away (15:1-10)

The Celebration of the Resurrection (15:1-58)

### 1 Corinthians 16

Open thy Mouth and I will Fill It (16:1-9)

Stand Fast (16:10-24)

# 1 Corinthians 1

## *Paul's Opening to the Church*

### *(1:1-9)*

#### **FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH AT CORINTH**

Paul first came to Corinth on his second missionary journey. He had been preaching and working in Macedonian/Greek cities for some time. From Philippi (where he first ministered in Europe), he had gone to Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and then Corinth (Acts 16:11—18:1). Upon arriving in Corinth he met Aquila and Priscilla, Jews who had been driven out of Rome, and who were, like himself, tentmakers. He stayed with them for a while and began to preach regularly in the synagogue every Sabbath. Silas and Timothy joined him from Macedonia, and, as Paul's preaching intensified, so did resistance to his message. Soon, however, many Corinthians, including Jews, began to believe in Christ. Even Crispus, leader of the synagogue, along with his household, trusted in the Lord (Acts 18:8). Paul continued to minister in Corinth for one and a half years (Acts 18:11). Jewish opposition became so strong that he was brought before a Roman tribunal. Since the charges were purely religious, however, the proconsul, Gallio, refused to hear the case. After staying a while longer, Paul left Corinth with Priscilla and Aquila and went to Ephesus. Leaving his friends there, he returned to Palestine (Acts 18:12–22). The second leader of the Corinthian church was Apollos. An eloquent Jewish convert from Alexandria, Apollos had come to Ephesus and begun preaching while Aquila and Priscilla were there. Although "he was mighty in the Scriptures," he had some doctrinal deficiencies, which Aquila and Priscilla were instrumental in correcting. When he wanted to preach in Achaia, the Ephesian church not only encouraged him but gave him a letter of commendation, and he began ministering in Corinth as its next pastor (Acts 18:24—19:1). Some time between Paul's leaving Corinth and his writing what we call First Corinthians, Paul had written the church another letter (1 Cor. 5:9), commonly referred to as the lost epistle. It too was corrective in nature.

#### **Written about 54AD from Ephesus**

He was there about 50-52 AD, and now writes this letter a few years later, about 54 AD, from Ephesus (Acts 18)

#### **Sainthood (1:1-9)**

**(1 Cor 1:1 NKJV) Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,**

#### **"to be" – Not There / Not looking to Achieve – but Definition of who he Was**

The words "to be" appear in italics. As is usually the case, when the translators added them to clarify the sentence, they actually clouded it. This verse should actually read: "Paul, called an apostle of Jesus Christ." Apostleship was not an office he was trying to achieve, but rather a definition of who he was—one who was sent out by Jesus Christ.

#### **People Often Ask – what is God's Will**

People often ask what is the will of God for my life, and I usually give a 30 minute dissertation on it, but for today I will make it real short"

You ask: "What is the will of God?"

Well, here's the answer true;

"The nearest thing, that should be done,

That He can do—through you!"

#### **DC Trip**

The other day I was working in Washington DC and I was taking the train in and out of the city. As I was coming back to catch the train home in the evening there was a street beggar outside the entrance. There were two ways to go, one way would take you right next to here, and the other would take you around away

from her. As I walked in the flow of hundreds of people I noticed everyone was going the “other way”. As I walked I found myself going with the flow. As I got closer to the door I felt the Lord prompting me. I tried to shrug it off, but I knew what the will of the Lord was for that moment. Try as I may, to not go back would be to not be in His will for that moment. So I went back, imparted a blessing financially, spoke to her as a person, tried to share Christ which she said no to, and then prayed with her and went on my way.

### **Live in the Will of God – Moment by Moment**

Christian I’ll tell you a good life for us to be living, and that is to be looking to be living in His will moment-by-moment, and not worrying about what am I called to do in the grand scheme of my Christian life, but what are you prompting me to do right now, the nearest thing that needs to be done. Paul preached, and then somewhere along the way it became clear to him and the others, that he was called to be an Apostle. What he was doing simply confirmed what he was.

### **Sosthenes was beside Paul / House of Justus next Door / Crispus leader of Synagogue / Led Charge**

Verse 1 - and Sosthenes our brother - As Paul wrote this Epistle, a man named Sosthenes was beside him. Perhaps that name rings a bell. When Paul was in Corinth the first time, he preached the gospel in the synagogues. But when he proclaimed that Jesus is Messiah, the Jews protested so vehemently that Paul shook off his raiment and said, “Your blood be upon your own heads. I’m going to the Gentiles” (see Acts 18:6). When he went to the Gentiles, where did Paul go? Right next door to the house of Justus, also called Gaius. When he started teaching there, many were converted—including Crispus, the leader of the synagogue. As a result, the Jews were “provoked to jealousy” (see Romans 1). When Gallio, a new deputy, was assigned to the region, the Jews wasted no time presenting their accusations against Paul. Led by a man named Sosthenes, they stormed into Gallio’s office, saying, “A man next door to our synagogue is teaching things contrary to the law.” Yet even before Paul could open his mouth in his own defense, Gallio said, “I don’t have time to settle religious disputes.” And he drove them out. Angry with the one who pled their case, the Jews beat Sosthenes. Evidently, it was at this point that something happened within him—for shortly thereafter, Sosthenes was converted.

*Acts 18:6–8 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” <sup>7</sup> And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. <sup>8</sup> Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

### **Those that bark the Loudest**

I remind you of this story for a reason. That is, although it was Sosthenes who led the protest against Paul, in our text we see Sosthenes laboring with Paul. The same is still true. People who are most violently opposed to you and your faith are often the very ones who are most convicted by the Spirit, the very ones who are closest to conversion. Just let them take a few more hits from their friends in the world, and, like Sosthenes, they’ll come around. When I share the gospel, the response I least want to hear is, “I’m glad that works for you.” On the other hand, when someone responds vehemently or angrily, I know I’ve got a candidate because he or she is provoked. As the saying goes, throw a rock into a pack of dogs, and the one that barks the loudest is the one that was hit.

*Acts 18:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.

### **Love to see Sosthnes – Not Domesticated / Same Zeal as Sinner – applied as Saint**

I like where I find Sosthenes, he is with Paul serving full on. Fully associated with and sold out for Jesus Christ. The same zeal he had as a sinner, he now has as a saint. He led the church at the synagogue against the word, and now we find him lock step with Paul for the word. I think it is such a shame when Christians get “domesticated”, in that they go from partying hard, vocal and outspoken, leading the charge for the call of the sinners, and then get saved and become all meek and mild, quiet and subdued. I love it when I see men and woman who had the zeal for the world, get saved, and then tie and apply that same zeal for the kingdom.

**(1 Cor 1:2 NKJV) To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:**

## **Church of God – not Church of Corinth**

Verse 2 - To the church of God which is at Corinth,- Paul doesn't say, "Unto the church of Corinth." He says, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth." There is not a church of Corinth. There is not a Church of England. There is only one church: the church of God.

## **Healthy Fear**

Gods Church - should strike a healthy fear into each of us as we look at the church we attend, they attend, and realize it isn't the Pastor's church, or the leaderships church, but it is God's church - thus making it His property, and all who are in it. And those who are in leadership, of how we handle each person of God's church.

## **Corinth – Most interesting Place / 4 miles Sea to Sea / Very Prosperous**

This church of God located at Corinth was in an interesting place. Corinth was a city in south central Greece that was prosperous economically due to its location geographically. You see, Corinth was only four miles from the Aegean Sea, so to avoid sailing around the southern tip of Greece where waters were rough and treacherous, sailors would sail through the channel to Corinth, unload their ships, put them on rollers, and roll them four miles to the Aegean. As a result, Corinth became a very prosperous port

## **And Wicked / 1000 Prostitutes / Temple of Aphrodite**

Corinth became a very prosperous port. And it was as wicked as it was prosperous. Every night, one thousand temple prostitutes left the temple of Aphrodite, the love goddess, and went through the city recruiting business in the name of worship. As a result, the coffers of the temple were filled.

## **Corinth became Synonymous with Sin**

Even to the pagan world the city was known for its moral corruption, so much so that in classical Greek corinthiazesthai ("to behave like a Corinthian") came to represent gross immorality and drunken debauchery. The name of the city became synonymous with moral depravity. In this letter to the church there, Paul lists some of the city's characteristic sins—fornication (porneia, from which comes our term pornography), idolatry, adultery, effeminacy, homosexuality, stealing, covetousness, drunkenness, reviling (abusive speech), and swindling (6:9–10).

## **Also Successful Entertainment / Isthmian games / Philosophical Center**

Corinth was also successful as an entertainment center. The two great athletic festivals of that day were the Olympian and the Isthmian games, and Corinth was host city for the latter—named after and played on the Isthmus of Corinth. In addition, Corinth was a philosophical center. Along with Athens, Corinth was a favorite of philosophers.

## **The De-Evolution of Man**

This made for an interesting mix in Corinth—a city engaged in lofty discourse by day and depravity and debauchery by night. Thus, it is no surprise that it was from Corinth that Paul penned his Epistle to the Romans, wherein he traced the devolution of man (Romans 1).

*Romans 1:18–32 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, <sup>19</sup> because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, <sup>21</sup> because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. <sup>24</sup> Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup> who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. <sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. <sup>27</sup> Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. <sup>28</sup> And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; <sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, <sup>30</sup> backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; <sup>32</sup> who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

## Sound Familiar

Well we have a very applicable and practical epistle to read before us, for all this should sound very familiar to those living in the United States. The rampant immorality, the entertainment abundance, and all the higher learning we got. Corinth could be likened very much to Las Vegas, but it reminds me of Pasadena equally as well.

## Sanctified / Marriage – Temple Instruments

Verse 2 - to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, - The word “sanctified” literally means “set apart.” The Greek word has its roots in the idea of marriage, wherein one is set apart to someone and for someone. The Hebrew concept of sanctification is seen in the instruments used in the tabernacle and temple that were used exclusively for the offering of sacrifices. Thus, from the very get-go, Paul comes in with a powerful word to the Corinthians as he says to them, “I know the reputation Corinthians have, but you Christians are different. You’re set apart for God’s service exclusively.

## Saints / We don’t work to be Saints – It is Done!

Verse 2 - called to be saints -The words “to be” are in italics. Therefore, for a more correct rendering of this phrase, delete the words “to be.” We don’t work to be saints. It’s not an honor given to a holy few. No, every one of us is who is born again is a saint. There is nothing to be added, because when Jesus said it is finished, He meant it! And nothing we could ever do could add to the finished works of Christ at the Cross. *John 19:30 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

## 1 Cor 2:2 / Extent we know – Extent we will Live

Hence why Paul will make the statement, I desired to know nothing else amongst you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Called saints - to the extent that we understand our identification, is to the extent that we will live it. If we don’t know who we are, we will continue to live in defeated, depressed, hopeless states. For all the Hope, is at the cross.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

## Truth applies Everywhere

Verse 2 – with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours - These truths apply not only to those in Corinth but also to everyone who calls on the name of the Lord.

## (1 Cor 1:3 NKJV) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Grace and Peace

“Charis,” or “Grace,” was the typical Greek greeting. “Shalom,” or “Peace,” was its Hebrew counterpart. Here and in his other epistles, Paul marries these two ideas—always putting grace first because a person cannot have true and lasting peace unless he first understands God’s matchless grace.

## G-R-A-C-E / The Eternal Question

I love the definition we give for this word grace, God’s – Riches – at – Christ –Expense, as we come back to “it is Finished!”. The cross, the proof and demonstrated of God’s love, Himself for our sins! If you are here today and you cannot answer this question, then it is most likely that you are not saved; “If you were to die tonight, would you be sure that you were going to heaven?”. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that is that you are perishing because your sin separates you from the Holy God; but God in His infinite love for you took your punishment, traded places with you, took your wrath for breaking His Holy law (the 10 Commandments), and has provided you a way to have your sins washed away, and that you might be seen before Him as sinless and perfect! Oh the story of grace!

*John 3:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

## Video

I love the definition of grace we give it, but here are as much so my favorite definitions of grace, and that is of the personal testimonies of those who have accepted His grace.

**(1 Cor 1:4 NKJV) I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,  
(1 Cor 1:5 NKJV) that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,  
(1 Cor 1:6 NKJV) even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,**

#### **Paul gives thanks for His brothers and sisters**

Paul gives thanks for his brothers and sisters, and we would do well to do the same, because it appears to me that more and more, people are not desiring to be submit their lives to Christ, and the Church of God that is located in the USA is dwindling.

#### **Those desiring to be Counselors**

Those of you who desire to be counselors please take careful note of Paul's counseling approach here. Do you notice how he doesn't just jump into all that they are doing wrong, but how he is gentle and loving, establishing his love and concern for them, while at the same time reinforcing to them the good things of their walk, and the insurance of their position with Christ. When we are counseling, we don't want people to walk away feeling as failures, but encourage to make the change, adjust the course, going higher, pushing deeper.

**(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

#### **CHURCH PROBLEMS**

The Corinthian church had many serious problems, one of which was factionalism. After Apollos had ministered in Corinth for a time, some of the believers developed a special loyalty to him. Friction began to develop between them and those whose loyalty was to Paul. Others were loyal to Peter (Cephas, his Aramaic name) and still another group identified itself as belonging only to Christ. The apostle strongly rebuked all of them for quarreling and having such unspiritual divisions (1:10–13; 3:1–9).

#### **Not Detaching from the World**

Their most serious problem, however, was in not detaching themselves from the worldly ways of the society around them. They could not understand, and perhaps did not want to understand, the principle of “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world” (1 John 2:15). They could not get “decorinthesized.” In his previous lost letter, Paul specifically had warned them “not to associate with immoral people” (1 Cor. 5:9). Some of the Christians thought he meant for them not to associate with unbelievers who were immoral. But the sexually corrupt, the covetous, swindling, and idolatrous people to whom Paul referred were fellow church members who refused to give up, or had fallen back into, the debauched life–style of Corinth (5:9–11). The faithful believers were not to associate with such as those. Such wicked brethren were, in fact, to be put out of the fellowship in order to purify the church (5:13).

#### **Wanted one foot in World – one in Heaven**

Like many Christians today, the Corinthian believers had great difficulty in not mimicking the unbelieving and corrupt society around them. They usually managed to stay a little higher than the world morally, but they were moving downward, in the same direction as the world. They wanted to be in God's kingdom while keeping one foot in the kingdom of this world. They wanted to have the blessings of the new life but hang on to the pleasures of the old. They wanted to have what they thought was the best of both worlds, but Paul plainly warned them that that was impossible (6:9–10).

#### **Got Principals Confused**

The Corinthians had gotten the principles confused. They continued to associate with openly and arrogantly sinful church members, with whom they should have broken fellowship. And, on the other hand, they mimicked, but refused to associate with, their unbelieving neighbors, to whom they should have been witnessing.

## **Reason Paul Writes**

So Paul is writing them this letter. It has been called a letter of correction, and that is so; but let it not be confused in what it ultimately is, instruction is righteousness, the path to spiritual maturity. So here is a high level overview of where we are going in this book.

## **BRIEF OUTLINE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS**

(Correction in Error – Instructions in Righteousness)

- Sainthood (1:1–9)
- Unity (1:10—3:23)
- Servanthood (4:1–21)
- Morality (5:1—6:20)
- Marriage (7:1–40)
- Liberty (8:1—11:1)
- Men and women in the church (11:2–16)
- The Lord’s Supper (11:17–34)
- Spiritual Gifts (12–14)
- The Resurrection (15)
- Stewardship (16:1–4)
- Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)

## **Theme – lacking Nothing**

Verse 7 - so that you come short in no gift - is the whole theme and reason of this letter and that is that they will not be lacking in anything spiritual. May that be our hearts as we get busy studying this book over the next months to come.

## **Many don’t want to talk Prophecy – End Times**

Verse 7 - eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ - Paul speaks of the coming of Christ. Many churches today don't want to teach or even mention the coming of Christ or the last days things because they feel uncomfortable about those things because they fear that people think they are off their rocker. Well here is Paul talking about it right at the beginning of his letter, and by saying it he makes the statement of why we want to be mature and doing well, and that is because Jesus is coming back soon.

## **Church in Thessalonica / Hope – Pure – Wicked / Produces Spiritual Power**

In the Book of Acts we see that Paul had only been in Thessalonica for 3 weeks, yet he was speaking and teaching about the rapture to these new believers, these babes in Christ. The result is that those who have this hope will keep themselves pure, and will be busy about the Father's business. And, those who aren't according to Jesus will grow relaxed and wicked. Lose living in the expectancy of Christ's soon return, and lose a great spiritual power that God has given to and for us.

*1 Thessalonians 4:16 (NKJV)*<sup>16</sup> *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*

*Matthew 24:48–49 (NKJV)*<sup>48</sup> *But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,'<sup>49</sup> and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,*

*1 John 3:3 (NKJV)*<sup>3</sup> *And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians – speaks of Antichrist**

Hey in 2nd Thessalonians Paul speaks to them about the Antichrist and the Day of the Lord, the apostasy of the last days, the great deception that would befall the world in the last days. The early church was taught to live in the constant expectancy of the soon return of Christ as we should too, because we are the closer to His return then they ever were.

**(1 Cor 1:8 NKJV) who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Confirm – Legal term – To Guarantee / Guarantee to see you to the End**

V8 - the word confirm is a legal term, where it meant “to guarantee”. So Jesus is guaranteeing you that you will make it to the end, so you need not fear that somehow you are going mess that up. He even says a guarantee that you will be seen as blameless.

### **Guaranteed to be Blameless / Stop Living in Defeat / Believe and you will Live It**

Verse 8 – Blameless – We are blameless, confirmed! That means past, present, and future. Hey if you are here today and you still are letting your past failings stop you from moving on, going higher, digging deeper – STOP IT. You have been confirmed, you are accounted as blameless before Him. If it is the devil, your flesh, or the world reminding you of your past, then walk past them, hear what God thinks of you, and it will change your life.

### **Adopted - Ephesians**

You are blameless, you are the Kings kid! Adopted as sons and daughter by Jesus Christ to Himself, and it is He considers it pleasurable to call you sons and daughters.

*(Ephesians 1:5 NKJV) having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,*

### **Roman Law / Lost Old Family / Old Debts Cancelled / Could Not Disown**

In Roman law, "When the adoption was complete it was complete indeed. The person who had been adopted had all the rights of a legitimate son in his new family and completely lost all rights in his old family. In the eyes of the law he was a new person. So new was he that even all debts and obligations connected with his previous family were abolished as if they had never existed." And, you could not disown an adopted child, only a child naturally born.

### **Son of Prostitute / Go Claim Your Inheritance / 2 Time Governor**

In old times a master would adopt a slave and make them joint heirs in ownership. A true story from way back. A man grew up as the son of the town prostitute. The town joke was him; they would say, "who does he look like? They would not allow him in the stores or on the walkway. He started to go to church, and he met the Pastor. The Pastor said, "you know who you look like? And the man thought to himself, the last person I expected it from was the Pastor. Pastor said, "you look like the son of God, go claim your inheritance." He was two times elected governor of his state.

*Believe it, and you will live like it!*

**(1 Cor 1:9 NKJV) God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

### **Human History Unfolding / God taking a Bride for His Son**

Human history is unfolding, and it is doing so that God may draw out a bride for His Son. That is what it is all about, called unto fellowship. Why am I here? Called unto to fellowship. How do I handle the situation I am facing? Called unto fellowship – call out to Him, be one with Him, and life will be centered and balanced. What a beautiful prayer to pray each day, and through the day, “Lord, let me be One with You”.

### **Koina – Oneness / Miss the Fellowship – Miss Blessing the Others**

The word is koinia, oneness. To be in fellowship and oneness with Him, then means to be in fellowship and oneness with each other. Oh can I add to that for a moment, and that is when you feel that maybe you don't have it in you to make it out to the fellowship, would you consider how if you are not here, then you cannot bless that person who needs to be blessed.

### **God wants Fellowship – That is Freedom / Just hang out – No Pressure**

God's main goal is fellowship with you! Freedom folks! God saying I just want to hang out with you ray, no pressures, no worries, just fellowship. I will tell you my most favorite days of my life, and those are the days where my son just wants to hang out together. We play lacrosse together, and well really he is not very good at age 4' he can rarely get the ball to me, but I love to watch his face smile as we catch. Sunday



night I was wiped out, but when my 17 year old came in right when I was going up to bed, and said want to pick the NCAA tourney, and of course I said sure, because days of fellowship gt shorter and shorter the older they get. I didn't have any expectations, just cherishing the moment, and so too it is with your heavenly Father.

**9 times in 9 Verses – Jesus Christ / the Hope in Jesus Christ**

Verse 9 – Jesus Christ our Lord - Nine times in nine verses the phrase “Jesus Christ” is used. Paul is penning this epistle right from the start of who the power is, and where the hope can be found – in Jesus Christ. The point he is setting up is that it is all about Jesus Christ.

**Know – 35 / Christ - 69**

In this epistle the word “Know” is used 35 times, and “Christ” is mentioned 69 times. Are you ready to do some great works in this life? Then let’s know Him more, and let us let this book change our lives.

*Daniel 11:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> ..... but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.

# *Mending the Nets - The Call for Unity in the Church* (1:10-18)

## **Church in Corinth having Problems / They think they are Mature / Foot in World - Church**

The Church of God in Corinth is having some problems, their problems are causing them to be fractured and divided, sinning and selfish, and although they speak in tongues and think of themselves as spiritual, we see from Paul's writing they are spiritually immature and personally deceived. They live in one of the most carnal places in the whole world at this time, and they haven't figured out how to separate themselves from the world, and unto Christ. They have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. Paul is writing them so that they lack no spiritual gift, so they reach spiritual maturity.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

## **Letter of Correction – Instructions in Righteousness / Spiritual Maturity**

So Paul is writing them this letter. It has been called a letter of correction, and that is so; but let it not be confused in what it ultimately is, instruction is righteousness, the path to spiritual maturity. So here is a high level overview of where we are going in this book.

## **BRIEF OUTLINE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS**

(Correction in Error – Instructions in Righteousness)

- Sainthood (1:1–9)
- Unity (1:10—3:23)
- Servanthood (4:1–21)
- Morality (5:1—6:20)
- Marriage (7:1–40)
- Liberty (8:1—11:1)
- Men and women in the church (11:2–16)
- The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
- Spiritual Gifts (12–14)
- The Resurrection (15)
- Stewardship (16:1–4)
- Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)

## **9 times in 9 Verses – Jesus Christ / the Hope in Jesus Christ**

*Verse 9 – Jesus Christ our Lord* - Nine times in the first nine verses the phrase “Jesus Christ” is used. Paul is penning this epistle right from the start of who the power is, and where the hope can be found – in Jesus Christ. The point he is setting up is that it is all about Jesus Christ. And as we develop this book, we will see that the fountain of that power in a believers life, the answer to every question the world and the believer has can be found and understood in one place, Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

## **Know – 35 / Christ - 69**

In this epistle the word “Know” is used 35 times, and “Christ” is mentioned 69 times. The two tie together. Are you ready to do some great works in this life? Then let's know Him more, and let us let this book change our lives, and we will live exactly what the Prophet declared we would in Daniel 11.

*Daniel 11:32 (NKJV) <sup>32</sup> ..... but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.*

## **Unity (1:10—3:23)**

**(1 Cor 1:10 NKJV) Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.**

### **10 Times Now / Hear a lot about Lordship – see Little / Savior – Lord / Sal Free – Disp Cost**

Notice that the Lord Jesus Christ is again mentioned in this verse. Ten times in ten verses. This epistle emphasizes the lordship of Christ. We hear a great deal about His lordship, but we see very little of it today. For this reason the church and individual Christians have serious problems. It is not enough to talk about the lordship of Christ. Is He your Lord? Have you made Him your Lord and your Master? Being saved (Jesus is my Savior) is great, you have eternal power over death; but is the man or woman who not only says, but lives it, that Jesus Christ is Lord, that will have power over sin in their life. Salvation is free and automatic, Romans 10:9, but Lordship is not automatic, it is a daily thing!. Lordship is discipleship! Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life

*Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* <sup>10</sup> *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

*Matthew 16:24–25 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.* <sup>25</sup> *For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*

### **Perfectly Joined – to Mend nets / Holes in net – will not Catch Anything**

Verse 10 - but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment - Perfectly joined together was used in their day to mean the mending of the fishing nets together. Look, holes in the net, and the fish slip right through it. Whether is unity in the church, unity in a ministry, or unity your home, if the net has holes in it, nothing will be caught. We will labor long and labor hard, but continually find our harvest small and lacking.

### **Same Mind – What would you Start With? / Drunk – Sex - Sueing**

Verse 10 - and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. So Paul is writing this letter to address issues in the church. If you were being asked to write the letter, what would you have started with? The people getting drunk when they came together for the love feast, how about the man that was sleeping with his father’s wife, or how they were suing each other in court? Where would you have begun? Paul begins with the division that is within the church

### **Paul begins There – Because Satan wants Division / Too fractured to Minister**

Paul begins with division because he knows that is where Satan wants to drive the church, into divisions and fractions, because if he can do that, then it will be too fractured to ministered to the person who is getting drunk at the communion table (or struggling from alcohol or drug addiction), the church will be too fractured to approach the man and woman in sexual sin, the church will be too weak that anyone would trust laying their issues bare before the leadership and say what are we supposed to do.

### **Cults do Well because of their Unity / People leaving in Doves over Division**

One of the reasons so many cults do so well is because the unity they have. People can see them being unified, being of the same mind and direction, they are drawn to it; yet sadly people are leaving God’s church in droves because the people can’t get along, the people are divided, the people are against one another.

### **Next time you consider not Forgiving – Go back to the Cross / Beaten, Spit, Scourged, Pierced**

Next time you consider that brother or sister to not be worthy of your forgiveness, or you time, or your dealing with, go back to the cross, look at the body that was beaten and buffeted, and then bent over a post and scourged with a whip that was embedded with shards of broken bones and pottery, look at the face with the bearded that was pulled out by human hands, look at Him, then turn your ears to hear those words spoken, “Father forgive them, then know not what they do”, and then evaluate that relationship again, and see if you come to the same determination of what you think of that person.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

### **Paul starts with Division – knows Satan’s Tactics – DIVISION / Marriage too / 6000 Years Exp**

Paul starts point one with divisions in the church, for Paul knows and we need to know ourselves, Satan loves to divide, for once he has people separated, he has them all to himself. He wants to do that in your marriage by the way, he wants to do that within your family by the way, Satan is a master at division, he

has had 6,000 years of experience and he sharpens his skills daily, be wise Christian, recognize the wiles of the devil.

### **Warrior of Old**

“Can ye not agree,” said a warrior of old to the people, “when your enemy is in sight!” Oh it only takes a casual look for us to see the enemy is in sight; only a glance at our Country, curriculum in the schools and colleges, the 24/7 flow from the web and cable, watching marriages collapse, children depart, leaders fall, churches fold, to see that the enemy is in sight, and he is dividing and conquering.

### **My Club killed Him**

THERE is a story of a little teeny pygmy who was standing over a rhinoceros that was killed. This was an odd sight to behold, a big, violent rhinoceros under the feet of a little teeny pygmy. A guy saw this dead rhinoceros and this little pygmy over it and said, “Did you kill that?” The little pygmy said, “Yeah I killed it.” Curious, the man asked, “So how did you, a little tiny pygmy, kill this raging rhinoceros?” He answered, “With my club. Yep! I killed this rhinoceros with my club.” The man was still thoroughly confused, “Well, how big is your club?” The pygmy said, “There are about a hundred of us in my club.” In other words, he was surrounded by folk who had the same belief systems and worked together so that they could handle being attacked by a rhinoceros

**(1 Cor 1:11 NKJV) For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you.**

**(1 Cor 1:12 NKJV) Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."**

### **Church divides over the most Foolish Things**

The church divides over the most foolish things.

### **Story – Man on the Bridge**

One day, a man was walking across a bridge and saw another man standing on the edge, about to jump off. He immediately ran to him and said, "Stop! Don't do it!" "Well, why shouldn't I?" he replied. The other said, "Well, there's so much to live for!" "Like what?" "Well ... are you religious or atheist?" "Religious." "Me too! And are you Christian or Jewish?" "Christian." "Me too! Are you Catholic or Protestant?" "Protestant." "Me too! Are you Episcopalian or Baptist?" "Baptist." "Wow! Me too! Are you Baptist Church of God or Baptist Church of the Lord?" "Baptist Church of God." "Me too! Are you Original Baptist Church of God, or are you Reformed Baptist Church of God?" "Reformed Baptist Church of God." "Me too! Are you Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1879, or Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1915?" "Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1915!" To which he said, "Die, you heretic!" and pushed him off the bridge.

### **Church divides over the most Foolish Things**

The church divides over the most foolish things.

### **Contention - Heated**

The word “contentions” here means “heated”. So there are some heated things between the people there. They are not just agreeing to disagree, but they are having heated divisions over the matter.

### **Is Chloe Gossiping? / It is an Open Debate – Camps have Formed**

*Verse 11 - by those of Chloe's household* - Do I believe that Chloe's household is gossiping, no because what we are seeing is that the people are openly and publically debating and stating their division, and it is apparent to the whole church there are divisions and camps that have formed together and against one another. Chloe's just stating the facts that people are gathering into camps very publically and openly.

### **Definition of Gossip**

When is it gossip? The oxford dictionary I think makes it real clear

- 1.) casual conversation or unsubstantiated reports about other people.
- 2.) chiefly derogatory a person who likes talking about other people's private lives.

\*Soanes, C., & Stevenson, A. (2004). *Concise Oxford English dictionary (11th ed.)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

### **Contentions listed as Work of Flesh / Don't want them lack Spiritual Gifts / Strife Robs**

Contentions are listed in Galatians as one of the works of the flesh. So we can see that contentions come from within the flesh, the pride and ego of man. Remember Paul is writing them because he does not want them to be lacking any spiritual gift. So too for us that the message being sent to them and us is that strife robs the believer of receiving all that God wants to give and do.

*Galatians 5:19–21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

### **Wow – Master Teacher? / Point – they think themselves Spiritual / If you Strife – You in Flesh**

Oh course you say, that is so obvious, do you consider yourself some master teacher to come up with such an interpretation? Hey, here is my point, and that is that I have seen it every time that I have seen strife, and that is that person or people leading the charge of the strife, all think they are being spiritual, they all think God has given them some special insight or revelation, and they feel they are the spiritual ones, and the others are unspiritual or spiritually immature. I make the point, if there ever comes a time where you involved in strife and division within the body, you are in the flesh, and the last thing you are is spiritual.

### **Contention – Eris – Goddess of Strife / Strife from Pit of Hell**

The word for “contentions” here is eris. Now Eris was the goddess of strife and wrangling. How fitting, because contentions are straight from the pit of hell.

*Greek Mythology* - Because of Eris' disagreeable nature she was the only goddess not to be invited to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. When she turned up anyway, she was refused admittance and, in a rage, threw a golden apple amongst the goddesses inscribed "To the fairest." Three goddesses laid claim it, and in their rivalry brought about the events which led to the Trojan War.

*James 3:13-18 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup>Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. <sup>15</sup>This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. <sup>16</sup>For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. <sup>17</sup>But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. <sup>18</sup>Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

### **4 Step Evaluation**

When someone brings you information about someone here is your checklist

- Ask them what is your purpose of telling me this information?
- Where did you get this information - have the facts been verified?
- Have you gone directly to the person you want to tell me about?
- And lastly, can I quote you on this?

### **Matthew 18 – Have you carried it Out**

Matthew 18 is the application. Ask them, have you carried out Matthew 18 to its fullest degree. For a further understanding of the Matthew 18 principle of discipline, please see the study notes that are posted on our website for that book.

*Matthew 18:15–17 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ <sup>17</sup> And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

**(1 Cor 1:12 NKJV) Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."**

**(1 Cor 1:13 NKJV) Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?**

### **We see a Fractured Church / Broken Leg Bone – Can't hold the Weight Up**

So we see they are a fractured church. Like a broken bone in a leg, unable to bear the full weight and burden that is required to function efficiently and effectively.

### **Not naming Televangelist / Listing Mighty Names**

Hey they are not naming some phony televangelist or snake salesman. They are listing wise and mighty in the Lord, and even the Lord. So each of these groups no doubt had strong bands of truth in their doctrine. Hey one group may have said, we follow the founder of this Church Paul, he has taught us grace. Another group says but when we came here Apollos was pastoring the church and he really knows how to preach, and the church really grew under his pastoring. And yet another group would be saying, but we are the first generation Christians, we got saved back in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost when Cephas (Peter) preached in power and the Holy Spirit fell upon us. And yet there were the last group who would sound so spiritual, and say we don't follow men but Christ! That sounds powerful, but not when it causes divisions, so what they said sounded so true, but it wasn't perfect if it caused them to have heated divisions amongst their fellow brethren.

### **Anyone says of Christ – Will seek Unity**

Anyone that says they are of Christ will want the same thing Christ wants and died for, to gather a unified body. That is in the Church, and that is in their home. The person, who is of Christ, will be known for their great love, not their great “so-called” wisdom.

### **Appears Baptism was a Big Issue / Still is Today / Emersion – In Name Of - Salvation**

It appears to me in this context as Paul goes on to talk about baptism that one of the most heated issues was about baptism. Well some things never change do they? Still today the church is splintered and fractured because of the debate on how, when and where baptism is to be done. Is it in Jesus name only, or in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? Well it can't say the Holy Spirit because He never draws attention to Himself, so if you say Holy Spirit the whole thing is wrong. Is full emersion or will sprinkling do? If you were never baptized and die in a car wreck you didn't go to heaven (what?). The debate goes on and on.

### **Amazing Church Argues over while World Perishes – Another Marriage Crumbles – Kid Walks**

It is amazing what the church will argue over, while a lost world perishes into hell, while another marriage crumbles, when another person walks away from the church saying I know I'll never find hope here, when another son or daughter drifts into the world, some never to be seen in the church again.

**(1 Cor 1:14 NKJV) I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,**

### **Crispus - Leader of Synagogue / Gaius - host in Rome**

The leader of the synagogue, Crispus, got saved when Paul first went to Corinth (Acts 18:8). Gaius was Paul's host in Rome (Romans 16:23).

**(1 Cor 1:15 NKJV) lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name.**

**(1 Cor 1:16 NKJV) Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.**

**(1 Cor 1:17 NKJV) For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.**

### **For those who Argue Doctrine – Follow Paul's Example**

For those who argue about baptism or other doctrinal issues, they would do well to follow the example of Paul, verse 17 – I came to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified, very simply, he did not complicate it.

### **Remember first Saved – “their thing”**

I can remember when I first got saved, so many people (new believers like myself) had “their thing”, and it was all they ever wanted to discuss. I remember some of the people wrapped up in the baptism thing. So Ray, what do you think about baptism, and I would start to talk, and three words into my answer they would cut me off and start starting up a storm. I would say, you really didn't ask me to find out what I think did you, you just wanted to tell me what you think don't you.

### **Paul didn't complicate the Gospel / Jesus Christ and Him Crucified / Preached – Work it Out**

Paul didn't complicate the gospel, he kept it focused, Jesus Christ and Him crucified is the gospel message. I like what Paul did in that he preached the gospel, and left them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. I believe Paul didn't baptize people because then they would or could think they were saved because The great Apostle Paul baptized me they could say, thus I am saved.

*Philippians 2:12–13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

### **Billy Graham – People think saved because went Forward**

Billy Graham struggles with that his whole ministry in that people think that because they went forward at a crusade that they were saved. One time Billy was on an airplane and this drunk obnoxious man recognized him and said Billy, how are you, I am one of your disciples, I went forward at one of your crusades. Billy answered and said, you must be one of my disciples, for your surely are not one of the Lord's.

### **Changed Life – revealed by Changed Heart / By their Fruit**

The changed life will reveal the changed heart. A person that has no fruit needs to evaluate themselves and their salvation. Regardless where they went forward at, or where and who baptized them.

*Matthew 7:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

### **The Symbolism of Fruit**

The word “fruit” is used for a reason, as it gives symbolism with it. Fruit was something that was picked, then eaten, and when eaten they are nourished, they are refreshed. I love fresh fruit, just the sight of it brings me pleasure, then when I bite into that fresh apple, and its crispness breaks, I say oh fresh. The sweetness of strawberries and blueberries. Oh a glass of ice cold orange juice. God is saying to us, be a fruit for people to pick and eat. Can people come to your bowl of fruit, and pick a fruit from it and partake of it? Be that in your home and your church, and there will be unity, people will be refreshed and nourished, and then they too produce fruit for others to partake of and be refreshed and spiritually nourished.

**(1 Cor 1:17 NKJV) For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.**

**(1 Cor 1:18 NKJV) For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

### **Be Practical – the Solution is Jesus Christ and Him Crucified**

“Come on, be practical,” people say. “We need more than just hearing about Jesus Christ crucified. We have problems in our marriage. We have problems with addictions. We have problems with our children. We have problems with guilt. We have problems with doubt.” But I suggest that throughout the Epistle, we'll see that the solution to every problem that plagues every person is the same: Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

# *The Wisdom of the World, versus the Wisdom of God*

## (1:18-31)

### **Church in Corinth having Problems / They think they are Mature / Foot in World - Church**

The Church of God in Corinth is having some problems, their problems are causing them to be fractured and divided, sinning and selfish, and although they speak in tongues and think of themselves as spiritual, we see from Paul's writing they are spiritually immature and personally deceived. They live in one of the most carnal places in the whole world at this time, and they haven't figured out how to separate themselves from the world, and unto Christ. They have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. Paul is writing them so that they lack no spiritual gift, so they reach spiritual maturity.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Letter of Correction – Instructions in Righteousness / Spiritual Maturity**

So Paul is writing them this letter. It has been called a letter of correction, and that is so; but let it not be confused in what it ultimately is, instruction is righteousness, the path to spiritual maturity. So here is a high level overview of where we are going in this book.

### **BRIEF OUTLINE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS**

(Correction in Error – Instructions in Righteousness)

- Sainthood (1:1–9)
- Unity (1:10—3:23)
- Servanthood (4:1–21)
- Morality (5:1—6:20)
- Marriage (7:1–40)
- Liberty (8:1—11:1)
- Men and women in the church (11:2–16)
- The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
- Spiritual Gifts (12–14)
- The Resurrection (15)
- Stewardship (16:1–4)
- Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)

### **10 Times Jesus Christ / It is all about Jesus**

We must remember in every study, Paul lays the foundation right from the beginning in this powerful and practical book, and that is that it is, all about Jesus Christ. Ten times in the first ten verses Paul says Jesus Christ. This is especially important to recognize that we are still in chapter 1, and today we will be discussing the wisdom of the world as compared to the wisdom of God.

*1 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,*

*1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

*1 Corinthians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 1:4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,*

*1 Corinthians 1:5 that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,*

*1 Corinthians 1:6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,*

*1 Corinthians 1:7 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

*1 Corinthians 1:8 who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

### **Be Practical – the Solution is Jesus Christ and Him Crucified**

The Lord is saying, it is all Jesus, every need, every hope, is found in Jesus. "Come on, be practical," people say. "We need more than just hearing about Jesus Christ crucified. We have problems in our marriage. We have problems with addictions. We have problems with our children. We have problems with guilt. We have problems with doubt." But I suggest that throughout the Epistle, we'll see that the solution to every problem that plagues every person is the same: Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*



### **Paul begins There – Because Satan wants Division / Too fractured to Minister**

Last week we saw Paul addressing the division that was within the church; Paul begins with division because he knows that is where Satan wants to drive the church, into divisions and factions, because if he can do that, then it will be too fractured to ministered to the person who is getting drunk at the communion table (or struggling from alcohol or drug addiction), the church will be too fractured to approach the man and woman in sexual sin, the church will be too weak that anyone would trust laying their issues bare before the leadership and say what are we supposed to do.

### **Still not getting into the “Issues” / Because – 15 chapters based on Wisdom of God, not World**

And in these verses today Paul still isn't getting into the issues of sexual immorality, divorce, stewardship, the suing of one another - but he goes on to talk about the wisdom of the world versus the wisdom of God. Why? Because God is saying that the counsel you and I will receive in the next fifteen chapters will not make sense according to the world's ways and reasoning, but listen He says, my wisdom is greater! How do we know His wisdom is greater, because of the cross of Jesus Christ, which we will study in our passage today

### **Verses 17 through Chapter 3 / Wisdom 17 Times**

From verse 17 here in chapter all the way through chapter 3, the word wisdom will be mentioned 17 times. Paul will draw a line between the wisdom of men and the wisdom of this world.

### **Greeks in Love with Philosophy / 50 Philosophical Parties / No absolute Standard of Truth**

The ancient Greeks (especially here at this intellectual center that Corinth was) were in love with philosophy, around which their culture was built. They had perhaps as many as fifty identifiable philosophical parties or movements, which vied for acceptance and influence. Each had its views of man's origin, significance, destiny, and relationship to the gods—of which they had many. Some of the philosophies had detailed schemes for the religious, political, social, economic, and educational ordering of society. The Greeks were in love with human wisdom. They believed that philosophy (philosophia, “love of wisdom”) was all-important. Philosophy provided a view, invented by man, of the meaning of life, values, relationships, purpose, and destiny. Thus there were as many philosophies as there were philosophers, and people tended to line up behind their favorite. They widely disagreed as to which philosophy was the truest and most reliable, and, inevitably, many factions developed, each with its own leaders and adherents. **Without an absolute standard for truth, ideas of right and wrong were based entirely on human opinion.**

### **Many in Church carried Philosophy into Viewpoints / Trusted Jesus for Salvation – not Leadership**

Unfortunately many of the Corinthian converts carried their spirit of philosophical factionalism into the church. Some of them still held on to beliefs of their former pagan philosophy. They were divided not only regarding Christian leaders (1:12) but also regarding philosophical viewpoints. They could not get over their love for human wisdom. They had trusted in Christ and recognized their redemption by grace through the cross, but they wanted to add human wisdom to what He had done for them.

**1 Cor 1:17 NKJV) For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.**

**(1 Cor 1:18 NKJV) For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

### **Cross is Symbol of Death / Fashionable / Today – an Electric Chair**

The cross is a symbol of death. Yet today it is a fashionable piece of jewelry. If Jesus died today in 2011 it would have been by the electric chair. That would be a very glamorous fashion statement would it. Look at the electric chair and it is shocking, some of you may be appalled that I put a picture of the electric up on the overhead. Imagine changing all the worship songs that replaced the word cross with electric chair.

Lyrics to At The Cross :

I know a place  
A wonderful place  
Where accused and condemned

Find mercy and grace  
Where the wrongs we have done  
And the wrongs done to us  
Were nailed there with Him  
There on the ~~eross~~ electric chair

At the ~~eross~~ chair, He died for my sins  
At the ~~eross~~ chair, He gave His life again  
At the ~~eross~~ chair, He died for my sins  
At the ~~eross~~ chair, He gave His life again

### **The Cross a Disgrace**

To die on the cross was a tremendous disgrace; the cross was saved for the worst of the worst. Even the Scriptures declared, cursed is the man who dies on a tree

*Deuteronomy 21:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.

### **Message at Cross – Shedding of Blood / People won't Accept that – or have to Accept it All**

There is a message spoken and declared at the cross - that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. For many people they won't accept that because then they have to accept all that comes with it, and that is that they are sinners, that they have offended the Holy God, that they don't have it all together, that they are as guilty before God as the person across the table, the street, or world. They can't accept that they are not a good person. The whole thing to them is foolish and insulting to them, that they would need someone to save them, as wonderful as they are.

*Hebrews 9:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

### **But to those that get It**

But to those who get it, to those who say "save me" for I can't save myself, they live in pure power (dunamis – where we get our word dynamite). What is that power, the power of knowing that the Holy God, loved me so much (a sinner), that nothing shall separate me from Him, for He who was willing to give me His only Son, I can be sure is for me, and will never be against me. Now that is pure power!

*Romans 8:31–32 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

**(1 Cor 1:19 NKJV) For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."**

### **Isaiah 29 / Assyrians Coming – seek Egypt for Help**

Verse 19 - For it is written - is referencing Isaiah 29, and that is a story of when the Assyrians were coming up against Israel (around 700 BC) with a mighty force, and rather Israel seeking the counsel of God concerning their predicament, they went to Egypt and asked for an alliance with them. All this was done by Israel against the warning of the prophets of God. Egypt is always a type of the world in the scriptures, and thus we see Paul making application of people seeking counsel and protection from the world, rather than seeking the counsel and protection of the Mighty God.

*Isaiah 29:14 (NKJV)*

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, behold, I will again do a marvelous work  
Among this people,  
A marvelous work and a wonder;  
For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish,  
And the understanding of their prudent men shall be hidden."

### **To Israel – it seemed so Logical / Egypt had mighty Army / Eye & Mind – seemed so Wise**

To Israel this seemed so logical, it seemed like the smart thing to do because Egypt had this mighty army that consisted of chariots and horses, swords and spearman, and military genius. It all seemed so logical. As the eye and the mind looked at the situation, human reasoning said this is a wise decision. But Isaiah is saying you are looking at the wisdom of the world, and not looking to your God for His leading and guiding.

### **End of Story – Egypt didn't Save Them / Paul using Typology here for the situation in Corinth**

The end of the story is Israel wasn't saved by Egypt, but a miraculous delivery of God. Paul is pulling out all this typology to tell the church in Corinth, that they are doing the same, the wisdom of the world is powerless to save them, help them, deliver them, but that God can miraculously save them, even when all seems hopeless.

### **Church applying Wisdom of World they have Learned – Paul says Foolish**

So these people in the church of Corinth are applying the wisdom of the world as they have learned through their lives, and Paul is telling them it is not wisdom, but foolishness.

**(1 Cor 1:20 NKJV) Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?**

**(1 Cor 1:21 NKJV) For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.**

**(1 Cor 1:22 NKJV) For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom;**

**(1 Cor 1:23 NKJV) but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,**

**(1 Cor 1:24 NKJV) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**

### **Jews Sought a Sign – Jesus gave only One - Jonah**

The Jews sought a sign - and Jesus said one sign only, Jonah - three days and three nights. Jesus takes it back to the proof and power of the gospel, the resurrection. God gave them a sign, but they didn't like that sign, so they seek another, but there is no other, for the cross said it all. The cross, and the resurrection!

*Matthew 12:38–40 (NKJV)* <sup>38</sup> Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

<sup>39</sup> But He answered and said to them, "*An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.* <sup>40</sup> For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

### **Rabbinical Beliefs About Soul and Body**

Oh it is all about Jesus, and the power of the life changing message He spoke with His life there at the cross. Do you remember the story of Lazarus? On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. The three days after death were called "days of weeping," which were followed by four "days of lamentation," thus making up the seven "days of mourning" (see Genesis 27:41 Days of Mourning). According to rabbinical thought, the spirit wanders about the sepulcher for three days seeking an opportunity to return into the body; but when the aspect of the body changes, it hovers no more, but leaves the body to itself. The friends of the deceased were in the habit of visiting the sepulcher for three days after death and burial, probably because they supposed they would thus be nearer to the departed soul. When the fourth day came, and decomposition took place, and the soul, as they supposed, went away from the sepulcher, they beat their breast and made loud lamentations. This explains the allusion to the "four days" in this text and in verse 39. The saying that one had been in the grave four days was equivalent to saying that bodily corruption had begun.

### **3 Days – they totally Missed It**

But three days, three days, Jesus gave them a sign, the sign of Jonah, and they totally missed the sign. Their own rabbinical teaching said that if the spirit was to return to the body, it would do so by day three, and they totally missed the sign.

### **It is the Resurrection Power**

But the sign is given today to all who will believe, and it is the cross and the resurrection on the third day. It is the resurrection power. It is the empty cross, as Christ is no longer on that cross, but you won't find Him in the tomb either, for it is the empty cross and the empty grave that displays His total power over sin (the empty cross), and death (the empty tomb). It is the resurrection power that is promised to us to live victorious and fulfilled Christian lives.

*Ephesians 1:15–21 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, <sup>16</sup> do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: <sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may

*give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,<sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,<sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power<sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,<sup>21</sup> far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.*

### **Jewish Mentality exists in Religious Person**

The Jewish mentality still exists today, and it exists in the mind of the religious person, they are offended that someone like me or you could just one day show up and say, hey guess what, I am saved and am going to heaven. That offends the religious person because they say hey wait a minute, I've been an usher for 20 years, I've been a faithful spouse a provider of my home. I have been part of a church since I was born, and my father was a deacon, and my grandfather was a deacon, and his father helped establish this church. I am fourth generation church member here. And they you show up, with the joy of the Lord on your face, talking about how you and God go for walks together, and how God speaks to you, and how you are saved and sealed, and they go what - I remember how you use to party, I remember your sexual immorality, how you never went to church your whole life because you were out all night, or had an 8 am tee time, and now you want to tell me about how you go for walks with God Himself, and you talk to Him, that just is offensive. That is a stumbling block to the religious person.

### **Greeks think it can't be that Simple / Illogical to be that Simple**

Now the Greeks on the other hand, they think it can't be that simple, there has to more than Jesus, that just doesn't make sense that you can have eternal life simply by believing in Jesus Christ. It is illogical to them, and anything illogical is not wisdom.

### **To the Intellectual – you Study Bible – You are Simple / Go to School 18 hours - Dedicated**

Hey, tell me if this isn't true, ever tell the "intellectual" about how you study the Bible, and most of them think you are a simpleton, reading a fairytale. To the intellectual when you tell them you study this Bible and go to Bible studies they just say that is so foolish. Isn't it an amazing world we live in that if you go to college and study 18 hours a day, you are considered dedicated and an overachiever, but if you say you study the bible people think you are foolish, if not nuts.

### **Paul says it that Simple**

But Paul says it is simply one thing, don't complicate it, it is Jesus Christ crucified.

**(1 Cor 1:25 NKJV) Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.**

### **Greatest Mans Wisdom – Still Weak**

Even the greatest of man's arguments they can have is absolute foolishness. Man's greatest argument is quite possible evolution, but lay it up against Creation and it becomes foolish.

- **The First Law of Thermodynamics** is known as the "Law of Energy Conservation". It states that energy cannot be created nor destroyed; it can only change from one form to another. Simply meaning there is no new energy being created. For the Evolution Theory the question has to be asked if energy cannot be created nor destroyed, then where did the energy come for the "Big Bang."
- **The Law of Biogenesis** says that life can only arise from life which is similar to itself. Evolution defies this law, because they say life evolved from inorganic (no life present) substance into an organic (life present) substance. So you start with nothing, then electrons form, then protons, then atoms, then amino acids, then nucleotides, then proteins, then DNA, then protozoa, then fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and then man. So in the beginning all this matter was floating around space, then it formed together into a mass and exploded. Over time it formed into the solar systems we know today, and then building blocks of life appeared out of this organic matter, and then life began to evolve. Evolutionist, to make it seem plausible, says that man evolved from monkeys, but they totally skip that part that what they are really asking someone to believe is that man evolved from a rock.

Just those two scientific laws leaves the wisdom of the world looking foolish. But even the most brilliant can't explain why the human body sleeps, and in that sleep it renews itself. They can't explain sleep, so how can they explain the beginning of the world.

### **Greatest Weakness – Still Mighty / God dying for Me – Greater than Anything World Offers**

The weakness of God, a God who became flesh and then would allow man to beat Him, whip Him, spit in His face, then die a horrible death on a hill outside Palestine - becomes the strongest statement ever made, and nothing man could ever present to me could be stronger to draw me away into anything this world has to offer.

### **Every Morning see a Masterpiece**

Every morning I see a masterpiece, it is a most amazing piece of work, it is priceless, and it is too beautiful to reside in. Museum tucked away waiting for a passerby here and there, but God sends it out on display every day. You look at His masterpiece each morning as you get ready for your day. You and I are His most amazing masterpieces of grace.

### **Imagine what world Thinks**

There is plenty that the world considers weak and foolish, but is pure power in a believer's life. Imagine what the world must think of:

**Communion** – you eat stale bread and sour juice – why? And for us, we experience joy, refreshment, wonderment all over, ohh that You died for me, you are amazing.

**Prayer** – so you talk into the air – ok! But for us, we know our God, the one who spoke the worlds into existence wants to speak with me, wow!

**Worship** – so you guys sing, about someone who isn't even there. Yet we know it is pure power in that we get to release the joy in our hearts, and wherever we are, whatever the burden of the day may be, we can be lifted up and revived.

**Fasting** – you don't eat! But we enjoy a separation from our flesh and the world, and we enter into a spiritual plane that is rich and full.

**Studying the Bible** – that old fairy tale. But to us, it is our compass, our answer book, our daily bread from heaven.

Now how about these ones, this really gets them:

**Tithing** – what, separating from your money, are you crazy. We are separating from our money, and trusting in our God to provide.

**Abstinence / purity before marriage** – now that is just crazy talk they say, but never see the relationship of all the failed marriages that started out in sexual promiscuity. Not to mention STD, abortions, loneliness, guilt, and shame.

**Commitment to Marriage Vows** – hey they say, be free, life is too short. Where we know all His promises are yes and amen.

**Missions** – you what, are use your vacation and own money to go help build an orphanage, and people about Jesus, ok, but we are going to the Maui.

### **Weak things of God – Blows their Wisdom Away**

All the things the world says is so weak and foolish of God, continually just blows all their self-help, and so-called professional counsel away.

### **Tell You Total Foolishness – Incorporating it into the Church.**

I will tell you what is utter foolishness is when the church tries to incorporate, implement, and apply the world's wisdom into the church. Using Madison avenue marketing to build the church; hey God will bring who He wants when He wants, we need only be the light and beacon of hope, evangelize because their souls are at stake, not for numbers sake. I don't need a multiple-step program to overcome addictions (it is a Person, not a program); I just need Him who has kicked the devil in the teeth, and lives inside of me. How do you let a caged lion defend itself, just let Him loose, let the Lion of the Tribe of Judah loose in your life and enjoy the show.

### **Name Some Names**

I'm going to name some names here and tell you some foolishness of the world's wisdom being brought into the church. You know who the comedian Steve Harvey is, well he is being invited into church to speak. You know his great counsel, it brought right in from the world, he tells the men and woman in the church that they need to wait 90 days before they have sex. Don't give it away too early he says, you need to make sure they are the right one. Forget the abstinence message he is saying, because he says there is no way anyone can wait until marriage. Bob Bell, a Pastor, just wrote a book, and in it he says there is no hell. That is a great friendly message, because hell is upsetting to the world, and it isn't going to pack the seats if you preach it. That is world's wisdom. Ken Ham from the Creation Institute was uninvited from speaking at a Christian Home School Conference because he publically disagreed with another speaker whose Christian home school curriculum removes the literal Genesis account of creation and says it is just an allegory about Israel, not that God actually created the world in 6 days.

### **Church Today – Corinth Yesterday**

The church today needs to remember the church of Corinth, as they had their problems because they were not separating themselves from the wisdom of the world

**(1 Cor 1:26 NKJV) For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.**

### **Not Many – doesn't say – Not Any**

Does not say "not any" but "not many"

### **We Hope Celebrity gets Saved - Not many leaves Us**

So often we hope that the celebrity will get saved because then they will be this great witness for Christ; well guess what, if there aren't many noble and mighty, guess who that leaves? That is right, it is me and you, the base and foolish things of the world.

**(1 Cor 1:27 NKJV) But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;**

### **Foolish = Moran**

Hey if you ever start thinking highly of yourself, especially if God is using you; let me just temper that down a bit by telling you that the word for foolish here is where we get our English word - moron. So really those who boast about being so great in the kingdom, or hint at how much more spiritual they are than others, is really bragging about "being the chief moron". Alrighty then, have it!

**(1 Cor 1:28 NKJV) and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,**

### **I'm Perfect for the Job – Meet all the Requirements**

Like wow, I am a perfect fit for this job description. Paul, called to be an Apostle. So Lord what you are saying is that the calling to be an Apostle was that you weren't wise, weren't smooth in speech, not considered wise by the world, and that you were weak? Wow, I am likely totally perfect for that job. The apostle means, sent out one, and thus I can be a modern day apostle. How about you. If you attend this church I think you meet all the requirements.

### **See an Insight of who Lord Looking For – The Weak and Rejected**

I see an insight into the type of people that seek the Lord, and it is the person who is weak, forgotten, not considered great, the downtrodden. But here is something I've learned over the years, and that is that I can't tell who they really are until I get to the very heart of who they are. I can see so many things on the outside, things that make me think they have it all together, they feel so wonderful about themselves and their lives, like their lives rely have it going on, and all together, but then I finally break through their shell and I find they are struggling, I find their whole lives are a house of cards ready to tumble. They seem as if they have it so together, but when you finally break through and they take the mask off you see the agony in their eyes, the tears, the depression, and the fears. I find their lives aren't going as advertised, I find they

have an illness, or a child that is breaking their heart, a job that is in jeopardy, a mortgage that is over their head, a job that is seeing them thin.

### **I Know it is True – It is my Story**

I know there are many who think they are all they portray, and they have no need for God because they are self-made; but I know there are those who behind the mask is a person who feels there is no hope, that this world is empty, but this world is all there is, and thus they will live a life of hopelessness. I know it is true because that was me and that was my life 20 years ago. I saw all that the world said was it, successful, wise, and mighty, and yet for years I would go home after drinking in all the world said was delicious and filling, and I would look into the mirror and it was as if I was looking right into the depth of my soul, and I saw total darkness. I was everything I just described. And I am so thankful that God allowed that pain into my life, so I could see that this world had nothing for me.

### **We must Approach them as if they Don't have it Together**

And so too it may be for the person who seems like they have it so together. May we not determine who is the mighty and noble, but may we just approach every person as if they are the weak and foolish.

### **Terry Bradshaw**

This week I was at a banquet and Terry Bradshaw was the guest speaker. He spoke about how he suffered depression, defeat, and hopelessness in his life until he fully submitted and committed his life to the Lord. Now he is by no means a finished product, and he will attest to that, but he makes no doubt about it, that he lived a life that had no hope, until he met Christ. Amazing to hear a four-time Super Bowl winner, a Hall of Fame inducted player say such a thing, but nobody knew that is what was going on inside his heart, even when all seemed so perfect on the outside.

### **(1 Cor 1:29 NKJV) that no flesh should glory in His presence.**

### **Beautiful Place to be – It is all Him / No Expectations on You**

It is a beautiful place to be when we see it was all His grace, and it continues to be Grace. I am totally free to enjoy my Christianity, no pressures of being the world changer, nothing expected of me, because we are all in agreement that we can't impress God, thus He is never expecting us to impress Him.

### **Weak Enough to be Saved – Weak enough to be Used**

And by the way, if we are weak enough and foolish enough to be saved, then we are weak enough and foolish enough for Him to confound the wise. So let know one say God can't use me, for if you say that, they the catch twenty-two is that you are saying you are too wise to be saved then too.

### **BTW – God will Allow Flesh to die in Your Sight**

By the way, God will allow the flesh to die in your sight so you can see Him in all His glory. The Lord uses weak things in order that only He gets credit. Why? Is He on some huge ego trip? Is He saying, "I don't want anyone else to get any glory because I need to be affirmed?" Obviously not! God uses weak things not because of a lack in His nature, but due to a lack in ours. You see, God knows when He uses someone who is impressive in the eyes of the world, people set themselves up for a huge fall because they look to him rather than to God. Therefore, He says, "I don't want any flesh to glory because all flesh will fail ultimately." It was not until Uzziah died that Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up (Isaiah 6:1). Who was Uzziah? One of the most powerful, successful, gifted kings in the history of Judah and Israel, Uzziah increased the boundaries of the nation, ushered in economic prosperity, and invented war machinery. Yet although his name was on the lips of all people (2 Chronicles 26:8), it wasn't until he died that Isaiah saw the Lord. The Lord still allows people to die—not physically—but in the estimation of others in order that our focus can more clearly be upon Him. Therefore, wise is the man and mature the church that realizes that Uzziah's death is not a reason to quit. Instead, it's a reason to say, "Once again, Lord, I see that You are the only One upon whom I can truly and totally rely."

### **(1 Cor 1:30 NKJV) But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God; and righteousness and sanctification and redemption;**

**Wisdom not From – But In**

Wisdom doesn't come from the Lord. Wisdom is in the Lord. All the promises of God are in Him yea and Amen (2 Corinthians 1:20). Wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, all that we could ever need or want both now and eternally are wrapped up in Jesus.

**Even when not Clear – Just be in Him**

Even when things are not fully clear on what is going on, and what you should do, just abide in Him, the One that died for you, lives in you, and will be there with you.

*John 15:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

**(1 Cor 1:31 NKJV) that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."**

**What are you Glorifying In?**

What is it that you are glorying in today Beloved of God? Let it be Him, and Him only!

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*



# 1 Corinthians 2

## Nothing but the Cross – Part 1

(2:1-2)

### **Church in Corinth having Problems / They think they are Mature / Foot in World - Church**

The Church of God in Corinth is having some problems, their problems are causing them to be fractured and divided, sinning and selfish, and although they speak in tongues and think of themselves as spiritual, we see from Paul's writing they are spiritually immature and personally deceived. They live in one of the most carnal places in the whole world at this time, and they haven't figured out how to separate themselves from the world, and unto Christ. They have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. Paul is writing them so that they lack no spiritual gift, so they reach spiritual maturity.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Letter of Correction – Instructions in Righteousness / Spiritual Maturity**

So Paul is writing them this letter. It has been called a letter of correction, and that is so; but let it not be confused in what it ultimately is, instruction is righteousness, the path to spiritual maturity. So here is a high level overview of where we are going in this book.

### **BRIEF OUTLINE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS**

(Correction in Error – Instructions in Righteousness)

- Sainthood (1:1–9)
- Unity (1:10—3:23)
- Servanthood (4:1–21)
- Morality (5:1—6:20)
- Marriage (7:1–40)
- Liberty (8:1—11:1)
- Men and women in the church (11:2–16)
- The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
- Spiritual Gifts (12–14)
- The Resurrection (15)
- Stewardship (16:1–4)
- Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)

### **10 Times Jesus Christ / It is all about Jesus**

We must remember in every future study, that Paul laid the foundation right from the beginning in this powerful and practical book, and that is that it is, all about Jesus Christ. Ten times in the first ten verses of chapter one, Paul says Jesus Christ.

*1 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,*

*1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

*1 Corinthians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 1:4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,*

*1 Corinthians 1:5 that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,*

*1 Corinthians 1:6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,*

*1 Corinthians 1:7 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

*1 Corinthians 1:8 who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

### **Be Practical – the Solution is Jesus Christ and Him Crucified**

The Lord is saying, it is all Jesus, every need, every hope, is found in Jesus. “Come on, be practical,” people say. “We need more than just hearing about Jesus Christ crucified. We have problems in our

marriage. We have problems with addictions. We have problems with our children. We have problems with guilt. We have problems with doubt.” But I suggest that throughout the Epistle, we’ll see that the solution to every problem that plagues every person is the same: Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

### **Last Study – Paul tears down Wisdom of the World**

In our study last week we watched Paul (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) tear down the wisdom of the world. We saw how the wisdom of God, which sometimes doesn’t make sense to us, or seem logical, is greater than the wisdom of the world.

*1 Corinthians 1:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”

### **Greeks in Love with Philosophy / 50 Philosophical Parties / No absolute Standard of Truth**

The ancient Greeks (especially here at this intellectual center that Corinth was) were in love with philosophy, around which their culture was built. They had perhaps as many as fifty identifiable philosophical parties or movements, which vied for acceptance and influence. Each had its views of man’s origin, significance, destiny, and relationship to the gods—of which they had many. Some of the philosophies had detailed schemes for the religious, political, social, economic, and educational ordering of society. The Greeks were in love with human wisdom. They believed that philosophy (philosophia, “love of wisdom”) was all-important. Philosophy provided a view, invented by man, of the meaning of life, values, relationships, purpose, and destiny. Thus there were as many philosophies as there were philosophers, and people tended to line up behind their favorite. They widely disagreed as to which philosophy was the truest and most reliable, and, inevitably, many factions developed, each with its own leaders and adherents. **Without an absolute standard for truth, ideas of right and wrong were based entirely on human opinion.**

### **Church forgot the Simplicity and Power of the Gospel / Allowed World Wisdom to Influence Again**

Well, here is what it appears to me has happened in the Church at Corinth, and that is that they have missed out on the pure power and simplicity of the message of the cross, and based on our study from last week, must have again let themselves come under the influence of the so-called wisdom of the world. They forgot the cross, or they thought the message of the cross was too simple, and was only for the baby believers, and thus started to complicate gospel that set us free, and thus had found themselves being anything but free, but tangled up in sin and division within the church.

### **Paul was there for 18 Months**

Paul was there and he taught for 18 months and said in our passage today, that he only taught on one thing for the whole time he was there, one message, one theme, verse 1-2 of our text today.

*Acts 18:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

**(1 Cor 2:1 NKJV) And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.**

**(1 Cor 2:2 NKJV) For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.**

**(1 Cor 2:3 NKJV) I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.**

**(1 Cor 2:4 NKJV) And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,**

### **Paul didn’t try to be Clever or Creative / 1 Thing – Jesus Crucified / So too for Us Today**

Imagine that, for 18 months, one message, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Paul did not come with the wisdom of the world, he didn’t come and try to be culturally relevant to them, he came with one thing, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And listen Christen, so too it is for us, whether we are looking for answers in our person lives, or we are trying to give godly counsel to the world around us, if you/we try to be philosophical or psychological, clever or creative, you’ll get tripped up. But, if like Paul, you determine to talk about nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, you’ll do well.

### What do you tell someone?

- Who asks “*How Do I Know God Loves Me?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Know God Will Provide for Me?*”
- Who asks “*Why Aren’t Things Working Out for Me?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Know God Will Forgive Me?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Overcome Addiction?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Overcome Depression?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Overcome Bitterness?*”

### Who asks “*How Do I Know God Loves Me?*”

You take them to the cross!

*Romans 5:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

#### **When you were dead in your Sin**

When someone says, “I’m not sure God loves me,” say, “God proved His love for you in that while you were sinning, rebelling, and couldn’t care less about knowing Him, He became a Man, was pinned to a Cross, and died for you specifically. He proved His love for you not when you were going to church, trying hard, being good—but when you were terrible.

#### **Water and Blood / His heart burst for You**

The water and blood that flowed when a spear was thrust into Jesus’ side as He hung on the Cross was indicative of a broken heart. Thus, He cares about you so dearly and loves you so deeply that even when you were sinning and rebelling, His heart burst for you.

### Who asks “*How Do I Know God Will Provide for Me?*”

You take them to the cross!

*Romans 8:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

#### **Gave His Son – Everything else is Little**

If God gave us His Son—the greatest gift He could have given to you and me—then surely He won’t withhold any good thing we ask of Him (Psalm 84:11). Take them back to the cross and teach them how to think in faith, to shape their minds to say, Lord you gave me Your only begotten Son, therefore I trust you will provide for me to cover this electric bill, to provide employment for me, to pay this medical bill, to support this mission trip. You see after providing His only begotten Son, everything else is little to Him.

*Psalm 84:11 (NKJV)*

<sup>11</sup> *For the LORD God is a sun and shield;  
The LORD will give grace and glory;  
No good thing will He withhold  
From those who walk uprightly.*

### Who asks “*Why Aren’t Things Working Out for Me?*”

You take them to the cross!

*Matthew 20:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> *Then the mother of Zebedee’s sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.*

### **Things are Cloudy – Get 20/20 Vision / Everything is clearer at the Cross**

If things are cloudy of why things don't seem to be going the way you think they should, then here is some 20/20 vision for you so that you may see clearly, Matthew 20:20. Everything is clearer at the cross.

### **Story of Salome**

Jesus must have chuckled when He saw the worship she was lavishing upon Him, knowing that she was coming not only to worship Him but also to get something from Him. "What do you want?" He asked her. "Well, since You're asking," Salome answered, "when You come into Your kingdom, could my two boys (that would be James and John) be on Your right hand and on Your left?" "You don't know what you're asking," Jesus replied. "Are you able to drink of the cup that I shall drink, and to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" No doubt Salome went her way, confused by Jesus' cryptic answer. But a few days later, when she saw Jesus flanked on the Cross by a thief on His left and on His right, her request must have thundered in her memory.

### **When wonder why things not Working Out**

Take those who wonder why things aren't working for them to the Cross. Remind them what happened to Salome when she gave advice to the Lord concerning what He should do. Let them see that the decisions the Lord makes ultimately prove to be the right ones.

### **Who asks "How Do I Know God Will Forgive Me?"**

You take them to the cross!

*John 19:33 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.

### **The Greatest 3 Words**

The greatest three words ever spoken in history are not, "It's a boy," or, "Hot and sunny," or even, "I love you," but, "It is finished." On the Cross of Calvary, all sin was paid for completely.

### **People feeling Guilt / Communion – Cross / Exodus 12 – Not a Bone Broken / No Limits**

So what do we do with people who feel guilty? We take Communion with them and remind them that there is no limitation to the blood of Jesus. "Where sin abounds, grace abounds yet more," declared Paul (Romans 5:20). That is why, when Jesus was nailed to the Cross as the Lamb who came to take away the sin of the world, not a bone of His was broken. In addition to fulfilling prophecy regarding the Passover lamb of Exodus 12, this speaks of forgiveness. You see, because blood is produced in the marrow of the bone, the fact that not a bone of Jesus was broken tells us the supply of blood to wash away sin is endless. No matter how much sin you might have been caught up in, no matter how heavy it was or how recent it has been, because of Calvary, there is no limit to the forgiveness available to you.

*Romans 5:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

### **Who asks "How Do I Overcome Addiction?"**

You take them to the cross!

*Ephesians 1:19–20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

### **It is the Cross – and Resurrection / Propitiation & Proof**

The cross and the resurrection go together. The cross is Jesus taking man's punishment, trading places with you and I; and the resurrection is proof that God accepted the substitution. Had Jesus remained in the

grave, there would be no proof that God accepted the substitution, but because Jesus rose from the dead, it is confirmation that the substitution was acceptable.

*Romans 6:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

### **Same Power available for us Today / Need to Believe It – Live It**

And God promises to us, that the same power that rose Jesus from the dead, is the same power that is available for us today. So if the power to raise someone from the dead is available to us, then how does that “thing” compare to raising the dead. If God can raise the dead, then can a drug addiction keep you in the grave, if God can raise the dead, then can a struggle with pornography keep you in bondage, certainly not! For if God can raise the dead, Jesus Christ and Him crucified, then we only need to look at the cross, and say Father, if you could deliver Christ from the grave, then I believe you can deliver me from this addiction and bondage that I am under.

*John 14:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

### **Person must believe It – then Walk it Out**

A person must not only believe it, they must get up and live it. Jesus told the paralytic you are healed, then He told the man, no get up and walk. So too it is for every person, the power is given, now get up and walk it out.

*Matthew 9:6–7 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” —then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” <sup>7</sup> And he arose and departed to his house.

### **Let me Add – Dwell on Him / Not the Sin**

Let me also add this before I move on, and that is why a person needs to keep their eyes on the cross, and that is because when a person focuses on the sin, you will be continually thinking about that thing, and as a man thinks therefore he is. Thus, we think on Him, crucified, and we see the power of God, and we believe then that same power, the resurrection power, is ready to work in our lives and set us free.

*Philippians 4:6–9 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; <sup>7</sup> and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. <sup>9</sup> The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

## **Who asks “How Do I Overcome Depression?”**

You take them to the cross!

*Luke 9:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

### **Don’t pop Pills – Carry the Cross**

The key to overcoming depression is not to pop pills, but to carry the Cross. What is the Cross? Some people say it refers to the allergies they suffer, or to the husband who left them. As hard as those situations might be, they do not fall under the biblical definition of the Cross. The Cross is not something we don’t want, don’t like, or can’t understand. The Cross is something we bear willingly to help someone else redemptively. The Cross is something by which we die to our wishes, our pleasure, our time schedule in order that we might lay down our lives for others.

### **Protect Life – Lose It / Let Go of Life – Find It**

If we try to protect our life, we lose it. When we let go of our life, we find it (Luke 9:24). Those who take up the Cross by saying, “Who can I help today? With whom can I pray or share? What can I do to get my eyes off myself and die to my situation?” live lives free of depression.

*Luke 9:24 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

### **Here is a 10 Step Program**

But if you really want a 10 step program here it is. Step 1, go serve someone. Step 2, repeat that 9 more times. Start serving others, and you will walk away and over your depression.

### **Who asks “How Do I Overcome Bitterness?”**

You take them to the cross!

*Exodus 15:25 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.....

#### **Marah - Bitter**

As the sun beat down on the people of Israel, their mouths were dry, their lips were parched, their skin was peeling. They hadn't had water for three days when someone cried out, "Water ahead!" Three million thirsty people ran for the pool and drank deeply—only to spit it out immediately, for the water was poisonous. "What have you done?" they cried to Moses. "You've lead us to a pool we thought would be refreshing, but instead it's bitter." And they called the name of that place "Marah," or "Bitter."

So what did Moses do? He called upon the Lord, and the Lord showed him a book on psychology. No. He called upon the Lord, and the Lord told the people to sit down before an empty chair and talk to those toward whom they were bitter. No. He called upon the Lord, and the Lord told the people to write a letter and express their anger. No. Those are all man's methods. Endless counseling sessions, playacting, and talking to empty chairs are fine for the world, for they know no other way. But what does the Bible say? Moses called to the Lord, and Scripture says the Lord showed him a tree—a tree that had been there all along—and said, "Cast it into the water." When Moses did, the water became sweet.

#### **So too for You who feel Bitter / I died for them – Is not My Blood Sufficient**

So, too, when you feel bitter toward the boyfriend who dumped you, the wife who left you, the boss who fired you, or the business partner who cheated you, the solution is the tree of Calvary. "Look to the Cross," Jesus says. "I died for the very sin about which you're so upset. Are you saying that My atonement is insufficient, that My blood is not enough?" It's impossible to be bitter if you see the Cross, if you understand the price that was paid for the very sin that bothers you so much.

#### **Onesimus – Philemon / Charge it to My Account**

Do you remember the story of the runaway slave, the slaves name was Onesimus, the master's name was Philemon. By chance (which isn't in the Lord's economy) the slave ends up imprisoned with Paul, and ends up getting saved (of course), and as only God can, Paul had previously lead Philemon his master to salvation. So Onesimus is being released, doing the right thing and heading back to his commitment to Philemon, and Paul writes a letter to Philemon saying Onesimus is coming back to you, and I know he has left you hanging by bailing out on you and all the work he was supposed to be doing, and all the financial obligations he failed to fulfill, so please receive him back, and anything he owes you, please charge it to my account. Paul is saying, Philemon, charge it to my account, you who I led to the Lord, please charge this debt to my account. You get the picture, Philemon was indebted to Paul for the labor of love he had give him, and by no means would he consider charging Paul. So Jesus says to you, hey you who I died for, that person that has wronged you, whatever he owes you, charge it to my account.

*Philemon 17-18 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me. <sup>18</sup> But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account.

# Nothing but the Cross – Part 2

## (2:1-2)

### **Church in Corinth having Problems / They think they are Mature / Foot in World - Church**

The Church of God in Corinth is having some problems, their problems are causing them to be fractured and divided, sinning and selfish, and although they speak in tongues and think of themselves as spiritual, we see from Paul's writing they are spiritually immature and personally deceived. They live in one of the most carnal places in the whole world at this time, and they haven't figured out how to separate themselves from the world, and unto Christ. They have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. Paul is writing them so that they lack no spiritual gift, so they reach spiritual maturity.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Letter of Correction – Instructions in Righteousness / Spiritual Maturity**

So Paul is writing them this letter. It has been called a letter of correction, and that is so; but let it not be confused in what it ultimately is, instruction is righteousness, the path to spiritual maturity. So here is a high level overview of where we are going in this book.

### **BRIEF OUTLINE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS**

(Correction in Error – Instructions in Righteousness)

- Sainthood (1:1–9)
- Unity (1:10—3:23)
- Servanthood (4:1–21)
- Morality (5:1—6:20)
- Marriage (7:1–40)
- Liberty (8:1—11:1)
- Men and women in the church (11:2–16)
- The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
- Spiritual Gifts (12–14)
- The Resurrection (15)
- Stewardship (16:1–4)
- Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)

### **10 Times Jesus Christ / It is all about Jesus**

We must remember in every future study, that Paul laid the foundation right from the beginning in this powerful and practical book, and that is that it is, all about Jesus Christ. Ten times in the first ten verses of chapter one, Paul says Jesus Christ.

*1 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,*

*1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

*1 Corinthians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 1:4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,*

*1 Corinthians 1:5 that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,*

*1 Corinthians 1:6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,*

*1 Corinthians 1:7 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

*1 Corinthians 1:8 who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

### **Be Practical – the Solution is Jesus Christ and Him Crucified**

The Lord is saying, it is all Jesus, every need, every hope, is found in Jesus. “Come on, be practical,” people say. “We need more than just hearing about Jesus Christ crucified. We have problems in our marriage. We have problems with addictions. We have problems with our children. We have problems with guilt. We have problems with doubt.” But I suggest that throughout the Epistle, we'll see that the solution to every problem that plagues every person is the same: Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

### **Last Study – Paul tears down Wisdom of the World**

In our study last week we watched Paul (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) tear down the wisdom of the world. We saw how the wisdom of God, which sometimes doesn't make sense to us, or seem logical, is greater than the wisdom of the world.

*1 Corinthians 1:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written:

*"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."*

### **Greeks in Love with Philosophy / 50 Philosophical Parties / No absolute Standard of Truth**

The ancient Greeks (especially here at this intellectual center that Corinth was) were in love with philosophy, around which their culture was built. They had perhaps as many as fifty identifiable philosophical parties or movements, which vied for acceptance and influence. Each had its views of man's origin, significance, destiny, and relationship to the gods—of which they had many. Some of the philosophies had detailed schemes for the religious, political, social, economic, and educational ordering of society. The Greeks were in love with human wisdom. They believed that philosophy (philosophia, "love of wisdom") was all-important. Philosophy provided a view, invented by man, of the meaning of life, values, relationships, purpose, and destiny. Thus there were as many philosophies as there were philosophers, and people tended to line up behind their favorite. They widely disagreed as to which philosophy was the truest and most reliable, and, inevitably, many factions developed, each with its own leaders and adherents. **Without an absolute standard for truth, ideas of right and wrong were based entirely on human opinion.**

### **Church forgot the Simplicity and Power of the Gospel / Allowed World Wisdom to Influence Again**

Well, here is what it appears to me has happened in the Church at Corinth, and that is that they have missed out on the pure power and simplicity of the message of the cross, and based on our study from last week, must have again let themselves come under the influence of the so-called wisdom of the world. They forgot the cross, or they thought the message of the cross was too simple, and was only for the baby believers, and thus started to complicate gospel that set us free, and thus had found themselves being anything but free, but tangled up in sin and division within the church.

### **Paul was there for 18 Months**

Paul was there and he taught for 18 months and said in our passage today, that he only taught on one thing for the whole time he was there, one message, one theme, verse 1-2 of our text today.

*Acts 18:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

**(1 Cor 2:1 NKJV) And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.**

**(1 Cor 2:2 NKJV) For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.**

**(1 Cor 2:3 NKJV) I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.**

**(1 Cor 2:4 NKJV) And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,**

### **Paul didn't try to be Clever or Creative / 1 Thing – Jesus Crucified / So too for Us Today**

Imagine that, for 18 months, one message, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Paul did not come with the wisdom of the world, he didn't come and try to be culturally relevant to them, he came with one thing, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And listen Christen, so too it is for us, whether we are looking for answers in our person lives, or we are trying to give godly counsel to the world around us, if you/we try to be philosophical or psychological, clever or creative, you'll get tripped up. But, if like Paul, you determine to talk about nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, you'll do well.



### **What do you tell someone (part 1)?**

- Who asks “*How Do I Know God Loves Me?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Know God Will Provide for Me?*”
- Who asks “*Why Aren't Things Working Out for Me?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Know God Will Forgive Me?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Overcome Addiction?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Overcome Depression?*”
- Who asks “*How Do I Overcome Bitterness?*”

### **What do you tell someone (part 2)?**

Who says “*How could God allow me to be in this Hopeless Situation?*”

Who asks “*How Could God Allow My Child or Loved One to Die?*”

Who says “*That they Believe in the Theory of Evolution?*”

Who says “*That all Christians are Hypocrites?*”

Who asks “*How Can I Get People to See the Seriousness of Sin?*”

Who asks “*How Can I Have a Better Marriage?*”

Who asks “*How Can I Be a Better Parent/Leader?*”

Who asks “*How Can I Motivate People to Discipleship?*”

Who says “*That that feels ill equipped to witness, who are afraid they can't answer all the question that may be thrown their way?*”

### **Who says “How could God allow me to be in this Hopeless Situation?”**

You take them to the cross!

*John 19:17–18 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, <sup>18</sup> where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.

*John 20:1 (NKJV)* Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

### **Working from Victory – not to Victory**

What do you say to that person who feels that the situation they are in is totally hopeless, that Satan has won, and they are destined for failure? You take them to the cross, you remind that that we are not working to victory, but from victory, that as the enemy and the world celebrated victory, as the believers mourned, as darkness covered the land, Jesus was waiting to turn the tables and take what looked like the ultimate defeat, and turn it into the ultimate victory.

### **The Cross Hair**

You need to put what seems like a hopeless situation into the crosshairs of the cross, dead center, where the horizontal beam crosses the vertical beam, and keep the cross the center of your thoughts, as it reminds you who died for you, who has risen for you, and who now sits at the right hand of the Father living to make intercession for you.

*Hebrews 7:25 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

### **Must hang in there until Sunday**

Folks, you who may feel it is hopeless, that defeat is imminent, you must hang in there until Sunday. You must make it through your Friday, when the sky is at its darkest, you must make it through your Saturday, when it is a new day but nothing new is happening for you, you got to make it through your Friday and Saturday so you can make it to your Sunday!

## **Who asks “How Could God Allow My Child or Loved One to Die?”**

You take them to the cross!

*John 3:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

### **Loss of the Apple of Eye / Not Worldly Clichés /**

One of my greatest fears was how do I comfort people after they have lost a loved one, the apple of their eye. What do we say to someone who has lost their spouse, their parent, their friend, or the ever unimaginable loss of their child. The wisdom of the world, says things like, I guess God needed them more in heaven, or when it is your time, it is your time. What do we do when we come to that painful situation, we take them to the cross, and we tell them there is the One who knows what it is to lose a child, to lose the treasure of their heart, and He is the One the holds you in His hand right now. He has not left you, He has not forsaken you, and He can relate to the pain you are now suffering.

### **Take to Arms of Savior / Have given all they need to Make It / Perseverance**

If I, if you, can take someone to the Father, lead them into His arms of love, then I, then you, then we, have taken them, and have given them, all they will need to walk through the valley they are in. And may I note, we never get through the pain, life will never be the same, but perseverance is not getting on through, it is hanging on to, and that is hanging on to the Heavenly Father, who loves you so deeply that he would give His only Son for you.

### **He will Hold – Comfort – Whisper / I Know / Never Leave You**

He can hold you, He can comfort you, He can whisper in your ears, I know your pain, I know your hurt, I am here, and I hear, and I will never leave you.

## **Who says “That they Believe in the Theory of Evolution?”**

You take them to the cross!

**1 Corinthians 1:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written:**

*“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”*

### **They can be so Intimidating**

What do you say to the evolutionist, the one who throws out all their so-called wisdom, all the intellectualism that can seem so overwhelming to the simple folks such as you and I? You take them to the cross.

### **Not issue of Mind – but Heart / No need to Debate – Romans 2**

The debate isn't a battle of the minds, but the heart, and it is there that God wrote His law on their heart. We let them have their say, pontificate for a while, but then we ask them, let's just say there is a heaven, will you go there? Regardless of their response, we simply ask them, can I share the gospel of the Bible with you, what it says? Because that is where we want to take them, to their sin, and to the cross that can save them from their sin.

*Romans 2:15–16 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) <sup>16</sup> in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

## **Who says “That all Christians are Hypocrites?”**

You take them to the cross!

*John 14:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

### **Follow Me – Not My People / He is the Truth – no Mask / Talk is Cheap**

Jesus didn't say to follow His people, He said to follow Him. He said He is the way (the example to follow), He is the truth (no masking or hypocrisy), and He is the life (eternal life, and present life). That person who says Christians are all a bunch of hypocrites, you take that person to the cross and say, Jesus said to follow Him, not His people, do you see hypocrisy in Him? Talk is cheap as Christians make all kinds of professions but then don't live it out, but Jesus made His final statement at the cross! He backed up His talk, with His life.

### **Not a drop Hypocrisy at Cross**

You won't find one drop of hypocrisy at the cross.

## **Who asks “How Can I Get People to See the Seriousness of Sin?”**

You take them to the cross!

*Romans 6:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### **We can never move on from the Cross**

We can never move on from the cross, and I think we so often do, where we look at the cross as the place of salvation, but then all kinds of other things as the place where we grow and mature in the Lord. Yea I am saved, now I am going to do Bible Studies, Morning Devotions, Men's Fellowships, and then slowly we drift into the so-called wisdom of maturity, and we become filled with all kinds of head knowledge, and like this church in Corinth, the cross hairs move from the cross, to something else. When my eyes see the cross, then I see sin at its finest, and sin at its finest is bloody, it is brutal, it is bitter.

### **Look at What Sin Does**

We who have walked with the Lord for some time know that sin will find us out and do us in, but how do we help others who haven't yet come to that understanding? Take them to the Cross and say, “Look and see what sin does. It was my sin that caused the humiliation, the pain, the bleeding, the broken heart, the spectacle. See what sin did to Jesus on the Cross. And it will do the same to you. Oh, you may chuckle or wink at it now, but sin will eventually break your heart and wipe you out.” Get back to see sin in its context, and the context of sin is the cross.

### **Worlds name Changing**

Get sin back into its context and it won't be called:

- An error in judgment – but sin
- An affair – but adultery
- Alcoholism – but drunkardness
- Righteous indignation – but hatred
- An alternate lifestyle – but an abomination
- Living together – but fornication

## **Who asks “How Can I Have a Better Marriage?”**

You take them to the cross!

*Ephesians 5:25–27 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

### **Not Seminars - the Cross / Die! / Woman is Reflection of Man / Husbands give whole Hearted**

The key to a good marriage is not seminars. The key is Calvary. It's dying, husband, to your dreams, your desires, your wishes—and instead taking into consideration your wife's welfare and well-being. The woman being the glory, or literally the “outshining” of the man, means that she is the reflection of her husband (1 Corinthians 11:7). Therefore, if you're having a hard time with your wife, husband, the problem is yours. Give yourself totally, wholeheartedly, and sacrificially to your wife as Christ did—and watch what happens in your marriage. Serve your wife for a week or a month redemptively, and watch what takes place in your own heart.

*1 Corinthians 11:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> *For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.*

## **Who asks “How Can I Be a Better Parent/Leader?”**

You take them to the cross!

*John 19:26–27 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> *When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “**Woman, behold your son!**”* <sup>27</sup> *Then He said to the disciple, “**Behold your mother!**” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.*

### **Picture of Family Bonding / John - Mary**

The one instance we see family bonding take place in Scripture wasn't in a therapist's office. It was at the foot of the Cross, where Jesus said of John to His mother, “Behold thy son,” and where Jesus said to John of Mary, “Behold thy mother.” And from that point on, John adopted Mary as his mother, caring for her until she died.

### **Mom and Dad / Show your kids the Cross**

Mom, Dad, foster parent, step parent, grandparent—how long has it been since you had Communion with your kids or grandchildren, since you knelt beside them with the Lord's blood and body in hand? More impacting than any vacation, more important than any talk session will be the times you gather your kids around Calvary. There, a bonding and binding will take place unlike any other the world can even begin to offer.

## **Who asks “How Can I Motivate People to Discipleship?”**

You take them to the cross!

*Matthew 27:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> *Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross.*

### **Jesus Beaten and Weak / Simon tapped on the Shoulder**

Crowds mocked and taunted Jesus as He made His way through the city. But because of the beating He had already endured and the loss of blood He had already experienced, His body collapsed under the weight of the Cross beam He carried. At that point, a Roman soldier tapped the shoulder of an African man who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. Feeling the cold steel of the spear upon his shoulder, Simon no doubt thought, Oh no. I came here for a vacation. I came here to celebrate Passover. Now I'm going to carry the cross for a criminal—with all of these people jeering and shouting? I don't want to get involved in

this. I'm just a tourist. But he had no choice. So Simon stepped out, took up the Cross, and carried it to Calvary.

**Becomes Leader in Early Church / Once Person sees Cross – becomes Disciples / Look what he Did**

But here's the interesting thing: He who no doubt was reluctant to carry the Cross not only became a believer, but the father of two prominent figures in the structure of the early church (Mark 15:21). This tells me that a person who sees the Cross and carries the Cross will become a disciple of Jesus Christ. There's no other option. Once a thirteen-year-old, an eighteen-year-old, or a forty-two-year-old carries the Cross, he, too, will become a disciple. It's inevitable. Therefore, it's our responsibility to tell people, to share with people, to keep pointing people to the Cross, saying, "Look what Jesus did on your behalf."

*Mark 15:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.*

**Nicodemus – Joseph / Asks for the Body / Become Ceremonially Defiled / Jobs**

No one would have thought of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea as radical disciples. But something happened to Nicodemus—the one who came to Jesus by night because he didn't want to be openly associated with Him. Something happened to Joseph of Arimathea, who was probably a member of the Sanhedrin: When they saw Jesus crucified on the Cross, their hearts were changed radically—so much so that, following His crucifixion, they boldly went to Pontius Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus (John 19:38, 39). This meant they would be ceremonially defiled for Passover. It meant Joseph would lose his standing in the Sanhedrin. It meant Nicodemus would no longer be the master teacher of Israel. But they didn't care. They gave it all up. Why? Because when these fringe disciples, these secret followers, saw the Cross, they had no choice but to become radical in their service for Jesus.

**Who says "That that feels ill equipped to witness, who are afraid they can't answer all the question that may be thrown their way?"**

You take them to the cross!

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

**I Hope you See**

I hope you have seen up to this point, that you never need to feel that you don't have the right answers, that you are not equipped to give counsel to that believer that is hurting or questioning the things of their faith, nor do you ever need to worry that you can't hold your own is witnessing to the loss, for in every case, every question, every need, the answer is the cross.

# Eye has not Seen – Nor Ear has Heard

## Easter Sunday – 24 April 2011

(2:1-18)

### Video – I am Amazed

#### I am Amazed

I am amazed,

- I am amazed – That He says He can't stop thinking about me.
- I am amazed - That He traded places with me.
- I am amazed - That He said "forgiven".
- I am amazed – That He says to a sinner such as me "I love you Ray".
- I am amazed – That He calls me "son"
- I am amazed - That He says "mine" – even at times when I don't even want to claim myself.

#### Every Passage – Him & You

How blessed to spend this Easter Sunday with you, to break open a passage of Scripture and see "Him" in it, and to see us. Every passage, every sentence, and every word has two things in it, Him and you. This book, written so that we might see and know Him more, and so that he might speak His volume of love towards us who He loves and adores. The God of the universe is madly and deeply in love with you, and He writes us a detailed love letter that we get to read over and over again.

#### Stay focused on Cross – Watch out for Wisdom of World / Not Cleaver Speech – Just Jesus

We pick up our text here in chapter two, and our brother Paul has been telling us not to get ourselves mixed up, confused, distracted, or deceived by the so-called wisdom of the world, but to keep our lives very simple, very focused, to be very "cross-eyed", and that is (verse 2), to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Paul says when he came to this church in Corinth that he didn't come with a golden tongue, who with being all clever and entertaining, but he came and told them the one thing, the great thing, the only thing that matters, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And as we had studied last week, that is the singular solution to every man's problem, and every man's need – Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

**(1 Cor 2:1 NKJV) And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.**

**(1 Cor 2:2 NKJV) For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.**

**(1 Cor 2:3 NKJV) I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.**

**(1 Cor 2:4 NKJV) And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,**

**(1 Cor 2:5 NKJV) that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.**

#### Didn't come to Reason Intellectually – Just Jesus / And you were Blown Away – for He is Amazing

I didn't come to you and give intellectual reasoning, I just told you about Jesus and you were blown away, the power of God did a work in your heart and you were never the same. And oh how true that is, when we just think on Him, read this love letter, and our hearts are gripped, and our lives are changed, because He is just so amazing.

#### What we Read & Hear – is Totally Amazing

What we read and what we hear, and we are totally amazed.

**(1 Cor 2:6 NKJV) However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.**

**(1 Cor 2:7 NKJV) But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,**

### **A Mystery – Waiting for all the Pieces**

A mystery in the Bible isn't a secret, but is something that would not be fully understood until all the pieces were revealed. Nothing is a mystery to us, because we have this Bible and its full counsel, and thus we have the New Testament to help us understand the Old Testament. The people at the time of this writing were still waiting to get all the details that we can buy for 3.99 at Ollie's Bargain Barrel.

**(1 Cor 2:8 NKJV) which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.**

**(1 Cor 2:9 NKJV) But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."**

### **You ain't seen Nothing Yet / Paul puts it in Context of the Cross**

Verse 9 in our passage is a passage that we all like to quote, "Eye has not seen, nor ear has heard, nor entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him". We quote that as the "you ain't seen nothing yet", and that is so true, for we truly have not seen anything yet, and so we can keep quoting that verse as such (for the context of those chapters in Isaiah refers to the Last Days), but what I want you to see today is that that this verse is that Paul is saying this verse is also a reference to the cross, and it a quote from Isaiah (written about 700 years prior to the cross of Christ).

### **Isaiah 64**

This verse is a quote from Isaiah 64, and the passage of Scripture is, well simply put, the writer is saying "we need an Easter; we need someone to come save us from our sin". Let's read that passage together

### **Isaiah 64:1–7 (NKJV)**

Oh, that You would rend the heavens!  
That You would come down!  
That the mountains might shake at Your presence—  
2 As fire burns brushwood,  
As fire causes water to boil—  
To make Your name known to Your adversaries,  
*That* the nations may tremble at Your presence!  
3 When You did awesome things *for which* we did not look,  
You came down,  
The mountains shook at Your presence.  
4 For since the beginning of the world  
*Men* have not heard nor perceived by the ear,  
Nor has the eye seen any God besides You,  
Who acts for the one who waits for Him.  
5 You meet him who rejoices and does righteousness,  
*Who* remembers You in Your ways.  
You are indeed angry, for we have sinned—  
In these ways we continue;  
And we need to be saved.  
6 But we are all like an unclean *thing*,  
And all our righteousnesses *are* like filthy rags;  
We all fade as a leaf,  
And our iniquities, like the wind,  
Have taken us away.  
7 And *there is* no one who calls on Your name,  
Who stirs himself up to take hold of You;  
For You have hidden Your face from us,  
And have consumed us because of our iniquities.

## Overview Isaiah 64

The recap on Isaiah 64:

- Verse 4 – eye has not seen, nor ear heard.
- Verse 5 – and we need to be saved!
- Verse 6 – Our works are not going to help us either, no matter how great we think they may be, God calls them filthy rags (which in the original language is literally “menstrual rags”).
- Verse 7 – Because of our sin, God turns His face away from us, for He is too Holy to look upon sin

### Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> *You are of purer eyes than to behold evil,  
And cannot look on wickedness.  
Why do You look on those who deal treacherously,  
And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours  
A person more righteous than he?*

## Paul Saying the Leaders Wisdom made them Fools

Paul is saying (1 Cor 2:8), that they leaders who thought they were so wise, were so foolish, in that their so-called wisdom, led them to crucify the one who could save them.

## 700 years before Cross – they had no idea what was Coming at the Cross

Seven hundred years prior when Isaiah had written this passage, eye truly had not seen, not ear had heard, all that God had prepared for them, but that first Easter, when Isaiah 64 was fulfilled, oh what man saw and heard that day on the hill outside of Jerusalem.

## Glory Road

I call it “Glory Road”, these five “G’s” in the Easter account, and it is truly glorious, for oh what we see and hear at these five places, what they speak to our hearts, what they mean to our lives.

### Proverbs 20:12 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> *The hearing ear and the seeing eye,  
The LORD has made them both.*

## Glory Road:

- Gethsemane
- Gabbatha
- Golgotha
- Grave
- Garden

## The Eye

Your eyes are the most complex organs you possess except for your brain.

Your eyes are composed of more than 2 million working parts

Your eyes can process 36,000 bits of information every hour.

The external muscles that move the eyes are the strongest muscles in the human body for the job that they have to do. They are 100 times more powerful than they need to be.

## The Ear

The human ear, another amazing creation of God, the ability to hear sounds from the faintest whisper, to sounds from miles away. From what I have read, the bones in the human ear are the only bones that never stop growing. They grow from birth until death. I believe that God has a subtle message as He speaks to man, that we are never to stop listening, in fact the older we get, the larger our ears, the more we should be able to hear.

*Revelation 2:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”*

## All so we can See & Hear the Glory of God

The eyes and the ears, all so you can see and hear the glory of God! And oh what was seen and heard that Easter 2,000 years.



## Gethsemane

Gethsemane (which means oil press), what was seen and heard there? We see our Hero, our Loved One, sweating drops of blood, and we hear Him say Father if there be any other way. Our salvation was won and secured there in the Gethsemane, as Jesus said if there be no other way, then on the this way I shall go, because Ray is worth it to me, Renee is worth it to me, because Wayne and Camden are worth it to me.

*Matthew 26:36 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup> Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “*Sit here while I go and pray over there.*”

*Luke 22:41–44 (NKJV)* <sup>41</sup> And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, “*Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.*” <sup>43</sup> Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. <sup>44</sup> And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

## Gabbatha

Gabbatha. Where Jesus stood before Pilate, where we see a bloodied and beaten Jesus after 40 lashes of the scourging standing before Pilate and Pilate declaring, behold your King! The King of Glory, God Himself, willing to leave His throne and come trade places with us. And we hear the words that come out of our very mouth, crucify Him, there is no other way that we may be saved, Isaiah 64, we need to be saved, and the only way is for God to come down. Christian, can you hear those words coming from your lips today?

*John 19:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called *The Pavement*, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

*John 19:14–16 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!”

<sup>15</sup> But they cried out, “Away with *Him*, away with *Him*! Crucify Him!”

Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?”

The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!”

<sup>16</sup> Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led *Him* away.

## Golgotha

Golgotha. Here we see the full measure of God’s love, willing to give His Only Begotten Son. Golgotha was also called the “Place of a Skull” because as they quarried the rocks out of the area that were used to build the Temple, the mount took on the look of a face. How masterfully designed by God that the place where the rocks were cut to build the Temple, would be the same place the “Rock of our Salvation” would be cut so that we might become the Temples of the Living God.

*John 19:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the *Place of a Skull*, which is called in Hebrew, *Golgotha*,

*1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

## Why a Skull

But did you ever consider this also, of why it was called the Place of Skulls, because eye has not seen, nor ear has heard! What we see, what we heard, there at Golgotha. To see a crucified Christ, and then to hear Him say, Father forgive them!

*Luke 23:34 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> Then Jesus said, “*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.*” ....

## Not a Bone was Broken

*John 19:36 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup> For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, “*Not one of His bones shall be broken.*”

Why was no bone to be broken? I suggest two reasons...

**Redemption.** “Where sin abounds, grace abounds more,” Paul declares (Romans 5:20). What is the basis of grace? The blood of Calvary. Where is blood produced? In the bone. Therefore, in insisting that not a bone be broken, it’s as though God is saying, “I don’t want any suggestion that there is a limitation to the blood. I want people to understand that where sin abounds, grace always abounds more.”

**Reconciliation.** To hasten death, soldiers would break the legs of those being crucified. However, when they came to do this to Jesus, so surprised were they that He had died in only six hours, that they poked a spear in His side to make sure (John 19:34). Can I give you a special word for this Easter, if you are

estranged from or at odds with someone to whom you were once close, the only way there can be reconciliation is if someone dies. Jesus models that for you and me. He died to reconcile us to the Father—but He died quickly. It was not unusual for victims of crucifixion to prolong their lives eighteen hours or more as they hung on the cross. Not Jesus. The work of reconciliation complete, He released His spirit relatively quickly in order that He might race to Easter—to Resurrection day. That's the key: the sooner we die, the sooner we'll be at Easter Sunday. A lot of people remain at Good Friday, saying, "I'm not going to give up. I'm not going to die. I'm going to stand up for my rights," only to prolong the pain and separation. Jesus showed us the way when He died quickly. How do you know if you're really dead? They poked Jesus in the side with a spear to find out if He was really dead—and the same will happen to you. If you're dead, you won't react when you get poked. You won't say, "Ouch! Cut that out!" You'll know you're dead if, when you are poked, all that comes out is the blood of forgiveness, the water of refreshment. And that's when there can be reconciliation and resurrection.

### **Between two Thieves**

Between two thieves was an appropriate place for Jesus to be crucified. He is, after all, the ultimate thief. He'll steal the heart of anyone who understands what He did on the Cross there at Golgotha.

### **The Grave**

The Grave; what do we see and hear there at the grave? Nothing! Absolute silence, and absolute blindness. Imagine what it was like for those followers of Christ, imagine those that followed Him for those three years, imagine seeing Him and hearing Him for those three years, and then in one violent moment, silence! Silence can be deafening can it not? For three days they would sit in silence and wonder, will He really rise, is it really possible? The fear in that silence, that if He does not rise, then were our sins really forgiven, did the Father accept the substitution? But on the third day!

*Matthew 27:60 (NKJV) <sup>60</sup> and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb (Grave), and departed.*

### **The Garden**

The Garden. Here in the garden tomb we see our Risen Lord, we see death and sin conquered!

*John 19:41 (NKJV) <sup>41</sup> Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.*

### **Who do you Seek**

We hear Him say, "who do you seek?" Jesus was saying, you came seeking Me, and here I stand before you, representing all that you came to find!

- You came to find hope, here it stands before you.
- You came to find forgiveness, here it stands before you.
- You came to find love, here it stands before you.
- All that you seek, you will find in me.

*John 20:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" .....*

### **The Garden – the Place of Fruit**

Jesus that first Easter is seen and heard in a garden, and how wonderfully designed by God, that He is resurrected in a Garden, a place where fruit is grown, a place where flowers bloom, a place where the fragrance of life is smelled. Oh in the garden, what the eye sees, and the ear hears.

### **THE BLOOD**

One night in a church service a young woman felt the tug of God At her heart. She responded to God's call and accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. The young woman had a very rough past, involving alcohol, drugs, and even prostitution when she needed to supply her addiction. But, the change in her was evident. As time went on she became a faithful member of the church. She eventually became involved in the ministry, teaching young children. It was not very long until this faithful young woman had caught the eye and heart of the pastor's son. The relationship grew and they began to make wedding plans. This is when the problems began. The church did not think that a woman with a past such as hers was suitable for a pastor's son. The whispers and the cold stares could not be ignored; the people wore their thoughts and feelings about the matter on their sleeves. The son's heart broke over the judgment towards his bride to be,

and the young girl even began to question if the people were right, that her past condemned her future. Then one Sunday before the service began, the pastor's son stood up and addressed the matter. He began to speak and his statement was this: "My fiancée's past is not what is in question here. What you are questioning is the ability of the blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Today you have put the blood of Jesus in question. So, the question for you is, "does it wash away sin or not?" The whole church began to weep as they realized what they had been doing.

### **What we have Seen and Heard Today / It is Finished**

Oh what we have seen and heard today as we made the trip back to that first Easter. When He said "It is Finished", He meant "It is finished".

*John 19:30 (NKJV)*<sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

### **New Creation**

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)**<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

### **Happy Easter!**

### **Maybe you say – I don't get it / This is Foolishness**

But maybe you are here today and you say you don't get it, you don't understand what all this means to you, or you say the whole thing is foolishness.

*(1 Cor 2:14 NKJV)* But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

**(1 Cor 2:10 NKJV)** But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

**(1 Cor 2:11 NKJV)** For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

**(1 Cor 2:12 NKJV)** Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

**(1 Cor 2:13 NKJV)** These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

**(1 Cor 2:14 NKJV)** But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

**(1 Cor 2:15 NKJV)** But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.

**(1 Cor 2:16 NKJV)** For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

### **The Difference of Natural Man vs Spiritual – is the Cross**

These verses are making the distinction between the natural man and the spiritual man. Verse 14 is a real clear summation of that, and here is a real clear summation – the difference between the natural man and the spiritual man, is the cross of Christ. A man or woman will never understand the things of God (the spiritual things – for God is Spirit), until they first walk "glory road", and see and understand what that means to them personally.

*John 4:24 (NKJV)*<sup>24</sup> God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

### **Communion Table**

# 1 Corinthians 3

## The Carnal Christian versus the Spiritual Christian Part 1 - (3:1-15)

### **Church in Corinth having Problems / They think they are Mature / Foot in World - Church**

The Church of God in Corinth is having some problems, their problems are causing them to be fractured and divided, sinning and selfish, and although they speak in tongues and think of themselves as spiritual, we see from Paul's writing they are spiritually immature and personally deceived. They live in one of the most carnal places in the whole world at this time, and they haven't figured out how to separate themselves from the world, and unto Christ. They have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. Paul is writing them so that they lack no spiritual gift, so they reach spiritual maturity.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Letter of Correction – Instructions in Righteousness / Spiritual Maturity**

So Paul is writing them this letter. It has been called a letter of correction, and that is so; but let it not be confused in what it ultimately is, instruction is righteousness, the path to spiritual maturity. So here is a high level overview of where we are going in this book.

### **BRIEF OUTLINE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS**

(Correction in Error – Instructions in Righteousness)

- Sainthood (1:1–9)
- Unity (1:10—3:23)
- Servanthood (4:1–21)
- Morality (5:1—6:20)
- Marriage (7:1–40)
- Liberty (8:1—11:1)
- Men and women in the church (11:2–16)
- The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
- Spiritual Gifts (12–14)
- The Resurrection (15)
- Stewardship (16:1–4)
- Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)

### **Pick it Up in Verse 1**

So let's pick up our study in verse one, of chapter three, as Paul starts the comparison between the fleshly man (carnal man) and the spiritual man. If you are here today, then it is obvious why, because you want to be close to your Lord, hear His word, become more like Him, and in this chapter today the Lord is giving us tremendous instructions on how to grow deeper, and reach higher in our walk with Him.

**(1 Cor 3:1 NKJV) And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.**

### **Wishing to Address but Can't / Sarkinos – Fleshly / Fleshly – Dominated by the Flesh**

*Verse 1 - could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal -*“I was hoping I could address you as men and women who are spiritual,” Paul said to those at Corinth—“but I can't because you're carnal.” The Greek word translated “carnal” is sarkinos and means “fleshly.” Thus, a carnal person is one who is dominated by the inclinations of his flesh. They were not dominated and led by the Spirit of God.

### **Some base Maturity on Years – Not Experience**

Some people base their spiritual maturity on how long they have been saved. They say I gave my life to the Lord 10 years ago, I am a mature believer. That reminds me of the true story of a senior worker who

didn't get the promotion at work. She went into the boss's office and said hey, you gave the job to that person with only 5 years of experience, while I have 25 years of experience. The boss said no, you have 1 year of experience 25 times.

### **Not new Believers – But Stunted in Spiritual Growth / Saved 2-4 Years**

Verse 1 - as to babes in Christ - This doesn't mean those at Corinth were new believers, but that they were stunted in their spiritual growth. He was there about 50-52 AD, and now writes this letter a few years later, about 54 AD, from Ephesus (Acts 18). So these people have been saved now anywhere from 2-4 years.

### **Milk does a body Good / Same application Spiritually**

Hey milk is still good, in fact milk is great. Paul is using an allegory to make a spiritual point. We know that milk does a body good! Got Milk! Milk is vital for new babies, milk forms the bones and the skeletal structure of the human body. Milk has protein to help the muscles and organs to grow and promote good body health. Studies show that milk reduces the risk of some cancers, reduces the chance for some types of diabetes, milk does a body good! So too spiritually, as every new believer needs the milk of the word to develop their spiritual body, to develop their spiritual structure, and to grow the vital organs, and to reduce the forms of certain spiritual cancers and diseases. But just as a body cannot grow into its full strength on milk alone, it needs other types of nutrients that we get from meats and vegetables, so it is for our spiritual growth and maturity.

*1 Peter 2:1-3 (NKJV) Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, <sup>2</sup> as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, <sup>3</sup> if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

### **Babies are Cute – as Babies / New Believers Cute – as new Believers**

Babies are cute as babies. I love watching them stumble around; I loved watching my Camden suck on his baba when he was a baby. Even changing the diapers wasn't that bad. Hearing him say gagga and googoo was cute. He got away with a lot of stuff because he was a baby. But as he gets older, I have certain expectations I am expecting of him. I expect him to drink from a cup, feed himself, use the potty, heed to my directions, and go from self-centered to other-centered. Babies are cute when they are babies. So are new believers when they are babies. It is sweet to watch them grow, their limited understanding; some of their questions that are so innocent, yet so confused they are. We give them much grace because we know they are just babes and Christ and we know we need to give them time to grow and mature. But it is sad when that new believer never grows, where they stay in the self-centered state, where they continue to do the same immature things they did when they first got saved. It is no longer cute, but sad.

### **So not New Believers – but as those who should have been moving On**

So, too, Paul is talking not to newborn believers, but to those who should have been moving on in maturity and engaged in ministry, should have been teachers by now.

*Hebrews 5:12-14 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

### **In Christ – means they are Saved / But – Sunday was Sunday – Monday another Thing**

Verse 1 - in Christ - The fact that Paul refers to the Corinthians as being "in Christ" shows they're saved. But instead of moving on to maturity, they remained spiritually stunted. Why? Because they were mixing the world and the Word. They came to church on Sunday and took in the studies. They clapped their hands in worship and even put money in the offering. But on Monday they were out in the world again.

### **3 Types of Man**

Again, it is important to notice that the carnal Christian and the spiritual Christian are both in Christ, and thus they are both saved. Here we see that Paul is dividing people into three categories, and thus we should recognize ourselves that they exist.

1. Then Natural Man – who is not saved.
2. The Believer who is Spiritual
3. The Believer who is Carnal

### **The Difference of Natural Man vs Spiritual – is the Cross**

These verses are making the distinction between the natural man and the spiritual man. Verse 14 is a real clear summation of that, and here is a real clear summation – the difference between the natural man and the spiritual man, is the cross of Christ. A man or woman will never understand the things of God (the spiritual things – for God is Spirit – John 4:24), until they first walk “glory road”, and see and understand what that means to them personally. Please see last week’s study.

*(1 Cor 2:14 NKJV) But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

**(1 Cor 3:2 NKJV) I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;**

### **Fleshly Christian – only receives Milk / Still needs to be Pampered**

*Verse 2 - I fed you with milk and not with solid food* -The carnal Christian man can only receive milk. Like a baby, someone has to pamper him and burp him, counsel him and constantly explain things to him. The carnal Christian man does not know what it means to open up the Word, seek the Lord, and walk day by day with Him.

### **Must move on – Jesus Loves me this I Know / Go Further on – Further Away**

The believer in Christ has to move on from “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so”. They need to go further in their understanding.....and they need to go further away from the things of the world and the flesh.

### **Simple way to Evaluate – How is your Appetite / Crave Meat?**

*Verse 2 - for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able* - here’s a very simple way to evaluate whether you are carnal or not: How is your appetite? Do you crave the meat of the Word, or are you still only able to digest milk?

### **Pau is talking about a Diet / Nibble here and There - Slim**

Paul is talking about a person’s spiritual diet, and a man or woman is exactly what they eat. So for those who have a nibble here and a nibble there, they are spiritually slim. Those that love to load up on the carbs and proteins of the Word, they are solid. How’s your diet been? If you were to do a calorie count this week, did you consume more spiritual calories than worldly?

**(1 Cor 3:3 NKJV) for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?**

### **In Addition – Carnality manifests itself in Division**

In addition to an inability to take in the meat of the Word, carnality manifests itself in envy, strife, and division. Envy always wants something else, which leads to strife—always finding something wrong, which leads to division—always looking for something new. This is what was happening in the church at Corinth as carnal believers fought with and split from one another.

### **Proverbs - Pride**

Proverbs makes it clear that all contentions and divisions all are birthed from the same place, pride!

*Proverbs 13:10 (NKJV)*

<sup>10</sup> *By pride comes nothing but strife,  
But with the well-advised is wisdom.*

**(1 Cor 3:4 NKJV) For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?**

**(1 Cor 3:5 NKJV) Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?**

**(1 Cor 3:6 NKJV) I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.**

**(1 Cor 3:7 NKJV) So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.**

## **Why Splintering Us – Paul and Apollos in it together / God Produced Miracle of Germination**

“Why are you splintering?” Paul would ask the Corinthian Christians. “Apollos and I are in this together. We both have a part to play. We simply plant and water. It’s God who works the miracle of germination.”

### **Agricultural Study Done**

Some years ago, a study was done by an agricultural school in Iowa. It reported that production of a hundred bushels of corn from one acre of land required 4,000,000 lbs. of water, 6,800 lbs. of oxygen, 5,200 lbs. of carbon, 160 lbs. of nitrogen, 125 lbs. of potassium, 75 lbs. of yellow sulphur, and other elements too numerous to list. In addition to these ingredients are required rain and sunshine at the right times. Although many hours of the farmer’s labor are also needed, it was estimated that only 5 percent of the produce of a farm can be attributed to the efforts of man. So it is in spiritual realms: God causes the growth

### **Our Responsibility**

So some people are planters, they turn the soil over (reveal sin, the holiness of God), pick out the rocks (explaining and answering peoples questions and misconceptions), scatter the seeds of the gospel (the good news of Christ on the Cross). Another person comes by and waters it with the word, helps bring more clarity to what the planter has said, or water the seed planted through prayer, or their very own tears as they intercede for the person. So the two work so wonderfully together. But let it be remembered, our responsibility is to bring Christ to men, but only God can bring men to Christ.

*John 6:44 (NKJV)* <sup>44</sup> *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

### **Chuck Swindoll**

Paul said him and Apollos were working together in the same field. Chuck Swindoll tells this story: I was thumbing through one of the national periodicals and happened upon a picture of President Reagan sitting in the Oval Office. He was behind his desk, signing some documents. I noticed a small sign on his desk that was too small to read. It intrigued me. I found a magnifying glass and looked closer; the print was blurred. The next morning I had my secretary telephone the White House and talk with someone who could give us the information.” She found out that the sign on the President’s desk said: THERE IS NO LIMIT TO WHAT A MAN CAN DO OR WHERE HE CAN GO IF HE DOESN’T MIND WHO GETS THE CREDIT. – (C. Swindoll, *Dropping Your Guard*)

**(1 Cor 3:8 NKJV) Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.**

**(1 Cor 3:9 NKJV) For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.**

### **Changes from Agriculture to Architecture**

*Verse 9 –, you are God's building* - Here, Paul shifts analogies from agriculture to architecture.

**(1 Cor 3:10 NKJV) According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.**

**(1 Cor 3:11 NKJV) For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**

### **Only One Foundation – Jesus Christ / True Church Builds on and Up Jesus Christ**

The foundation upon which Paul built was not principles, but a Person—Jesus Christ. “Upon this rock will I build My Church,” Jesus said. What rock? The rock of Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Christ (see Matthew 16:18). When Peter said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. You’re the Hope, the Promise, the One,” Jesus had a foundation upon which to build His church. The true church of Jesus Christ is not built upon, “Let’s get together and make something happen politically,” or, “Let’s launch a moral crusade,” or, “Let’s be socially responsible.” It’s based upon Jesus Christ—our Hero, our Savior, our Friend, our coming King.

*Matthew 16:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.* <sup>19</sup> *And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

### **Christian-ettes**

I think that is one of the problems with today's churches and that is that they quit preaching Christ, and send time talking about everything else. And, the Pastors are no longer giving the people meat, but watered down milk. They give the people sermonettes to make them happy, and nothing deep to make them think, well "Sermonettes produce Christian-ettes"

**(1 Cor 3:12 NKJV) Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,**

**(1 Cor 3:13 NKJV) each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.**

### **DAY – Bema seat**

Verse 14 – The Day: is a reference to the judgment seat of Christ, known as the Bema Seat. It is not judgment for sin, as that was dealt with (It is Finished) on the cross; but the revelation of what we did for Him with what He gave us while we were here on the earth.

*2 Corinthians 5:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

**(1 Cor 3:14 NKJV) If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.**

### **Every Day – I build upon my Foundation / Difference of Material in Flammability**

Every day I live as a Believer in Jesus Christ, I build upon the foundational principle that Jesus is the Christ, that He is my Lord. The question is, do I build with gold, silver, and precious stones—or with wood, stubble, and hay? What is the telling difference between these materials? Gold, silver, and precious stones (diamonds, rubies, sapphire) don't burn.

### **Verse 10 – How not If / We all Building Something / Ask the Lord – is this of Value?**

In verse 10 Paul said "on how he builds, not if he builds". We are all building something, whether good or bad. Ask the Lord to help you evaluate the material you are using, Ask Him, "Lord is this of value what I am doing?" This thing that I am involved in, spending my time on, expending my resources, spending my money, taking me away from my home for (and church) - Ask Him, "Lord is this of value what I am doing? If you told me that every day, any day, that I was willing to enter into a mine shaft, that I would come out with at least one nugget of gold, silver, or a diamond – well I would be heading into the mine shaft every day. God promises the spiritual man, just that! Ask Him every day, Lord is what I am investing in of value, am I mining gold, silver, precious stones? Or am I only producing wood, hay, or stubble which is all going to burn?"

**(1 Cor 3:15 NKJV) If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.**

### **Every who Understands Jesus the Foundation – Saved / But some by Fire / Everything Vaporized**

Everyone who understands that Jesus is the Foundation of life will be saved. But some shall be saved as by fire. They'll make it into heaven. They'll be warmed when they see Jesus' face, but they'll look around and say, "Oh no, everything on earth I did vaporized before His eyes, and now I have no crown to cast at His feet."

### **Wipe away every Tear- then Tears in Heaven / Bigger Houses – Missed Opportunities**

Because God shall wipe away every tear (Revelation 7:17), there will be tears in heaven. For what will they be shed? Not for the bigger house we wish we had built, not for the newer car we wish we had purchased, not for the nicer clothes we wish we had worn—but for the opportunities we missed to lay up treasure there.

*Revelation 7:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

### **Before heaven – Millennial Kingdom / 365,000 Days / Layup Treasuries**

But before the eternity side of heaven, will be a time that is measureable, it will be calculated in days, and years, and it is called the Millennial Kingdom, and we will rule and reign with Him on this earth for 1,000



years, and what we do for each of those 365,000 days will be solely dependent on what we did (and invested in) here on earth. Hey, if you hate your job now, you might want to really rethink that position, well all I care about is making it in. 365,000 days is a long, long, long time! I don't want to be the street sweeper in the millennial kingdom, I want to hear Him say well done, go now and be my ambassador over there, come back and give me a report on how goes it. I will weep, if He hands me a broom, and says I need you up in Glen Burnie tomorrow. I think many people will be so regrettable that they wasted so much of their opportunities here on earth to lay up their treasures.

*Matthew 25:21 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> *His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'*

*Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

### **Story of a Man's Mansion**

A man died and went to heaven, and upon arrival Peter said let me show you to your place. So as they walk they pass this huge castle, and the man asks, is that mine, and Peter says no that is not yours. Then they pass a huge three-story mansion, and the man asks, is that mine, and Peter says no that is not yours, then they pass a nice five-bedroom home, and the man asks, is that mine, and Peter says no that is not yours. Then they pass a one-bedroom home, and the man asks, is that mine, and Peter says no that is not yours. Then they come to a small wooden shack, no glass on the windows, just open to the air, just one room, no porch, no patio. The man says this is it, this is my mansion, what gives? And Peter said, well we did the best with the material you sent ahead.

### **What is the Material Used For – God is building a Temple**

What is the Lord doing with all this precious material (gold, silver, and precious stone)? He is building Himself a Temple, and you are that temple, and He desires it to be glorious! We will pick it up there in our next study.

*(1 Cor 3:16 NKJV)* *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

# The Carnal Christian versus the Spiritual Christian

## Part 2 - (3:16-23)

### **Church in Corinth having Problems / They think they are Mature / Foot in World - Church**

The Church of God in Corinth is having some problems, their problems are causing them to be fractured and divided, sinning and selfish, and although they speak in tongues and think of themselves as spiritual, we see from Paul's writing they are spiritually immature and personally deceived. They live in one of the most carnal places in the whole world at this time, and they haven't figured out how to separate themselves from the world, and unto Christ. They have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. Paul is writing them so that they lack no spiritual gift, so they reach spiritual maturity.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Picking it Up - Paul has been telling them to Separate from World**

We are picking our study back up here in chapter three and the apostle is writing to this church in Corinth about separating themselves from the world, from the influences of the world, very specifically he is telling them to not get influenced and absorbed by the wisdom of the world.

### **World's Wisdom sounds Good – Until you see the Results down the Road / Dr. Phil Show**

The world's wisdom sounds so sound, so solid, so sure, until you watch it play itself out, and the resultant is anything but solid and sure. I want to see the Dr. Phil show in five years, go back and interview all the "powerful moments" from five years ago, and see how many are "still powerful", and I will guarantee you that it will be a short show - for the wisdom of man is futile. But, apply the wisdom of God, His word and His ways, and the applicant lives a life of freedom and power. The wisdom of the world is powerless, because the wisdom of the world excludes Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

### **Difference Saved and Unsaved / Difference Carnal and Spiritual Christian / Spiritual – Led by Spirit**

Our brother Paul is writing in the context, of not only differentiating the difference between the saved person and the unsaved, but also the difference between the carnal (fleshly) Christian and the spiritual Christian. The carnal Christian is saved as they understand the cross of Jesus, but they are led by their fleshly desires; where the spiritual Christian is one who is led by the Spirit of God.

*1 Corinthians 3:18–23 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. <sup>19</sup> For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; <sup>20</sup> and again, "The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." <sup>21</sup> Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours: <sup>22</sup> whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come—all are yours. <sup>23</sup> And you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.*

### **Fleshly – not Skilled in the Word / Flesh supersedes word of God / Want Spirit-led – do the Word**

Paul up to this point has said the fleshly carnal Christian is one that is not skilled or in understanding of the Word of God. They do not take the Word of God, read it and apply it to their lives. They let their fleshly desires supersede what the word of God says. Many people ask, Ray how can I be filled with the Holy Spirit, and I tell them that to be filled with the Spirit is to be influenced by the Spirit, which is to be led by the Spirit. Thus do what the Word of God says to do, and you will be fulfilling (full filling) of the Holy Spirit.

### **Fleshly – not in Unity**

Paul also spoke about how the carnal fleshly Christian is one that is not in unity, they cause and live in division. Do you want to be spiritual, to be a spirit filled Christian, live in unity, seek it out, and promote it.

### **Fleshly – pursuits are Selfish – Will all Burn**

Then Paul went on, and where we left off, that the carnal fleshly christen is not producing works that glorify God. The carnal Christian is wrapped up in their own endeavors, their own pursuit of happiness, and they are not storing their treasures up in heaven, and the things the fleshly Christian are investing in are all going to burn up and produce nothing of value.

### **More Application – then Finish the Chapter**

We laid a foundation last study, and now I want to bring some more application to a few things, and then we will wrap this study up with the last verses of the chapter. Here is the outline of chapter three.

#### **Building the Spiritual Body**

- Feasting on the Word (3:1-2)
- Finding Unity (3:3-7)
- Fireproof Works (3:8-15)
- Fellowshiping in Purity (3:16-23)

#### **Feasting on the Word (3:1-2)**

**(1 Cor 3:2 NKJV) I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;**

#### **Not New Believers – Not Mature**

As we studied last week these believers in Corinth were not new believers, but immature believers. They had been saved anywhere from 2-4 years, yet they were not moving on in their understanding and application of the word of God. They knew “Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so”, but they were not moving on to applying the principals of the Word, and letting it lead and guide their lives. They should have been teaching the word at this point, rather than having to continually be taught and reminded about the basic things of the faith (Hebrews 5):

*Hebrews 5:12-14 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

#### **Want to be Spiritual? Take the Word beyond just Hearing and Reading**

What I want to add is, if you want to be the Spirit filled and led Christian, to break free from the influences of the flesh, then we must take the Word beyond just reading and hearing it. In several studies, and they all come up with close to the same results, researchers have determined that things taught are retained at the following degree.

#### **The Learning Pyramid**

- Lecture - 5%
- Reading – 10%
- Audiovisual – 20%
- Demonstration – 30%
- Discussion – 50%
- Practice doing – 75%
- Teaching Others – 90%

*\*research done by “National Training Laboratories” (Bethel, Maine).*

#### **Apply It Beyond**

So you can see, we have to take the Word, beyond just reading and hearing, we need to find places and people we can

- See Demonstration – oh the mission field is the place to see it applied, to see God work His Word. The mission field is nearer than you think, across the street or across the sea.
- Discuss it. Parents, discuss the word with your children, married couples discuss the word. Do the small group men’s and woman’s study, the home fellowships.
- Practice It – Take the Word and say I am going to do it, whether I want to or not, whether I feel like it or not, but if I read something or hear something, then I am going apply it to my life today.
- Teaching It – The greatest student, is a teacher, because they reinforce the word they have heard by studying it deeper, pondering it longer, and living it out (for who wants to be say one thing and do another). I know, and have known since the beginning, that God didn’t make me a Bible teacher because He needed a teacher, rather He made me a Bible teacher so I can be taught. I

know because of my proneness to laziness, that if I didn't have to teach, my reading and listening would be nearly non-existent. 90% retention rate! Give me that return on my money, and I'd be throwing last dollar into that fund. Teaching is an investment in your spiritual life.

### **Finding Unity (3:3-7)**

**(1 Cor 3:3 NKJV) for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?**

#### **We are God's Building**

As we have read through Paul uses the analogy that we are builders, we are building something, and we see that we are God's building. Verse 16 will tell us that we are God's building, His temple, His Holy of Holies for which He can dwell in us. But I see it more than that as Paul for nearly three chapters keeps coming back around and talking about unity, oneness in the body of Christ; and I see a message here that we are more than just a building for God to dwell in, but that we are to be building for others to dwell in, for you see God shares all that He has with His children, and that would be all the buildings He owns, that would be you and I, and thus I see God speaking to us that we are to be buildings that people can come into (if you will) and feel at home. Have you ever considered yourself a building for others to come into? I guess the first question, especially as it applies to unity, do people feel invited and welcomed into your life? Do you put yourself out there that people feel they can approach you, knock on your door, and say may I come in? Or do you have a do not disturb sign on your life. When we consider that we are a building for others to come into, it is quite interesting to walk the house and see all that comes with that home that we invite others into. There is the center of every home, at least for me, and that is the dining room, a place that people can come in and eat. We, this building of God for others to come into, we say come in and let me feed and nourish you with the Word, a fine meal at just the right time, as we share God's Word with them, give them something to remind them of who is their God, to give them nourishment when they may feel starved by the world. Have you ever considered yourself a dining room to feed and nourish others? Every home needs a kitchen then to prepare that meal, and we need a room in our buildings to prepare meals, read recipes, so that we may feed those who come into the dining room of our bodies. And then there is the living room, a place we invite people to just come and have fellowship, to rest, to be relaxed, to kick back. It is a joy to be around those people that are so welcoming and receiving, that you just enjoy being with them, and when you leave you feel totally refreshed. And, there is the bedroom, where people can rest, just be away from the world. How vital it is to be a person that people can just come and be at rest.

### **Fireproof Works (3:8-15)**

**(1 Cor 3:9 NKJV) For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.....**

**(1 Cor 3:12 NKJV) Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,**

**(1 Cor 3:13 NKJV) each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.**

**(1 Cor 3:14 NKJV) If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.**

**(1 Cor 3:15 NKJV) If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.**

#### **Works more than Ministry**

Works is so often wrapped up into witnessing and serving others, but it is much more than that, it is our faith and our character.

#### **Letting the Fires Burn**

Although the primary reference of verses 13-15 is to the bema seat, where we will be rewarded for that which we've done on earth (which we studied in our last study), I believe a secondary reference is to the

fires the Lord allows to sweep through our lives presently. “You’re fired,” your boss says to you. And now you get a chance to see how much of your character is gold, silver, and precious stones, and how much is wood, hay, and stubble. In ministry, in relationships, and on the job, fires will break out around you that you might think you have to put out immediately. But I have found that when you sense a wildfire starting, it’s a good idea to be careful before you grab your bucket and shovel and try to put it out in your own energy and by your own wisdom. If you have good people skills, you can meet with people, try to reason with them, and maybe control the fire for a year or two. But more often than not, it will explode eventually with a flame more devastating than the original. Thus, when fires come, I am slowly but surely learning to let them burn. I don’t defend myself. I don’t try to soothe feelings or calm tension. I let the fire burn. And when the fire is over, I poke around and see if any gold, silver, or precious stones are left with which to rebuild. To you who are involved with people in your family or in ministry, I suggest letting any given fire burn. And when you see what’s left, you’ll either know you were building with gold, silver, and precious stones—or with the wood, hay, and stubble of your own self-importance.

### **James Garfield**

When James Garfield, later to become President of the United States, was principal of Hiram College in Ohio, one father asked him if the course of his studies could not be shortened so that his son might be able to complete his studies in less time. “Certainly,” Garfield replied. “But it all depends on what you want to make of your boy. When God wants to make an oak, he takes one hundred years. When he wants to make a squash, he requires only two months.” Don’t always be looking for the quick and easy way out, or you may end up being squash.

### **The Fire**

The fire seems so frightening, but a fire that is controlled and contained is very soothing and comforting. The fires God brings into our lives are under control (even if we think they are wild-fires), and they can be very soothing to our souls and spirits. Just this week I have a week of discouragement, weariness, a feeling of overwhelm, decisions upon decisions to contemplate and decide on, and I found myself being comforted and encouraged at the fire. I have a little fire pit in the back yard, and I sat by it for hours (3 to 4), and for each major decision, God spoke His direction, for my weariness His refreshed me (I never wanted to go to bed – if I didn’t have to go to work I would have stayed out there until sunrise), and for my discouragement He ministered peace and encouragement unto me. Fire can be a great thing when it is contained, it can be warming and soothing. So, let’s not think fires will consume us, let’s let them burn under God’s control, and let’s poke around and see the gold and silver they refine, and the wood, hay, and stubble they burn away.

### **Fellowshipping in Purity (3:16-23)**

#### **Want to be Spirit Led – Fellowship in Purity**

And lastly, if you want to be the Spirit filled and led Christian, to break free from the influences of the flesh, we are to (what I call) the fellowshipping in purity. The place where we say no to the desires and calling of the flesh, at whatever the cost, and seek the pure ways of the Lord.

**(1 Cor 3:16 NKJV) Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?**

#### **The Holy of Holies**

The Greek word translated “temple” is not the usual word hieron, which refers to the whole temple, but rather naos, which speaks of the Holy of Holies—the part of the temple wherein dwelt the shekinah, the chabod, the visible perception of the presence of God. God Himself lives in you!

**(1 Cor 3:17 NKJV) If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.**

#### **To Diminish / Sometime Penalty of Sin – is the sin Itself**

The Greek word translated “destroy” doesn’t mean “damned.” It means “diminished.” Sometimes the very penalty of sin is the sin itself as it robs and diminishes a person from all they can have and be. Impurity

will diminish (our appetite for the Word, will make us critical and thus not seek unity, and will not give us a passion for laying up treasures in heaven). But, oh when we are living in purity there is a supernatural spiritual dynamic that makes us crave those three things. And, another amazing dynamic, when we do those three things, even when we are less than living in purity, those three things produce a craving for us to be living in purity.

**(1 Cor 3:18 NKJV) Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.**

**(1 Cor 3:19 NKJV) For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness";**

**(1 Cor 3:20 NKJV) and again, "The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."**

### **Big Picture – Not wisdom of World / Man is not Fooling God**

Remember these are believers. Remember the big picture context is the falling into the wisdom of the world, and Paul is saying don't do it. The world think they are so slick, crafty, finding all the loopholes and convincing themselves that they are justified or excused for their action, but God is saying don't think you have a loophole, and the that your craftiness is only deceiving yourself, for it surely does not fool the Lord. And, the day will come when you will rep what you sow.

*Galatians 6:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*

**(1 Cor 3:21 NKJV) Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours:**

**(1 Cor 3:22 NKJV) whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come; all are yours.**

**(1 Cor 3:23 NKJV) And you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.**

### **Christians say they can't Overcome their Passions**

Oh how many Christians say they can't help it, even if they are in Christ they still can't overcome the flesh and the world and their passions, and hence why they don't live the life of fellowshiping in purity.

### **Overwhelming Passion**

In his book *The Obedience Option*, David Hegg illustrates what he calls "overwhelming faith." Hegg was talking to a young man who claimed that he couldn't stop his pattern of sleeping with different women. The young man knew it was wrong, but he also claimed that his sexual lust was inevitable. Therefore, it wasn't his fault, especially since God had created him with such strong desires and urges.

Finally, Hegg interrupted the young man and said, "Suppose that I came into your room and caught you and your girlfriend as you were just starting this 'inevitable' process." Suppose I took out ten one-hundred-dollar bills, and told you that they were yours if you [stopped]. What would you do?"

When the young man quickly said that he'd rather have the cash, Hegg asked, "So what happened to the irresistible force of lust?"

Then Hegg concluded:

*We both realized a very simple truth: one passion may seem irresistible until a greater passion comes along .... If we take this principle into the arena of righteous living, it comes out like this: the only way to overcome a passion for sin is with an overwhelming passion for righteousness. This overwhelming passion for righteousness is actually a mindset that the Bible calls faith. Here is a helpful definition of this kind of overwhelming faith: Faith is a life-dominating conviction that all God has for me through obedience is better by far than anything Satan can offer me through selfishness and sin.*

### **Greatest reason in the Flesh – we Fade from the Cross**

One of, if not the greatest, reasons people become fleshly is because they drift and fade away from the cross. Ohh how we must continually go back to the cross. I have purposed that I will always preach and teach on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ because that is where the power of God lies. See Jesus, God Himself, laying down His life for you, for me, and we will not allow ourselves to be wowed and robbed by this world.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

### **Acts 1 – 40 Days after His Resurrection**

In Acts we are told that Jesus walked amongst the people for 40 days after His resurrection. Forty days of walking, forty days of talking, forty days of eating and fellowshiping. And every time you would see Him, you would see the scars.

*Acts 1:1–3 (NKJV) The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, <sup>2</sup> until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, <sup>3</sup> to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*

### **What did His Body Look Like / A Permanent Reminder**

What did the resurrected body of Jesus look like? The Bible tells us that after Jesus' cruel torture, crucifixion, and three days in the tomb, He was recognizable, and that His followers knew who He was.

- We know that He had a body of flesh and bone. Jesus told the disciples, "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have" (Luke 24:39).
- We also know that Jesus ate food. Imagine the surprise of the disciples when the risen Lord appeared to them and then said, "Have you any food here?" "What?" they must have been thinking. But they gave Jesus a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb, and He ate it (see Luke 24:41–43).
- His resurrected body also could be touched and felt. When the women were returning from the empty tomb, "Behold, Jesus met them, saying, 'Rejoice!' So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him" (Matthew 28:9).
- Then, when Jesus appeared to the disciples in the Upper Room, He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing" (John 20:27).
- This tells us that in His resurrected body, Jesus still wore the marks of the crucifixion. And He will wear those marks, even in eternity (see Zechariah 12:10).

### **Imagine**

Imagine shaking hands with Him, and see the nail scarred hand that would say, peace be unto you, paid in full at the cross. Imagine when He came to your house, and the custom was to wash each visitors feet as they entered your home, and imagine running your hands over those scars, knowing that you were welcoming into your home the Risen Savior. Imagine going to a Bible study taught by Him, as His hands would move as He taught you would see the continually reminder that this Christianity is bought with blood. Imagine counseling with Him, and seeing the scars right before you, and you would see the reminder that of the One that was willing to pay the price for you, and the volume of His words backed with proof, of His declaration that I love you, I did all this for you, and that I have the power to overcome anything and everything that plagues and troubles you today; and when we saw the scars we knew we can trust all that He spoke. Imagine if He was to hand you something, and you would see those scars, you would really see where all that you had come from. Imagine walking with Him, looking down and continually seeing those scars, and you would really determine if you were going to go down certain paths now wouldn't you.

### **The Greater Passion – Overcomes all other Passions**

We overcome one passion, by a greater passion, and when we apply our lesson today, Jesus will be that greater passion – always!

### **Building the Spiritual Body**

- Feasting on the Word (3:1-2)
- Finding Unity (3:3-7)
- Fireproof Works (3:8-15)
- Fellowshiping in Purity (3:16-23)

### ***Communion***

# *1 Corinthians 4*

## The Minister of God (4:1-21)

### **Spiritual - Carnal**

We pick up in our study today here in chapter four where Paul is going to talk about the ministers of God. Now the church in Corinth is having some issues; they think themselves spiritual because they have spiritual activities going on such as after-glow sessions where people are speaking in tongues and prophesy, they are having great church events such as love feast and church pot-lucks, lots of spiritual impressiveness, but then there was a whole another side of things going on that were anything but spiritual, as they were winking at drunkardness, fornication, all kinds of sexual immorality, and there was a lot of division, critical spirits, and gossip going on in the church.

### **Doesn't go after Big Ones**

Paul writes a letter of correction (and instructions in spiritual maturity) to them, and how interesting to me in that he doesn't start off going after the "big ones" like all the sexual immorality and partying, but he addresses in detail the call and need for unity. This book is sixteen chapters, and he spends the first four chapters (1-4) taking unity, loving and serving one another.

### **Division leads to Carnality / Unity & Service to Spirituality**

Why? Because division and judging leads to and promotes carnality; while unity and serving leads to and promotes spirituality. Want to be spiritual? Then seek unity with your brethren, and be a servant. Serve who? Whoever God puts before you.

### **Paul speaks of Self – But we all Called to be Slaves**

Paul will be speaking here in chapter four about himself as the picture of a servant (minister) of God; but the application is meant for every person who names the name of Jesus as Lord, for we are all called to be servants in some form or fashion. So in our study we will see the following attributes we should strive to be as ministers of Christ:

Outline: The Minister of God

- The Minister of God – Is Faithful (4:1-5)
- The Minister of God – Is Humble (4:6-13)
- The Minister of God – Is Tender (4:14-21)

### **The Minister of God – Is Faithful (4:1-5)**

#### **Servanthood (4:1-21)**

**1 Corinthians 4:1-6 (NKJV)** Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. <sup>2</sup> Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. <sup>3</sup> But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. <sup>4</sup> For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

**(1 Cor 4:1 NKJV)** Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

#### **Under-rower**

The literal meaning of the Greek word *huperetes*, translated "minister," is "under-oarsman." An under-oarsman was a slave on the lowest deck of the ship who simply followed the cadence of the drummer. What does it mean to be a minister? It doesn't mean to set the course or determine direction, but rather to



simply do what the Captain of the ship, Jesus Christ, tells us to do, knowing that He will bring us to the right destination.

### **Modern day – A Waiter for Christ**

A good modern day translation would be read something like this

*“Let a man so consider us, as waiters of Christ”*

### **Not a Table Guest**

A waiter not a table guest – one who serves the others. Sadly, there are many Christians who are only table guests, as they always sit to be served, never getting up to serve others. But we are all called to be the servants, the waiters of Christ.

### **The Waiter of the Lord**

But what do we see in the servant, the waiter of the Lord, very many of the same functions and roles as we see of the waiter in the restaurant today.

- The waiter is the one who comes to take the order. But note they only take the order according to what is on the menu. The waiter only serves what Jesus is cooking, what is on the menu we call the bible. Too many servants of God today are letting people determine what is on the menu and what is being served because they want the people to come back to their restaurant.
- The waiter is important because they are the face of the cook, as the cook is behind the scene, usually not visible, and so a picture of the minister of God, as we are the face of the Master Chef, we represent Him to the people physically as He is not visible. I am reminded of the story of the little boy who was scared of the lightning storm and was crying in his bed for his mommy. His mommy said it is ok Billy for Jesus is with you. The little boy said I know that mommy but right now I need someone with skin on them. So it is for the minister as they get to be the one with the skin on that people sometime need to see and feel the embrace.
- But ever so important for the waiter is that after the great meal, and the compliments of the great meal, they need to tell the people He is a great Chef indeed.
- Another attribute of a waiter is that they need to be attentive, looking at the people's need before the people even see their need. Is it not true the best waiters are the ones that are refilling the glass before you get to your last sip, or topping off the coffee before it gets cold so every sip is as hot as the last? I'll never forget this one maitre d' when I was in a restaurant in New Orleans and it was a champagne brunch And he offered me a glass of champagne as I sat down and I said no thank you, and in new Orleans to refuse alcohol you immediately stand out, he said please explain with a smile on his face and I told him that I hadn't had a drop of alcohol in like ten years. So the waiter comes by after he leaves and ask me what I would like to drink and I said ice tea, well since I was in new Orleans he just assumed I must have meant Long Island Ice Tea, so he brings it to me and I start rising it to my lips, and I have no idea how the maitre d' could tell the difference, but from across the room, and it seemed like one of those slow motion scenes in a movie, he starts running across the room screaming noooooooooo, and was able to stop me before it reached my lips. Hence why he was the head waiter, because he became familiar with the people and looking to attend to their every need.
- And a waiter is patient with the people at the table giving them time think, not to pressure them. And, the best waiters are the one that are just simply pleasant, they have a smile, they are inviting, and they make the people comfortable.

Good pictures of the waiters, the servants of God.

*“Let a man so consider us, as waiters of Christ”*

## **Verse 1 - and stewards of the mysteries of God.**

### **A Mystery / Shadows and Types**

A mystery when spoken of in the New Testament isn't a secret, but something that was not fully revealed, but now has been. In the Old Testament we see many types and shadows of Jesus and heaven, and spiritual things, but now we have been given full understanding of those things through the New Testament, and the imparting of the Holy Spirit so that we have the whole picture. And now as stewards, we are to manage and serve out this knowledge and understanding to others.

### **Steward knows location of Master's Wealth**

The word "steward" refers to the slave who knew the location of his master's wealth. As seen in Genesis 39, Joseph was this type of a slave to Potiphar. So it is for us, as we have and know the location of our Master's wealth.

*Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*

**(1 Cor 4:2 NKJV) Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.**

### **Human Wisdom – Success is Seen / God's Economy - Faithfulness**

In Corinth, with all their human wisdom, they placed spirituality on outwards signs, outward success, and Paul says that success in God's economy is based on one thing, faithful.

### **Just Keep Rowing**

Just keep rowing - stroke after stroke and day after day just keep rowing to the beat of Jesus Christ, the heartbeat of the Father. Jesus is the Captain of our Salvation, He has charted a course for each and every one of us, and we need to just be faithful to keep rowing.

### **Speaking of Faithfulness – The Little Things Matter**

Speaking of faithfulness I believe the Lord gives us an insight into something when He says you have been faithful in the little things and I will make you ruler over many; and I believe the insight into our everyday lives is that if we have not been being faithful in the so-called little things, when it comes time to stand and be faithful in the bigger things we will find that we won't be. And so we see the vital-ness of staying and being faithful in the so-called little things, which we now see are no longer little things because they determine how we will handle the bigger things. So the key take away is for us to be faithful in everything, regardless of big or small, so that we are found faithful!

*Luke 19:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> *And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'*

### **Next – Don't Worry about People**

Paul is going to give a little caveat and encouragement here in the next three verses as he says, and don't worry about what the people are saying, or even your own heart, just keep your eyes on the Lord and the prize. Judgment produces discouragement, which leads to quitting, which extinguishes faithfulness.

**(1 Cor 4:3 NKJV) But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself.**

**(1 Cor 4:4 NKJV) For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.**

**(1 Cor 4:5 NKJV) Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.**

### **Never win a Heart by Judging / How about Correction - Identification**

We will never win anyone's heart by judging them. How about correction you may ask, do it in love, and then it won't be about your heart but it will be about where their heart is. When Jesus said you will know them by their fruits, He is talking about identification and not condemnation.

*Matthew 7:15–20 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup> You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> Even so, every good tree bears*

good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

### 3 Courts

Notice there are three courts spoken of here.

1. The Court of Opinions of Others (v3)
2. The Court of Self-Judgment (v3-4)
3. The Court of the Lord (v5)

### Judge

Paul is saying others will judge, that is just what the carnal worldly person does, for as they judge you, then they can feel good about themselves, they feel elevated. Which is totally foolish as Paul points out because eventually we will all be judged before the Lord (and this ties back to our study in chapter 3 on the foundations we are laying and whether they will make it through the fire). But Paul says, don't judge yourself. I myself am my worst judge; I can really lay myself out. Paul says don't judge yourself because you won't get it right. Our hearts are deceitful, we can fool ourselves into thinking we are doing really bad when we aren't, and equally so we can think we are doing well, when really we are in bad spiritual shape. Verse 10 of Jeremiah gives us the key, and that is to get alone with the Lord in silence and let Him search our hearts (which He will so often do as we read the word), and then we will see where our hearts truly are, and whether we are building on wood, hay, and stubble, or if we are building on gold, silver, and precious stones.

**Jeremiah 17:9–10 (NKJV)**

- <sup>9</sup> *"The heart is deceitful above all things,  
And desperately wicked;  
Who can know it?*
- <sup>10</sup> *I, the LORD, search the heart,  
I test the mind,  
Even to give every man according to his ways,  
According to the fruit of his doings.*

### Faithful – Humble

So the minister of God is first faithful, and next we see they are to be humble. Humble in recognizing that the world and even fellow Christians will look down on the faithful servant of God. Paul's application for us is that it comes with the territory, it is nothing unusual, so don't quit because of it, just stay faithful. And here we will get a look at Paul's sarcastic side.

### **The Minister of God – Is Humble (4:6-13)**

**1 Corinthians 4:6–13 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. <sup>7</sup> For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? <sup>8</sup> You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us—and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you! <sup>9</sup> For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. <sup>10</sup> We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! <sup>11</sup> To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. <sup>12</sup> And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; <sup>13</sup> being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

**(1 Cor 4:6 NKJV) Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.**

### Paul and Apollos real life Examples

V6 - figuratively - the points I made here I will now apply to me and Apollos so you can see a real life application before your eyes. We are both servants in God's field so why do you try to divide us.

### **Correct – More Gifted or Materially Blessed**

*Verse 6 - , that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other* – Paul, rather sarcastically, will correct them for thinking that because someone is physically gifted, or material blessed, that doesn't mean they are more spiritual or more favored of God.

**(1 Cor 4:7 NKJV) For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?**

### **Three Questions / Leaves us nothing to Boast**

V7 - three questions so they may see their heart:

1. Who makes you different?
2. What do you have that you did not receive?
3. Why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

This should all bring us down to size and see that all we have and are has come from the Lord, so nothing to boast in.

**(1 Cor 4:8 NKJV) You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us; and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!**

### **Over – Under Valuing**

Many in Corinth were over-valuing themselves, and way under-valuing Paul. But verse 7 if they had any smarts about themselves would zip their lips because they would make fools of themselves to say anything more about being so wonderful and Paul being so weak.

**(1 Cor 4:9 NKJV) For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.**

### **Roman Arena**

In the time of this writing the Roman Empire ruled with an iron fist, and they would humiliate their enemies and foes. As spectacles, this word refers to the theater and entertainment, and that is what the Romans did, they would bring conquered foes and criminals into the arena and the people for entertainment would come and watch them get paraded by (sometimes nude) into the arena and mock and jeer at them, and then enjoy watching them get slaughtered by a gladiator, or a lion, or have to choose to fight each other. After the spectacle was over they would go get a bite to eat, have a few laughs remembering the moment, then sleep in their comfortable beds, and go to their comfortable jobs in the morning.

**(1 Cor 4:10 NKJV) We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored!**

### **Paul repeating Comments made about Him**

So Paul is repeating some of the comments that he has heard about himself and other apostles. Some of the people in Corinth were saying if Paul is so favored of God why do so many people dislike him. They are trying to levy that Paul's words are not of God, because he offends and distances so many people as seen in how he is viewed by others.

**(1 Cor 4:11 NKJV) To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless.**

**(1 Cor 4:12 NKJV) And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure;**

**(1 Cor 4:13 NKJV) being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.**

### **Warning for Us – Don't get Deceived like Corinth Church Did**

V8-13 - the warning for us is to not get deceived today like the Corinth church did in they thought Christianity was filled with outward signs, signs such as health, wealth, and happiness. We see that very

much in the American Christianity today, where the expectation is all are healthy, all are prospering, and Christianity is one big coffee house life, where things are easy, relaxing, and laughter. Paul said that just isn't the way it is. If you hear any teaching like that today, you need to get your running shoes on and get as far away as possible.

### **If you feel Curses rather than Blessings / The Praise will come from the Lord**

If you feel you are failing as a minister for Christ because people curse you rather than bless you, because you seem to continually be struggling financially and materially, don't revile back at the accusation laid against you (it just comes with the territory of spiritual warfare), and don't worry about the appreciation of man, for.....

*(1 Cor 4:5 NKJV) Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.*

### **Faithful**

Just.....be faithful

*(1 Cor 4:2 NKJV) Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.*

### **Before the Time**

Verse 5 – Before the time – before moving on to our next point (I want to refer back to verse 5 again), I want to say something to those who are here today and you have been faithful, but you feel you are being mistreated. I know there is someone here today and your time has not yet come, and you are totally irritated, frustrated, angry and upset because you are the one who is giving, making the sacrifice, making the hard choices and decisions, and instead of receiving thanks or appreciation, you are being judged and being slammed. Maybe someone else is even getting the credit, the praise, the thank you, and they have done nothing deserving or contributing at all. God wants you to know that your time will come, that whether anyone ever gives you thanks or appreciation, that your time will come, and above all – He sees, and He sees all, and you will hear Him say, well done, awesome how you didn't quit, didn't come down or go up upon, but you just faithfully did what God called you to do. Your time will come, and with it your reward.

### **An Old Missionary Couple**

An old missionary couple had been working in Africa for years and were returning to New York to retire. They had no pension; their health was broken; they were defeated, discouraged, and afraid. They discovered they were booked on the same ship as President Teddy Roosevelt, who was returning from one of his big-game hunting expeditions.

No one paid any attention to them. They watched the fanfare that accompanied the President's entourage, with passengers trying to catch a glimpse of the great man. As the ship moved across the ocean, the old missionary said to his wife, "Something is wrong." "Why should we have given our lives in faithful service for God in Africa all these many years and have no one care a thing about us? Here this man comes back from a hunting trip and everybody makes much over him, but nobody gives two hoots about us."

"Dear, you shouldn't feel that way", his wife said. He replied "I can't help it; it doesn't seem right."

When the ship docked in New York, a band was waiting to greet the President. The mayor and other dignitaries were there. The papers were full of the President's arrival. No one noticed this missionary couple. They slipped off the ship and found a cheap flat on the East Side, hoping the next day to see what they could do to make a living in the city.

That night the man's spirit broke. He said to his wife, "I can't take this; God is not treating us fairly". His wife replied, "Why don't you go in the bedroom and tell that to the Lord?" A short time later he came out from the bedroom, but now his face was completely different. His wife asked, "Dear, what happened?" "The Lord settled it with me", he said. "I told Him how bitter I was that the President should receive this tremendous homecoming, when no one met us as we returned home. And when I finished, it seemed as though the Lord put His hand on my shoulder and simply said; "But you're not home yet."

### **We are not Home Yet**

We are not home yet Christian, remember that as they revile and persecute you, disrespect and ridicule you, we are not home yet, but when we do get home, we will hear the praises from our God who will say, well done, you kept going, you didn't quit or waver when things got hard, you didn't get wrapped up in the world but just kept rowing to the beat of My heart, oh I am so well pleased with you.

### **The Minister of God – Is Tender (4:14-21)**

#### **Faithful – Humble - Tender**

And thirdly, we see that a minister of God is to be faithful, to remain humble, and thirdly to be tender, as a father.

#### **We need 1&2**

We need one and two, faithfulness and humbleness, else we will never be tender. But oh the beauty of the tenderhearted faithful and humble servant of God.

**(1 Cor 4:14 NKJV) I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.**

**(1 Cor 4:15 NKJV) For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.**

#### **Easy to have 10,000**

Paul was probably stretching the numbers to make his point, but it sure is easy to have 10,000 instructors today as we have tens of thousands at our disposal on the internet. But Paul is saying, to them you are just a number yourself, but to me you are my children, and I love you as sons and daughters. Here will see the heart of Paul, and that is that people were on his heart. You will only have people on your heart by thinking about them and praying for them.

**(1 Cor 4:16 NKJV) Therefore I urge you, imitate me.**

#### **Follow Me**

Spiritual fathers—both men and women—how I pray we can say what Paul said when he said, “Follow me. Do what I do.”. Christian, can you say that to your kids, your neighbors, your spouse?

**(1 Cor 4:17 NKJV) For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.**

#### **Paul gives up his Son**

Paul was willing to part with his precious son in the faith Timothy to send help to the church in Corinth. We see in that example that God will ask us to part with precious things ourselves as we are His servants, waiters. What is it the Lord may ask you to part with? Can we part with our time? Can we part with our comfort zone? Can we part with a personal pleasure because ministry calls us at the same time as that personal pleasure is on or happening? As parents we make many sacrifices for our children, even when they are unappreciative and rebellious, but we do it because they have been given to us to “steward” and we have been giving the calling to lead them, and so it is as God gives each and every one this calling....

*(1 Cor 4:1 NKJV) Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

**(1 Cor 4:18 NKJV) Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you.**

**(1 Cor 4:19 NKJV) But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power.**

**(1 Cor 4:20 NKJV) For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.**

**(1 Cor 4:21 NKJV) What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?**

#### **Festival of Love or Day of Discipline**

“I'm coming shortly,” Paul says. “Will that day be a festival of love, or a day of discipline?”

**Sometime we have to Correct**

Sometimes as Mothers or Fathers, we have to bring discipline and correction. Paul is saying I would rather you make your corrections now before I get there so we can just love on one another, and not have to have a hard conversation, but if need be that is what we will do.

**The Balance / When so – Do it in Love**

So we see there is a balance all the way through being a servant of Christ, and we are to serve as waiters, but only what is on the menu, and sometimes what we serve may be hard to swallow. Sometimes that is what we have to do in the body, but when we have to do it, may we do it tenderly and in love, as a mother or father in the Lord.

Outline: The Minister of God

- The Minister of God – Is Faithful (4:1-5)
- The Minister of God – Is Humble (4:6-13)
- The Minister of God – Is Tender (4:14-21)

# *1 Corinthians 5*

## The Worse Day of Ministry for the Minister of God (5:1-13)

### **As we Flow – the Minister of God / Faithful – Humble - Tender**

As we flow into this passage and chapter today we have to remember where we came from and that was chapter four "the minister of God", and we saw the three things a minister of God was to be, and that was faithful, humble, and tender as a Father. Well in our passage today, I have titled it, "the Worse Day of Ministry for the Minister of God", and that is because this is the chapter on dealing with the unrepentant believer, and the minister of God's faithfulness will be tested, his character must be humble, and his heart tender.

### **If you are Visiting – Sheep Protected (Safe Harbor)**

Now let me say if you are here visiting, I hope what you will see is a church where the sheep are protected to ensure that they have a safe harbor to come be taught the Word of God, and fellowship without fear and worry that they may be taken advantage of or mistreated. For us here, it is not about going to church, it is about being a church.

### **Visiting to Check out Christ – Hope see the Lengths God goes to make a Life Whole**

Now if you are here today and you are just "checking things out" what is this Christianity all about, who is Jesus, what does He think of me, then I want you to see as we talk about this subject, just to what great lengths God will go to make your life whole, to free you from the sins that can destroy your life, to clear your spiritual vision so you can see all that God has for you, so that you may live a life as you were created to live, and that is in a deep and personal relationship with Him - as you are not some distant thought to Him, but that you are personal to Him, and He want to have an intimate and loving relationship with you.

### **So – the Worse day of Ministry**

So, the worse day of ministry for the minister of God, and that is the dealing with the unrepentant believer.

### **When Ministering to the Unrepentant Believer:**

- We should be Grieving for the Person (5:1-2)
- We should be Dealing with the Person (5:3-5)
- We should be Separating from the Person (5:6-13)

### **Corinthian Church Divided - United**

In chapter 1, we saw that the Corinthian believers were divided when they should have been united. Here in chapter 5, we'll see them united when they should have been divided.

### **We should be Grieving for the Person (5:1-2)**

#### **[Morality \(5:1—6:20\)](#)**

**(1 Cor 5:1 NKJV) It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles; that a man has his father's wife!**

### **Whole City is Buzzing / Wow that is Crazy / Town with 1000 Prostitutes**

The whole city was abuzz with this report - hey did you hear about the Christians and what they are allowing to be going on at their church, yea this son is messing around with his stepmom - woe they would say, that is crazy. Quite a statement because this is the city where the pagan temple sent out 1000 prostitutes a night to solicit "worship" of the gods. Yet even they were abuzz about what they were hearing.



### **World still loves to Hear Christians and Conservatives Falling / Justifies / Highest Nightline**

The world still loves to see Christians involved in immorality because it eases their conscience and justifies their own loose lifestyle. The highest Nightline television shows have been the ones where a spiritual or moral leader have fallen into sexual sin. Why, because the world eats it up, it eases their conscience and makes the walk to the temple less convicting.

### **So – a Satan Tactic**

Knowing this, one of Satan's favorite tactics is to get Christians involved in immorality.

### **We must stay United / Unity means Accountability / Get under Accountability / You who Strong**

We have to stay united beloved ones. Listen, unity means accountability, and many Christians don't want that, but they then leave themselves exposed and unprotected, and many are taken down along the way. Get accountable, stay accountable. And you who say I am strong, have no problem, good for you, but take heed lest you fall; but also, go find someone you can invest in so they can learn the walk you walk so they don't get picked off by the Evil one. I refer you back to our last study, the "the minister of God".

*1 Corinthians 10:12–13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. <sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

### **I will deduce – Matthew 18 has been applied / Problem – Leadership doesn't see it as Problem**

We can deduce that Matthew 18 has been carried out from the point of an initial confronting of the believer (by someone who has now told Paul what is going on), to the next part of two or more going to confront him, to this place where they have contacted Paul and said we need to go public with this, but the problem is that church leadership and many followers don't see this as a problem, so now what do we do.

**(1 Cor 5:2 NKJV) And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.**

### **Rather than Grieved – the Proud of their Tolerance**

Rather than being grieved, the Corinthian believers were proud of their open-mindedness, their tolerance, their political correctness in allowing the offending brother to remain in their midst.

### **We shouldn't be Tolerant – we should Weep / Not Judgmental – but Grieve**

The minister of God, when they see a brother or sister wrapped up, in bondage to some sin, we shouldn't be tolerant, we should weep. And, we shouldn't be angry, judgmental, or irritated by them, but we should be grieving for them. You won't have a tender heart for them if you aren't on your knees interceding for them either. For, it is when we see their condition as God sees it, that our hearts will break for them.

### **Story of Joe**

There was a dear brother that I was involved in having to apply church discipline to at a church I was active in 20 some years ago, and I will never forget the culmination moment. He had duped me (again) with this great story of how his welding equipment was in the pawn shop, and he needed thirty dollars to give a payment to keep it from going out on the floor for sell, and how if that would happen he would never get hired by anyone if he didn't have his own equipment. So I bought the whole story hook line and sinker, and even ended up driving him out there to the pawn shop. He asked me to stay in the car as this was humiliating to him, and I said ok. But as I sat for about 15 minutes I finally started to get it, and then I looked at the side streets and realized there were drug dealers everywhere. So I went looking for him, and I walked around the other side of the building just as he was coming from the other side, so I missed him, but the drug dealers saw me and they knew I was the fool that fell for it, and they were pointing and laughing at me. So when I got back to the car he was already in the car, and I was hot by now, and my mind was determining whether I was going to open the door to pull him out of the car, or just pull him out through the window. But as I approached the car I looked at him, and I saw his face of emptiness and hopelessness, and God utterly broke my heart for him, just as God's heart was breaking for Him, and although I had to carry out this discipline, and then eventually get another brother to confront him, the whole time I was able to do it in love, with a grieving heart, not a heart that was mad, and wanted justice, just a heart that wanted to see a brother made whole again so that we may fellowship and praise the Lord together again like we

once had done. He eventually did repent, he did come back to the Lord, and he even paid me back the 60 bucks he had taken from me. I didn't need the money, but God spoke to me how it was important for this brother to make restitution. As ministers of God, when ministering to the unrepentant believer, we should be a people, ministers, who are grieving for the person.

### **We should be Dealing with the Person (5:3-5)**

**(1 Cor 5:3 NKJV) For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed.**

**(1 Cor 5:4 NKJV) In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

**(1 Cor 5:5 NKJV) deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

#### **Deliver him Up – Not for Damnation but Restoration / This is where to be Divided / Sick of Sin**

Paul's instruction to the Corinthians was that they were to deliver this man into the hand of Satan—not for damnation, but for restoration, in order that his flesh would be destroyed and his spirit saved. "This is where you should be divided congregationally," Paul said. "Stay away from this man and let him live his life of immorality away from the joy, peace, and covering of the body. And hopefully, he will become so sick of his sin that he'll long for the days when he was in fellowship with you—where there was worship ascending and true love abounding."

#### **This man did indeed Repent**

As we will see in his second letter to them, the church at Corinth did, indeed, take Paul's advice, and it worked to such a degree that Paul was later able to instruct them to welcome their brother back into their company (2 Corinthians 2).

#### **Important word for Church and Parents / Not love by allowing Sin / Not Love but Cripple**

This is an important word for congregations and for parents. We do not serve each other or our children well by allowing them to live in sin. We aren't loving them but actually crippling them.

#### **Who needs Jesus when they have You / Don't want to Upset them or Make Uncomfortable**

I have a saying, and it too often is a true saying, but that is to some people why would "Johnny" need Jesus Christ when he has you. So many times in our love, our compassion, we can't bear to see a loved one hurting or uncomfortable, and thus we try to comfort and console them when really we should be afflicting them. I am talking about enabling people to continue in a lifestyle of sin because we give them and provide for them the things they should be doing for themselves, but they won't because they are too busy consumed in their sin. They need not look to Jesus to meet their needs because someone else is meeting their needs for them, all along enabling them to continue in their sin.

#### **Comes a Point – Need to Turn over to Satan / But not so Fast!**

There comes a point when a person needs to be turned over to Satan in order to reap the repercussions of his sin, regardless of how painful it may be for us to watch. But lest anyone become too eager to arbitrarily turn others over to Satan in the name of Jesus, Paul gives four specific qualifications for doing so in verse 4

#### **Name of Jesus / Do it because we Heard from Lord / Time is Now**

*Verse 4 - In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ* - whatever we do we must be doing it in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which means we are doing it because Jesus has spoken to us to do it, He has given us the direction to do it, we are representing Him, and the time to do it is now. We must be ever so sensitive to do it as we hear from the Lord to do it. We can't do it before it's time, nor can we do it when it is after the time, it is too late. We do it when we have heard from the Lord, and thus we have to be steeped in prayer so we can discern His voice from our voice, because our hearts can be so deceitful, that we won't do it because we don't want to see them suffer, not we will be doing it because we have reached our limit

with them and have not grace for them. So before we turn someone over to Satan we must be sure we can do it in the name of Jesus.

### **Gathered Together / Power of Unity / They only need 1 Person to Justify Themselves**

Verse 4 - when you are gathered together - the call for unity, and the power that comes with being unified. No one needs to go through such a hard thing all by themselves. Also, the person being turned over will see a unified decision. In that I mean, all a person who is bound up in sin needs is just one person to agree with them, and they will feel justified in their action. But have a unanimous vote, and they see they won't have other people to come back around and play on their emotions with and find more enablers. Christian, by not calling sin - sin, and wrong - wrong, and right - right, we enable a person to continue in their sin as much as the person who gives materially and financial aid to the wayward brother or sister. Send the message to them of confirmation in the congregation.

### **My Spirit – The Word of God**

Verse 4 - along with my spirit - what is Paul's spirit for our application, that is the apostles doctrine, that is the Word of God. All that we do in our lives, and all that we do in correction and discipline, needs to be done in accordance with God's word.

*Hebrews 4:11–13 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

### **Power of Lord Jesus Christ / Power for Confrontation – to Carry it Through**

Verse 4 - with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ - the Lord has given the wisdom of what needs to be done, but we also need the power of the Lord Jesus Christ to carry it through, and see it through. We need the power for the moment of confrontation (for that is never pleasant), and then we need the power of the Lord to see it through to the end because we our loving and compassionate, we want to cut it short, help them out, comfort and console them, but to do so would be to short-circuit prematurely what the Lord is desiring to do. So we need the power of the Lord to initiate it, and then the continually power to see it through.

### **Name of Jesus - Love**

And the power and name of the Lord Jesus is love, and thus we must do this because of love, and in love. *1 John 4:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

### **Separation seems Contradictory to our Belief / We have to walk it by Faith**

Separation seems contradictory to our belief, we are to love them, have compassion, win them back by pleading with them to come to the goodness of God that far exceeds what this world has to offer. But this is the place of faith, where we believe the wisdom and word of God is greater than our feelings.

### **God is saying – give them their Fill / Children of Israel and Quail**

God is saying give them their fill of the flesh, and when it they it all they can, maybe like the children of Israel crying for meat, not satisfied with the sweet manna, when they puke it out their nostrils they will say no more, give me the manna and the manna only.

*Numbers 11:18–20 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> Then you shall say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the hearing of the LORD, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt." Therefore the LORD will give you meat, and you shall eat. <sup>19</sup> You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, <sup>20</sup> but for a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have despised the LORD who is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, "Why did we ever come up out of Egypt?" ' ' "

### **Story of Mike / No Longer their Own**

I remember a long time ago a friend of mine who has broken the law and an arrest warrant was issued for him, and he was looking at 5-7 years in jail. He went on the run. He would contact me and we would talk, and eventually I convinced him to the fact, you will never have a life again until you face this, deal with it, and serve out your sentence. He said he would turn himself in and asked me to go with him, and so I did. But I never forget that moment, as he was on the run, calling the shots, and then the moment the FBI placed the handcuffs on his wrists. The moment the handcuffs went on his wrist, he totally melted down, he know it was over, he know he was now a prisoner, he knew he wasn't going home for a long time, he knew he no

longer had the control, he knew that someone else for the next seven years was going to dictate when he got up, when he went to sleep, what he ate, when and where he ate it, when he could shower, when he could talk or not talk, and when those handcuffs went on his wrist, he knew he was no longer his own. And that is the desire in the turning over to Satan, that the person comes to the realization that they are no longer their own, they are a slave to Satan, and he is an evil task master. Then they remember where the goodness and love is, who loves them, who cares for them, and how precious they are to Him!

### **They reap the Blessings of our Blessings – Financially have money to Buy their Thing**

Should we allow them to continue on with us, whether here in the church or there at our homes, that person reaps the blessings of the Lord that God abounds in our lives as believers. When they receive the financial blessings that you have, when they are gleaned your finance in terms of food or housing or bill paying, then they have extra money in their pocket to go buy their "thing". Turn them over to Satan and they have to decide to eat or do that "thing" and hopefully they will say forget that, I am hungry, I'm tired of walking and not driving, I'm tired of living in a dump.

### **Everyone Loves to be Loved and Accepted**

And, what is it that every person desires, that is to be loved and accepted. People, even in wretched sin, can still love that unconditional love and acceptance, and I mean as they sit amongst you (whether here or at home), and they simply love the feeling. And they know they can leave and come back to it at any time. But when they are turned over to Satan, it is gone, and hopefully they say I am leaving this thing, and I am going back home.

### **Loneliness has Awakened many People**

Loneliness has awakened many a people to make the choice to turn and return.

### **Pray for those who are Struggling**

I know there are some here today and you are in this place, you are struggling within yourself on what you should do, or you already know what you need to do, but just don't want to do it - I'd like to pray with you right now before we move on so that you can hear from the Lord.

## **We should be Separating from the Person (5:6-13)**

**(1 Cor 5:6 NKJV) Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?**

### **Leaven – first not seen – then Puff Up**

Leaven is not easily seen initially, but it becomes very obvious eventually, making it the perfect symbol of evil throughout Scripture. The call for separation from this person so they don't infect their whole sin and poison on the rest of the church.

**(1 Cor 5:7 NKJV) Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.**

**(1 Cor 5:8 NKJV) Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

### **First Passover – Leaving Egypt / Death cannot Touch Us**

The first Passover was instituted when the Children of Israel were in haste leaving the bondages of Egypt as the tenth plague swept the land of Egypt killing the first born. But none of the children of Israel lost a child who had applied the blood of the lamb over the doorpost of their home, which was a foreshadow and type of the final lamb who when applied over our lives, death cannot touch us, and we will be free from the bondages of sin.

### **Day before – Feast of Preparation / rid Home of Leaven – Finish with Feather and Spoon**

The day before Passover was called the Day of Preparation, in which the Jews would rid their homes of every trace of leaven in preparation for Passover and the six-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. So into they were they would finish the job off with a feather and a spoon to get every last bit.

### **Be Committed to Holiness / Be Holy for I Am Holy**

Paul draws on this well-known understanding as a call for a recommitment to holiness and purity on the part of the Corinthian body. Get the feather and the spoon out, don't settle for a broom and a pan, but get the feather and the spoon out to rid sin from your life. Be holy for I Am holy says the Lord.

**1 Peter 1:15–16 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, <sup>16</sup> because it is written, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*”

### **Get the Feather and Spoon Out**

The picture for us is that we have left Egypt—the world—through the blood our Passover Lamb shed for us on the Cross. Therefore, let us continue on from that point without leaven—without the secret sins that puff up and spread throughout our fellowships so easily. Get the feather and spoon out, not the broom and dust pan only.

**(1 Cor 5:9 NKJV)** I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

**(1 Cor 5:10 NKJV)** Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

**(1 Cor 5:11 NKJV)** But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; not even to eat with such a person.

### **The tense is Habitual Sin**

The Greek tense of this passage makes it clear that we are to cut off from our company not the one who has fallen into or struggles with these sins—but the one who knowingly, obstinately, perpetually practices them. Why?

### **Why – Correct the Offender / The Doctor operates to Save the Body**

I believe the first reason is to correct the offender. If a tumor is growing in my body, no competent doctor would say, “I’m not going to operate on you because I don’t want to be too harsh with you.” And yet that is exactly what we say to believers who are mired in sin when we fail to take the sword of the Spirit and show them where they are wrong. If I really care about someone, I’ll say, “I’m not going to fellowship with you—not because I’m mad at you or don’t love you. On the contrary, I care about you so much that I cannot allow you *to go on as though there’s nothing amiss in your life* because sooner or later the tumor of sin within you will take a terrible toll on you.”

### **Second – to Protect / Don’t deal with it – Send a Message**

Secondly, we are not to fellowship with insistent, persistent sinners in order to protect the body. If we allow it, we don't deal with it, we wink at it, what is the message we are sending to the others in the body, the new believers, the weak in the faith, those not yet mature in their understanding, what is the message we are sending our children?

### **The List**

I want you to see the list, and see the detail that it goes to.

- *sexually immoral* – any sex outside of marriage, and that would be adultery, heterosexual fornication, and homosexual fornication.
- *or covetous*, - never having enough, and thus their greed often times leads them to prey and play on the kindness and compassion of others.
- *or an idolater*, - means worshipper of false gods, they are saying Jesus isn't enough, and they bring strange doctrines into the church and most often they apply their strange doctrine to the new and immature believer and lead them astray.
- *or a reviler*, - Means mischief or abuser, and these are people that want to lead others into come on let's go get in the flesh, party it up.

- *or a drunkard*. - Would include anything that puts someone under the influence of something other than the Lord. Whether that be alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, or now we are even seeing this legal chemical drugs such as ICE.
- *or an extortioner* – someone who swindles or robs from another.

### **Not to Eat**

*Verse 11 - not even to eat with such a person* – Hey, when we need to be sure we have heard from the Lord when it is time to turn them over, because there is no middle ground, when we separate ourselves from them, it is in totally – to the point we don't keep any company with them, including eating with them. Now, I do not see that meaning that we can't meet with them for biblical counseling, else how can they hear the Word of God? What I see this meaning is that we are not to get together with them, and act like nothing is wrong, to be silent on what we have confronted them on, and “just” agree to disagree. The application is, there is no other conversation between us, until this one has been settled. We are not going to watch the game together, we are not going to have dinner together, until this is settled. If you want to get together with me, that will be my topic, and if it is not your topic, then no use us getting together.

### **God wants Church to be place to Enjoy Him**

God calls for separation from the unrepentant person, because God wants His church to be a place of holiness, and a place where people can come in and not have the ploys and poisons of the world in their face. A place where they can come and fellowship freely with the Lord and fellow believers who are like-minded.

### **But – Paul points we Don't Separate from World**

But Paul does make it clear that we are not to separate ourselves from the world, or else we could never reach them with the message of freedom from sin and death.

**(1 Cor 5:12 NKJV) For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?**

**(1 Cor 5:13 NKJV) But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."**

### **Got to Go to Fulfill**

If we separate from world, we could never fulfill the commission of reaching the world. Go therefore, means we have to go to them, and not wait for them to come to us.

*Matthew 28:19–20 (NKJV)*<sup>19</sup> *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*<sup>20</sup> *teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.*

### **What about Stepmom? / We deal with Christian Community – Let God deal with World**

What about the woman, the stepmother? Why didn't Paul deal with her? Evidently, she wasn't a believer. “We don't judge unbelievers,” says Paul. “God will take care of them.” I find this interesting because there is a tendency on the part of Christians today to want to judge the world, to change the culture. All too often, we're activists against the world's wickedness, but we fail to judge our own congregation. We march, petition, crusade, vote, and talk about the world's sin as we turn a blind eye to our own. We've got it exactly backward. We're to deal with the Christian community and let God take care of the world's iniquity.

### **When Ministering to the Unrepentant Believer:**

- We should be Grieving for the Person (5:1-2)
- We should be Dealing with the Person (5:3-5)
- We should be Separating from the Person (5:6-13)

### **God's Great Love for His People and Church**

God's great love, for the wayward sinner, and His church - meeting and working in both to bring them to the place of seeing and experience Him personally, and living a life that is abundant and holy.

# *1 Corinthians 6*

## Not of this World (6:1-20)

### *Part 1 (6:1-8)*

**5 Chps – speaking Unity / Wisdom Man vs. Wisdom of God / Man so Short / Separate man Wisdom**  
For five chapters now the Apostle Paul has been speaking to this church in Corinth about being united, to not be divided, to be likeminded. He has been comparing the wisdom of the world, versus the wisdom of God, and how far short the wisdom of the world falls; and he has been continually calling out the believers to be separate from the thinking and applying the ways of the world.

**Verse 20 – Bought with a Price / To live Lives to glorify God / Every Thought & Action**

At the end of this chapter, verse 20 sums it all up, and it the statement that we have been bought with a price, a high price at that, the blood of Jesus Christ, and thus we are to live our lives to glorify God with every action we take, whether that be with our thoughts or with our body.

*(1 Cor 6:20 NKJV) For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

**Church in Corinth – absorbed by Philosophies of Corinth / Mixed World Philosophy with Theology**

The church in Corinth was living in the world, they were absorbing all the philosophies that were present in Corinth at that time, and they were all mixed up in their theology, and all mixed up in areas of sin that they shouldn't have been.

**Paul saying – You are not of this World / Need to be Reminded / We are Unique and Special**

Paul was saying to them, you are not of this world, this word speaks to us still that we are not of this world, we are unique, we are special, and thus we need to be reminded of that regularly that we are, so we don't find ourselves being sucked into the world, and mixed up in its fruitless endeavors.

*1 Peter 2:9-10 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

**We are not of this world, we are unique:**

- We are Unique in Wisdom (6:1-8)
- We are Unique in Purity (6:9-18)
- We are Unique in Price (6:19-20)

**We are Unique in Wisdom (6:1-8)**

**The Wisdom to Rule (6:1-4)**

**Least Esteemed – More Wisdom than World's Court / Word of God – no Loopholes**

God says in these verses that the least esteemed in the church has more wisdom than the world's court system. It is true, because we judge according to God's word, and God's word has no loopholes which so many people slip through in our legal system today.

**(1 Cor 6:1 NKJV) Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?**

**(1 Cor 6:2 NKJV) Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?**

**(1 Cor 6:3 NKJV) Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?**

**(1 Cor 6:4 NKJV) If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?**

### **So Unique – we Judge Civil Matters / Corinth loved to Sue / Civil Suits – Not Criminal**

So unique is the wisdom we have as believers, God says that we shouldn't go to the world's court to settle disputes, but should handle them ourselves. The Corinthian believers had been so used to arguing, disputing, and taking one another to court before they were saved that they carried those selfish attitudes and habits over into their new lives as Christians. Let me note here, we are talking about civil suits, not criminal suits, as Romans 13 says God has established the authority to deal with the criminal.

*Romans 13:1–7 (NKJV) Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. <sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. <sup>4</sup> For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. <sup>5</sup> Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. <sup>6</sup> For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. <sup>7</sup> Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.*

### **So Unique – we will Rule for 1,000 Years / Rev 20 – we will enforce Righteousness**

So unique is the wisdom we have as followers of Christ, there is a day that we will be ruling and judging the world. God entrusts us then, and he entrusts us today. According to Revelation 20 and other passages, as we reign and rule with Christ in the millennial kingdom, part of our job will be to govern and judge those who get saved during the Tribulation. You see, although we'll be in a glorified state, Tribulation believers will still have fleshly inclinations. Therefore, we will be involved in the process of enforcing righteousness.

*Revelation 20:4–6 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*

### **Enforce What? His Word / We are in Training right Now / Judge Thoughts and Intentions**

What will we enforce, all the things we are studying in this Word. Hey folks, we are in training right now for our future jobs as rulers with Him. I don't know how it works, but since there is no unrighteousness in the Millennial Kingdom, a man may have unrighteous thoughts, but they will not be able to carry them out. I have no idea how that will work, how we know their thoughts, but what we do know from the scriptures is that we will rule and reign with Jesus, and that we will judge the people, we will tell them that your intentions are wrong, they are wrong according to the ways of the Lord, and they are wrong against your neighbor.

### **To Judge usually involves Discipline**

To judge usually involves discipline, so we may determine what the disciplinary actions will be for the transgressor.

### **To What Degree we Serve? / Matthew 25 and Luke 19**

Now, to what degree will we serve in the Millennial kingdom, we can tell by Matthew 25, and Luke 19, to the degree we were faithful with the talents and opportunities that we were given.

### **Matthew 25 – Diversity of Gifts / Luke 19 - Opportunities**

The talents (in Matthew 25) speak of the diversity of the gifts that we have been given by the Lord. While the pounds (in Luke 19) speak of the opportunities the Lord gives us (as each person got the same opportunity - one pound each) on how to use the talents that have been given them.

*Matthew 25:14–19 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. <sup>15</sup> And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. <sup>16</sup> Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. <sup>17</sup> And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. <sup>18</sup> But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. <sup>19</sup> After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.*

*Luke 19:11–13 (KJV 1900) <sup>11</sup> And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. <sup>12</sup> He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. <sup>13</sup> And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*



### **So God gives Various Gifts – but all the same Opportunities / 24hrs – 7days – 30 / What do?**

So God gives all various gifts, some have more gifts than others, but all of us have been given the same amount of time on which to use those gifts for His glory, to be His ministers in His name. We each have 24 hours in a day, 7 days in a week (168 hours in a week), 30 days in a month, and the question is what do we do with the time and talents God gives us here on earth.

### **What we do with Them – How Serve in Millennial / Cities – Towns - Parks**

What we do with them, will determine where we serve in the Millennial Kingdom. Some may rule cities, some may rule towns, some may rule buildings, some may rule parks, while sadly some may be ruler over the park sweepers (or maybe even just be a park sweeper) because they were so busy and caught up with the meaningless things of this earth, all they did was wood, hay, and stubble, all burned up, nothing of gold, silver, and precious stones like diamonds and rubies. There will be much weeping (or shall I say – much sweeping) on that day by many believers who realized they invested in the wrong the stock.

*1 Corinthians 3:12–13 (KJV 1900)* <sup>12</sup> Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

<sup>13</sup> Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

### **I want Maui they Say / Give me Pasadena**

I always hear people say they call Hawaii or Bermuda, but as for me, I am calling Pasadena and its surrounding area because I want to see this through, I want to see the day when all of Pasadena sees and knows that Jesus is the Lord. Many do not see Him today, but there will come a day where every knee will bow and tongue will confess that He is King.

*Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

### **Sidebar – 3by3**

And let me just side bar this to you, what is it that God has called you to? Whatever it is, control that area. Don't worry about what the other people are or are not doing, just control and be faithful to your area. When I was coaching peewee football, I was working with the lineman, and we use to line them up up three feet from each other, and I would tell them they needed only to control their three feet (18 inches on their right and 18 inches on their left). They didn't need to worry about the other lineman to their right or left and what they were doing, and they didn't need to worry where the quarterback was, and where the running backs were going. They needed only to control their three feet, move the defender where we told them to move them on that play. I told them if you control your three feet, control the defender that came into your three feet, the running back or quarterback will do the rest from there and we will win that play, and do the same on the next play we will win that play too, and the one after that, and after that, until we score. This is what the Lord has spoken to me, and I speak to you, and that is we need only to control the 3by3 we are called to control by the Lord, we need only to be faithful in that 3by3, my patch of ground, to do what God called me to do in that place, and He will take it from there. You see we are not the quarterbacks, nor the running backs, We are the lineman control our patch of ground the Lord has given us, and it is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that are in the backfield. Here is my 3by3 in the ministry, and it is the pulpit, and I need only to be faithful here, and I need not worry what the results are afterwards, as I only need to be faithful in my 3by3. When I am in my home, my patch of ground is my family, when I am work my patch of ground is my desk, when I go street witnessing my patch of ground is all who come inside my 3by3. You know what, I can do that, I can be faithful, I can be focused, and I can stay diligent to that area. It is when I start looking around, when I start looking at his talents, seeing their results, that I can be distracted and even discouraged.

### **Beloved – what is your 3by3?**

Beloved, what is your 3by3, what is the patch of land, the ministry God has called you to be faithful in? Then be faithful to it. Don't feel yourself overwhelmed, the task to daunting, just be and stay faithful to your patch, and like God run the rest from there.

### **When Life is Past – Only what's Done for Christ will Last**

Hey make your life count, do what is wise, for when life is past, only what's done for Christ will last

### **If Rule the World – we can Rule Ourselves / 20 years I have never Seen It**

Well - we will judge the world, it will be based on what we do with our talents and time. So, if we are to rule the world, then God says we should also be able to rule over the issues that arise in the church, and there be no need to go to the worlds court (unless we have to go to court with an unbeliever as it is highly doubtful they will agree to come to the court within the church). But I must say, I have been in the ministry for 20 years, and I have never seen two believers come and say we have an issue and would like the church to make a ruling on, and we submit to their decision.

### **The Wisdom to Release (6:5-8)**

The Lord is going to give us some of the most practical advice, and that is to “let it go” as person after person who has been wronged by another, just can’t let that thing go, and it consumes them, it devours them, and they live a life of constant stress and turmoil, and the Lord is going to say here is great wisdom, just let it go, and you will finally be free.

**(1 Cor 6:5 NKJV) I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?**

**(1 Cor 6:6 NKJV) But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!**

**(1 Cor 6:7 NKJV) Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?**

**(1 Cor 6:8 NKJV) No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren!**

### **The Shame**

The shame part is that the community was talking about the churches immorality, and they were talking about how they say come and join our church we love each other, well that is until someone wrongs us, and then to the courts we go!

### **In Addition – Absorb the Wrong / Turn the Cheek – Go Extra Mile**

So, Paul is saying to them, in addition to judging themselves, the Corinthian believers were to absorb the wrongs done to them, to turn the other cheek, to give up the cloak, to go the extra mile (Matthew 5:39–41). *Matthew 5:39–41 (NKJV) <sup>39</sup> But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. <sup>40</sup> If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. <sup>41</sup> And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.*

### **Wow – Imagine that approach in Marriage**

Wow, could you imagine if we applied this principle into our marriages every day! Going the extra mile, absorbing others wrongs against us, turning the other cheek.

### **This principle in Corinth a Huge Mind Shift – Capital of Lawsuits / USA the lawsuit Capital**

Anyways, to not go to court in Corinth would be a huge mind-shift as Corinth was the capital of lawsuits the history books tell us. To tell them don’t go to court, do sue each other, settle it in the church or just forget about it and walk away would require them to think in God’s wisdom, and not the wisdom of the day. Well, there is no group of Christians today that need this same reprogramming than the Christians of the USA, which is the most litigated country in the world.

*As of 2006, there were over 1 million lawyers in the United States, according to the American Bar Association -- more per capita than any other country. As the number of lawyers has increased, so has the number of civil claims, up 12 percent from 1993 to 2002. In all, over 16 million civil cases were filed in state courts in 2002, according to the State Court Guide to Statistical Reporting, 2003, from the National Center for State Courts. Trial lawyers earned an estimated \$40 billion in lawsuit awards that same year.*

### **Ridiculous Lawsuits**

America sues over some of the most ridiculous things:

- In 1991, Richard Overton sued Anheuser-Busch, creators of Budweiser, for \$10,000. He claimed to have suffered emotional distress, mental injury, and financial loss because drinking beer did not make his fantasies of beautiful women in tropical settings come to life, as he claimed it had advertised, driving him to buy and drink more and more Bud Light. The case was dismissed.

- After watching an episode of the reality TV show Fear Factor on NBC in 2005, Austin Aitken sued the network for \$2.5 million. He said the sight of contestants eating blended rats disgusted him so much that his health suffered. He claimed the show raised his blood pressure, made him dizzy, and caused him to vomit. He also became so disoriented, he smashed into a door. The lawsuit was thrown out of court.
- A 16-year-old Connecticut high school student who fell asleep in class alleged he suffered substantial hearing loss when his math teacher smacked her palm down on his desk to wake him up while she was teaching, so his parents decided to sue Danbury High School, the Connecticut Board of Education and the city of Danbury on his behalf. Attorney Alan Barry says 15-year-old Vinicios Robacher suffered pain and "very severe injuries to his left eardrum" when teacher Melissa Nadeau abruptly slammed the palm of her hand on his desk. Vinicios has been teased by students at school ever since.
- Mistaken for a superstar? How insulting! 2006, Allen Heckard sued Michael Jordan and Nike founder Phil Knight for \$832 million. He claimed to suffer defamation, permanent injury, and emotional pain and suffering because people often mistook him for the basketball star. Heckard dropped the lawsuit later that year.
- In another frivolous lawsuit, Roy Pearson Jr, a judge in Washington, tried to bully a family-owned dry cleaning shop by suing the owners for \$54 million in damages after they lost his pants. The case demoralized the South Korean immigrant owners of the business and brought demands that the customer be disbarred and removed from office for pursuing a frivolous and abusive claim. Pearson's lawsuit against Custom Cleaners of Northwest D.C. eventually ended with a U.S. District Judge finding for the defendants. Pearson later indicated that he would appeal.
- If you can't sue the system, sue yourself. 1995, Robert Lee Brock sued himself for \$5 million. He claimed that he had violated his own civil rights and religious beliefs by allowing himself to get drunk and commit crimes which landed him in the Indian Creek Correctional Center in Virginia, serving a 23 year sentence for grand larceny and breaking and entering. What could he possibly have to gain by suing himself? Since being in prison prevented him from having an income, he expected the state to pay. This case was thrown out.

### **World's legal system all Messed Up**

But on a serious note, the world's legal system is messed up in so many ways. Victims are punished, the people who want to do right are often the ones who are ending up getting the judgment against them because good is called bad and bad is called good in this world that is going further and further away from the Lord and His word. We watch murderers walk away scot free even after they confess because someone made a paperwork error, we see rapists walk because the police made an "illegal search", we see a homeowner go to jail for attempted murder after a robber gets shot breaking into his house in the middle of the night

*Isaiah 5:20 (NKJV)*

<sup>20</sup> *Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;  
Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness;  
Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

### **Paul says – let yourself be Ripped Off**

Paul told the Corinthians that, rather than going through all the legal hassles (again this applies to civil suits not criminal) to defend themselves judicially, the better way was to trust the Lord to solve the problem. And, if all else fails, just walk away and let yourself be cheated.

### **I Remember helping a Believer**

I remember helping out a Christian friend, I had loaned their business probably around 1000-1500 dollars and that was well close to 25 percent of my life's savings at the time this happened. I went back and forth with them over a few months, every time it not being comfortable when I asked them when they were going to pay me back. Promises kept coming, but the envelopes never did. It really tore me up inside, I was angry with them. I could have went to the church leadership and said I don't want to go to the world's court system to get my money back, would you make a ruling in the matter, but just one day in my daily devotional reading the Lord just spoke to me, Proverbs 19, he who lends to the poor, lends to the Lord. Not sure how poor they were with my 1500 dollars, but the Lord spoke to my heart, and I just called them and said the debt is cancelled, God bless you, and I immediately was filled with the peace of the Lord. I also

have no doubt that the Lord has paid me back in ways I have never realized, but God says lend to Me and you will not be shorted.

**Proverbs 19:17 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> *He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD,  
And He will pay back what he has given.*

### **Don't Borrow what you Can't afford to Buy – Loan what can't afford to Lose / Lend to Lord**

I have a saying, don't borrow what you can't afford to buy, and don't loan what you can't afford to lose. Meaning if I borrow something from someone and it breaks in my possession, or I ruin it because of my mistake, then I am required to replace it for them. If someone wants to borrow something from me, I ask myself can I afford to loan it to them and never get it back. There are something's that I just can't afford to loan, because it would be too much of a burden on me if I didn't get it back and thus I don't loan it out. I can't afford to loan my computer, for I have too much work to do with it every day that if it got broke, it would cause a hardship on this ministry. So we should be wise in what we borrow and loan, and remember when we do loan to a brother or sister we are lending to the Lord, so be wise, but be generous when at all possible.

**Proverbs 19:17 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> *He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD,  
And He will pay back what he has given.*

### **On the Note of Our Neighbors**

I think something very applicable for us as believers in this ligated USA is our neighbors. Living next to someone, gives plenty of opportunity for issues (whether they are lawsuit potential or just irritations), I am reminded of this story which we may all want to consider next time we think it is time to go knock on the door of that neighbor whose kids keep trampling our flowers, or the dog is barking, or their car is in our space. The following story from author Leonard Sweet highlights the importance of valuing our relationships with other people:

*Tom Wiles served a stint as university chaplain at Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, Arizona. A few years ago, he picked me up at the Phoenix airport in his new Ford pickup and whisked me away to keynote a leadership conference at the university. Since I was still mourning the trade-in of my Dodge truck, we immediately bonded, sharing truck stories and laughing at the bumper-sticker truism:*

*"Nothing is more beautiful than a man and his truck."*

*As I climbed into his 2002 Ranger for the ride back to the airport a day later, I noticed two big scrapes by the passenger door. "What happened here?" I asked.*

*"My neighbor's basketball post fell and left those dents and white scars," Tom replied with a downcast voice.*

*"You're kidding! How awful," I commiserated. "This truck is so new I can smell it."*

*"What's even worse is my neighbor doesn't feel responsible for the damage."*

*Rising to my newfound friend's defense, I said, "Did you contact your insurance company? How are you going to get him to pay for it?"*

*"This has been a real spiritual journey for me," Tom replied. "After a lot of soul-searching and discussions with my wife about hiring an attorney, it came down to this: **I can either be in the right, or I can be in a relationship with my neighbor.** Since my neighbor will probably be with me longer than this truck, I decided that I'd rather be in a relationship than be right. Besides, trucks are meant to be banged up, so I got mine initiated into the real world a bit earlier than I expected."*

### **Conclusion – Uniqueness in our Wisdom.**

The application goes much further than we should be able to settle and reconcile our issues amongst our brothers within the church, and much more than just allowing ourselves to absorb the loss for relationship sake, but the main point is for us to see we have a "uniqueness in our wisdom", and God has given us the ability to determine action and application in every situation in our lives. We as believers need to believe that is so, and apply it to our 3by3 area each time, every time.

**James 1:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

**James 3:17–18 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.* <sup>18</sup> *Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

### **We are Unique – not of this World – Lets Live as Such**

We are Unique, we are not of this world, and therefore lets live as such.

# *Not of this World (6:1-20)*

## *Part 2 (6:9-20)*

### **5 Chps – speaking Unity / Wisdom Man vs. Wisdom of God / Man so Short / Separate man Wisdom**

For five chapters now the Apostle Paul has been speaking to this church in Corinth about being united, to not be divided, to be likeminded. He has been comparing the wisdom of the world, versus the wisdom of God, and how far short the wisdom of the world falls; and he has been continually calling out the believers to be separate from the thinking and applying the ways of the world.

### **Verse 20 – Bought with a Price / To live Lives to glorify God / Every Thought & Action**

At the end of this chapter, verse 20 sums it all up, and it the statement that we have been bought with a price, a high price at that, the blood of Jesus Christ, and thus we are to live our lives to glorify God with every action we take, whether that be with our thoughts or with our body.

*(1 Cor 6:20 NKJV) For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

### **Church in Corinth – absorbed by Philosophies of Corinth / Mixed World Philosophy with Theology**

The church in Corinth was living in the world, they were absorbing all the philosophies that were present in Corinth at that time, and they were all mixed up in their theology, and all mixed up in areas of sin that they shouldn't have been.

### **Paul saying – You are not of this World / Need to be Reminded / We are Unique and Special**

Paul was saying to them, you are not of this world, this word speaks to us still that we are not of this world, we are unique, we are special, and thus we need to be reminded of that regularly that we are, so we don't find ourselves being sucked into the world, and mixed up in its fruitless endeavors.

*1 Peter 2:9-10 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

### **We are not of this world, we are unique:**

- We are Unique in Wisdom (6:1-8)
  - The Wisdom to Rule (6:1-4)
  - The Wisdom to Release (6:5-8)
- We are Unique in Purity (6:9-18)
- We are Unique in Price (6:19-20)

## **We are Unique in Purity (6:9-18)**

### **We are Unique**

The believer in Christ is unique, we are to be unique, and here the Lord speaks that we are unique in our purity, and how different our purity is compared to the world's value on purity (morality).

### **Are Americans Getting Comfortable With Immorality?**

Purity seems (even amongst the believers) seems to becoming more and more a thing of the past. If you can believe it, more and more each year Americans think the Country is becoming more moral!

*By Stephanie Samuel | Christian Post Reporter - The Christian Post > U.S. | Fri, May. 27 2011 09:15 PM EDT*

*While the majority of Americans believe that the country's morality is poor and lacking, the gap between those looking for the moral high ground and those who believe we are already morally good is closing. A Thursday Gallup poll shows the number of Americans who believe the overall state of moral values in the U.S. is poor has dropped seven percentage points to 38 percent. Meanwhile, the number of those who believe the country's morality is excellent or good has risen eight percentage points to 23 percent. Fewer Americans also believe the country's moral values are getting worse. Sixty-nine percent, down from 76 percent in 2010, say the state of moral values is worsening, while 22 percent, up from 14 percent, believe it's getting better.*

**(1 Cor 6:9 NKJV) Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, (1 Cor 6:10 NKJV) nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.**

**(1 Cor 6:11 NKJV) And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.**

### **Chp 5 – Corinth Church was practicing these Things**

Chapter 5 verse 11 tells us that there were those in the church at Corinth who were practicing such things, and Paul gives directions on how to handle and treat such a person, and it wasn't "acceptance and tolerance", but "separation and discipline".

*1 Corinthians 5:9-11 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. <sup>10</sup> Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. <sup>11</sup> But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner— not even to eat with such a person.*

### **Installment Plan / Don't be Deceived**

There are some want Jesus on the installment plan, Savior now, Lord later, but Paul is saying, "don't be deceived".

### **Means some were Deceived**

Don't be deceived means some were deceived. Some in the church were deceived thinking that because they were under grace, or because it was a "natural" body urge, or because they were "born that way", or because the whole world was doing it, that it was acceptable. Paul through the Holy Spirit says don't be deceived, it is not acceptable before the Lord, even if you are under grace. His warning is so strong that he says those who practice such a thing will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

### **Protect and Provide**

Let me say, God is not a kill-joy, he calls sin, sin, because He hates what it does to us, He hates how it destroys us, piece by piece, little by little (as we will develop in our study today). God gives us His command to "protect" and to "provide". I want to protect you from this harm and this evil that this sin can bring upon you; and I want to "provide" for you this blessing and this provision that will prosper your life. But, allow this sin in, and it will rob, diminish, and even destroy you.

### **Context – we are Ministers / Pray for a Heart that Breaks**

And remember, we have been in the context that we are ministers of God, and thus as we read this chapter, we cannot help but first heed the warning for ourselves, and secondly for the minister who is walking in purity, we cannot help but think of others that are in bondage to these sins. As we think of them, our heart should grieve for them, and if our heart is not grieving, ask the Lord to change our heart for and towards them.

### **Story – Every Hour on the Hour**

That heart change will come through prayer for them, for as we pray God lays on our heart, the things that break His heart. We too often pray for our needs and situations, and often times skip the praying for others, and thus we never have a heart for the lost and deceived, those in bondage, those in despair. I remember doing some street ministry and running into a man who was a pastors son, but living in all kinds of immorality. I told him I am going to pray tonight that God wakes you up on the hour, every hour, and speaks to your heart about returning to Him. Guess what the Lord did that night? He woke me every hour, on the hour, and told me to pray for him. We often want to chuck a quick pray up, then go to our thing, but the Lord is desiring us to co-labor, co-heart break, for those that are deceived and being robbed by the sin they are involved in.

**(1 Cor 6:12 NKJV) All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.**

### **The Epicurean Cry**

The epicurean cry in Corinth was that all things all lawful, do what feels good. Although that was the cry of that day, and our day, as we have said this doesn't mean a believer is free to do the things just mentioned above, and grace would cover it if we did.

### **The Law still Exists**

This verse many apply to mean that because of grace we can do whatever we want, but because we are saved we shouldn't want to do them. You can apply it that way, but remember this fact, and that is that there still is the holy law of God that still exist under grace. Grace doesn't wipe the law, just the judgment that breaking the law brings. Even under grace, we are guilty of breaking the law, we won't be sentenced to damnation for breaking the law because of the cross of Christ, but we will reap the consequences of that sin. Breaking the law, will bring consequences.

*Matthew 5:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.*

*John 1:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

*Galatians 6:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*

### **Love to wake up to Freedom**

Verse 12 - All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful – I love to wake up and say come Lord Jesus, I love to walk through the day with freedom; I am glad I live a life where I don't have to say, oh I hope the Lord doesn't come today because I have shame. I want to live a life in such a way that I can say, "Come quickly Lord Jesus!"

### **Mark of Spiritual Immaturity / Sin – Binds, Blinds, Grinds**

The mark of spiritual "immaturity" is when a person measures their Christianity in what they give up, rather than what they get. I have to give up drunkardness, I have to give up having my girlfriend spend the night, I, I, I. Beloved, when you are free, you will say, I have been given new life, I have been given salvation at no cost, I have been given the power to be free from the things that bind me, blind me, and grind me.

### **Story of Samson / The Unwrapped Gifts**

Judges 16 tells the story of Samson, we saw what sin did to him - sin blinds, then it binds, then it grinds. He played with sin with Delilah and found himself **bound** and imprisoned. Once bound they plucked his eyes out, and that is what sin does it **blinds** us to the spiritual things the Lord has for us, and wants to give to us. How often we miss the 'protect and provide' part. Another great preacher John R. Rice. He wrote, "I once imagined I was in Heaven, walking along with the Angel Gabriel. I said, "Gabe, what is that big building over there?" "You'll be disappointed," he answered. "I don't think you want to see it." But I insisted, and he proceeded to show me floor after floor of beautiful gifts, all wrapped and ready to be sent. "Gabriel, what are all of these?" He said, I thought rather sadly, "We wrapped all these things, but people never called for them." There are gifts and an abundance of blessings to be received from heaven – but sin will blind us from seeking them and receiving them. And then after Samson was bound, and blinded, his life became a **grind** as he was made into a human oxen and just pushed the grinding stone over the wheat all day. The person who is bounded and blinded by sin, we then find their life just a grind, no joy, no purpose, except to satisfy that sin each day. They awake, and the first thing they think is how they will satisfy that sin for that day, and their life is nothing but a grind.

*Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*

### **Protect and Provide**

God calls sin, sin, to protect and to provide!

### **Sexual Immorality**

#### **Paul zeros in on Sexual Immorality**

In these next verses Paul zeros in on sexual immorality. Corinth was a place of wretched sexual immorality. Corinth was a sex charged place, as there was the Temple of Aphrodite's, where each night

some 1,000 temple prostitutes (both male and female, heterosexual and homosexual) would come out into the town and practice their trade. Interestingly you can still see the remains of this temple, the ruins of it, which is such a picture of sin as that is how it starts so big and beautiful, but in the end it ends and lies in ruin.

### **Calls Good Evil and Evil Good**

We Americans, and the Western civilization for that matter, live in a sex charged society, in a Country and culture that has lost its moral bearing. A Country that calls good evil and evil good.

*Isaiah 5:20 (NKJV)*

<sup>20</sup> *Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;  
Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness;  
Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

### **Some Statistics**

- A recent study found that 70% of all shows include some sexual content, and that these shows average 5.0 sexual scenes per hour
- A recent study found that teens who watch a lot of television with sexual content are more likely to initiate intercourse in the following year.
- According to compiled numbers from respected news and research organizations,
  - every second \$3,075.64 is being spent on pornography.
  - Every second 28,258 internet users are viewing pornography.
  - In that same second 372 internet users are typing adult search terms into search engines.
  - Every 39 minutes a new pornographic video is being created in the U.S
- It's big business. The pornography industry has larger revenues than Microsoft, Google, Amazon, eBay, Yahoo, Apple and Netflix combined. 2006 Worldwide Pornography Revenues ballooned to \$97.06 billion.

Here is what Paul will tell us about sexual Immorality

### **Sexual Immorality**

- Argues Your Eternal Sate (6:9-12)
- Agonizes God's Heart (6:13-17)
- Attaches to Your Soul (6:18-19)

### **1.) Sexual Immorality - Argues Your Eternal Sate (6:9-12)**

*1 Corinthians 6:9–12 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. <sup>12</sup> All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

### **Verb Tense / Stay Tuned for keys to Victory**

Now the verb tense is in the form of a habitual lifestyle. So you who are struggling, battling to overcome, don't quit on this study, stay tuned in, as God will give us the keys to victory and overcoming before we finish this chapter.

### **Argues your Salvation**

But the word of God is clear, and that is that anyone who is living in a habitual lifestyle of sin, and thinks they are going to heaven, are deceived. These are not my thoughts; they are the word of God. Any disagreement is not with me, but with God. The person who says they are saved and going to heaven because they believe in Jesus, but continually live in the lifestyle of sin (whether sexual immorality or any of the others listed) put themselves into this argument – Are you really Saved?



### **1 John 2:3**

1 John 2:3 says by this we know that we know Him, that we keep His commands. So the person who says don't judge me, so what I do these things, consider the word of the Lord.

*1 John 2:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.*

### **Make Election Sure**

The Bible says to Make your calling and election sure:

*2 Peter 1:10-11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; <sup>11</sup> for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

### **The Calvinist Doctrine**

Now I know the all familiar Calvinist doctrine that once saved always saved, I get challenged by them often. My answer to them is, if you think I will guarantee salvation to the person who is in unrepentant habitual sin, I won't. The reason I won't is because the Lord always wants the person to examine themselves and to see and not be deceived as to whether they are in the faith or not.

### **Not Something to Play around With**

This isn't something to play around with, the person who thinks they can continue on in their sin and still be saved, you are taking a huge risk. The habitual lifestyle should tell you that there is something seriously wrong with your "relationship" with the Lord.

### **Do not be Deceived**

Do not be deceived, is clearly spoken, because people are continually deceived into thinking they can live a lifestyle of sin and still be saved.

## **2.) Sexual Immorality - Agonizes God's Heart (6:13-17)**

**(1 Cor 6:13 NKJV) Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.**

### **Corinthian Culture**

The Corinthian culture held the position that the act of physical intimacy was nothing more than the satisfying of one's physical appetite—no different than the need for food. Not so, said Paul.

### **God destroying today's Challenge**

God is blowing out of the water the statement we hear of today, that these urges are God given, sexual drive and satisfaction is the same as a man's food drive, and since we don't deprave the food drive, why would we deprave the sex drive.

### **Such were some of You**

Back in verse 11 it said "such were some of you" - means some were once those things, but have overcome through Jesus Christ. So don't say there is no escape from homosexual life, the addiction, the drunkardness (by the way the word alcoholic is not mentioned in the Bible), the fornication, the verbal abuse you deliver with your tongue.

*(1 Cor 6:11 NKJV) And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*

**(1 Cor 6:14 NKJV) And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.**

**(1 Cor 6:15 NKJV) Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!**

**(1 Cor 6:16 NKJV) Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."**

**(1 Cor 6:17 NKJV) But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.**

### **Genesis 2 / Glue – Something Permanent**

Verse 16 (the two shall become one flesh<sup>0</sup> is referring back to Genesis 2. The word there for cleave back in Genesis is the word for glue. God is saying there is something permanent that happens every time there is sexual union.

*Genesis 2:24 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

### **Furthermore – we are Involving the Lord**

Furthermore, when we engage into the sexual sin, it is not just you and that person (hey what's the big deal, who are we really hurting), but we are involving the Lord, the Holy God, the perfect and pure God, the One who is so offending by sexual sin that death was the judgment upon those involved in it under the Old Covenant, the God who said that those who practice sexual immorality will be on the outside of heaven gates, yes the Holy and pure God is forced into that sin, because He is in you, and you are in Him, if you are truly saved.

### **3. Sexual Immorality - Attaches to Your Soul (6:18-19)**

**(1 Cor 6:18 NKJV) Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.**

**(1 Cor 6:19 NKJV) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?**

#### **Protect**

When God says protect, He is protecting us from HIV, STD, unplanned pregnancy, abortion (which scars for life), just to name a few that happens to your body through the sin of sexual immorality.

#### **The Soul – Proverbs 6**

But, in Proverbs 6:32 God tells us that sexual sin not only attacks your body, but attaches to your soul. In the Hebrew, adultery meant any sex outside of marriage, not just sex with a married person other than their spouse.

*Proverbs 6:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> *Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He who does so destroys his own soul.*

#### **World thinks only deals with the Body**

You see Hollywood and MTV, etc all say an think that sex only deals with the body, but God is saying it is about the body, soul, and Spirit. God says it is two souls being joined together. Again, in Genesis when it says the two become one, the word for joined meant "glued". So it is two people being glued together.

#### **I got a Piece / It is like an Onion**

Today people say I got piece, or she gave it away, and it is true. It is like an onion, and every act is a peeling away, and the more the person gives themselves away, the less and less of a person they become.

#### **Singles – If they take that**

You singles, don't fall for it, they do not love you. If they will take that, you have not seen anything yet of all that they will take from you day after day.

#### **In Marriage – Dynamic Bonds**

Now, the same act that diminishes outside of marriage is the very same act unites, bonds, and builds up a marriage. It is a spiritual dynamic that is designed by God. Can I speak openly to all married couples, make sure you protect that intimacy part in your marriage. Don't withhold because of fighting, don't miss it because you are too tired, hey turn the television off and go to bed, do what it takes because there is a spiritual dynamic in it.

*1 Corinthians 7:4-5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> *The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.* <sup>5</sup> *Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

## **Flee – Run for Life / Married – Run to your Wife**

Verses 18 – Flee means run for your life. If you are married, then run for your wife, save your marriage.

## **Flee – Your Computer Screen / Human thinks in Pictures**

Flee - that includes your computer screen and television monitor. The human being is pictorial in our thinking, we are constantly filling our mind with images. When I read a book, I read it in images, as the text turns into pictures. Hence why people love the movies so much. Well if you fill your mind with pictures of other woman (whether that be pornography or fantasy thoughts), you burn those images into your mind.

## **Burn the Images of your Spouse**

The intent of God is that you burn the images of your spouse into your mind, not other people.

## **Make Decision Today – Everyday – to Flee**

You have to make your decision today, every day, that you will flee sexual immorality

## **How do you Overcome? Flee to Righteousness!**

How do you overcome, whether single or married, the bible says to flee from lust, and flee to the body. Paul told Timothy to flee youthful lust, and to surround himself with the righteous. Oh the power of us gathering together, studying the word together, encouraging one another, sharpening one another, praying with one another, and all that happens when we come together.

*2 Timothy 2:20–22 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. <sup>21</sup> Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. <sup>22</sup> Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

## **When I Cycled**

I entered a bicycle challenge many years ago, and it was 175 mile in one day. From the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico, across the whole State of Florida. That is a long ride, but what we did was team up, and we took turn leading the pack. It is estimated that your resistance is diminished by up to 70%, and thus you have the energy to finish such a challenge. So too it is for us as we come together, we team together, we peddle together, even against the wind, so that we all may make it to the finish.

*Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

## **The Power of the Word**

And, oh the power of the word of God, and how it works in our lives. Gives us wisdom on how to handle the things that come before, it divides our thoughts between good and evil.

*Hebrews 4:12–13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

## **The Wicker Basket**

The story is told of an old man who lived on a farm in the mountains of eastern Kentucky with his young grandson.

*Each morning, Grandpa was up early sitting at the kitchen table reading from his old worn-out Bible. His grandson who wanted to be just like him tried to imitate him in any way he could.. One day the grandson asked, 'Papa, I try to read the Bible just like you but I don't understand it, and what I do understand I forget as soon as I close the book. What good does reading the Bible do?' The Grandfather quietly turned from putting coal in the stove and said, 'Take this old wicker coal basket down to the river and bring back a basket of water.'*

*The boy did as he was told, even though all the water leaked out before he could get back to the house. The grandfather laughed and said, 'You will have to move a little faster next time,' and sent him back to the river with the basket to try again. This time the boy ran faster, but again the old wicker basket was empty before he returned home. Out of breath, he told his grandfather that it was 'impossible to carry water in a basket,' and he went to get a bucket instead. The old man said, 'I don't want a bucket of water; I want a basket of water. You can do this. You're just not trying hard enough,' and he went out the door to watch the boy try again.*

*At this point, the boy knew it was impossible, but he wanted to show his grandfather that even if he ran as fast as he could, the water would leak out before he got far at all. The boy scooped the water and ran hard, but when he reached his grandfather the basket was again empty. Out of breath, he said, 'See Papa, it's useless!'*

*'So you think it is useless?' the old man said. 'Look at the basket.' The boy looked at the basket and for the first time he realized that the basket looked different. Instead of a dirty old wicker coal basket, it was clean. 'Son, that's what happens when you read the Bible. You might not understand or remember everything, but when you read it, it will change you from the inside out.'*

### **Makes us Clean – keeps us Clean**

The word, makes us clean, and it will keep us clean.

### **What to Do if Failed - EAT**

What to do if you have gone down the path, you feel you have thrown it all away? E-A-T.

*Psalm 34:8-9 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! <sup>9</sup> Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him.*

**Enjoy** - the Lord, don't feel condemned – Romans 8:1

**Adjust** - accordingly - flee, and come get cleaned and refreshed – Acts 3:19

**Trust** - Him to do a work in you - Phil 1:6

*Romans 8:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

*Acts 3:19 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,*

*Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

## **We are Unique in Price (6:19-20)**

### **Our Price – Outside this World**

Why? All of this is because we are unique. The unique price declares we are outside, and out of this world, as the price paid for us had to come from outside this world to buy us.

*Ephesians 1:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*

**(1 Cor 6:19 NKJV) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?**

**(1 Cor 6:20 NKJV) For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.**

### **Went to Temple to Experience God / What went On in Temple**

Verse 19 - you went to the Temple to experience the presence of God. What went on at the Temple, are the things that should be going on inside our Temple.

- Praise – for He is worthy
- Sacrifice – at whatever the cost
- Worship – for we have been redeemed
- The word – study to show thyself approved
- Holiness - we are set apart.

### **All Instruments in Temple – Set Apart**

All the instruments used in the Temple were considered holy, set apart for one thing, the use in the Temple.

### **Wayne's Car / We need to Ask – What can I do with this Body**

Got another car, one that my son can use, but the fact is it is still my car, and if he wants to use it he needs to ask me permission on what he can do with it. I bought it, I paid the price for it. You have been bought with a price, you are no longer your own, you want to do something with this vehicle you call a body, you need to ask God what you can and can't do with it.

### **He will say – Glorify me with It**

He will tell you, glorify Me with it!

*(1 Cor 6:20 NKJV) For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

# 1 Corinthians 7

## Marriage is the Same: Yesterday, Today, and Forever Part 1 - (7:1-9) - Intimacy

### Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### First Question – Marriage and Sexual Intimacy

The first question the Corinthian church asked Paul concerned marriage and intimacy in marriage. Why? Due to the prevalent heresy of Gnosticism that propounded that anything physical was inherently evil, whatever one did with one's body became either evil or immaterial. This resulted in two extreme reactions. One group said, "Since purity in the material realm is impossible, we can do whatever we want with our bodies." The other group beat and abused their bodies in an attempt to rid themselves of the evil within. Remind you also, Corinth was just a party town, there was all kinds of sexual activity going on in the town, trumped up by the 1,000 temple prostitutes that walked the streets every evening. Thus, it is no wonder that, because of cultural confusion, the church had some questions for Paul concerning marriage and sexual intimacy.

### Sermon Title

I have titled this passage, "Marriage is the Same; Yesterday, Today, and Forever". The reason is simple, and that is because it is. Times may change, styles may change, cultures may change, knowledge may increase, opinions may change, man's desires may change – but God's position on Marriage and Sexual Intimacy will never change, just as He never changes. And His Word regarding sexual intimacy, as it was spoken 6,000 years ago in the Garden, still hasn't change, it is reserved for one man, one woman, in the boundary of marriage.

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

*Genesis 2:21–25 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. <sup>22</sup> Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

### They are asking Questions

The Corinthian church was asking a specific question about marriage and sexual intimacy, Paul now answers it here in chapter seven. I like this in that they are asking questions, they are seeking things out. They wrote Paul because they wanted to know what the Lord said about this, and said about that, because they wanted to do the things of the Lord, His way, because they wanted to know if they were on the right path or needed to make some course adjustments. I like that, that is healthy and wise. I commend you for being here today, for I know that is your desire to do the same, and pray the Lord will bless you through this word.

*Psalms 111:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> The works of the LORD are great, Studied by all who have pleasure in them.

### Marriage (7:1–40)

**(1 Cor 7:1 NKJV) Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.**

#### **People who thought Body Evil Tortured / Celibacy more Spiritual / Celibacy is Gift**

Well for the people who believed that the body was evil, beat it into submission, they were suffering because they still had the bodily desires for physical union; and then there was a camp, which still exists today, which says that to be really spiritual a person should remain single. Well Paul (1 Corinthians 7) and Jesus (Matthew 19) both say that celibacy is a gift, and here the passage is saying that if you don't have that gift, then don't torture yourself trying to have it.

#### **Verse 1 – Middle of Chapter 6 & 7 / Sexual Immorality – Marriage Union / Marriage is Good**

Now this verse falls in the middle of the context of chapter seven (discussion of marriage), and chapter six (discussion on sexual immorality). So we told that marriage is a good thing, and to be married is not sinful, and when done right keeps you from sexual immorality.

#### **When Single – Don't touch / Greek – to Kindle a Fire / Applies for Single and Married**

But, when you are single you are not to touch a woman. The word here for touch in the Greek means to kindle a fire; when used in the context of the sensual, it means to touch in such a way to cause arousal. So, a man is not to touch a woman to cause passion to be flamed. If you are married then the application is to not touch any woman other than your wife in a way that could cause passion to be sparked.

#### **Often Asked – What is the Line / Protect and Provide / Can't put brakes On / Guilt Ridden**

I am often asked by youth, and singles dating, where is the line between sin and innocence, and I bring them to his passage and say right here the point where passion is aroused. So, girls I can't speak for you, but I do know for teenage boys, and young adult men, that is at the kissing part at the latest, and maybe at times the hand holding. God gives a clear line, of where the line is. And remember it is to protect and to provide. God say don't cross this line here, and you will be safe, I am giving you wisdom on where the line is so you don't get yourself in a situation you can't get out of. We were not made to put on the brakes, so trying to stop a rolling car in the middle of the hill is quite a task. Provide, He is keeping the relationship guilt free which can destroy even the most God desired relationships because the couple pushed or exceeded the limits, and guilt caused them to call it quits. I will let the Calvinist and Arminianist argue that whole thing out on was it truly God's will for them to be together or not, as I am outside that circle, God doesn't solicit me on those things, He just tells me to teach this verse – it is not good for a couple to touch each other in such a way to kindle a fire.

#### **Most Believers Agree Sex Outside Marriage is Wrong – But still get too Close / Do self Favor**

Most believers are in agreement that sex before marriage is wrong, not God will for them, but that still doesn't stop them from getting a little too close. Beloved, just listen to the Lord, save yourself the frustration. It is like beating yourself in the head with a tennis shoe, it just hurts. I had a friend in college who literally would whack himself with a tennis shoe several times real hard. I asked him why do you do it, and his reply was that it felt so good when he stopped. Just don't start, do each of yourselves a favor.

#### **All the Way – On the Way / Physical can Fool the Mind – Endorphins Produced**

You who are single, it is great that you are not “going all the way”, but listen, don't even get “on the way”. It will stunt your relationship, it will cloud your true compatibility, because the physical is so powerful, it can fool the mind into thinking this is a great relationship. There are chemicals in the body that are produced at sexual arousal, and doctors say they actual resemble the drug opium.

*The "love" chemicals produced by our endocrine system can act like an addictive drug. Phenylethylamine (PEA) is one of the main stimulants of the nervous system, and is released during times of sexual excitement or arousal. In turn, phenylethylamine (PEA) triggers endorphins, the body's natural pain killers, which also produce feelings which have been described as euphoric, pleasurable, "mellow." PEA also supercharges the actions of dopamine, the brain's primary neurotransmitter involved in sexual arousal. - Don Colbert M.D*

*Endorphins ("endogenous morphine") are endogenous opioid peptides that function as neurotransmitters. They are produced by the pituitary gland and the hypothalamus in vertebrates during exercise, excitement, pain, consumption of spicy food, love and orgasm, and they resemble the opiates in their abilities to produce analgesia and a feeling of well-being. - Wikipedia*

### **Same Process with Pornography and Fantasy / Eye gate – Thought gate / Burning a CD**

By the way that same chemical process is what is going on when a person views pornography (whether that be pure nudity, or the half-clothed nudity that the cultural accepts today). When a person lets it through the eye gate, and then allows it through the thought gate, and then thinks upon it, then these chemicals produce and burn an image on to the mind. It is like burning a file on to a Compact Disc.

### **Use those Chemicals for your Marriage**

Remember this thought, because that same “chemical” that can stunt you, will be the same chemical process that will ignite your marriage.

**(1 Cor 7:2 NKJV) Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.**

### **Real Clear Definition of Marriage / 4,000 years after Garden / Such were Some of You**

Notice the real clear definition here, that marriage is between a man and a woman (4,000 years later from the Garden it is still the same definition). Marriage is the same yesterday, today, and forever – for God doesn’t change regardless how man tries to reapply His word based on the current cultural desires. Now, I really skimmed by it our last study, and that was where Paul speaking of homosexuality, says and such were some of you. The point is that some were living that life, but came out of it, in obedience to the Lord. So to say that someone is born that way and to ask them to change would be impossible, is not consistent with the Scriptures. The same applies for the other vices that people were entangled with such as drunkardness, fighting, stealing, etc, and sex before marriage.

*1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*

### **Proverbs 18**

Proverbs 18 says that he who finds a wife finds a good thing. Socrates said he that finds a good wife will be happy, and he that finds a bad wife becomes a philosopher. If you don’t get it now, you’ll get it on the way home.

*Proverbs 18:22 (NKJV) <sup>22</sup> He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD.*

### **Marriage won’t Solve your Lust Problem**

I always say this, especially to the people who say they have to get married because they can’t control themselves, I say don’t make that your top reason to get married. I tell men, if you can’t control your lust before marriage, marriage will not solve your lust problem. You don’t have a lust problem, you have a heart problem, and you need to seek the Lord on getting that heart changed. Paul said in the last chapter that we are not to be brought under the power of anything.

*1 Corinthians 6:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

### **Now in Marriage Bounds**

Now, in the marriage bounds, oh that passion for your spouse is a gift, and God has an intention for it.

**(1 Cor 7:3 NKJV) Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.**

**(1 Cor 7:4 NKJV) The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.**

### **Don’t Withhold / Not a Weapon / Satan gets a Foothold**

Now, when you are married, you are to kindle the passion between you and your spouse, and you are not to withhold sex from each other. Some couples use sex as a weapon, as they withhold it as a payback for something else they are upset about. The Lord says don’t do it, because it opens the door for Satan to get a foothold of separation in the marriage. Satan’s strategy is to always separate couples from each other, and individuals from the Lord.

### **Bodily – Closeness / But – if Only for Sex / Something is Amiss – Someone is Self Centered**

Sometimes for a married couple, sex is a bodily urge, sometimes it is the heart desiring to be so close that the two become one. In either case God uses it for the binding together of your marriage. But, I have to add this, if you only want to be with your spouse for the sex part, and then run off and do your own thing, there is something amiss in your marriage, and you need to seek the Lord (and counseling if need be), because it is a great indicator that you are very self-centered, and a self-centered person in a marriage is not God's design, and anything outside His design and ways will surely not be good.

**(1 Cor 7:5 NKJV) Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.**

### **World says Separate – God says Unite / I have to Find Myself**

Contrary to the wisdom of the world, which prescribes separation for ailing marriages, the principle of the Word is that, rather than moving out to find oneself, to discover what one wants, or to determine what's wrong, husbands and wives are to give themselves to each other because intimacy binds people uniquely.

### **Again – Sex is a binding Thing / Idiom – Two become One**

As we studied last week in chapter six, sex is not only a bodily thing; it is the binding and union of two souls. So each time a married couple joins in the physical act, they give a piece of their souls to that other person. Hence why the idiom is “the two became one”.

### **I don't Support Separation / Satan Works / Separate at Length you can Fast / No Loopholes**

I do not support the place of couples who are having marital difficulties to separate (unless in situations of physical abuse – and if that is the case then the outside intercession needs to be immediately – and the abuser needs to be confronted immediately). But separation in the non-violent situation I do not believe is wise, because once separation occurs, Satan can get to work. So the max length of time the separation can should be, is how long you can fast. God removes the loopholes people try to work out, oh we are separating to think and pray, God says great, and when you are ready to eat, then planning on making it dinner for two.

### **Enjoy Gift – Recreation, Procreation, and Unification**

So husband and wife, enjoy the gift, and enjoy the gift as recreation, procreation, but also remember the gift as unification.

### **Is passion Cool – Overworked and Overstressed / Pray for Spouse – Prayer produces Passion**

And let me just remind you of this, if your passion is somewhat cool, it is most usually because you are overstressed and overworked. Make some adjustments there, and I will give you a sure fire that will kindle a flame – pray for your spouse. Pray for them, and prayer changes things, and it will change the way you feel about your spouse, because God will move in your heart and remind you of the commitment you made, the bride of your youth, the mother or father to your child, who your best friend is, and many other things that will move your heart. The most passionless marriages are the marriages where prayer is passionless.

### **Divorce Rate 1 in 1072**

By the way, interesting statistic, the couple who have consistent prayer life, are consistently in the Word, and consistently in fellowship with the saints – their divorce rate is 1 in 1072, compared to the average of 1 in 2.

### **Greek; Eros – Agape – Phileo / Marriage is Garden – began in Garden - Cultivated**

We have been talking about love, in the Greek word “eros”, in the sensual form. But remember there is love in the form “agape”, which is that unconditional form, loving your spouse when you don't feel like, and even when they are flat out wrong or being mean. But let us not forget, and we so often do, the third Greek word form for love, and that is “phileo”, and that is the word for friend. Couples keep being friends don't go find other best friends, make your mate your best friend, and God will bless your marriage. Marriage is a garden, it began in a garden, and like a garden it needs to be cultivated.



**(1 Cor 7:6 NKJV) But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment.**

**(1 Cor 7:7 NKJV) For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.**

**(1 Cor 7:8 NKJV) But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am;**

### **Paul now Single – Once Married**

Although he was single at this point, there are two strong indications that Paul had been married previously.

- As they do to this day, the rabbis taught that God's edict to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28) was a commandment given to all holy or godly men. Therefore, they said whoever didn't marry and have children violated the commandment. And, concerning the law, Paul was blameless (Philippians 3:6).
- Secondly, Paul was most likely a member of the Sanhedrin—the Jewish Supreme Court. To be a member of this seventy-member body, one had to be married because the Jews believed that he who was married was more prone to mercy.

What happened to Paul's wife? Some suggest she died. History, however, weighs in on the side of the premise that his wife left him when he converted to Christianity.

### **Jesus spoke about Gift in Matthew 19**

Jesus referred to the gift of which Paul speaks in Matthew 19. Jesus said some are born without a need or desire to be married. Others—for example those who were in charge of a king's harem—were involuntarily made that way. I suspect that Jesus was speaking of those who made themselves eunuchs in the sense that they said, "I am not going to become involved with women in order that I might focus on the kingdom."

*Matthew 19:10–12 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry." <sup>11</sup> But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given: <sup>12</sup> For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it."

### **If don't have it – Don't try It**

Paul and Jesus both say, if you don't have the gift, don't try to have it; it is ok to be married.

### **Paul said it is Great to be Single – being Single Minded**

If you are at a place where you can live by yourself, Paul says, "Good for you. I wish all men were like that—living in single-mindedness and in freedom." Paul was free to serve the Lord, he had to worry about nothing else except the ministry. He didn't have to take the cares of feeding the family, providing medical insurance, tball games, and the likes, he was able to singlemindedly focus on the ministry outside the home.

### **Marriage made me Unspiritual / Nothing make you more Like Jesus than Marriage**

I have to say, marriage really made me unspiritual. I was so much more spiritual when I was single. I got along so great with myself, I never upset myself, when I was tired of me I just put me to bed. But woe, I get married and I find found out how cranky I can really be, how selfish I really am, how focused on me I really was. As I say, nothing will make you more like Jesus Christ than marriage, for you will have to learn to die to yourself for the sake of the other.

### **If you feel Called into Ministry / Ask if your Ministry will be Added to**

I just say this, if you feel a calling to the ministry, a ministry outside the home, then carefully ask yourself this when you are dating a potential mate, and that is, will this person add to or take away from my ministry calling.

**(1 Cor 7:9 NKJV) but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.**

### **But if Not – Get Married**

Although Paul enjoyed his single state, he knew it was better for someone to get married than to burn with passion. And such would be the normal pattern for the vast majority.

### **This is the One**

I give this counsel concerning the balance of all this. Marriage will not solve your lust issue, so don't get married because you have a lust issue, be brought under the power of nothing. But for a man and a woman who have sought the Lord, have exercised restraint, and have come to the place in their heart that this is the one, this is the person they want to spend the rest of their lives together, then marry! Don't drag it out for months and months because you have to plan this elaborate wedding, or you are waiting for some certain month of the year, all the while you are burning inside to be one, then marry!

Long Courtship –Short Engagement!

But again, only after you have given your relationship time to develop, mature, and blossom. Hence why God says to not have the physical aspect of the relationship, because then all that leaves you is time to talk, and not be clouded by the physical and emotional side of the relationship. Be pure, and you will know if this is one light years ahead of those who keep pushing the line, or worse, go over the line. God's ways are perfect and pure, and wisdom beyond this world's.

### **Single and Waiting Forever**

You who are single, not given the gift, desiring to be married, but at this moment have not even a date, think you'll be single forever, what do you do – wait! Here are four things to meditate on for those who are single and waiting forever.

**W – Work** in the Lord's field, take advantage of the freedom singleness brings. While you work, you won't be so consumed with you, and you very well may see who else has a heart for the service of the Lord.

**A – Aim** to be the mate you desire your mate to be. You want a spouse of the word, then be in the word, a spouse of prayer, be a person of pray, a spouse who is pure, then be pure.

**I – Intercede** for your mate, pray for them, ask the Lord to develop them. Hey you may think you are ready to be married, but that person God has designed for you may still have some things God want to do with them before He gives them to you.

**T - Trust** the Lord. Trust the Lord is going to bring you a mate, just like he did Adam. Thankfully Adam was resting in the Lord, so much so he was sleeping, and not going around the garden shaking the bushes, and turning over the rocks, else he would have got what crawled out from beneath them. He rested in the Lord, and the Lord delivered.

*Proverbs 3:5-6 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*

### **Conclusion**

Marriage and sexual intimacy, is the same yesterday, today, and forever. God's way – the perfect way!

# Marriage is the Same: Yesterday, Today, and Forever

## *Part 2 - (Now that you Date)*

### **Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions**

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### **First Question – Marriage and Sexual Intimacy**

The first question the Corinthian church asked Paul concerned marriage and intimacy in marriage. Why? Due to the prevalent heresy of Gnosticism that propounded that anything physical was inherently evil, whatever one did with one's body became either evil or immaterial. This resulted in two extreme reactions. One group said, "Since purity in the material realm is impossible, we can do whatever we want with our bodies." The other group beat and abused their bodies in an attempt to rid themselves of the evil within. Remind you also, Corinth was just a party town, there was all kinds of sexual activity going on in the town, trumped up by the 1,000 temple prostitutes that walked the streets every evening. Thus, it is no wonder that, because of cultural confusion, the church had some questions for Paul concerning marriage and sexual intimacy.

### **Sermon Title**

I have titled this passage, "Marriage is the Same; Yesterday, Today, and Forever". The reason is simple, and that is because it is. Times may change, styles may change, cultures may change, knowledge may increase, opinions may change, man's desires may change – but God's position on Marriage and Sexual Intimacy will never change, just as He never changes. And His Word regarding sexual intimacy, as it was spoken 6,000 years ago in the Garden, still hasn't change, it is reserved for one man, one woman, in the boundary of marriage.

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

*Genesis 2:21–25 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. <sup>22</sup> Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

### **They are asking Questions**

The Corinthian church was asking a specific question about marriage and sexual intimacy, Paul now answers it here in chapter seven. I like this in that they are asking questions, they are seeking things out. They wrote Paul because they wanted to know what the Lord said about this, and said about that, because they wanted to do the things of the Lord, His way, because they wanted to know if they were on the right path or needed to make some course adjustments. I like that, that is healthy and wise. I commend you for being here today, for I know that is your desire to do the same, and pray the Lord will bless you through this word.

*Psalms 111:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *The works of the LORD are great, Studied by all who have pleasure in them.*

### **Now that you Date**

So, today's study is more of a topical study, as I thought it beneficial for us to look into "Ok, now that you date". You are at that place in your life that you date, you are at that place in your life that you feel that someday you will be marriage, so yes the step before marriage is dating, and you want to do it right. But, this study then also is for you parents as you lead and guide your children on how to date godly and biblically.

## **Ephesians 4-5**

I could have picked ten verses from ten different places in the Bible, and we could have discussed each point and flipped to each passage, but I love how God lays out the Scriptures, and I notice a one stop-shop on how to date biblically and godly, and that is Ephesians chapters 4-5. This place of Scripture applies to marriage relationships as well, and as a matter of fact, it applies to every interpersonal relationship we have. Today, we will look at it specifically in the terms of dating, and of course how could we not make mention as it applies to marriage.

### **The Christian Pickup Lines (by Mark Lowry):**

So now you date, maybe that prince or princess walked into the room and gave your heart a knockout blow, maybe your friends fixed you up, or maybe you fell for one of these pick-up lines, but here you are and now you date, and you want to do it right.

1. Nice bible.
2. I would like to pray with you.
3. You know Jesus? Me too.
4. God told me to come talk to you.
5. I know a church where we could go and talk.
6. How about a hug, sister?
7. Do you need help carrying your bible? It looks heavy.
8. Christians don't shake hands, Christians gotta hug.
9. Oh you are cold, Ecclesiastes 4:11.
10. Did it hurt when you fell from Heaven?
11. What are your plans for tonight? Feel like a bible study?
12. I am here for you.
13. The word says "Give drink to those who are thirsty, and feed the hungry." How about dinner?
14. You don't have an accountability partner? Me neither.
15. Do you want to come over and watch the Ten Commandments tonight?
16. Is it a sin that you stole my heart?
17. Would you happen to know a Christian woman (man) that I could love with all my heart and wait on hand and foot?
18. Nice bracelet (WWJD). What would Jesus date? I mean "do."
19. Do you believe in Divine appointment?
20. Have you ever tried praying at a drive-in movie before?
21. Excuse me, I believe one of your ribs belongs to me.
22. My friend told me to come and meet you, he said that you are a really nice person. I think you know him. Jesus, yeah, that's His name.
23. You know they say that you have never really dated, until you have dated a Christian.
24. Yeah I predicted David over Goliath.

### **Not a Demoralizing Waiting Game / But an Opportunity**

Some singles approach dating as a demoralizing waiting game ... others, a desperate mating game ... and still others, a deceitful baiting game. At the core, their mindset is, I have to have someone to meet my needs. But God's view of dating is different. Because He is the one who promises to meet our deepest needs, we need not view dating as a desperate effort to get our needs met. Meeting our needs is His job. For us, dating is an opportunity to develop

- social skills,
- self-control,
- and healthy relationships that selflessly seek the highest good of another person.

Rather than searching our social landscape seeking a "perfect match," we are to view dating as an ideal time to focus on becoming the person God intends us to be. For many, this journey will someday end in marriage. For some, it will not. But, when done His way, dating will help us grow in Christ like character as we form friendships that flourish. This promise takes the "desperation" out of dating.

### **Don't play Games**

**4:25 - Be truthful, no games.** Whether it is something that is picked up from the world, or the sin nature within, don't play those foolish dating games that people so often play. Well they think, I am not going to call them for two days to see if they really are into me. Or I won't return their text all night and see how they react to it. If they are really into me they will be calling and texting me. I remember a friend of mine telling me how his girlfriend called him and said I am on the other side of the Bay Bridge and am afraid to drive over, I need you to come over (60 minutes of work for him) and help escort me over. Later on she told him I just did that to see if you would come, to see how much you love me. Games, games, and games. Immature believers will also flirt with others, to see how the other one reacts.

*Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.*

### **Learn to Communicate**

**4:26-27 - learn to communicate, talk through your problems.** You may find that you are not meant for each other, but if you talk it out that you can break-up and still be friends. Or you may find that you really just miss understood what the other was thinking. The devil will use those things to drive division between the two of you

*Ephesians 4:26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,  
Ephesians 4:27 nor give place to the devil.*

### **Again – wisdom of not being Physical**

Again, this is the wisdom of God of why He says to not have sex before marriage. What happens is that people have problems, they are mad at each other for some reason or another, but the emotional side of the physical side comes into play, and they have sex, that dissipates the anger, but it doesn't resolve what the original problem was and still is. So all they did was smooth the issue over, and now that everyone is in that peaceful place, they really don't want to fight about it again, they just ignore it. But ignoring it doesn't make it go away, and thus it just lingers there, and eventually rises again. The beautiful part is when you are not having sex, there is nothing left to do but talk it through, and come to a resolution or at the minimum an understanding of why the person did what they did.

### **No Corrupt Words**

**4:29 – No Corrupt words.** Choose your words, even in joking. Respect that person as a child of God. Although my point isn't about stealing and it is about the words we choose, we see the correlation that we are to edify and give to the other, not just materially but to the heart to build them up. Any words that are corrupt takes away from the other person, it robs them, it steals from them. Dating couples do not need to be making any sexual innuendos towards each other. That robs them; it makes them think of things they shouldn't be thinking.

*Ephesians 4:28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.*

*Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.*

### **The Tale Our Tweets Tell**

Hey, did you read this in the paper.

*Did you hear that the Library of Congress is going to be acquiring the Twitter archives, dating back to the social media giant's origins in 2006? Folks aren't too happy about it. They assumed their 140-character notes were here today, gone tomorrow. I thought Newsweek's Julia Baird had some interesting reflections on the matter. When people read the collected tweets years from now, what will they make of our endless stream of "politics and junk, self-aggrandizement and social activism, the phony and the genuine, the mad and the sweet"? I wonder if this could be used in a sermon as an interesting way to talk about conduct and witness in a social media world? Or, could this be used to challenge people to take a journey through their social media profiles? What story is being told via their status updates and tweets? Is it a good story? A story different from the many told throughout the social media world? A story that they really want on record for the world to read and reflect on?*

### **Our Memory Retains – Watch out in Fighting**

My point isn't so much about watch what you tweet, which you should, but if man has the ability to record every word spoken in a tweet, know that God has a much greater ability to do the same. And, the human memory is amazing on what it retains, and has no rhyme or reason on when those things come back up and out. Watch the words you use when you are having an argument, because they may linger on indefinitely with that person you spilled them on.

### **Do not Grieve**

**4:30 – Do not Grieve the Holy Spirit** - speaks for itself. If your relationship reaches this point, it is time to call it quits, seek counseling if you need confirmation. This is a sign of immaturity, and one or both persons need to not date until they are mature enough to handle a relationship.

*Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

### **Be Kind**

**4:31-32 - Be kind**, Kindness can make up for a lot of shortcomings.

*Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.*

*Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

### **Again – Watch your Words**

There again is the caution and the counsel to watch what proceeds from our mouth.

### **Be Honest – We all need some Forgiving**

And, let just be honest, we all need some forgiving from time to time, so be gracious and forgive. Allow them to have a bad day, allow them to be cranky from time to time. Men recognize the extreme physical toll a woman's menstrual cycle can be on them.

### **BUT – if they always need Forgiving / Don't be Deceived / Marriage won't make them Better**

But, if you are continually forgiving, continually overlooking, be realistic with yourself and see that that is person, and that is you future if you continue in this relationship unto marriage. A person deceives themselves if they think marriage will make this great change in a person's personality. The desire to marry can be so great that a person says I know they have this issue and that issue, but that will change when we get married because we will be sharing a house, or they won't have to drive home, or we can merge our finances, or we will have more time together to talk. I think you deceive yourself.

### **Question – If they never Change**

I always ask this question when someone brings up issues they have about the person they are dating, and I ask them, if that person never changes one bit, could you accept that and live with them for the rest of your life; 50 years, 18,250 days, 438,000 hours, those 2,628,000 minutes of your life? If you can't, then better to part ways now before you start the clock on those 50 years, which starts ticking when you say "I do"

### **Be Imitators of God / How would Jesus treat Them / No Shame**

**5:1 - WWJD**. In all your dealings with one another, consider how would Jesus treat this person. You do that, and you can be sure your relationship will be blessed, whether you end up married or not. How glorious it is to have a Christian couple stop dating, remain friends, and not have any shame about their dating relationship.

*Ephesians 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.*

### **Sacrifice / Not One way / Save Marriage talk for Month 4**

**5:2 – Making the Sacrifice**. A relationship is not one way, you have to be willing to sacrifice. You can't always do what you like, or always do it your way. A relationship is a sacrifice; we must be willing to sacrifice for the other. You can get a real good indicator of how much you really love that person to the level you will sacrifice for them. And likewise they to you. Hey save the marriage talk for way down the road.

1. Month one this is the one,
2. Month two I have a few problems with you,
3. Month three all I want is to be free.

Give it time, and time will show and tell; you will clearly see if they are all about themselves.

*Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.*

### **Number 1 Reason Marriages Fail**

The number one reason marriages fail? Selfishness. One or both persons refuse to die to themselves, are demanding their own way, and when they don't get it, or are not willing to sacrifice, the relationship ends.

## Purity

**5:3 - Sexual purity** – Here it is, spelled out real clear for each dating couple.

*Ephesians 5:3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;*

### Research Shows That Delaying Sex Until Marriage Improves Relationships

*Does delaying sex until after marriage improve your marital relationship? According to a 2010 research study, the answer is a clear yes. As reported in the Journal of Family Psychology (and later in the January 22, 2011, edition of The Economist), the study surveyed 2,035 married couples and asked them about their initial sexual experience together (before or after the wedding). Of the 2,035 couples, 336 couples reported waiting until they got married to have sex. The largest group of couples had sex within a few weeks of dating, and 126 couples had sex prior to dating. (This prompted a psychologist who reviewed the study to note, "I guess I'm not sure what constitutes dating anymore.")*

*After analyzing the data, the three researchers concluded that waiting until after marriage improved the relationship (for both men and women) in four key areas: sexual quality, relationship communication, relationship satisfaction, and perceived relationship stability. According to the study, people who waited until marriage*

- *rated sexual quality 15 percent higher than people who had premarital sex*
- *rated relationship stability 22 percent higher*
- *rated satisfaction with their relationships 20 percent higher*

*The data showed that premarital sex doesn't necessarily doom the future marriage to failure. On the other hand, based on this research, there is no validity to the idea that premarital sex is needed to "test" and possibly improve the future marriage relationship. The authors stated that waiting until after the wedding day (what they call "commitment-based sexuality") "is more likely to create a sense of security and clarity between partners ... about exclusivity and a future."*

## P-U-R-I-T-Y

P—Prioritize God's standard for purity in your dating.

U—Undertake personal accountability for how you treat your date's body.

R—Refrain from activities that violate God's standard by arousing sexual desires.

I—Implement activities that are pleasing to God (Serving, Attending Church)

T—Trust in God's timing.

Y—Yield your life to the Lord.

## World's Mentality

**5:3-7 Don't bring in the world's dating mentality.** Austin Powers is not your role model. Hollywood is not where to learn how to behave on a date. Verse 6 says don't be deceived. The world tries to start at Eros (Greek word for sexual intimacy), then move to Phileo (Greek word for friendship), and then the last Greek word for love (Agape), which is this unconditional love. God's way is totally reversed. God says start with Agape, develop friendship, and then move into the intimacy.

*Ephesians 5:3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;*

*Ephesians 5:4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.*

*Ephesians 5:5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

*Ephesians 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.*

*Ephesians 5:7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.*

### World's Mentality / Dating Survey Shows When Sex Becomes Acceptable

*Here is the world's mentality about sex and dating. In a 2003 survey, men and women were asked, "When does sex with your date become acceptable?"*

- *On the first, second, or third date: 22 percent (men: 44 percent; women: 8 percent)*
- *Only after three or more dates: 19 percent (men: 20 percent; women: 18 percent)*
- *Only after knowing person for extended period: 35 percent (men: 22 percent; women: 45 percent)*
- *Only after getting married: 11 percent (men: 5 percent; women: 15 percent)*

*[The responses above are selections, so the percentages do not add up to 100 percent.]*

*Original source: AARP/Knowledge Networks, 2003; as seen in sidebar "Instant KAMA," to "Solo, So What," American Demographics (February 2004), p. 15*

### Teens on Cohabitation / Are what you Eat

Americans aged 13 to 17 who believe unmarried couples living together is acceptable:

- *Teens overall: 70 percent*
- *Churchgoing teens: 50 percent*

Where do they develop this standard, from the world, for that is what the world promotes and touts on television and the movies. You go watch that stuff over and over, your mind will be receive the message. You truly are what you eat.

### **Unequally Yoked**

**5:8-11 – do not be unequalled yoke / Do not date unbelievers.** No missionary dating. God is wise in His counsel. Do you trust Him enough in this area? If you are dating an non-believer you need to end it today, else in the end you will be the one who is hurting.

*Ephesians 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light*

*Ephesians 5:9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),*

*Ephesians 5:10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.*

*Ephesians 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.*

*Ephesians 5:12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.*

*Ephesians 5:13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.*

*Ephesians 5:14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep. Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."*

### **Redeem the Time**

**5:15-16 - Invest in your relationship.** Don't spend so much time in mindless movies and TV; but in the things of God. Go serve somewhere together. I can never understand it, but why is it that dating is all about movies and dinner? Why isn't it about spending a Saturday at Habitat for Humanity, or feeding the hungry on Thursday. Dating couples spend so much time on mindless things, which in themselves may not be bad, but they for the most part are unprofitable for the development of the relationship. Go serve together, and you will see and know what is really in the heart of the other.

*Ephesians 5:15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,*

*Ephesians 5:16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

### **Taking them Higher / Not Self-Centered**

**5:18-19 - How can I help this person draw closer to God and become more like Christ.** In your dating you should continually be seeking and asking how you can draw that person closer to the Lord. But, so often the person is dating because of "themselves". They make me feel good, I enjoy them, I am glad I am not alone. How true that may be, but the danger is that it draws a self-centered focus unto self, and that leads to not seeking how to take the person higher in their relationship with the Lord.

*Ephesians 5:17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

*Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

*Ephesians 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,*

### **Don't take them for Granted**

**5:20 Give Thanks.** I love it in new relationships; month one each person always has a pack of gum on themselves, always have the fresh breath. Hair always combed makeup on, contacts in, best clothes. But then as they settle in the glasses go on, too tired to iron this shirt, woe - where is the makeup. It is good to settle in and be yourself, but the point I am making (in a joking way) is that some people reach the point that they are no longer willing to make any sacrifice for the relationship, or go out of their way for the other for anything, and basically start to take the other for granted. You do well to give thanks for the person in your life every day, consider them a gift from God, and treat them as such. And, before you go to the next level (getting engaged), see if they are doing the same

*Ephesians 5:20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Keep Investing in the Relationship**

This ties in with keep investing in your relationship. The same is true once you get married. It is a dangerous place when a person feels, ok now that I got, they are committed to me because we are Christians. Like a garden, we must keep cultivating the garden. Me and a friend at work like to talk gardening. How interesting how much more fruitful his garden is then mine, although I felt like my garden was really doing well. But his, wow it is flourishing. The difference, he goes out and waters his daily, he adds fertilizer, he fences it in from the animals, basically he spends a whole lot more time tending and cultivating his garden. As for me, I threw some seed in the ground, and every now and then I remember it and go pull a weed here, water it when I remember it has not rained for some time – basically my garden is on autopilot, and his is more hands-on. Relationships get like that, marriages especially, as we can put them on auto-pilot, be content where they are, missing that the more we cultivate them, the greater the



growth and harvest. Don't take your relationship for granted, give thanks for it continually, and cultivate it daily.

### **Fear of the Lord**

**5:21 In the Fear of the Lord** - Men, that girl you want to get close to is God's little girl. Lady's, God has plans for that young man, that he will become that man of God. Both of you must reverence God in your relationship.

*Ephesians 5:21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

### **Woman**

**5:22 – Is she teachable** – does she demand to lead. Girls if you're the spiritual leader, then there will always be trouble. Men, if she won't let you lead, then there will always be trouble.

*Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*

### **Time**

Need time to tell. That is why you need to wait, and stay pure.

### **When does this Start**

The question is often asked, when does this start in a relationship? I say when the two of you have come to the place where you both feel and have discussed that your relationship is headed towards marriage.

### **Men**

**5:23 – Can he lead, or just wants to Lord over you.** Girls if he is not leading you deeper in your relationship with Christ, then it is not of the Lord.

*Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.*

### **Time**

Need time to tell. That is why you need to wait, and stay pure.

### **Conclusion**

These points are great points to pray over individually, discuss corporately, and review frequently.

- 4:25 - Be truthful, no games.
- 4:26-27 - Learn to communicate, talk through your problems.
- 4:29 – No corrupt words.
- 4:30 – Do not Grieve the Holy Spirit
- 4:31-32 - Be kind to one another
- 5:1 - WWJD.
- 5:2 – Make sacrifices
- 5:3 - Sexual Purity
- 5:3-7 - Don't bring in the worlds dating mentality
- 5:8-11 – Do not be unequalled yoke / Do not date unbelievers.
- 5:15-16 - Invest in your relationship.
- 5:18-19 - How can I help this person draw closer to God and become more like Christ.
- 5:20 - Give Thanks for them.
- 5:21 - Fear of the Lord
- 5:22 – Is she teachable / Be teachable
- 5:23 – Can he lead, or just wants to Lord over you / Men Lead

# Marriage is the Same: Yesterday, Today, and Forever

## *Part 3 (7:10-40)*

### *Live as You are Called*

#### **Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions**

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

#### **First Question – Marriage and Sexual Intimacy**

The first question the Corinthian church asked Paul concerned marriage and intimacy in marriage. Why? Due to the prevalent heresy of Gnosticism that propounded that anything physical was inherently evil, whatever one did with one's body became either evil or immaterial. This resulted in two extreme reactions. One group said, "Since purity in the material realm is impossible, we can do whatever we want with our bodies." The other group beat and abused their bodies in an attempt to rid themselves of the evil within. Remind you also, Corinth was just a party town, there was all kinds of sexual activity going on in the town, trumped up by the 1,000 temple prostitutes that walked the streets every evening. Thus, it is no wonder that, because of cultural confusion, the church had some questions for Paul concerning marriage and sexual intimacy.

#### **Sermon Title**

I have titled this passage, "Marriage is the Same; Yesterday, Today, and Forever". The reason is simple, and that is because it is. Times may change, styles may change, cultures may change, knowledge may increase, opinions may change, man's desires may change – but God's position on Marriage and Sexual Intimacy will never change, just as He never changes. And His Word regarding sexual intimacy, as it was spoken 6,000 years ago in the Garden, still hasn't change, it is reserved for one man, one woman, in the boundary of marriage.

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

*Genesis 2:21–25 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. <sup>22</sup> Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

#### **They are asking Questions**

The Corinthian church was asking a specific question about marriage and sexual intimacy, Paul now answers it here in chapter seven. I like this in that they are asking questions, they are seeking things out. They wrote Paul because they wanted to know what the Lord said about this, and said about that, because they wanted to do the things of the Lord, His way, because they wanted to know if they were on the right path or needed to make some course adjustments. I like that, that is healthy and wise. I commend you for being here today, for I know that is your desire to do the same, and pray the Lord will bless you through this word.

*Psalms 111:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *The works of the LORD are great, Studied by all who have pleasure in them.*

#### **Colossians 1**

We come here because what Paul said in Colossians 1, and that is we preach and teach so that we may be complete. Lord may we seize this this promise to be made complete as we study Your word today.

*Colossians 1:28 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

### **Recap Verses 1-9**

So picking up here in our study today starting in verse 10, we left off with Paul saying it is better to marry than to burn with lust. But immediately in verse ten we start with Paul saying but if you do get married, then stay married.

*1 Corinthians 7:8-9 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; <sup>9</sup> but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

### **Marriage – A Display to the World**

Marriage amongst the church is meant to be a public display of God's covenant with all who will come to Him. As the world looks on, sees godly marriages, they see a glimpse of God's promise to man, that I will be with you forever, in sickness and health, in good times and bad, but death will never do us apart for I have already died for you so we can live forever together.

*Revelation 19:7-8 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. <sup>8</sup> And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

### **Message Title – Live as you were Called**

The title of our message today is “Live as you were Called”, and we hear the heart of God saying that marriage (and all that we do for that matter) is a holy calling, and as His disciples, His followers, we have a high calling on living it out for His glory. When you bring Him glory, you will see His glory, so His commands are not burdensome, but are total power and freedom! Do you want power in your marriage? Do you want live and enjoy the abundant life that God promises us (whether that applies to your marriage, your job, your recreation, your relationships, your family), then here is a mountaintop of power and passion here in this chapter.

*1 John 5:3-5 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. <sup>4</sup> For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

### **Outline**

Outline: Live as you were Called:

1. Your Walk in the Calling (7:10-17)
2. Your Position in the Calling (7:18-20)
3. Your Contentment in the Calling (7:21-23)
4. Your Remaining in the Calling (7:24-40)

## **Your Walk in the Calling (7:10-17)**

### **Verse 17 – Called and Walk**

Verse 17 says “as the Lord has called each, so let him walk”. The moment you said “I Do”, your marriage was sealed before the Lord, became His will, became you calling, and know the calling says to walk it out. (*1 Cor 7:17 NKJV*) But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches.

### **Walk Means**

This word walk means

- “go”
- “walk about”
- “be occupied” – are you occupied with your marriage or busy about other things.
- “to make progress” – is you marriage progressing? Marriage fail when they don't progress.
- “to make due use of opportunities” – marriage is a gift and opportunity to become more Christlike.
- “to live” – to live for you marriage, means you first have to die for it.
- “to conduct one's self” – how are we to conduct ourselves in our marriages, let's read the next 30 verses.

**(1 Cor 7:10 NKJV) Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.**

**(1 Cor 7:11 NKJV) But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.**

### **Like a Violin / Marriage for Life – Approach it as Such / Commands - Enabling**

Wives, do not leave your husbands. Period. Marriage is like a violin—it doesn't work without strings. But even when the music stops, the strings are still attached. Marriage is for life, approach it like that, live it as such, walk accordingly, and you will work through any and all issues in your marriage. Every one of God's commands, come with His enabling, thus any marriage can be reconciled if both husband and wife are walking according to their calling.

### **Adultery Exception**

There are two causes where divorce is allowed in the sight of the Holy God. One is adultery, and the second we will cover starting in verse 12.

*Matthew 19:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."*

### **Dynamic 1 - Husbands**

However, before we go to verse 12, I want you to see this verse 11, it is quite a dynamic verse is verse 11 when you really stop to consider it, and it needs to be taught today in its full dynamic. Dynamic 1, husbands you are not to divorce your wife period! (except under circumstance of her committing adultery – and even then if you can reconcile you do well). No options given to the husband other than to make it work, until death do you apart. God expects the man to lead, to work, to sweat, to fight, and if need be die for the marriage. This is the expectation of being a man – so men, be men, quite whining, and be a man.

### **Dynamic 2 - Wives**

Dynamic 2, wives, if you leave under any circumstances (other than adultery), then you can never remarry as long as your husband is still available to reconcile to. Verse 11 would seem to say it is ok for the woman to leave, but verse 10 makes it clear that she is not to, and if she does, then she is in sin. The dynamic of verse 11 is really for the church, in that the church should not be condoning unbiblical marriages. The church needs to determine if the divorce was biblical to start with, before they marry anyone who was once previously married. If adultery was not the case, the church leadership needs to tell these two people they are to breakup, and the other is to go back and try to reconcile their prior marriage. It is quite a dynamic being spoken here in that God is saying hey wife, if you disregard my word, let it be known that if you move on to another relationship, this is what I consider it. ....

*Matthew 19:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."*

### **Verses 12-16 – Second Allowable for Divorce**

Now moving on to verses 12-16, the second allowable reason for divorce, the unbeliever wants to leave. The situation here in Corinth, as it so happens today, people got married and one of the spouses was saved or got saved, and the other wasn't, and the unsaved saved person says "I don't want anything to do with you and your Jesus, I am out of here".

### **Before we get to Far / Paul says – Lord Says**

Before we get too far down the road, Paul says in verse 12 that he says, and not the Lord says. People thus apply that to mean that this is Paul's opinion, and not a command of the Lord. I say, "all" Scripture is inspired of God. So, rule out that when Paul says something as such, that it is an optional application.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

### **Paul isn't referencing something Jesus Said**

Because all Scripture is given by inspiration, I believe the more correct interpretation for us (it is not his opinion) but Paul is saying, "Jesus did not specifically say this" (as the instance he quotes Jesus directly regarding adultery), and although Jesus did not specifically address this, here is the Lord's word on the matter.

**(1 Cor 7:12 NKJV) But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her.**

**(1 Cor 7:13 NKJV) And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.**

### **Don't drive the Spouse Away**

Paul says a person who gets saved is not to divorce or drive away his unbelieving spouse. Don't be stuffing tracts in between their sandwiches, or writing Bible verses on the bathroom mirror so when the steam comes from the shower a verses "magically" appears say "repent for the kingdom of God is near".

**(1 Cor 7:14 NKJV) For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.**

### **The Unbelievers are Sanctified - Blessed**

The unbelieving husband or wife is sanctified by the believing spouse. This doesn't mean the unbeliever is saved, but rather that he or she is sanctified, set apart, blessed simply because they're linked to a believer.

### **Teenagers – you are Blessed because Believing Parents**

Here is some application you can take away right now, and that is you teenagers, maybe you think your parents are crazy, boring, over the top with this Jesus stuff – let me just tell you who have ears to hear, and that is your house that you enjoy is tremendously blessed because of your parent or parents commitment to the Lord. You reap the blessings of God, even if you don't believe or are disengaged from the things of the Lord, all because of that parent or parents.

### **Parents – Time is Short**

Likewise to you parents, I can see in this verse that God is telling us He is setting our kids aside, even if they are distant or disengaged in the things of the Lord, all because of our faith. God is showing blessings and honoring to our faith, for our kids. Take advantage of that, even if they seem to have no interest, God is saying to us that He is setting them apart for this time and season of life to Himself. Parents, that means pour your life into them while you got them, and while God is sanctifying them. Parents the world is evil, and we can't think we will counter the evilness of this world by giving them five minutes of spiritual things, redeem the time, invest the time, while you have this time, this sanctified time.

**(1 Cor 7:15 NKJV) But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.**

### **Let them Go – Free to Remarry**

But if they want to go, then let them go, and you are free to remarry.

### **Crazy Stories**

Now it is amazing to me as I have personally seen it, where a person is married to a total louse, they drink, cheat, abuse, and the other person stays with them through it all it; but then that louse gets saved, becomes a totally different person, wonderful and loving, but because they love Jesus the other person says you are a nut, I am out of here. What can you do, but let them go Paul says.

**(1 Cor 7:16 NKJV) For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?**

**(1 Cor 7:17 NKJV) But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches.**

### **Unequally Yoked – Can't use the escape Clause**

So, we also see here that if a believer marries an unbeliever, they can't later say I made a mistake by marrying an unbeliever, thus I am going to get divorced and find me a believer to marry. People love to use that excuse, and I just bring them to this passage.

### **Stick it Out – they may Get Saved / Missionary Marriage**

So they are to stick it out, because just maybe the other one will end up getting saved. I say don't do missionary dating, but if you are married to an unbeliever, then realize you are in a "missionary marriage". Live out your marriage calling so that the other sees you are not of this world. Peter says to woman, but flip it the same for men married to unbelieving wives:

*1 Peter 3:1-2 (NKJV) Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, <sup>2</sup> when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.*

### **Believing Woman – Marrying Unbelievers / Don't marry a Frog / 2,628,000 minutes**

I think Peter writes this to woman because if you take a casual survey, it is more so that believing woman marries unbelieving men. Oh you single girls, wait! Don't marry a frog expecting a kiss will turn him into a prince. Ask anyone involved in "missionary marriages", they are heartbreaking, even if the unbeliever is a nice person, a good spouse – for there will always be something (which in your life is the Great One) missing; the greatest part of your life and you won't be able to fully connect and share with the person you spend (50 years, 18,250 days, 438,000 hours, those 2,628,000 minutes of your life with).

### **Your Position in the Calling (7:18-20)**

#### **Wherever God has Placed you – Live it out from There**

Live out your calling, wherever God has placed you, whatever position you find yourself in today, then accept that position and live out your faith from that position.

**(1 Cor 7:17 NKJV) But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches.**

**(1 Cor 7:18 NKJV) Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised.**

**(1 Cor 7:19 NKJV) Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.**

**(1 Cor 7:20 NKJV) Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.**

#### **Live within the Bounds of the Word**

Now this staying where you were called means within the bounds of God's word and ways. So I don't agree with the people I've met who use this verse to say they are going to keep working in the bars, or the strip clubs, that doesn't line up with the word.

#### **Josephus – brokering Business Deals**

Interestingly Josephus speaks about how in the time of this writing that much business was brokered at the hot spas, in the saunas. It is much like the deals brokered at the golf courses today. Well what is sad is that some Jewish business men were getting a surgical procedure done to become uncircumcised because when they were in the saunas their Jewishness was known, and it was feared that in the Greek cities that could cause you to lose a deal because the Jews were not favored in the Greek cities such as Corinth. Crazy talk it sounds, but we are not too far off that today as so many Christians today are afraid to let their Christian out in the work place because they are afraid it may prevent them from job growth or promotions. They are don't want to be known as a Christian because they don't want to deal with people in the work place as a Christian because they fear if you treat someone deceit and respectfully you will get walked all over in the dog-eat-dog world of business. Paul is saying be who you are, be all that you are; keep the commandments of God in every area of your life. Child of God is our position! It is our calling – every day!

#### **Definition of Call**

Here is the definition of this word "called:

- "be so named" – God has called you be name.
- "to call aloud" – He has called you aloud out of the darkness into His light.
- "to invite" – He has invited you into a personal relationship with Him
- "to name, by name" – He knows you personally be name.
- "to give a name" – he has given you the name also "my child"
- "to bear a name" – and we get to bear His family name.

### **Ray – Called to be a Husband**

Stay as you are, and may I say, be what you are. You are a child of God; you were called and bought with a price, and therefore now live to your calling. Paul and apostle of Jesus Christ; my calling and your calling for all married, Ray a husband by the will of God, Ray a father by the will of God. Whatever, wherever, God has called you to be, then be all of that, don't leave anything left of your calling.

### **Thought teaching n Marriage / No Separation**

Hey I thought you were going to be talking about divorce today, it seems like you have hardly touched on it you might say. We are, we have, for you see God is saying there is no separation between this thing or that thing in our life. How we are at work is how we should be in our marriage. How we act in church is how we should act on a date you singles. Be who you are called to be, everywhere you are, in every position.

### **High Calling**

*In every area of your life, in every position you find yourself, live up to your name.*

### **Your Contentment in the Calling (7:21-23)**

#### **Be Content**

Be content where God has called you.

**(1 Cor 7:21 NKJV) Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it.**

**(1 Cor 7:22 NKJV) For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave.**

**(1 Cor 7:23 NKJV) You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.**

**(1 Cor 7:24 NKJV) Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.**

#### **Be Content / Too Much Time wanting to be Somewhere Else**

Be content where you are, and while you are there, be all there. People spend so much time wanting to be somewhere else; they live meagerly lives in their current state. Paul is writing to people who many of them were slaves, as the Roman Empire at this time was about one in four people were slaves. Paul said be all that you can be for Christ where you are. If you are slave and God wants to set you free, He will, but in the meantime live out your calling where you are.

#### **Two greatest Places / That Mentality Robs Today**

It has been said that the two greatest places in the world is where you were, and where you are going. That mentality robs all that God wants and can do in the today phase.

#### **All still Applies to Marriage / Feel Like a slave – Be Content – You will find Freedom**

All this still applies to and is in the context of marriage, so take what Paul is saying and apply it to your marriage. Do you feel like you are in bondage in your marriage, then so be it, God has allowed it, so live out you calling where he has you, and you will find contentment in your current place. And guess what, once you are content, you may actually start to look and feel differently for that person. The atmosphere you produce in the home with your contentment will spill on to your spouse, and they may begin to feel differently about you.

#### **Scott Story**

I remember when I came home from college on my first semester, me and my friend Scott flew home and his dad picked us up at the airport. He started to ask Scott if he made any new friends, and Scott said no. His dad said well how about Jim who is your roommate, and Scott said no he is an idiot; his dad said how about Bill your lab partner, and Scott said no he is an idiot; his dad said well how about Mike the guy on your tennis team, and Scott said no he is an idiot; then Scott's dad said, son have you ever considered that you are the idiot? Hey, just maybe, just.....maybe, you are the problem in your marriage. So learn to be content in your marriage, and I will guarantee your marriage will change greatly.

## Study Break (two part audio tape)

### **Outline**

Outline: Live as you were Called:

1. Your Walk in the Calling (7:10-17)
2. Your Position in the Calling (7:18-20)
3. Your Contentment in the Calling (7:21-23)
4. Your Remaining in the Calling (7:24-40)

### **Recap Points 1-3**

Well we come to our last point in our study, and it says to remain in your calling. In a summation that is what we have been told in the first three points. Simply put, we are told to stay put.

- Married, then stay put, don't divorce (7:10-17).
- Circumcised or uncircumcised, stay put, don't try to change who you are (7:18-20).
- Slave or free, stay put, don't try to change your circumstance, be content where God has you (7:24-40).

### **Point 4**

Now, point 4, your remaining in the calling.

## **Your Remaining in the Calling (7:24-40)**

### **Definition of Remain**

Here is the definition of remain:

- “dwell”
- “continue”
- “tarry”
- “endure”
- “to remain” ,
- “to sojourn”
- “to not to depart”
- “to wait”
- “to continue to be present” – Christian wherever God has you, then be all there.
- “to be held, kept, continually” – Christian do you recognize whose hand you are in.
- “to continue to be, not to perish, to last, endure” – we have been given an opportunity, for glory, here on earth as we endure, we continue, as we do not quit, and the world watches on and see how different we are. In regards to purity, you are unique you singles who continue in purity; in regards to marriage, you who live abundant fruitful marriages, are unique. Many people stay married, but they are no longer present in their marriage; God has called us beyond that, He calls us into a marriage that is life and that more abundant. That the world can look unto our marriages, use them as models for their own, see an illustration of God's covenant and intentions for their relationship with Him, as a Bride who He will never leave nor forsake, but give Himself fully and wholly to, even to the point of death. God desires our marriages to be fruitful, so people can pick us like a piece of fruit, partake and taste and see the Lord is good.

### **Remain / Relationships – Position – Situation / Pennsylvania Sewer Fields**

So remain in the calling, stay put, don't try to change your relationships, your position in Christ, nor your circumstances, just stay put, remain in your calling, live up to your calling. I know we can think God needs our help, or more so we go and start changing the situations in our lives because we don't like where we are at in them, but I am reminded of how growing up in rural Pennsylvania without all the zoning laws, our sewage went into a sewage field, not some city treatment system, and I always remember how green that grass was over the septic field. Christian don't jump, stay put, for you never truly knows what lies under that which looks so green.



**(1 Cor 7:23 NKJV) You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.**

#### **Bought with a Price – Not make own Decisions / Work Computers**

We were bought, because we were once slaves. We have never been our own, that is such a fallacy of man. We are either a slave to this world, or a slave to God. We once were in bondage, we were on the slave trading block, being pushed around and mistreated by the world, and then came Jesus, he looked at us with purchase price in hand, and we said if you buy me, get me out of this condemning position I am in, I will follow you for life. Well it is now follow time! We have been bought with a price, we are not our own to make any decision we so choose. We stay put until God tells us otherwise. I have a laptop at home and I can load my choice of software, videos, pictures, cruise the web, and anything else I choose to because it is my computer. Now the computer at work is totally different, it is not mine, and therefore I am only allowed to load software that has been preapproved by company. No pictures or videos, and I can only cruise the website for work related topics. I abide by the rules, because it is there computer, they own it. We are not our own, we can only use and do with these bodies as allowed to by the Lord, and at the direction of the Lord. We need to ask, Lord is this acceptable, can I or can I not do this or do that.

**(1 Cor 7:24 NKJV) Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.**

**(1 Cor 7:25 NKJV) Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy.**

**(1 Cor 7:26 NKJV) I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress; that it is good for a man to remain as he is:**

#### **Jesus never taught on Virgins**

Paul has no commandment from the Lord, and what he means is that Jesus never specifically spoke or addressed the topic of virgins specifically.

#### **See Key Word - Made Trustworthy / Well Experienced**

See a key word there “the Lord has made trustworthy”, meaning wisdom and the Spirit is upon Paul as he speaks these words. Paul is also speaking out of the wisdom of experience, as he can relate and speak from experience the freedom that comes from remaining single.

#### **Better I go – so Helper Come / 2 Time 3:16-17**

Jesus said it is better that I go so that the Holy Spirit may come and teach you all things, and here we see Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit speaking the words revealed to Him from God. Remember, all Scripture is giving by inspiration.

*John 16:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.*

*2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

#### **Verse 26 – Present Distress / Rome & Jews rising up against Christians**

Now, in verse 26 he is referring to a “present distress”, so he is speaking about “some” tribulation that the church is currently going through. We know from history that the Jews were coming against the Christians, and the Roman Empire was starting to resent the Christians, and ultimately culminating with Caesar Nero launching an all-out attack against them, burning them at the stake and feeding them to the lions.

#### **Under Circumstances – Good not to have to watch Loved Ones Suffer**

So Paul is saying, under these circumstances, it is great to be single and not have the burden of watching your spouse and children suffer. And, that the single state allows one to be singularly committed to the kingdom.

#### **Maybe Singleness is your Distress / W-A-I-T**

Maybe singleness is what you feel is your current distress, you just so want to be married, remember just stay put, and wait.

**W – Work** in the Lord’s field, take advantage of the freedom singleness brings. While you work, you won’t be so consumed with you, and you very well may see who else has a heart for the service of the Lord.

**A – Aim** to be the mate you desire your mate to be. You want a spouse of the word, then be in the word, a spouse of prayer, be a person of pray, a spouse who is pure, then be pure.

**I – Intercede** for your mate, pray for them, ask the Lord to develop them. Hey you may think you are ready to be married, but that person God has designed for you may still have some things God want to do with them before He gives them to you.

**T - Trust** the Lord. Trust the Lord is going to bring you a mate, just like he did Adam. Thankfully Adam was resting in the Lord, so much so he was sleeping, and not going around the garden shaking the bushes, and turning over the rocks, else he would have got what crawled out from beneath them. He rested in the Lord, and the Lord delivered.

*Proverbs 3:5-6 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*

**(1 Cor 7:27 NKJV) Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.**

#### **Stay in your State**

If you’re married, stay married, says Paul. If you’re single, don’t strive to find a wife.

#### **I might Add – Sexual Immorality isn’t a Caveat Either**

I might also add that those who were believers, or unequally yoked, and were engaging in premarital sex, cant later down the road after they get married, and things start going sour, say “ we are getting a divorce because we shouldn’t have got married in the first place because we were in sexual sin”. Verse 27 negates that argument.

#### **Pornography is not Adultery**

Let me also add that pornography is not adultery, there are lots of people trying to get a divorce because their spouse was or is viewing pornography. They say Jesus says if you lust in your heart you are guilty of adultery. Ok, if we apply that, then we need to apply it across the board, and that would mean everyone should be in jail for murder, because Jesus said if you have hatred in your heart then you have committed murder. We are going to need to make some bigger jails. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount was and is making the point that Law is spiritual, not just physical, and that God is looking the heart, and thus everyone is guilty before Him because every man’s heart is sinful. Point, are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed.

#### **Don’t think you Spiritual for not Divorcing / Live out your Calling / Stay Put – Put in Everything**

Let me make this application also, don’t think you are doing something wonderful and spiritual staying married because you don’t believe in divorce, because you say divorce is sin and an offense to God thus I am going to stay married to this person even though I don’t want to or like them. It is far beyond just staying put, remaining married, it is living out your calling, and your calling in your marriage is to love your spouse, as Christ loves his spouse. So stay put in your marriage, and put everything you have into your marriage, as I remind you that one of the definitions of “remain” is “to be continually present”.

#### **Maybe Married a few Times**

I know I have talked a lot about not to divorce, but maybe you have been married before, maybe even more than once, and maybe you are feeling a condemnation right now. Listen beloved, you are beloved by Him. You may say or think that you should never remarry, God isn’t going to be part of your future; God says it is ok to remarry, the Lord knows the world judges, but He says I love you, I understand your desires, because that is how I made you, so go ahead and get remarried, it is ok. If you doubt that statement I just made, then go look at the story of the woman at the well, and how the Lord sought her out, called her to a

personal relationship with Him. If you want to remarry, or have remarried, then you have been given a wonderful opportunity, to do it right, and therefore do it right, right now!

**(1 Cor 7:28 NKJV) But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you.**

### **It is Ok to Marry – Better than Burning**

It is ok to marry, in fact it is better to marry than burn with lust. God is not saying that He is against marriage.

*(1 Cor 7:9 NKJV) but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.*

### **Marriage brings its own set of Troubles**

Verse 28 - but I would spare you – Now Paul does say, but I would spare you; because marriage consist of two imperfect people, every marriage has days of struggle and difficulty. Therefore, if yours does, don't think you're alone, off the wall, or out to lunch. Paul says matrimony inevitably brings its own challenges.

### **Things become more Complicated**

Things definitely become more complicated when you get married. When I was single I didn't have to know the difference between curtains, valances, or drapes - I just needed to know if the bed sheet was largest enough to cover the whole window. I had to get use to the fact that my seat tray on the airplane was only half the size once I got married as my wife puts here junk on my tray. Goodbye Florida in 12 hours, it is now 16 hours and forty stops later you finally feels the sun. I love driving at night, at like midnight; I always fill up before midnight so I can drive six hours uninterrupted. I nervously watch these home improvement shows waiting for the question, do you think we could do that. Yes life becomes more complicated once you get married. You know how they say we are so alike that we can finish each other sentences, I have come to believe that my wife finishes my sentences for me because is afraid of what I am going to say.

**(1 Cor 7:29 NKJV) But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,**

### **Life is Short – a Vapor / Age or Rapture – His return is Near / Paul identifies 3 Obstacles**

“Time is short,” Paul says. “Life is a vapor,” James echoes (see James 4:14). Whether the Lord comes back for us today—or whether we live out full lives, time is rapidly coming to a close because we're getting older and the Lord's coming is nearer. In light of this, Paul identifies three obstacles that could keep us from investing in the things of eternity....

#### **Obstacle 1 - Relationships**

Verse 29 - so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none -

The first potential pitfall is in the area of relationships. There are people who miss out on being engaged in the kingdom because they're caught up in family relationships. There are people called into ministry, missions, or other opportunities to serve the Lord who say, “We can't do it now because we're getting married. But after we're settled, we're going to really go for it for the Lord.” So I talk to them a year later, only to hear them say, “We're really excited about serving the Lord, but we have to get our baby out of diapers. Then we're really going for it.” But then Junior is in elementary school and they say, “We can't pull him out of school, Boy Scouts, and sports.” And what happens? All too often those who focus completely on the family find problems abounding within the family because they weren't true to the calling God placed upon their lives in the first place.

#### **Get outside Yourself – You are Engaged in Something Bigger – ETERNITY / Matthew 6:33**

Get outside of yourselves, married couple. Say, “We're engaged in something bigger than ourselves—it's called eternity.” Seek first the kingdom, Mom and Dad—and watch everything else fall into place (Matthew 6:33).

**(1 Cor 7:30 NKJV) those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess,**

**(1 Cor 7:31 NKJV) and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away.**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> – Emotions / The “I” Disease – Focus on Self / Become Depressed / Get Involved in Others**

*Verse 30 - those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice.*

The second obstacle to keeping eternity’s values in view is in the area of emotions. The most widespread disease today is “I” disease—people focused on themselves, analyzing why they’re depressed or why they’re discouraged. But the more they analyze themselves, the more depressed they become. Paul’s remedy is simple: Weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15). In other words, get involved with how others are doing. It’s amazing what will happen. The Lord will use you, and you’ll be set free if you get your eyes off yourself.

*Romans 12:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> – Possessions / People caught up in Investments – No time for Ministry / Keep Tithing**

*Verse 30-31 - those who buy as though they did not possess. (1 Cor 7:31 NKJV) and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away.-* Finally, Paul names possessions as

the third obstacle to seeing the big picture of the kingdom. He who is caught up in his investment portfolio or in the fashion of this world will be too busy, too preoccupied to engage in ministry. Yes, we should be wise stewards—but our possessions should not preoccupy us. Tithing is so important and giving so freeing because every time you put money in the offering, you’re giving away a part of your stinginess, shortsightedness, and selfishness. I seen a child’s piggy-bank yesterday while over friend’s house, and of course a piggy goes from narrower at the neck to really wide at the rear, and the piggy bank had three slots, up front near the narrow it said “to spend”, then in the wider middle it said “to save”, and then the third slot at the widest rear said “to donate”. I like that, get outside ourselves and get be part of something bigger than ourselves, ETERNITY!

### **Lord Saying – Here is Freedom / Time is Short – Focus on Eternity – Seek First / Focus on Walk**

The Lord isn’t saying, “Don’t focus on your relationships, your emotions, or your possessions because I want you to be miserable.” Quite the opposite. His intention is for you to be free. And the way to freedom is to forget about yourself and seek first the kingdom. This applies to marriage, to emotions, to possessions. When you seek first the kingdom, everything else is added to you—and you’re blessed beyond belief. Time is short, gang. Be about the work of eternity. Maintain a walk with the Lord personally. Serve Him however He leads you enthusiastically. And you’ll be blessed abundantly

### **Live every Aspect of Life – that it is Temporal**

Live your life, every aspect of your life in the light of the fact that it is all temporal, all is fading away, in a twinkling of an eye.

### **All Marriage Counseling Comes to 1 Cor 7 / God inserts these 3 Points Here**

Hey if you enter into any type of marriage counseling, whether that is pre-marriage or post-marriage, at some point in the counseling you end up here in chapter 7; and that is because this chapter is one of the greatest passages on marriage in all of the Bible. And right in the midst of what looks like commandments on not to get divorce, or better to marry than burn with lust, we see the Lord giving us the keys to a fruitful and blissful marriage, and that is verses 29-31. So let’s seize these verses, and apply them to our lives.

**(1 Cor 7:32 NKJV) But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord; how he may please the Lord.**

**(1 Cor 7:33 NKJV) But he who is married cares about the things of the world; how he may please his wife.**

**(1 Cor 7:34 NKJV) There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world; how she may please her husband.**

**(1 Cor 7:35 NKJV) And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.**

### **Married – Obligation to Family / Single – Singularly to Please the Lord**

The woman who is married has an obligation to please her husband. The single sister, on the other hand, has the opportunity to be about pleasing the Lord singularly.

### **Verses 36-38 about Arranged Marriage Culture**

After talking about the freedom found in the single state, in his day of arranged marriages, Paul goes on to talk to fathers about their unmarried daughters, saying that if their daughters desired to marry, that was acceptable.

**(1 Cor 7:36 NKJV) But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry.**

**(1 Cor 7:37 NKJV) Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well.**

**(1 Cor 7:38 NKJV) So then he who gives her in marriage does well, but he who does not give her in marriage does better.**

### **Prearranged Marriages**

Paul is counseling the fathers that it is ok for your daughters to be married or stay single. Now I remind you that many of the marriages in these days in that cultural were marriages that were prearranged by the parents of the two getting married. So it could be hard for the dad in light of getting saved himself trying to figure out if he was suppose have his daughter stay single for life now that they are believers or should she marry. Paul said either is ok.

### **Youth and Singles Today – You do well to Glean Parents Wisdom concerning Dating**

Hey, just a note, we are all glad we do not live in the prearranged marriage culture, but I will tell you singles, that if you have godly parents, you would be wise to seek their wisdom and discernment in your dating life.

### **Flower of Youth**

*Verse 36 – if she is past the flower of her youth* – she is no longer in full bloom. Reminds me of the story of the two men in the remote part of the jungle who became converted through a missionary group working in the region. The missionaries decided to bring them to a mission's conference so they could meet and tell people about how God worked in their lives, amongst their marriages, and in their village. So the conference was in a big city such as LA, and these men were just blown away by everything they saw from the airplanes, to the cars, and the massive high rise hotel they were brought into. When they came into the hotel they came to the elevator and looked at it in wonderment of what it was. They doors opened to the elevator and two elderly past the flower of their youth got on it. They watched the doors closed, they watched the spindle go up, and then come down, and then the doors opened and two young attractive gals come walking out. The one man looked at the other and said, we got to bring our wives here and put them on this machine!

### **Men – you need the Machine**

If there be any man here who is discontent because his wife has past the “flower of her youth”, first let me remind you, so too have you. But secondly, keep your ways pure before the Lord, don't click, don't watch, don't go, stay put and be satisfied with the wife of your youth. If you are discontent, then it is you that needs to “get in that machine”, and ask God to take you up, do some heart surgery, and then return to your wife a changed man.

#### **Proverbs 5:15-20 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> *Drink water from your own cistern,*

*And running water from your own well.*

<sup>16</sup> *Should your fountains be dispersed abroad,  
Streams of water in the streets?*

<sup>17</sup> *Let them be only your own,  
And not for strangers with you.*

<sup>18</sup> *Let your fountain be blessed,  
And rejoice with the wife of your youth.*

<sup>19</sup> *As a loving deer and a graceful doe,  
Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;*

*And always be enraptured with her love.*  
20 *For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman,  
And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?*

**(1 Cor 7:39 NKJV) A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.**

**(1 Cor 7:40 NKJV) But she is happier if she remains as she is, according to my judgment; and I think I also have the Spirit of God.**

### **Tom Falcone Story**

I am reminded of a dear couple in my life (Tom and Carmela), they have been married over fifty years. I remember having dinner with them, and Carmela said something totally dingy, and Tom looked at me and said, if I would have killed here 30 years ago like I wanted to, I would be out on parole and a free man now. Ahh, not what the Lord means here haahaa.

### **Ok to Remarry after Death**

Clarifying the questions presented to him, Paul tells the Corinthian believers that a wife is bound to her husband until death separates them. After that, she is at liberty to marry anyone she wishes as long as he's a believer and the Lord so directs. So it is ok for widowers to remarry.

### **Heart big enough to Love Again**

Widowers, it is ok to remarry if that is what you feel in your heart. It is not a betrayal to your departed loved one. You see, the human heart is amazing, and God gives our hearts the ability to love again after a spouse departs to heaven, but it isn't replacement love, it is different love.

## **Conclusion**

### **1 Cor 7 doesn't have Problem with Marriage / Full Counsel – Eph 5**

Throughout the centuries, people have read 1 Corinthians 7 and come to the conclusion that, because he speaks so highly of the single state, Paul has a problem with marriage. But that is because they fail to take into account Paul's full counsel—for in his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul elevates marriage to a place of utmost glory when he uses it as an illustration for no less a relationship than that of Christ and His church.

*Ephesians 5:25–27 (NKJV) <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

### **Marriage is an Illustration / Not everyone is Going to Church**

The way a husband lays down his life for his wife, and the way a wife submits to her husband is a powerful illustration seen on every street in every neighborhood. Bunches of people aren't into going to church. So the Lord brings the church to them through the illustration of marriage wherein people see how much He loves the church and how the church submits to Him. It's an awesome responsibility for all who are married. Unbelievers don't need to see perfection in our marriages—just something remarkably different from what they see in society.

*2 Corinthians 3:2 (NKJV) You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men;*

### **Singleness is Unique – Focus Singularly on the Lord / I am Married to You Lord**

And yet, as seen here in 1 Corinthians 7, Paul says singleness has its own unique beauty, its own important role to play in the body. The single state is not to be looked down upon, dreaded, or merely endured. Those who are called to a single life or who find themselves in a single state fulfill a very real function: to serve the Lord with spontaneity and without distraction. Marriage is a picture, but, in a sense, singleness can be the reality—for it is the single person uniquely who can say, “I am married to You, Lord. You are my Husband, my Love, my best Friend. And I will be devoted to you single-heartedly for as long as You have me in this state.”

**Whether Single or Married – be Content where God has You / Make Jesus your Passion There**

Whether single or married, widowed or divorced—be content wherever God has you. And whatever your position, make Jesus your passion.

**1 Corinthians 10:31**

Sum it up in one verse:

*1 Corinthians 10:31 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

**Outline**

Outline: Live as you were Called:

1. Your Walk in the Calling (7:10-17)
2. Your Position in the Calling (7:18-20)
3. Your Contentment in the Calling (7:21-23)
4. Your Remaining in the Calling (7:24-40)

# 1 Corinthians 8

## Like Him (8:1-13)

### Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul’s letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### Next 3 Chapters

So in the next three chapters Paul will be addressing questions the believers at the church in Corinth regarding the Christian liberties they were free to enjoy, but should they enjoy them.

### Writing to a Church Family

Paul is writing to a family, a church family. Do you remember why he is writing to them, do you remember the theme of how that they would come short of no spiritual thing, and how they would be one together. And here in chapter 8 the Lord is telling the family how the family is to look out for family. There is a sweetness in this church we call family. We received a wonderful compliment from the missionary visiting last week, and he said after all the years of doing what he does, he pretty much knows what to expect regarding how people respond to the message and the mission, and he said this church was way beyond what he expected, and what a heart of love and life this church has. Well, God help us, and any church, when church becomes a group of people assembling together, rather than a family coming together. A group assembling together hears the word and says how does this help me, but a family coming together says how can this word help me and the family. Family looks out for family.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### Family looks out for Family

Family looks out for family; and so we have before us a passage on how we are to be looking out for each other, how we are to be looking at how we can build up others around us, even if it may cost us something, but oh when we do, well when we do, we become like “Him”, we live and act like Jesus Christ. Is that not all our hearts desire here today, to be like Him? Well here the Lord gives us a practical “how to”. Paul will end this three chapter dissertation by saying:

*1 Corinthians 10:31–11:1 (NKJV)*

<sup>31</sup> *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

<sup>32</sup> *Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God,*

<sup>33</sup> *just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*

*11:1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

### Outline: Like Him (8:1-13)

- In Love (8:1-3)
- In Wisdom (8:4-6)
- In Patience (8:7-8)
- In Death (8:9-13)



## **Like Him - In Love (8:1-3)**

### **Love – It is all about Love**

Love, it is all about love, all of Christendom can be boiled down into one word, “love”. For, God is love (1 John 4:8), and the greatest of all gifts, is love (1 Corinthians 13). Here we are getting a precursor, practical application, of how we can love like God, how we can imitate God right here, and right now, in the midst of a selfish, me-me, world.

*1 John 4:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

*1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

### **Liberty (8:1—11:1)**

**(1 Cor 8:1 NKJV) Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge.**

**Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.**

**(1 Cor 8:2 NKJV) And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.**

**(1 Cor 8:3 NKJV) But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.**

### **Context – Temple Sacrifices sold at the local Market**

For context, there in Corinth were many pagan temples, and many animal sacrifices going on. Much of the food was then sent down to the local street vendor and sold for profit. So Joe pagan worshipper would come and offer a sacrifice at the temple, then after it was over the temple priests would take the remaining flesh (for not all the sacrifices were burnt offerings) and sell it to the street vendor who would sell it to the average Joe picking up dinner on the way home from work, and this meat was most often cheaper because it was donated to the temple for free, and thus the temple didn't the cost to raise the animal to factor in their profit margin, because the sacrifice was pure profit to start with.

### **I am Glad we have FDA / Ukraine Food Poisoning**

Boy, I am so glad we don't buy our food from the street vendor, because if you ever have seen it you wouldn't need to participate in any of these diets going around today, you would be scared to eat it when you saw it in its raw form. When I was in the Ukraine on missions they had street vendors, and man what a site. They would pop the trunks of their cars open, and have the meat sitting on top of newspaper, and they would have the head of whichever animal they were selling sitting next to it, and waving a tree branch every now and then over it to rid the flies. On one day when I ate some food from the streets, and out at one of the farmlands, and I got the worse food poisoning ever! To this day the missionaries there still gauge the food poisoning as compared to mine. When someone gets food poisoning, they ask, and how would you compare it Ray's on a scale of one to ten. But anyhow, back to our story, and the context of meats sold that were first offered as a sacrifice to pagan idols.

### **Lots of Knowledge Today / Lose the Point – God is Love**

*Verse 1 – knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.* – Lots of knowledge out there, Corinth was the philosophical center of the region, they had their higher education there, and lots of people knew lots of things. How about today, how more so today, in that with clicks of buttons we have thousands of pieces of information before us, and that includes biblical information. Do I want to know about this doctrine, click, do I want to know about that doctrine, click. Millions of books on millions of subjects, we can have all the information in seconds. Problem being, sometimes knowledge becomes the end all, as people say I understand this doctrine now, and they lose the heart of the doctrine, they lose the simplest point – “God is Love”. So the knowledge is applied from the head, missing the heart only 18 inches away.

### **3rd Person – Puffed Up**

It is ever so fitting; Paul uses the 3<sup>rd</sup> person form of the verb “puffs up”. That means he is kind of writing it like his is a narrator of a story. You see that in a movie or documentary as a narrator tells the story, and then Joe set out west to make his fortune in gold, etc. But have you ever met a person who talks about themselves in the third person? It is bizarre! They say thing like, Billy doesn't do broccoli (your like what). Or, Billy likes chili (strange). Billy is going to the ballgame tonight (who is this Billy you are talking about you start to think – I thought you were Billy). It is like those people are watching a movie,

and it is their favorite movie, their favorite channel, and it is the “Billy Channel”, it is themselves. And for the people filled with “all knowledge” they love to watch how they crush people with their knowledge, how they silence people with their arsenal of Scriptures on that particular subject, they love to watch themselves “be spiritual”. They then like to think about it over and over again, reruns they watch over and over again in their mind, of them and all their knowledge winning every theological position. They win the debate, but lose the person forever.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Person – Love Edifies**

But, it is also ever so fitting, in that Paul when he says “love edifies (builds up) that he is talking in third person verb form. I think it is so applicable for us to step back from every situation we engage in, and look at it from the “observer” position, and ask ourselves how am I coming across in this conversation. As God looks on, let me step back and look on, and am I coming across in love or am I coming across as puffed up, knowledge without love and compassion, looking to be right, so right I am dead right, and I have won the debate, but have lost the person forever. I can think of some times over my Christian walk where I have gone home and replayed the tape (if you will) and I watch that encounter with that person from the 3<sup>rd</sup> person position (a God’s eye view), and I just want to bury my head I am so ashamed of how I handled that situation. Lots of time we just can’t see it, because we are too deeply embedded in it at that moment, and thus we need to step back, and take a God’s eye view of how we are coming across to the people we are engaging with.

### **God’s Eye View**

A God’s eye view is the view we want to consider in every situation we encounter. How is this coming across, is it coming across in love, or am I coming across “puffed up”, am I being ‘puffed up’? Looking at it from a God’s eye view....., but hey, just don’t start talking in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person ok ☺.

## **Like Him - In Wisdom (8:4-6)**

### **Wisdom is Knowledge Applied / We need to know the Word – Apply it in Love**

Wisdom, is knowledge applied. We need to be in this Word, to know this Word, but remember to exercise and apply the Word in love each and every time.

*2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

### **Love doesn’t Wink at Sin**

I might add, the delicate balance of love and knowledge, and that is that love doesn’t water down the Word, remain silence on saying what is right. We are talking about people who are weak in faith or young in the Lord, who have certain convictions that fall into a grey area; we are not talking about someone who is in direct sin (whether immature or young in the Lord), in love we need to tell them, this is sin what you are doing, and if you continue, your will stunt your relationship with the Lord, and reap the personal consequences of what that sin produces, for no sin is ever without its consequences, for it is a spiritual law that cannot be thwarted any more than the law of gravity can, and jump without a parachute and you will reap the consequence of defying the law of gravity.

*Galatians 6:7–10 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. <sup>8</sup> For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. <sup>9</sup> And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

**(1 Cor 8:4 NKJV) Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.**

**(1 Cor 8:5 NKJV) For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords),**

**(1 Cor 8:6 NKJV) yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.**

### **Mature knew just Meat – no Mystical Connection / Judaism – Bowl Food / Jesus - Communion**

So they were asking Paul is it ok to eat meat that has been offered to idols. Now the mature believers knew that it was just meat, the idol was false, and that there was no mystical connections to the meat. It wasn’t

like if you ate meat offered to a demon, that when you ate the meat you were now eating the demon, and now had a demonic influence within you. Yea that sounds crazy that some believed that, but for those that came out of Judaism, I could see them being the ones that were really concerned about this because they believed that if two people broke bread together, dipped bread in the same bowl, that they were becoming one together. And, the picture of communion gave this picture that when you take communion at the table of the Lord, that you were becoming one with the Lord. So really when we step back and consider the environment, this was a really good question they were asking.

*Mark 14:23–24 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. <sup>24</sup> And He said to them, *“This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.*

### **Knowledge can be Spirit Quencher – amazing Dichotomy**

Now back in verse one we see that there were many who knew that it meant nothing, but rather being teachers and leaders, they were using their knowledge to be puffed up and to feel spiritually superior. Knowledge can be such a spirit quencher, and what an amazing dichotomy when we know that knowledge is for edification, not self-exaltation, but we can get that reversed because of our pride and ego. Paul is saying to us today that if you have knowledge, be gentle and kind with, be merciful and patient with those who are lesser in the wisdom and knowledge area. Knowledge always has to be tempered with love.

### **Wisdom is Knowledge Applied / Like the Lord when we use it to Build Up**

Again, wisdom is knowledge applied. And we are ever so like our Lord when we take the Word, and apply it in love, to build up another who is weak or hurting. I think of that precious woman, she had been hurting (bleeding) for twelve years now, at this point she tried every 3am infomercial she had watched, she journeyed to every faith healer, traveled to be seen by every doctor, and she is now broke and destitute, and because of her ‘blood issue’ she couldn’t even live with her family because per Levitical law she would make them and everything she touched, unclean. But she hears Jesus is passing through, she heard of the miracle worker, or maybe she heard where He was and made the trek to find Him, whatever the case she has found Him. And with all heart and faith, but not accurate knowledge she pushes through the crowd to get to Him, believing that if she can touch Him, but not just anywhere it had to be the hem of His garment, that she would be made whole again. She makes it, she touches the hem, and she is healed. Jesus, God incarnate, didn’t say correct her, He didn’t make an illustration of the thought that there was something mystical in a piece of cloth, instead He embraces her in love, on what was the true heart of the matter, and that was her faith. She had the faith to know (Jesus confirms she was a woman of faith) that Jesus is and can heal. Jesus didn’t correct her lack of knowledge, instead He edified her and built her up for what she did know, Jesus heals. May we be like Jesus!

*Luke 8:48 (NKJV)* <sup>48</sup> And He said to her, *“Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”*

### **Notice the Meat – Awesome God**

Also, please notice some meat (excuse the pun) in this verse six, as we could miss it as we focus on the context of the passage as it relates to idols, so let us notice the following of our awesome God:

- One God – we have one God, He is the only God
- One Father – and He says you can call me Dad
- Of whom are all things – He created all things, including you in your mother’s womb
- And we for Him – we have been created to fellowship with Him, our Dad
- One Lord Jesus Christ – and that door of fellowship is through Jesus our Savior
- Through whom are all things – all life and substance in and through Him
- Through whom we live – so, who are you living for today?

### **Everyman worships Someone**

*Verse 5 - For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords) - Paul says that an idol is nothing, for we know there is only One True God. But how interesting that he does say there are many so-called gods in the world. Every man worships something or someone, who is it that you are worshipping today? Have you given your life to Jesus Christ? Have you ever said to Him, Lord I know I am a sinner, that my sin offends you, that You sent your Only Son to pay the penalty for sinning against You, please forgive me, please come into my life, I turn from following my gods of my desire, and I turn to follow You. Have you? If not, today!*

*2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> For He says:

*“In an acceptable time I have heard you,  
And in the day of salvation I have helped you.”*

*Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

## **Like Him - In Patience (8:7-8)**

### **Running Theme – Patience and Love**

As the running theme, may we have patience with the weaker brother or sister, handling them with love and in love. You see chapter thirteen is known as the love chapter, but chapters 8-12 are how that love plays out in our daily actions.

*1 Corinthians 13:4 (NIV) <sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.*

### **How Masterfully Written**

How masterfully written is this book, it could only be by divine inspiration.

**(1 Cor 8:7 NKJV) However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.**

**(1 Cor 8:8 NKJV) But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.**

### **Not everyone had Arrived**

But not everyone had arrived at that point that the meat was just meat, and there was no mystical connection to the meat that was sacrificed to the idol. So here Paul gives the counsel on how we are to handle (remember knowledge must be tempered in love) the weaker beloved in Christ.

### **Bear with their Weakness**

Bear with their weakness and immaturity, be gentle and patient with them. Don't lay them out for their weakness, give them grace. God says they are not in sin, He doesn't hold this against them, and don't you hold it against them either.

### **Come with Love and they will Listen /**

Simply put, if you want to reach them you have to approach them in love and gentleness over the matter, and respect their position. By doing so, you will build a relationship with them, and hopefully establish a mentoring relationship with them where you can grow and instruct them in the ways of the Lord. As we have said often, no one cares how much you know until they know how much you care. Come with love, and they will listen.

### **Chapter 12 into Chapter 13**

Sometimes people with their pet peeves, or their ‘boycotting’ agendas can be taxing on our patience, but loving them takes us to the pinnacle of spiritual gifts. Paul will say in regards to seeking spiritual gifts, covet earnestly the best gift, as chapter 12 is all about spiritual gifts like healing, speaking in tongues, miracles, yet he will say, seek the greatest gift – love, and thus he begins chapter 13, what we call the love chapter.

*1 Corinthians 12:27–13:3 (NKJV)*

*<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. <sup>28</sup> And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup> But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.*

*13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.*

### **Chapters 8-12**

Chapters 8-12 are practical application on love. God is love, and He gives us opportunity to be just like Him.

## **Love is the Preeminence of the Law**

The Word says love is the preeminence of the law; it is a law of love.

## **Like Him - In Death (8:9-13)**

### **Now the hard Part – Love in Action**

Now comes the hard part, what are we willing to lay down, walk away from, in order to build up another person in love. Love will go beyond just being gentle and patient with the weak or new believer, but love will actually ask us to lay down a liberty, that is not sin, but may cause another to stumble and fall. The death I am talking about, is the death to ourselves, and our personal wants and freedoms.

*John 15:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.*

**(1 Cor 8:9 NKJV) But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.**

### **Camden Stumbling Blocks / We must 24/7 be Considering Others**

You know what I do continually around my house, I am looking and clearing stumbling blocks that could have my little Camden stumble and fall over and get hurt. I am continually looking at things that he could possibly pull down upon himself and clearing that thing from possibly coming down upon him and hurting him. It is work, it is continual thoughts, 24/7 as I see things I ask myself could he stumble over this or have it come down upon. We can't just live our Christian life in autopilot, we must continually be evaluating all things that we do and the places we go, to determine could this cause a brother to stumble or fall if they see a green light to do it themselves because they see me doing it.

**(1 Cor 8:10 NKJV) For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?**

### **Keys to the Kingdom – Bound & Loose**

When Jesus said (speaking of giving the keys to the Kingdom to Peter and making him a Scribe) that whatever you bind will be bound and whatever you loose will be loosed, we mainly apply that to binding the devil, and the power of prayer, but what I also want you to understand is the culture of the day when Jesus said that, and that was that the Scribes (who wrote the word of God for the Jewish people – experts in the word/scriptures) would wear keys around their sashes, and those keys were symbolic of binding and loosing, and the Scribe would say of a particular issue/topic that it was bound (mandatory), and of another issue/topic that it was loose (up to your discretion). And so it is as we apply certain topics in the new covenant, the kingdom of God; there are certain things that are bound, there is now leeway. Fornication, and not to, is bound, there is no left or right of it, only obedience to not having sex before marriage. Now, going to the beach, that is up to your discretion, there is no mandatory word on that, and each one has the freedom to choose if they want to go to the beach or not (even though modesty is few and far between).

*Matthew 18:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> *Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*

### **Drunkard - Movies**

It is wrong to be drunk, it is bound (1 Cor 6). Is it wrong to have a beer, that is loosed, up to a person's discretion). It is wrong to watch sexually explicit movies, it is bound (Romans 1), Is it wrong to watch any movie (for some teach all movies are evil), that is loosed, , it is up to a person's discretion.

### **But**

BUT.....

**(1 Cor 8:11 NKJV) And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?**

**(1 Cor 8:12 NKJV) But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.**

**(1 Cor 8:13 NKJV) Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.**

**People Look up to You / You wake up – They get Devoured / Walk Over – Rolls Over / Step - Crush**  
People look up to you, and if it is ok for you, then it is ok for them, but in the end you wake up and go to work the next day, but they end up being devoured by it, and their whole life is affected by it. For what you walk over, rolls over them. What you step over, crushes them.

### **Drunk Bible Thumper**

I shared this before, but I remember some 20 years ago when I teaching Children's Church the Lord started to poke at my heart about drinking beer. I had reached the point after about 6 months of being saved that I knew that drunkardness was a sin, but I knew I was at liberty to drink a beer as long as I didn't get drunk. I remember meeting my friends at the local spot and having a beer and just hanging out with them. Now I am totally excited about being saved, and my favorite subject was Jesus, so of course at some point as we are hanging out I am talking to someone about the Bible. I remember talking to a friend, and hearing someone passing us (whom I didn't know) who overheard our conversation, and the one said to another, of great another drunk Bible thumper. I was totally guilty by association, didn't matter what I could have and would have said, I was simply guilty by association of where I was and what was in my hand. They had no idea whether I had one beer or ten, to them I was a drunk bible thumper. And so the Lord began to work on me.

### **Story of Bowling**

It was only shortly after that I was bowling with some friends, I was looking at the pins, had my one of two beers in my hand, and I felt eyes upon me. I glance over my shoulder (without revealing my hand), and there was one of my fifth graders all shy who had recognized me, but was afraid to approach. I waved with the other hand, and said I am so glad she did not see what is in my hand. That night or shortly thereafter I sat with the Lord and He asked me, "Will you put that down for Me", and I said yes Lord it just isn't worth it, the stakes are too high.

### **Verse 12 – WOW!**

Verse 12 - But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. - Wow, verse twelve adds a whole dynamic to this subject. The person who has their personal convictions that may not be totally in line with the scriptures are not in sin, but the person who knows that their action may or is causing another to sin is the one in sin. Maturity comes with a responsibility.

### **What is More Important to You**

What is more important, you belly or your brother, your entertainment or what enters into your brother, your freedom or your brother's enslavement.

### **Paul's Not List / Make me a Bible Guy**

Verse 13 - Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble – Paul said if this thing causes a beloved family member to stumble, then put it on my "NOT LIST". How many here has ever prayed, Lord make me like Paul, oh Lord I want to be a Bible Guy, I want to do great exploits like those I read of in the Bible. Well here is our chance.

### **Take a Moment – Ask Him if there is Something for the Not List**

Beloved, may we take a moment here, lets interact with the message before we leave this place, and during this worship song and reflect on and ask the Lord, is there something in my life that is or may be causing someone to stumble? If He puts His finger on something, then next is to ask Him to give you the power, His Spirit in you, to carry it through. God will never ask you to do something, without giving you the power to do it, and do it well, to do it for His glory.

*1 Corinthians 10:31–11:1 (NKJV)*

<sup>31</sup> *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

<sup>32</sup> *Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God,*

<sup>33</sup> *just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*

*11:1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

Outline: Like Him (8:1-13)

- In Love (8:1-3)
- In Wisdom (8:4-6)
- In Patience (8:7-8)
- In Death (8:9-13)

# *1 Corinthians 9*

## Paul – A Man after God’s Own Heart (9:1-27)

### **Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions**

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul’s letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### **Next 3 Chapters**

So in the next three chapters Paul will be addressing questions the believers at the church in Corinth regarding the Christian liberties they were free to enjoy, but should they enjoy them.

### **Context of Financial Support / One of the Challenges**

Now the context of this chapter nine is Paul writing to say that it is biblical (as he will quote some Old Testament passages) for the ministers of God to be provided for by the church. It appears that this was one of the questions that had arisen from the church. It even appears that there was a challenge from some that he should not receive or be supported by the body.

### **Much Greater – the Example of Paul / A Life laid Down**

Now although this is the context, what lies beneath it is much greater and richer if we dig into it, and that is the tremendous example that Paul leaves for us as believers, an example of a life laid down for the gospel sake, and the sake of others. Lock in to this passage, and see the mighty example our brother Paul lays for us.

### **We get to See into the Heart of Paul / His Passion**

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, but oh what a chapter in that we get to see what inspired Paul. We get to see into the heart of this great man of God. What we read today is very much his personal passion of how he wanted to live out his Christian walk, and we can see a man after God’s own heart, we can see a man on fire for the Lord, and today we get to come and watch him burn.

### **Outline**

#### Paul – A Man after God’s own Heart

- Seeking First the Kingdom (9:1-18)
- Seeking Others (9:19-23)
- Seeking the Crown (9:24-27)

### **What do you Burn For?**

What is it that you burn for? I hope we all can catch a spark from our brother Paul today.



## **Seeking First the Kingdom (9:1-18)**

### **Paul willing to Sacrifice**

So we get to see Paul, a man after God's own heart seeking first the Kingdom of God, and his willingness to sacrifice of his own rights, so that others may be won to Christ, and grow in Christ.

*Matthew 6:31-34 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" <sup>32</sup> For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. <sup>34</sup> Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

### **Paul the Freest Man on Earth**

Paul will talk about in these next verses how it is right to financially support the minister of God. But please read and see deeper than that, look into the heart of the passage, and that is Paul's absolute trust in the Lord that He will provide, and how Paul is totally free from the fears of the world. At this time, the economy isn't cooking for the believers, many will be ostracized because of their faith, they will totally be left on their own. Some business owners will see their business decrease because people don't want to do business with a Christian, some workers won't get hired for the same reason, their economic situation is not booming. I'll be honest if I said I don't have my times of concern, worry, as I watch the world's economy, USA massive debt, as I listen to the rumblings of more layoffs coming in the industry I work. I worry all the way to the point where I remember, seek first the Kingdom, and I am in His hand, and He will do what He sees fit to do. I will suggest to you, that Paul was the freest man on the planet, because He was so focused on seeking first the Kingdom of God, he wasn't worried about building up and protecting his stuff, he was only concerned about building up and protecting the kingdom of God.

*The richest man on the planet isn't the one with the most stuff, it is the one that needs the least.*

**(1 Cor 9:1 NKJV) Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?**

### **A Challenge to Apostleship / Paul doesn't Waver on Calling / Let that be same for Us – no Waver**

So some in Corinth were challenging whether Paul was really an apostle. No doubt that argument and debate that hasn't ended in 2000 years that only the original disciples were truly apostles. But Paul doesn't waver, he knows his calling. Let that be the same to you, whatever God has called you to do for the kingdom, do it fully, and when challenges come against your calling, don't waver under the opinion of man, just continue to serve Him full heartily. You can be sure Satan will always be sending someone to tell you how short you are falling (whether it is well meaning, covert attack, or straight out hostility) Satan will send his ministering agents to try to get you to turn from the right or left.

*1 Corinthians 1:12-13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." <sup>13</sup> Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

### **Command – A decree given by the King**

When Paul writes to his young protégé he says Paul an apostle by the command of God. That word there for command meant a decree given by the king; in Paul's case it was the decree given by King Jesus. What God has called you to is a decree by the King, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, the King of the universe, and the very King that is your heavenly Father, so don't waver in your calling mothers, fathers, ministers, workers, witnesses, keep true to your calling.

*1 Timothy 1:1 (NKJV)* Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

### **Paul was an Eyewitness**

Being an eyewitness to the resurrected Christ was a requirement that the early church laid down for being an apostle, and thus Paul just throws that in for good measure. Paul had seen Jesus on road to Damascus, not to mention, Paul as a Pharisee before his conversion may very well have seen some or much of Jesus' earthly ministry.

**(1 Cor 9:2 NKJV) If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.**

### **Seal of Ownership / Step back 8 Chapters – Messed up Church – Embarrassment / Paul Claims**

A seal was proof of ownership and Paul is referring to them as the fruit of his labors in the gospel. Now, step back 8 chapters and four months ago and let me remind you of the context of what is going on here at this church in Corinth and that was they had some issues going on; they had divisions in the church, they were allowing unspeaking things to be allowed (like one member was sleeping with his step-mom), some people were getting drunk at the church potlucks, and many other things of ill report, yet Paul aligns himself with them. Paul doesn't say I want no part of you; you are an embarrassment to me, I wash my hands of all of you. No, he claims them, he aligns himself to them, in all their faults and embarrassment. Does that sound like your heart today? How often we distance ourselves from that person who is failing, who is embarrassing us or the Lord, how we wash our hands of them. Paul's heart, Paul's passion, how about you, how about me.

**(1 Cor 9:3 NKJV) My defense to those who examine me is this:**

#### **Some Challenging / Paul list Them**

So some folks were making challenge of Paul, and here he lists some of the challenges.

**(1 Cor 9:4 NKJV) Do we have no right to eat and drink?**

#### **Traveling Speakers were Compensated**

Some traveling speakers would be compensated either by an honorarium, and/or by being put up in someone's home and being provided with food and drink. It was customary, it was also reasonable to do so. Paul is saying the other traveling speakers were extended this, and he had the same right to also.

**(1 Cor 9:5 NKJV) Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?**

#### **Paul not Married – Some Companions Were / Wise Today**

Now we know that Paul was not married (chapter 7), but it appears that others who were traveling with him had wives, and there was a challenge that the wives should not travel with them. Paul is saying it is within the right to take the spouse with them. I think it is very wise to do that today, as it allows them to reach both sexes, and to be there for each other for support.

**(1 Cor 9:6 NKJV) Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working?**

#### **6 Reason to Financially Support the Work**

Paul will now list 6 reasons why it is alright for a minister to receive financial support from the ministry they serve.

**(1 Cor 9:7 NKJV) Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?**

#### **Soldier**

Verse 7 - Who ever goes to war at his own expense? - No soldier is expected to supply his/her own weapon and body armor before deploying to the war zone. The soldier being willing and sacrificing is enough in itself, that is their contribution; and the last thing they should need to worry about is the cost to go to war. Could you imagine if we charge our soldiers airfare to go to Afghanistan?

#### **Vineyard**

Verse 7 - Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? - No one would be expected to toil and sweat in a garden, pulling weeds and picking rocks, enduring the heat and the sun, only in the end to watch someone else eat of the fruit of their labors and they go hungry.

#### **Flock**

Verse 7 - Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? - Nor would it be expected to guard the herd, feed the herd, spend hours upon hours with them in the field, and then not get to partake in the milk and fruit of a healthy flock.

### **All Excellent Example of the Ministry**

All three of these are excellent examples of the life of the minister of God, those who feed, those who protect, and those who spend countless hours tending to the ministry, many hours well into the wee hours of the morning.

- Paul uses the example of war and it is ever so fitting because it is a war, it is a battle, there is a battle on with Satan for the hearts of men.
- It is a vineyard because ministry is something that takes long hours and pruning to produce fruit, and that fruit doesn't come overnight.
- And it is a flock that needs to be lead and fed.

Paul says those in the material world are provided for their labors, should the church ministry be any different.

### **Paul will Quote Scripture**

But, great example of using illustration from our surrounding to bring a spiritual point home, but the word is always the conclusive point, and so Paul will quote Old Testament passages and Jesus Himself to make his point loud and clear. By the way, using logic is great, but in the end it has to be backed up with Scripture.

**(1 Cor 9:8 NKJV) Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also?**

**(1 Cor 9:9 NKJV) For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about?**

### **Duet 25 – Context is Human Relationships**

The context of that chapter is all about human relationships; it has a human principal behind it, not just on how an animal was to be treated. Paul is making the point by saying is it oxen God is concerned about, no is not man more important than an oxen. If you feed the ox that plows for you, sure you would feed the man that plows for you.

*Deuteronomy 25:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.*

**(1 Cor 9:10 NKJV) Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope.**

**(1 Cor 9:11 NKJV) If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?**

### **Material pale in Comparison to Spiritual**

Paul is saying if spiritual things have been sown and reaped, the material things should pale in comparison to that. But, in our materialistic world money often outranks the spiritual things.

### **Malcolm**

I like what Malcolm Wild (CC Merritt Island) says, and that is that if you don't trust me with your money, then why would you trust me with your spirit? People are people, and there are always people who say I like the church but I can't trust them with my money so I will give it over there instead. Malcolm would say then that is where you should go because the money thing is nothing in comparison to your spiritual well-being.

**(1 Cor 9:12 NKJV) If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more?**

**Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.**

**(1 Cor 9:13 NKJV) Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar?**

### **Paul referencing OT Priests**

Paul refers to the Old Testament principle of how the priests of God were to be supplied for by the people they served.

*Deuteronomy 18:1 (NKJV)* “The priests, the Levites—all the tribe of Levi—shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and His portion.

**(1 Cor 9:14 NKJV) Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.**

### **Quotes Jesus**

Paul finishes this by quoting Jesus Himself who said the laborer is worthy of his labors.

*Matthew 10:5–10 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. <sup>6</sup> But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ <sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. <sup>9</sup> Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, <sup>10</sup> nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.

### **But Now – Paul says Although Entitled – I Don’t!**

Now after laying all this out, building the scriptural base that the ministers of the gospel have the right and should be supported by the body and flock they tend to, Paul will now say, but I don’t take from you one denarius, not even a mite, no shawarma (umm mixture of lamb and beef), nor even a falafel (ground beans with special seasonings – all in a pita pocket), so I don’t cause anyone to stumble, so I can freely preach the gospel with no one challenging my motives.

**(1 Cor 9:15 NKJV) But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void.**

**(1 Cor 9:16 NKJV) For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!**

**(1 Cor 9:17 NKJV) For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.**

**(1 Cor 9:18 NKJV) What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.**

### **Paul says I must Preach / Woe when Ministry becomes Work or Habit / Jeremiah’s Fire!**

Paul says I love preaching and ministering so much that I would do it for free, in fact now that I think of it I do do it for free. Woe unto the minister whose ministry has become a job more than a ministry; and may every layman (children’s worker, youth worker, church handyman, and the like) never let the ministry become a habit, may it always be something that is boiling within our heart. May we be like Jeremiah who when he tried to keep the word within him, it boiled up and he just had to let it out.

*2 Corinthians 5:14–15 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; <sup>15</sup> and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

*Jeremiah 20:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.” But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.

### **Paul says there many Critics / Only in it for the Money / Paul loves the Critic**

Paul says I know there are many critics about the gospel of Christ, they say ministers are only in it for the money, it is all about the money, and I love the critics so much I add extra burden upon myself to reach them.

### **Christian what you willing to Burden?**

Christian what are you willing to burden so to reach your critics, and the critics of Christ. Paul doesn’t say the fire of hell be upon you, rather woe that I cause any man to missing the Jesus.

### **I don’t take a Salary – Great Freedom / Sometime feel need to Give back Money**

I personally do not take a salary for pastoring. There is a wonderful freedom in that; no one can say I am in it for the money. I love the freedom to preach Christ and His word, and if I was being paid a salary that

was used to supply my family's need there are those times where I would feel bad receiving money. Yea there would be those sermons where I would feel that was so bad I need to give you your money back, wow that was a real stinker. I am reminded of the time I found a little chest under Renee's side of the bed. Curiosity made me open it and there I found six grains of corn and 10,000 dollars. I said honey what are these 6 grains of corn for, and she said well every time you preached a real yawner of a message I put a kernel of corn in the box. I said to myself well that isn't too bad, only 6 kernels after all these years, I then held up the 10000 dollars and said and what is this, and she replied well every time I got a bushel I sold it.

#### **Ministers should continually Evaluate /**

Although the minister is worthy to receive support, I think the minister needs to continually be asking the Lord if that is right thing at that time. The more the people the more the demands upon the minister and thus the need for the minister to not be tied up making tents, and thus the need for the minister to be fully supported. The bi-vocational minister should be continually seeking the Lord if He is desiring the minister to be undivided and solely serve in the church; but the full-time minister should continually be seeking the Lord as to whether the Lord is calling him to go back to being bi-vocational, because they could be over taxing the church and their family.

#### **Paul man after God's own Heart / Follows chapter 8**

Paul, a man after God's own heart, an example for us; a man who sought first the kingdom of God, even though it meant having to make sacrifices. This chapter 9 follows right after our study of last week where we were challenged to lay down certain liberties so not to stumble others. And, we see Paul was totally free from the pulls of the material world because his focus was on the spiritual things, not the material.  
*(1 Cor 8:9 NKJV) But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.*

#### **Seeking Others (9:19-23)**

##### **Seeks First – Now seeks Others**

So we see this man after God's own heart seeking first the Kingdom of God and trusting God to provide materially for him for doing so, and now we see his heart for the people as he seeks to save.

##### **Question – Which comes First**

Question, which comes first? Does Paul have a heart for people because he was free from the cares of the world, or was Paul free from the cares of the world because he had a heart for people? And of course there is the third piece, Paul was seeking the crown of Christ. God has wonderfully woven together for all of us, the keys to freedom, the pathway out of depression, life and that more abundant, in one chapter, and one example, the example of Paul. What will you do with this chapter, will you take it and lay it out before the Lord and say, how am I doing in these three, how much am I focused on my material things compared to the Kingdom, what is my heart for people, am I looking for the crown? Lay this word out before your heavenly father, make a purposeful time where you will discuss these three before Him, then with your family, and make course adjustment as necessary.

**(1 Cor 9:19 NKJV) For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;**

##### **Willing to lay down Pleasures and Rights**

Paul was willing to lay down certain pleasures and rights so that he might win people to Christ.

**(1 Cor 9:20 NKJV) and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;**

**(1 Cor 9:21 NKJV) to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;**

**(1 Cor 9:22 NKJV) to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.**

**(1 Cor 9:23 NKJV) Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.**

### **Paul doesn't Stumble Others**

Remember we are flowing from chapter eight where we are not to be stumbling block to others. So Paul here is saying

- Jews - that when he was with the Jews he stayed kosher, he didn't wave bacon in their face and said this is delicious,
- The Law - when he was with the people under the law he didn't argue with them whether you should worship on Saturday or Sunday, but rather he worshipped with them on Saturday and told them about the Lord of the Sabbath Jesus Christ.
- Gentiles - to those who did not know the law, Gentiles, he didn't tell them they were heathen pagans, and he didn't have scorn on his face because of the things they were doing, but he skipped all that and just gave them and showed the love of Jesus. Hey, I believe homosexuality is a sin, but I will never win a homosexual to Christ if he/she feels hatred or resentment from me. I do not approve of the immoral lifestyle whether that be drunkrdrness, sexual immorality, abortion, certain political affiliation that are anti-Christian – but if my heart is against them personally, they will know it and I will never win them to Christ.
- Football Fans - Ok, you football fans, chill out! Wow some people actually are so obnoxious when it comes to football they actually turn people off and away. People actually resent them because they are so arrogant or boastful, so in their face, that they don't want them anywhere near them.
- Verse 22 - I've become all things to all men so that I might win some. You into skateboarding, tell me about it. You want to have long hair, you want to wear baggy clothes, you want to wear a suit to church, you want to be a vegetarian – tell me about so I can come to know you, so you become personal to me. If I reject this things or that thing about you, then I am rejecting you, and you will never become personal to me because I refuse to understand you, and I only want you to understand me, and thus you become about me, rather than me becoming about you. Paul shows us his heart, in how he would get personal with the people would become personal to him, and they would then be on his heart. Once a person is on your heart, your heart will be to win them for Christ because you know this earth is temporary, and there is an eternity to enter into, but that destiny is decided in this lifetime.

### **Jim Cymbala – Crying out for those no one Wanted**

Mark Buchanan, "Messy, Costly, Dirty Ministry," Leadershipjournal.net (5-15-09)

*The Tuesday night prayer meeting at Brooklyn Tabernacle felt like skydiving into a tornado, exhausting and exhilarating all at once. I'd read about the meeting in Pastor Jim Cymbala's book Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire, but nothing prepared me for the event itself: 3,500 God-hungry people storming heaven for two hours.*

*Afterward, my friend and I went out to dinner with the Cymbalas. In the course of the meal, Jim turned to me and said, "Mark, do you know what the number one sin of the church in America is?" I wasn't sure, and the question was rhetorical anyhow. "It's not the plague of internet pornography that is consuming our men. It's not that the divorce rate in the church is roughly the same as society at large."*

*Jim named two or three other candidates for the worst sin, all of which he dismissed. "The number one sin of the church in America," he said, "is that its pastors and leaders are not on their knees crying out to God, 'Bring us the drug-addicted, bring us the prostitutes, bring us the destitute, bring us the gang leaders, bring us those with AIDS, bring us the people nobody else wants, whom only you can heal, and let us love them in your name until they are whole.'"*

*I had no response. I was undone. He had laid me bare, found me out, and exposed my fraudulence. I was the chief of sinners. I had never prayed, not once, for God to bring such people to my church. So I went home and repented. I stopped sinning. I began to cry out for "those nobody wants."*

### **Stay in Communities**

Ohh precious saints, he is so right, the reason most of these people stay in their communities, the addicts with the addicts, the destitute with the destitute, the AIDS with the AIDS, the unwanted with the unwanted, is because they feel there is nowhere else to go, especially to the church because they feel no one wants them there.

## Visitors

Oh when a visitor walks through this door, don't assume they feel comfortable, it very well may have took everything within them to walk through the doors, they may say I will give this one more shot, God if you are really there! What will you do? Will you leave your comfort zone, will you become all things to all men that you might win some?

## Seeking the Crown (9:24-27)

### 3 things to Set you Free

Paul was seeking the Kingdom, he was seeking others, and he was seeking a crown. Do you want three things that will set you free, set you free from the monotony of life, from depression, or from the worries of this world, then tear off a page from Paul's life and start to live it.

**(1 Cor 9:24 NKJV) Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.**

**(1 Cor 9:25 NKJV) And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.**

### Isthmus Games

The reason Paul alludes to sports in this way is because the Isthmus Games—the second most important athletic games in the region—took place in Corinth. Consequently, they knew about running races and wrestling matches. They watched the athletes arrive a year before the games took place to train single-mindedly in order to win the prize—a little laurel wreath to put on one's head.

### Great Olympians – Same Story

Great Olympic champions all have the same story, they traded the present for the future. They sacrifice staying up late watching the television so they can arise before the sun and begin their training. They pass on the hot fudge sundaes, they say no to seconds, they skip the fast food drive through, because every thought of the present is calculated in the light of the future event.

### Not Competing against Each Other

But we are not competing against other Christians, we are running to receive the prize, and the prize is Christ Himself, to hear His voice and to see His face. And, the crown, the prize, are the people we help see and hear His voice.

### 5 Crowns

There are 5 crowns spoken of in the bible:

- Incorruption –  
• *(1 Corinthians 9:25 NKJV) And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*
- Life –  
• *(James 1:12 NKJV) Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*
- Rejoicing –  
• *(1 Thessalonians 2:19 NKJV) For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?*
- Glory –  
• *(1 Peter 5:4 NKJV) and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*
- Righteousness –  
• *(2 Timothy 4:8 NKJV) Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

### **Imperishable Crown – Don't Cool Off - back Off Now**

Our crown is imperishable. These people Paul spoke of did all they did to get a wreath on their head that would eventually wither and die. Paul at the end of his life would say he fought the good fight he finished the course set before him. Oh precious saint, don't cool off now, don't pull back, don't go into cruise control. Now more than ever you are needed in the race. Maybe you got kids, great that you minister to them as you do, but invest just 10 percent into another man's field and watch how God will abundantly bless your field, which is your family.

### **Exciting Opportunities Coming**

We have some exciting opportunities coming up as we start back our Tuesday night prayer, as we reach out to the youth in this area and have a community youth group, as we will be doing the Fellowship of Christian Athletes when the school semester starts, we are starting up the Global Media Outreach where you can be an online missionary and discipline new believers. Seize an opportunity; don't just plan on finishing, but plan on finishing strong.

**(1 Cor 9:26 NKJV) Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.**

**(1 Cor 9:27 NKJV) But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.**

### **Living in Holiness / Keep Body in Subjection – Disqualified – Lead away to Slavery**

And then Paul puts it into the context that this isn't just serving others, it is living in holiness. Paul says live in such a way that no one can point at you and say it is all words, your actions counter you words. Paul says I discipline my body, I keep the flesh under subjection to the Spirit. The word Paul uses here for disqualified was the word they used in the sports game at that time for someone who became disqualified because they didn't compete within the bounds of the rules. The word Paul uses here for subjection is "to lead away to slavery".

### **Resembles Christ**

You know people want to pontificate for hours on end about definition of salvation, whose saved and who isn't, how far can you go in sin and still be saved, don't judge me brother! Look here it is simply defined, in Acts 11 was the first time the followers of Christ were called "Christians". The word Christian is the word "Christ" with the suffix "ian". Christ references Jesus the Messiah, and the suffix "ian" means "resembling". So, a Christian "resembles Christ". That isn't hard to boil down, do you, do they, resemble Christ? When Christians forget what their words mean, they forget what their faith means,

*Acts 11:25-26 (NKJV) <sup>25</sup> Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. <sup>26</sup> And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.*

### **Hebrews 12 – Lay aside Every Weight**

In the Book of Hebrews, we are told we should lay aside every weight and sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Laying aside every weight, every encumbrance. As Paul said earlier, all things are lawful for me but all things are not expedient. It's getting rid of those things that aren't expedient, things that aren't necessary. They are extra baggage.

*Hebrews 12:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,*

### **Not Running with Cowboy Boots On**

As we were going through and were at that point, we pointed out, if you were say, running the hundred meter race in the Olympics, and you came out to set yourself in the blocks, and you were wearing a pair of cowboy boots, people would think you were crazy. You can't run with cowboy boots. You need light, spiked shoes. You want to get the best traction. And you want them to be as light as possible. They have track shoes that weigh about thirteen ounces. You want to lay aside every weight. You want to strip down. You don't want to wear a heavy overcoat, a backpack, laying aside every weight! Yet, we see Christians in the Christian race and they are loaded down with all kinds of junk, baggage. And they are trying to run the Christian race, loaded down with baggage. So we are encouraged, we're exhorted, laying aside every



weight and sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the goal! Paul, when he was writing to the Philippian church said (Phil. 3:14), I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. I'm giving it everything I've got because I want to win! Paul said, run to win. They that run in a race run all, but only one is going to receive the prize. Run to win! So run that you might obtain, the prize, the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!

*Philippians 3:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

### **Run to win**

Run to win! Get in this race to win! Be willing to make the sacrifices that are necessary to be a winner because the crown that we receive is not a corruptible crown. We're laboring. We're running. We're wrestling for an incorruptible crown, the crown of righteousness, which the Lord our righteous judge shall give! And not to me only but to all those who love His appearing. So as Paul was coming towards the end of his race. He had been sentenced to death by Caesar Nero. He wrote to Timothy and said the time of my departure is at hand. But I have fought a good fight. I have finished the racecourse and I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, our righteous judge shall give to me. But not to me only but also to all those who love His appearing. Paul won the race! And now he was looking forward to standing before the judge's seat and receiving his crown of righteousness, which the Lord was going to give to him.

*2 Timothy 4:6-8 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

# *1 Corinthians 10*

## *And They Forgot (10:1-13)*

### **Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions**

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### **Next 3 Chapters Liberty / Chp 10 – OT vs NT**

So in the three chapters (8-10) Paul is addressing questions the believers at the church in Corinth regarding the Christian liberties they were free to enjoy, but should they enjoy them. And here in chapter 10 is a real clear statement to the believer to not think that grace is a license for the professing believer to be free to do anything they want to, and that God will wink and say it is ok. So often there is this Old Testament versus New Testament concept of God. In the OT He is a God of wrath, but in the NT He is a God of grace. Chapter ten Paul uses OT examples of sin, and says the examples still apply today. Paul is saying that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

*Malachi 3:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> *“For I am the LORD, I do not change; .....*

### **In Church Today – Liberty vs Sin**

Very much today there is confusion within the church as to the difference between liberty, and sin, and Paul makes clarity for them/us, so we don't enter into sin and think that somehow it will all fine because we saved and His chosen ones. He will use the example of His chosen people the people of Israel, but we will see there were great consequences for their sins of disobedience, and the same will be true for us.

### **Writing to a Church Family – that they not Fall Short**

Remember Paul is writing to a family, a church family. Do you remember why he is writing to them, do you remember the theme of how that they would come short of no spiritual thing, and how they would be one together. Family looks out for family.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV)* *so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Chapter 8 outline**

In Chapter 8 was the calling to not cause a brother or sister to stumble if they say us exercising a Christian liberty that wouldn't harm us, but could possibly crush them, because family looks out for family.

*Outline: Like Him “Jesus” (8:1-13)*

- *In Love (8:1-3)*
- *In Wisdom (8:4-6)*
- *In Patience (8:7-8)*
- *In Death (8:9-13)*

### **Chapter 9 Outline**

In Chapter 9 we get a rare autobiography of Paul and his heart, and we saw the example of Paul who was seeking first the kingdom of God, he was seeking to save others, and he was seeking the crown of Christ. Paul finished off his autobiography by saying he wanted to finish well, he wanted to finish his race with a strong kick, and go for the gold if you will. Our brother Paul was encouraging us along to do the same, because family looks out for family, and he knew this would be the greatest things for us to do ourselves.

### Outline: Paul – A Man after God’s own Heart

- Seeking First the Kingdom (9:1-18)
- Seeking Others (9:19-23)
- Seeking the Crown (9:24-27)

### **You are not Past Prime**

Let me just say to anyone here today who thinks you are in the place you are in in life that you are past your prime of rock the world for Christ, I want you to hear this clearly, and that is that you are not. God will do more for and through you today, than He done in your whole life combined, and I say that based on that He is looking for, desiring, men and woman who will cast off all restraint and abandon for the Kingdom sake, in these days that have to be the last-last days.

### **End Chp 9 for Context of Chp 10**

So, let's read verses 9:24-27 for Paul's context as it feeds into this chapter ten.

*(1 Cor 9:24 NKJV) Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.*

*(1 Cor 9:25 NKJV) And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*

*(1 Cor 9:26 NKJV) Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.*

*(1 Cor 9:27 NKJV) But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

### **Chp 10 – how Chosen Ones Fall / Examples for Us**

Well now in chapter 10 Paul is going to talk about some examples of the chosen people of Israel, but how they fall short, which is putting it nicely for they actually fell flat, they failed terribly after they were delivered from Egypt and the bonds of slavery by a mighty working of God. And Paul will use that example to make the point that even though they were delivered miraculously, were freed, provided for, and given the direction to go, they still failed because they allowed sin into their lives. Paul applies here these example unto us that even though we have been delivered miraculously, freed from bondage, provided for, and given direction, we can still fall flat, fail terribly, if we chose to succumb to the lust and temptations of the this world.

### **Main Message – Don’t Confuse Liberty with Ok**

Paul’s message, don’t confuse Christian liberty as an ok to violate the word of God.

### **Brother Paul – Writing to the Family / Warning and Warming**

So Brother Paul writing to the family, giving us warnings and warmings’ (the hope that is in Christ), because family looks out for family.

**(1 Cor 10:1 NKJV) Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea,**

**(1 Cor 10:2 NKJV) all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,**

**(1 Cor 10:3 NKJV) all ate the same spiritual food,**

**(1 Cor 10:4 NKJV) and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.**

**(1 Cor 10:5 NKJV) But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.**

### **How Fall - Forget**

How do you walk into sin, succumb to lust, by forgetting where you have come from, by forgetting all that God has done, and getting bogged down into the details and moments of now.

### **God not Pleased / 603,548 – 2 / Lust – Idolatry – Sex – Challenge - Complaining**

God was not well pleased with them, and we know from the scriptures that just the men alone, **603,548** of the adult males would perish in the wilderness over those 40 years, and only two would enter into the Promise Land, Joshua and Caleb. **603,548** perish in the wilderness because of lust, idolatry, and fornication, challenging God, and complaining against God. And Paul says these are the very same things

that although we may be saved, they will leave us in the wilderness, never reaching and gaining the crown, the promise, the high calling of God, to hear the words this is my child whom I am well pleased.

*Exodus 38:26 (NIV)* <sup>26</sup> one beka per person, that is, half a shekel, according to the sanctuary shekel, from everyone who had crossed over to those counted, twenty years old or more, a total of 603,550 men.

### **They were Steps away from Greatness / Wrong Steps Lead to Wilderness**

Even after all they saw and experienced, they still could turn away and fail, even though they were so close, they were right there, they were steps away from greatest, yet because of a wrong step here and a wrong step there, they missed out on all that He had for them.

- **Under the Cloud** – referring to how God lead them out of Egypt and through the wilderness by putting a cloud covering over them. In the extreme heat of the desert, God kept them cool by covering them with a cloud. God’s supernatural leading, no need to wonder where to go, just follow the cloud.
- **Passed through the Sea** – not just the miracle of parting the sea for their passage, but the watching of how He can bury any and every foe that comes against them.
- **Spiritual Food** – not this food was mystical, but that it was supernatural, as each morning there the manna would be to feed, nourish, and sustain not just them, but their whole family.
- **Spiritual Drink** – not that the rock was mystical, but it was supernatural in that fresh water was always there for them to refresh them, rehydrate them, and sustain them. I will save the exposition on this rock being Jesus Christ for another time.

### **Saw & Experienced – but Still Failed**

*Verse 6 – Now these things become our example* - They saw and experienced all this, but they still fell and failed.

### **5 Failings & Forgetting:**

We will read in our passage today of the five failings and forgetting that the people of Israel had, and thus why God was not pleased with them, and hundreds of thousands of them would perish in the wilderness, never entering into the Promised Land, the picture of the Spirit filled life. Note, the Promised land is not heaven as some teach it to be, and we know that is so because the children of Israel still had to fight wars against the enemies while living in the Promised Land, and in heaven the wars will be over. So in our study today we can see examples of five things that will quench and kill us from having a Spirit filled abundant life in God, but.....two powerful examples of how we can!

1. Lust
2. Idolatry
3. Sexual Immorality
4. Challenging the Lord
5. Complaining against the Lord

### **Why – Because they Forgot / Supernatural became the Normal**

Why did they go into these things, I suggest to you it is because they forgot all that they saw God do. And sometimes the forgetting part is the taking for granted the things we see Him do daily. The parting of the Red Sea, they soon forgot. But the cloud by day, just became a daily thing and stopped realizing how supernatural it was, because it just became so daily to them. The manna and the water, well there it is, just like yesterday, and the day before that, and so on.

### **How that can be Us / Forget the Deliverance – Forget His Presence and Provision**

How that can be so us Christian! How we can forget the great deliverance, the freedom from hell, the depression, the emptiness, the aimlessness of life after a year or two or three. And of course how we can forget His great provision His daily providing for us, even His daily presence.

### **Corporate Prayer**

Please come to the Corporate prayer as we seek His Presence. The verb context of that well know verse of where two are gathered, can more literally be read, where two or more are gathered I am already there. The sense is that God is saying I was here before you showed up, I have been waiting for you.

*Matthew 18:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

### **Communion Service**

Before we read the next section, let's go back and do this in remembrance, let's break bread together, and pour out wine.

**(1 Cor 10:6 NKJV) Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.**

### **Lust - Numbers 11 / Never Enough – Not Good Enough / Leanness**

The reference is to Numbers 11, where we read that, tiring of manna, the Israelites lusted after meat. Isn't that what lust really is—not being satisfied with what God has given us, wanting something or someone different? It isn't enough or not good enough. The psalmist sheds further light on this when he says, "God gave them their request, but He sent leanness to their soul" (see Psalm 106:14, 15). That's the way lust is. Never satisfied, it brings leanness to the soul, weakness to the body, emptiness to the spirit. We think of lust in terms of sexuality, but we see scripturally it is not being satisfied with what the Lord is presently providing us.

*Psalm 106:14–15 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, And tested God in the desert. <sup>15</sup> And He gave them their request, But sent leanness into their soul.*

### **And so they Forgot**

And so they forgot; they forgot all that God had done, and was doing for them. Could that be us today?

**(1 Cor 10:7 NKJV) And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."**

### **Idolatry – Exodus 32**

The reference here is to Exodus 32. Tired of waiting for Moses to return from Mount Sinai, the people pressed Aaron to fashion a golden calf from their jewelry—not to compete against Jehovah, but to be a visible, tangible representation of Him. Many cultures at that time considered the cow to be representative of deity. Why? The cow is a gentle yet powerful animal that provides milk for its young. But here's the problem with idolatry: If I allow anything or anyone to represent God to me, it will, at best, be only a partial representation of the full nature and character of the Father. You see, if I look at God as only being a cow in the sense of gently providing for His young, I need not fear if I act immorally in His sight. Yes, God is gentle. Yes He provides graciously—but He is also lion like in His holiness and purity. Therefore, I err greatly when I ignore this aspect of His nature. People, many Christians included, want to make God into the image they think He should be, rather than being formed into His image as revealed in His Word. People say I think He is a God of love, and so I don't think He would judge me for doing this or doing that, He knows me, and He knows my struggles, so this thing although contrary to His Word, is ok for me to do. The extremes are around us, gaining momentum in churches that say God would never send someone to hell, homosexuality is ok, sexual immorality is ok – well everyone is doing it.

### **And so they Forgot**

And so they forgot; they forgot all that God had done, and was doing for them. Could that be us today?

**(1 Cor 10:8 NKJV) Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;**

### **Sexual Immorality – Numbers 25**

Referring to the Numbers 25 account wherein, after committing fornication with the women of Moab, twenty-three thousand died in one day and one thousand more shortly thereafter, Paul says, "In the glorious life of liberty which you enjoy, make sure your freedom doesn't lead to immorality." "I can watch that. I can go there," we say of the questionable movie or activity—unaware that immorality kills. It kills our marriages and our families, our witness and our joy.

### **And so they Forgot**

And so they forgot; they forgot all that God had done, and was doing for them. Could that be us today?

### **Ray what are you Saying**

Ray what are you saying, are you talking about salvation here? No I am talking in the context of the passage, and that is this – sin kills, it does not liberate. The context of these three chapters is liberty, and any liberty that kills, is not liberty at all. Sin kills, it does not liberate.

### **And so they Forgot**

And so they forgot; they forgot all that God had done, and was doing for them. Could that be us today?

**(1 Cor 10:9 NKJV) nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;**

### **Challenging God – Numbers 21**

Referring Numbers 21, “Why did you bring us out here in the wilderness to die?” the Israelites cried to Moses. “We had it made back in Egypt—where there were onions and melons and leeks.” Even if they did have onions and melons and leeks—an assumption many historians question in light of the fact that such crops were cultivated only in Israel and unknown in Egypt at that time—the cry of the children of Israel is so much like ours when we long for the old gang, the wild parties, the fun times, and fail to remember the loneliness, the emptiness, the guilt; when we long for the melons, onions, and leeks, but fail to remember the laboring, the beatings, the slavery of Egypt. Don’t tempt Christ by saying, “I miss the old days. My job is a drag. Why am I stuck with him?”—for when I complain about my situation, I am directly complaining about Christ, the One who allowed me to be in the situation in the first place. We are challenging God that He knows what He is doing, and that we know better. We are challenging God on the direction He is taking us.

### **And so they Forgot**

And so they forgot; they forgot all that God had done, and was doing for them. Could that be us today?

**(1 Cor 10:10 NKJV) nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.**

### **Complaining – Numbers 13**

After being covered by the cloud and provided for by the goodness and graciousness of the Father, as the Israelites were poised to enter the Land of Promise, Moses sent twelve spies to check out the land. And although they returned with reports of its beauty, although they returned with fruit as proof of its productivity, they also returned with reports of Anakim—giants they believed were sure to squish them like bugs should they dare to enter (Numbers 13-16). All except Joshua and Caleb that is; but the people of Israel complained, and many (14,700) in the end were destroyed by the destroyer.

### **14700 killed for Complaining / Where would you Rank Complaining**

14,700 killed for complaining, complaining against God and complaining against the leader He had appointed. Hmm, how interesting that if you were to list a top 5, we would say oh yea sexual immorality, idolatry, challenging, discontentment – but would we have thought complaining that high on the list? I guess we wouldn’t have ranked it that high because we are just not the type to complain against God, or complain about His people – right?

### **And so they Forgot**

And so they forgot; they forgot all that God had done, and was doing for them. Could that be us today?

**(1 Cor 10:11 NKJV) Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**

### **SPECS**

God gives us many examples in the Scriptures, and as we read, always be looking for His specifications, SPECS we call them in the technical industry. Let the Word of God be supreme over our wants and desires.

**S – Sins to Forsake**  
**P – Promises to Claim**  
**E – Examples to Follow**  
**C – Commandments to Obey**  
**S – Stumbling Blocks to Avoid**

**(1 Cor 10:12 NKJV) Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.**

**(1 Cor 10:13 NKJV) No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.**

### **It is not Ok Ground (Lust, Idolatry, Sex, Challenging, Complaining) / Make Course Adjustment**

*Verse 12 - Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall* – The word of the Lord, if anyone thought they were on “ok ground” maybe have been justifying their lust (not satisfied with His provision), idolatry (adjusting God to their understanding), believing our sexual position is ok, the challenging of the direction He is leading us, and justified in our complaining about what He is doing and the people He has put in our lives, the word of the Lord says take heed, the fall is near, make course adjustment now, today, look at the examples of Israel, don’t confuse grace with liberty, and remember any liberty that kills is not liberty at all.

### **No Temptation – Provide way Out – or Ability to Bear It**

*Verse 13 – No Temptation* – that dispels that we are powerless against temptation. God will either provide the way out, and one of the ways out is the wisdom to not go in to start with. As I say the best way to avoid temptation is to remove. But if it is in your face, God says I will give you all you need to bear it and have victory over it.

### **Words Message**

I love looking into the details of the stories of these examples, and what a glorious message from the Lord I see in the two who did not fall in the big five categories, Joshua and Caleb 603,548 men over the age of 20 would not enter into the land, except two, Joshua and Caleb. In these two men I find the keys to victory over these 5 things. Joshua, was also called Oshea. Oshea means “help”. Joshua means “the Lord is my help”. So we see in Oshea saying I need help, but Joshua saying the Lord is my help. No temptation can overtake me because the Lord is my help. Caleb was also called “Chelubai”. Chelubai means caged. Caleb, remembers the cage of Egypt, the bondage, the cruel taskmaster of slavery, and remembers where the Lord delivered him from. Caleb, means dog. The life of Caleb, faithful to Moses and the Lord his whole life, I see the picture of that faithful dog that follows by his masters side, never wanting to be anywhere else. Great pictures for a victorious Christian life, Caleb and his faithfulness, remembering where he has been delivered from; and Joshua showing where the power source is – God is my help.

*Numbers 32:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> ‘Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they have not wholly followed Me,*

*Numbers 26:65 (NKJV) <sup>65</sup> For the LORD had said of them, “They shall surely die in the wilderness.” So there was not left a man of them, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.*

### **I Love the Heart of Caleb**

And I love the heart of Caleb, a warrior for the living God. After being covered by the cloud and provided for by the goodness and graciousness of the Father, as the Israelites were poised to enter the Land of Promise, Moses sent twelve spies to check out the land. And although they returned with reports of its beauty, although they returned with fruit as proof of its productivity, they also returned with reports of Anakim—giants they believed were sure to squish them like bugs should they dare to enter (Numbers 13:26–33). But there were two spies who had a different perspective. “Don’t rebel against the Lord,” said Joshua and Caleb. “Don’t fear the people of the land, for they are our bread” (see Numbers 14:9). I love that! Caleb said, “These giants are bread for us. We’ll eat them up. And as a result, we’ll actually be stronger for battle.” Forty years later, it was to an eighty-five-year-old Caleb that Joshua said, “We made it, Caleb. Out of the original three million, it’s just you and me. Take any territory you want. It’s time to retire.” But what does Caleb say?

*Joshua 14:11–12 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in. <sup>12</sup> Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said.”

### **Don't give me the Beach / Pass the Butter**

“Don't give me a beach cabin, give me the mountain where giants live,” said Caleb. “Why? Because I'm hungry for some bread.” Precious people, when you pray the Lord's prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread,” think Anakim. You see, we complain and murmur, “Why is this trial happening? Why that? Why not the other?” when in reality, the very situations or people about which we murmur are those through which God wants to strengthen us. That which seems so big and so intimidating are Anakim—and it is the wise man or woman who, like Caleb, says “You've let them cross my path, Lord, therefore they must be there to make me stronger.” Can you imagine how different our homes would be if we really believed that the trials that come our way and the giants that loom before us are actually beneficial to us if we would eat them up in faith? “More bills?” we'd say, “Great! Keep them coming. Another rejection notice? All right!” Most will die murmuring in the wilderness. “If God loves me, why doesn't He...?” or “How come this giant is marching toward me?” But there will be those—and I pray I might be one and you might be the other—who will say, “Giants? I smell bread. Pass the butter!”



# *The Cup of Blessing*

## **(10:14-33)**

### **Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions**

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### **Chapter 8 / Chapter 9 / Autobiography – We too can be Great in the Kingdom of God**

Back in chapter 8 Paul started this section of Christian liberty, and he begged the brethren that for the sake of the weaker brother or sister, that we would not do anything that may cause them to stumble (we will come back to the same point in our passage today). He said is that thing you are enjoying, although not sinful, but if it causes your brother to stumble, is it really worth it. He spoke about them eating meat sacrificed to idols, how it was just meat, but to the weaker or new believer they say it as partaking of a pagan practice. We made modern day applications to places we frequent, alcohol, movies, clothing, clubbing, wine tasting parties, etc. Paul went on in chapter 9 to say that for himself, if something he did could ever POSSIBLY cause a brother or sister to stumble before the Lord, he just wouldn't do it – PERIOD. The scriptures gave us a rare autobiography of the great apostle, and we can apply the same practices and principles like Paul, and be great in the Kingdom of God today.

### **BUT – Chapter 10 doesn't Excuse Disobedience**

And then in verses 1-13 of this chapter Paul makes it clear, hey don't think just because we are under grace, that we are excused from following the Word of the Lord. He says don't think that his discussion about liberty excuses disobedience to the commands of God. Grace isn't a license to sin.

### **Chp 10 – Examples of Israel**

And to make his point, he used examples from the children of Israel of how even though they were miraculously delivered from the slavery of Egypt (just as we have been from death), and were God's chosen people (just as we are today), they were still under commands of the Lord. We saw the example of how their disobedience in the following five areas brought death and destruction upon them, and prevented them from entering into the Promised Land, which for us represents the spirit-filled life.

1. Lust
2. Idolatry
3. Sexual Immorality
4. Challenging the Lord
5. Complaining against the Lord

### **We saw Why they Failed – Because they Forgot**

We saw the reason they failed was because they forgot all that God had done and was doing in their lives, and they got their attention off of God, unto the world and the flesh, and failure was certain, and so too is the certainty for us today if we do the same.

- **Under the Cloud** – referring to how God lead them out of Egypt and through the wilderness by putting a cloud covering over them. In the extreme heat of the desert, God kept them cool by covering them with a cloud. God's supernatural leading, no need to wonder where to go, just follow the cloud.
- **Passed through the Sea** – not just the miracle of parting the sea for their passage, but the watching of how He can bury any and every foe that comes against them.

- **Spiritual Food** – not this food was mystical, but that it was supernatural, as each morning there the manna would be to feed, nourish, and sustain not just them, but their whole family.
- **Spiritual Drink** – not that the rock was mystical, but it was supernatural in that fresh water was always there for them to refresh them, rehydrate them, and sustain them. I will save the exposition on this rock being Jesus Christ for another time.

### **Now – Very Specifically for us to Remember**

Paul gave the examples of what they forgot, and now we begin in verse 14 that he speaks very specific to us, watch out for taking our attention off of the Lord, and being distracted by the world, let us not fail and fall like the examples of Israel, let us remember very specifically of all the Lord has done for us.

**(1 Cor 10:14 NKJV) Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.**

**(1 Cor 10:15 NKJV) I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say.**

### **You are Wise Enough – Don't make Excuses / The Cup of Blessing**

Paul says you are wise enough to know what I am saying is the right thing to do, so don't try to justify or make excuses for partaking in the world's practices. WHY? Let me remind you – the Cup of Blessing.

**(1 Cor 10:16 NKJV) The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?**

### **Topic is Communion / Be Near-Sighted**

The topic of verse 16 is Communion, remembering the cross, the crucifix, the price that was paid to redeem us. The context of the chapter and three chapters is that in light of all that He has done, how could we partake of the things of the world again. Don't be narrow-minded, be near-sighted, fix your eyes upon the cross, keep the cross always in your field of vision, remember it daily, and the world will not touch you – It is a guarantee.

*(1 Cor 2:2 NKJV) For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

### **Cup of Blessing – Not a Euphuism**

The “cup of blessing” to us sounds like a euphuism, Paul speaking poetically about the partaking of communion, but oh it is much deeper than that, and the people of Corinth would be fully aware of what the “cup of blessing” meant. Normally in the Seder meal (the Jewish celebration of Passover) there are 4 different cups that are served. The Four Cups represent the four expressions of deliverance promised by God Exodus 6:6-7: "I will bring out," "I will deliver," "I will redeem," and "I will take."

*Exodus 6:6-7 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. <sup>7</sup> I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.*

**1st Cup (I will bring out):** This consisted of a solemn blessing (Kiddush) pronounced over the 1st cup of wine which was followed by a dish of bitter herbs. (This reminded them of their bitterness of Egyptian bondage). There are a few variations, of how this blessing would go, but it has its basis of remembering who the Lord is, the mighty God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, all that is seen and unseen.

*Genesis 2:1-3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. <sup>2</sup> And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. <sup>3</sup> Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*

Here is an excerpt from one Jewish rabbi on what is/was to be said after the reading of the Scripture:

*Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who sanctified us with His commandments, and hoped for us, and with love and intent invested us with His sacred Sabbath, as a memorial to the deed of Creation. It is the first amongst the holy festivals, commemorating the exodus from Egypt. For You chose us, and sanctified us, out of all nations, and with love and intent You invested us with Your Holy Sabbath.*

**2nd Cup (I will deliver):** The Passover narrative (the retelling of the story of God delivering them from Egypt) is recited after which the "Little Hallel" Ps 113 was sung. This cup is then drunk following the psalm. The psalm reminds the hearer who has the power, and the heart, to deliver them. This would have been the cup they took in Luke 22.

*Psalm 113:1–9 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, Praise the name of the LORD! <sup>2</sup> Blessed be the name of the LORD From this time forth and forevermore! <sup>3</sup> From the rising of the sun to its going down The LORD's name is to be praised. <sup>4</sup> The LORD is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens. <sup>5</sup> Who is like the LORD our God, Who dwells on high, <sup>6</sup> Who humbles Himself to behold The things that are in the heavens and in the earth? <sup>7</sup> He raises the poor out of the dust, And lifts the needy out of the ash heap, <sup>8</sup> That He may seat him with princes— With the princes of His people. <sup>9</sup> He grants the barren woman a home, Like a joyful mother of children. Praise the LORD!

*Luke 22:17 (KJV 1900)* <sup>17</sup> And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

**3rd Cup (I will redeem):** The main meal was served consisting of lamb and unleavened bread which preceded the drinking of the 3rd cup known as the "cup of blessing". It is the blessing after the meal, which is a little different for us as we only say a blessing before the meal. The Scripture reference is Deuteronomy 8:12. The heart of the blessing is to praise God for all His goodness, for bringing, for delivering, and for redeeming – all His provisions both miracle wise and physically. The cup that Jesus blessed and distributed is identified as the 3rd cup of the Passover meal. This is apparent from the singing of the Great Hallel which immediately follows (see Mk 14:26). Paul identifies this cup of blessing with the cup of the Eucharist (see 1Cor 10:16).

*Deuteronomy 8:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

Here is an excerpt (just one paragraph) from one Jewish rabbi on what is/was to be said

*Blessed are You, Adonai, our God, King of the universe, who sustains the entire universe with Your goodness, grace and mercy. You provide for all, and prepare the food for each of Your creations that You have created. Blessed are You, Adonai, who sustains all.*

Here is what Jesus said:

*Mark 14:22–25 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." <sup>23</sup> Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. <sup>24</sup> And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. <sup>25</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

**4th Cup (I will take):** Finally the climax of the Passover came with the singing of the "Great Hallel" Psalms 114-118. This is succeeded by the drinking of the 4th cup of wine called the "cup of consummation." How picture perfect this has been of Jesus being our Passover. But how the picture gets even more amazing. *1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

### **Hallel Song – but no Cup**

The 4<sup>th</sup> cup was to be taken after the singing of the Hallel song, and Jesus and the disciples that night sang them we read in Mark.

*Mark 14:26 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

### **Any other way to Take Them**

But this fourth cup, how amazing, as we read of Jesus saying Father is there any other way to "take them, bring them into the family", and there was no other way except by divine blood, the perfect Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world so God could take us as His own, to call us sons to call us daughters.

*Matthew 26:42 (NKJV)*

<sup>42</sup> Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

*Luke 22:41–42 (NKJV)* <sup>41</sup> And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

### **Ends with Presiding Priest – It is Done**

How is the Passover Meal, the Seder, end? By the presiding priest, the host leading all in the drinking of the fourth cup, and then saying "TEL TELESTI" which is interpreted as "IT IS FINISHED" or "IT IS CONSUMATED".

*John 19:28–30 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" <sup>29</sup> Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

## **What a Word**

It is Finished, and what a word this word "TEL TELESTI" as we read it in its meaning: done, consummated, paid, to expire, to execute, termination, the end of series, success, and perfection, to be exempt, to give a receipt. It is done my brothers and sisters, the receipt of proof of purchase, written in blood, the end of the series and the beginning of a new one for our life, the debit against us has been retired, and we are exempt from all punishment due us.

## **Isaiah – Messianic Prophecy / Jesus is the Sure Peg**

Isaiah 22 is a Messianic prophecy of Jesus Christ. In the day of the writing when they would pitch their tents, they would fasten a peg (a nail) on to the main beam of the structure and there they would hang their cups and pots, because it was sure to hold, and not fall. The passage says Jesus is the sure peg, and when we hold unto to Him He will not fail us. And I picture in my mind, when Jesus drank of that last cup, that fourth cup, He hung the cup up on the peg, and said – DONE!

*Isaiah 22:22–25 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> *The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; So he shall open, and no one shall shut; And he shall shut, and no one shall open.* <sup>23</sup> *I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place, And he will become a glorious throne to his father's house.* <sup>24</sup> *'They will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the posterity, all vessels of small quantity, from the cups to all the pitchers.* <sup>25</sup> *In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'the peg that is fastened in the secure place will be removed and be cut down and fall, and the burden that was on it will be cut off; for the LORD has spoken.'* ”

## **How Picture Perfect!**

### **The 5<sup>th</sup> Cup**

But, there is more. There were four cups that were served, but a fifth cup that was not partaken of. Most Jews call it the cup of Elijah, as it refers to when the Messiah will come for Israel. And He will!

*Most Ashkenazim have the custom to fill a fifth cup at this point. This relates to a Talmudic discussion that concerns the number of cups that are supposed to be drunk. Given that the four cups are in reference to the four expressions of redemption in Exodus 6:6-7, some rabbis felt that it was important to include a fifth cup for the fifth expression of redemption in Exodus 6:8. All agreed that five cups should be poured but the question as to whether or not the fifth should be drunk, given that the fifth expression of redemption concerned being brought into the Land of Israel, which - by this stage - was no longer possessed of an autonomous Jewish community, remained insoluble. The rabbis determined that the matter should be left until Elijah (in reference to the notion that Elijah's arrival would precipitate the coming of the Messiah, at which time all halakhic questions will be resolved) and the fifth cup came to be known as the Kos shel Eliyahu ("Cup of Elijah"). Over time, people came to relate this cup to the notion that Elijah will visit each home on Seder night as a foreshadowing of his future arrival at the end of the days, when he will come to announce the coming of the Jewish Messiah.*

### **For Us – he is Waiting to Celebrate the 5<sup>th</sup> Cup**

But for us, those who have received Him, He has told us in a sense there is another cup awaiting to be drunk with Him, and He said He would not drink until we were all together. That time is near, it will be when He calls us all home, and we celebrate the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

*Mark 14:22–25 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."* <sup>23</sup> *Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.* <sup>24</sup> *And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many."* <sup>25</sup> *Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."*

*Revelation 19:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'"* And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

## **Communion Service**

### **Ever Considered Our Communion and Jesus' Communion**

Have you ever considered the difference in the prayers of Communion between ours and Jesus when He prayed His. We say thank you for your body, the willingness to be broken. Jesus says, thank you Father for the opportunity to be broken, beaten. Thank you that I may die for Ray, that you have provided a way for him to be redeemed and forgiven, to wash his sins away and make him white as snow.

*Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,* <sup>2</sup> *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

## **The Broken Body**

How fascinating again is the bread of the Seder, called matzah, which we can clearly see is the perfect picture of the trinity, the crucifixion, and the resurrection.

Yachatz: Breaking (done early in the Seder, after the first cup)

One of the three matzahs on the table is broken. Part is returned to the pile, the other part is set aside for the afikomen (see below). The bread is wrapped in a napkin and then put out of sight until later in the meal.

Tzafun: The Afikomen (this is done right after the main meal of the Seder), right before the Cup of Blessing.

The piece of matzah set aside earlier is eaten as "dessert," the last food of the meal. Different families have different traditions relating to the afikomen. Some have the children hide it, while the parents have to either find it or ransom it back. Others have the parents hide it. But then the family eats it together.

## **On to the Passage – in the Context of the Cup of Blessing**

Well, that is the context of the rest of this passage, this topic on Christian liberty, partaking in the things of the world, and the context is “The Cup of Blessing”. When a jeweler displays a fine diamond, he often puts it on black velvet. There, it catches fire from the lights of the room, its beauty multiplied, and its value becomes more apparent. The Lord's Supper is like that diamond. Sometimes it needs to be pried from traditional settings and thrown against the black velvet of the blackest night in history: the night it was instituted--the night before Christ was crucified.

**(1 Cor 10:17 NKJV) For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.**

**(1 Cor 10:18 NKJV) Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?**

## **Temple - Communion – Koinonia - Oneness**

Israel understood the koinonia of Communion, for when the Jews offered their peace offerings to the Lord in the tabernacle, and later in the temple, part of the meat sacrificed would rise to the Lord in smoke. They were able to eat of the remainder. Thus, through the peace offering, they were able to commune with God as they shared meat together.

**(1 Cor 10:19 NKJV) What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything?**

**(1 Cor 10:20 NKJV) Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.**

**(1 Cor 10:21 NKJV) You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.**

## **Corinth Believers – Hot of the Grill**

For some of these believers in Corinth, in order to get a good deal on some meat, they were going down to the pagan temple, waiting and watching a pagan sacrifice, and then buying a piece of meat hot off the grill. No problem they say, I am just here for the meat, not the service.

## **Can't do It – In Light of Cup of Blessing**

Verse 21 – you can't do it. You can't do it in the light of the Cup of Blessing. When a jeweler displays a fine diamond, he often puts it on black velvet. There, it catches fire from the lights of the room, its beauty multiplied, and its value becomes more apparent. The Lord's Supper is like that diamond. Sometimes it needs to be pried from traditional settings and thrown against the black velvet of the blackest night in history: the night it was instituted--the night before Christ was crucified.

## **Demonic Inspiration and Representation behind the Forces**

Because, although there is no demon in the meat, just as there is oneness with the Lord in Communion, so too there is oneness with the dark influences at the pagan temple sacrifices. Paul is saying there is demonic inspiration and representation behind these forces.

### **Please don't go overboard on That**

Now don't go crazy on this and feel you have to identify them individually by name to battle them, the fact just don't go looking for them. I've met people who curse the demon of liquor, the demon of sex, the demon of lust. They tell me you have to denounce them by name to conquer them. They go overboard on the whole thing. Paul just makes the point that there is inspiration and representation behind these forces, and that is far enough for us to go on the matter. However, I have had my thoughts about the demon of Oreo cookies, those things seem to have some crazy foothold in my life.

### **There is an Influence**

There is an influence, and we are being told to not be in the place to be influenced. There is not to be fellowship with them, because they will influence us regardless whether we think so or not.

*2 Corinthians 6:11-18 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. <sup>12</sup> You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. <sup>13</sup> Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open. <sup>14</sup> Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? <sup>15</sup> And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? <sup>16</sup> And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." <sup>17</sup> Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." <sup>18</sup> "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty."

### **It will Affect You / Music – Pornography - Clubs**

Paul tells them you can't hang out at the pagan temple to get a deal on the meat, watch the sacrificial service and then chow down, and then swing by the church for communion and think no problem. If Paul was writing today he would say don't think you can listen to the vile music of I am going to bust a cap in your head, because you like the beat, and then come and sing worship songs on Sunday. Those songs are lyrics have demonic influence behind them. Don't think you can view pornography of the gal, and then see and date you sister in Christ and think it won't influence you. Same if you are married. Don't think Paul would say you can go clubbing until 3am on Saturday down on the Block, and then come to church on Sunday and have sweet communion with the Lord. Paul is saying those influences will affect your sweetness and oneness with the Lord.

### **Work is an Example**

Work is a modern application of this concept. There are times when I am on travel and at the end of the day everyone is going out to the bar to get a few drinks. It is a great networking opportunity, it is a great getting in the inner-circle opportunity, and as for me, if those things are the avenue to promotion or employment stability, then I guess I will be left behind, because I tell them I will have to pass because I am heading back to the room to call home, or retire early. Dinner - sure I will go, drinking, I will pass. Even dinner I can feel myself in some uncomfortable positions because the way the conversations go, but I go because I am not of this world but I am in this world, and would love to build or start relationships with people that I hope I can introduce to the Lord. But the bars, I know there is a whole atmosphere, and mentally that goes along with those places. The atmosphere of attraction, the mentality of carnality, all under the cloak of dim lights. I won't go in there not just because I want to abstain from all appearances of evil, but also because I know there is a demonic force heavily camped out there, and I don't want to engage in any battle that I am not called into. Listen Christian, don't expect to win a battle you were not called to go fight. After the children of Israel whimped out on not listening to Caleb and Joshua and the Lord passed sentence on them, they said ok we hear now and we are going to go in and fight. The resultant was they got whipped. So too will it be for you Christian, don't think the mighty hand of God is upon when go to places He has not called you to.

*Numbers 14:41-43 (NKJV)* <sup>41</sup> And Moses said, "Now why do you transgress the command of the LORD? For this will not succeed. <sup>42</sup> Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the LORD is not among you. <sup>43</sup> For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned away from the LORD, the LORD will not be with you."

### **New Orleans Story**

I remember when I was moving to Lake Charles LA the half-way point was New Orleans so I thought I would stop and check it out and spend the night. So I was staying out by the Superdome and about 7pm at night, totally dark by now because it was November, and I started to walk down to the French quarter. I tell you I only made it about one block and I physically felt the presence of evil. My mind comprehended immediately, I am just going down there as a tourist, not a missionary, and thus I am totally unprotected.

So I turned around and went back to the hotel and went to bed. I went down at 7am after my devotion time, in the daylight. I knew to go at night to a place I wasn't called, I was going unprotected.

**(1 Cor 10:22 NKJV) Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?**

### **He is Jealous for You**

The Lord isn't insecure; His jealousy is for your well-being.

**(1 Cor 10:23 NKJV) All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.**

### **We are Desensitized / Watch Time Changer**

I don't think we really realize how much our shock factor has been desensitized. There are times I will be somewhere and I say to myself am I really seeing what am I seeing, surely no one would be doing is. If you ever get the chance to watch the movie "Time Changer" watch it. It is about a guy who transport from 1900 to common time, and he goes to the movies with a bunch of Christians and he comes running out in the middle of the movie saying shut it off they are using the Lords name in vain, and the other Christians are saying chill out dude it is just a movie. Slowly but surely we have and are continually trying to be desensitized to God's holiness. And I have to be on guard because I can find things that appalled me 20 years ago now saying oh well, and I have to remind myself, you are becoming desensitized.

### **We Must Ask**

So we must continually ask ourselves, to be sure we haven't become desensitized, self-absorbed, or blind to our brothers - is this

- **Lawful**: if it is a command of God then stop right there.
- **Helpful (other translations read Beneficial)** - what is the benefit. Now if it is really of no benefit that doesn't mean we can't do it, because remember it isn't unlawful (so lets not become legalistic). However, when should we not engage in that lawful thing that is non-beneficial, when it begins to have a power over us
- **Edify (other translations read powerful)** - for instance, watching Dual Survival is not unlawful, in fact it may be very beneficial for me if I ever get lost hiking in the Amazon jungle, or like last week fall out of my kayak in the river in Kentucky. But the problem becomes when I watch three shows in a row until well past my bedtime, and totally miss my morning Devotion time with the Lord, and then be tired all day and not reflect Him as well as I could had I gone to sleep and got my 8.

*1 Corinthians 6:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

### **One Step from Greatness**

I say to myself, I am entitled to just check out, I've worked hard all week and now I am going to check chill. But as we discussed last week, the children of Israel were literally one step away from greatness, they needed only take a step and they were in the Promised Land, but they wouldn't do it because they were afraid of the giants. Well we too can be just like them, for as I have said, I believe many a Christians are just one hour away from greatness, and it is the last hour that we spend watching television or clicking the Internet right before bed, whereas we could be lights out, or in the word and prayer, and we wake up the next morning in the same spiritual state we went to bed at the night before, and the night before that, and the night before that.

### **Now back to Chapter 8**

Now Paul wraps up the question all the way back in chapter about eating meat offered to idols, and he says and don't do it if it is going to cause your brother to stumble.

**(1 Cor 10:24 NKJV) Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.**

**(1 Cor 10:25 NKJV) Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake;**

**(1 Cor 10:26 NKJV) for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness."**

**(1 Cor 10:27 NKJV) If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake.**

**(1 Cor 10:28 NKJV) But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness."**

**(1 Cor 10:29 NKJV) "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience?**

### **Conscience Judged**

Why should my liberty be judged by another's conscience - Paul says are they right to judge my liberty, NO, but do they, YES - and because the weaker brother does, I will take the position of family looks out for family, and I will do all that it takes

**(1 Cor 10:30 NKJV) But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks?**

**(1 Cor 10:31 NKJV) Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.**

**(1 Cor 10:32 NKJV) Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God,**

**(1 Cor 10:33 NKJV) just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.**

### **Wrapping Chapter 8 Up – For the Sake of Others**

Paul is coming back around to where we began, and that was, if a liberty of ours would cause a beloved to stumble, then lay it down for their sake. We covered this in detail in chapter 8, so please refresh yourself with that study again.

### **Chapter 12-13 / Does our Love Intersect at the Lowest Level**

But here is the detail within the 16 chapters of this book, in which we will discuss the gifts of the spirit, the things such as speaking in tongues, speaking prophecy, healing, and even performing miracles; but Paul asks, challenges, but will love and spirituality cross together at the lowest level, the willingness to give up certain liberties for the sake of that brother, that youth that is watching, the recovering addict, the person just looking for a reason to check back into the world. Does your spirituality and love intersect at the lowest level.

*1 Corinthians 12:27–30 (NKJV)* <sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. <sup>28</sup> And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

### **Love or Nothing**

Though I speak in tongues, yet have not love, I am nothing.

*1 Corinthians 13:1–3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

### **How low will you Go / Greatest in the Kingdom**

How low, will you go. He who desires to be great in the kingdom will be servant of all.

*Matthew 20:26–28 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. <sup>27</sup> And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— <sup>28</sup> just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

### **Spiritual One will Measure their Life down to Dinner Table**

The spiritual man, the spiritual woman, will even measure their life down to the dinner table.

### **Another's Wealth**

The others wealth - I like the KJV, as it says wealth. Has any self-centered person ever enriched your life, not they only take away from you don't they. I am looking to enrich you, make you wealthy in the Lord.

*1 Corinthians 10:23–24 (KJV 1900)* <sup>23</sup> All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. <sup>24</sup> Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.



**(1 Cor 11:1 NKJV) Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.**

Will you? How about in the light of the Cup of Blessing?

# *1 Corinthians 11*

## *Men, LEAD! (11:1-16)*

### **Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions**

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### **Outline Chp 11-12**

In the next two chapters (11-14) Paul will be addressing

- Order concerning men and woman in public worship (11:1-16)
- Order concerning communion in public worship (11:17-34)
- Order concerning the use of spiritual gifts in public worship (12-14)

### **Addresses Abuses / Purpose for Unity & Edification / So we do not Come Short**

As he does so, he will at the same time be addressing some of the abuses, misuses, and unnecessary confusion of these things that were taking place within the church of God that was in Corinth. And so it still is today that so many people are confused on these things, that instead of bringing unity and edification to the body, they cause division and strife instead; so a very purposeful and practical passage of scripture for us today, and how wise it is for us to look into and understand these things so we can, take hold of all that Paul wrote this letter for, and that is that we would not fall short in any spiritual gift and giving the Lord desires for us his people. As it was then, so it is today, that many churches in the name of liberty are allowing many things into the church that are not profitable, and even diminishing.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Men and Women in the Church (11:2–16)**

**(1 Cor 11:1 NKJV) Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.**

### **No Chapter Breaks / Most Common Tators / Don't Stumble Another**

Remember there are no chapter breaks in the bible, as this was just one letter, and meant to be read in one sitting. Most commentators will say this verses really goes with the end of chapters 8-10, and the beginning of chapter 11 begins in verse 2; I think it goes with chapter 8-10, the theme of not using our Christian liberties in a way to cause a brother or sister to stumble, and verse 1 here goes with this chapter because Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit, will still be talking about things that can cause another to stumble, and cause confusion to another believer. So I do like to read what the commentators say, but I always remember that they are themselves just "common tators", and not infallible like the Scriptures are.

### **Who Could you say that Too / Not Read what I Read / Dad walking in the Snow**

*Verse 1 - Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.* Who could you, would you, say that to today? Who could say imitate me as I imitate Christ, not read the books about Christ I read, or go to the church I go too, but imitate me, live like I live for Christ, for He is real to me and I have a real experience and relationship with Him. Moms and dads, can you/we say that to our kids right now, today? If they were to follow you in every step, would they be walking into the arms of Jesus, or elsewhere? I am reminded of the story of the man who was going out to pick up a fifth of liquor in the midst of the fresh fallen snow. And as he walked he heard footsteps behind him, and as he turned he saw his seven year old son coming up behind him, but with big steps as he tried to place his steps within his dads steps, and the son yelled out, "look daddy I am walking in your footsteps". Where will your child walk?

### **Teenagers – can you say That / You tell parents you are not a Kid / Now – not when Older**

You teenagers here today, can you like Paul say to your little brothers and sisters, imitate me just as I imitate Christ? You teenagers, how many times have you told your parents you are not a little kid anymore? It is true, you are not, and thus don't think you are to get serious about you walk with the Lord when you are older, and now is just a time of play and school, on the contrary – now is the time to imitate Christ, and expect that other people whether that be your brothers or sisters, or your classmates are watching you to see if this Jesus thing you profess is really real

**(1 Cor 11:2 NKJV) Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.**

### **Commends for Observing**

Paul commended the church at Corinth for the fact that they were observing the ordinances he had taught them when he was with them five years earlier. After commending them, however, Paul goes on to tell the Corinthians that some adjustments were necessary....

### **Good for us to Reevaluate Regularly**

This is a good thing for all of us to do, regardless of how long you have been walking with the Lord, and that is to continually to reevaluate how we are doing in the things of the Lord. I speak that as a word of caution to myself and anyone else who has been saved for a considerable period of time, and that is that we can get relaxed on things we were once so dedicated to doing right, because we have allowed ourselves to become relaxed, or influenced by the world, or fear those words “legalistic”, oh may we hold fast to the things we were so committed to.

**(1 Cor 11:3 NKJV) But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.**

### **This is About Order – Not Worth**

This is about order, not worth. God is establishing an order for society, marriage, and the church. Order, but not worth! In all places in the Scriptures you will see men and woman are equal in worth, ability, intelligence, and spirituality. So this is about order, not value.

### **Order: Woman – Man - God**

And this is the order established by God; woman to man, man to God. Yes, it is that word “submission”.

### **Ouch – Submission / Male Chauvin / Michelle Bachman – they laid in Wait – Lost Woman Vote**

Verse 3 – submission! That is what is being spoken of here when you boil it all down as Paul through the Holy Spirit establishes the order in that is ordained by God in the church. But that order we know is also the same as in the home/marriage (Ephesians 5), and meant to be in the world (Genesis 2). But look out once you start talking about submission, it is attacked as archaic male macho chauvinistic pig philosophy. Hey did you see the Media ambush on Presidential candidate Michelle Bachman? They laid in wait to spring this trap; they knowing she is an out-spoken conservative Christian, went and read the Bible (probably had to the local library or hotel room to get one – or dust off the one grandma left them), and they found the passage, wives submit to your husbands, and they launched the attack. So what does that mean to you? Are you as President going to tell all woman of America they should submit to their husbands? Ah masterful political move as they knew how many woman will not vote for her solely based on her position on that.

*Ephesians 5:22–25 (NKJV) <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,*

*Genesis 2:22–23 (NKJV) <sup>22</sup> Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> And Adam said: “This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.”*

### **Clearly – What Definition of Submit / Listen to Wife Husband**

First let's clearly identify what does that word submit mean. This word submit was used as a military term when this was written. The soldiers were all fighting the same battle, side by side, and each knew their role and responsibility in the battle to win. A modern example would be this: We go to war against the Taliban, each military division (Army, Navy, etc) gives its counsel to the war planning board. The Navy says we can launch Tomahawks from sea, the Air Force says we have studied their defenses and feel we can knock out their missiles, the Army and Marines say we can't fight conventional, we need to do commando raids at first, then massive ground battles.....everybody gave their input based on their experience and strength. The Commander - in - Chief and his advisor then came up with the Final battle plan. He then passes it down to his troops, and everybody knows what their role and responsibility is. They submit to the final plan, trusting that leader has planned it carefully. Imagine as ridiculous as it sounds, but the Army saying we don't like that plan, we are going in alone.....our own bombs would be dropping on our own men. Each military branch performed as directed, fought side-by-side, and the resultant was victory. That is how it is to be applied in marriages. Husbands you need to listen to your wives advice and wisdom, and then you need to go off and make a plan that we ensure success, and wives even if you don't agree with the plan, you need to perform your role and responsibility.

### **Eph 5 – Submitting to One Another**

What is missed in Ephesians 5 is that it says only a few verses earlier that we are to submit one another in love, which means love will always be the pre-imminent factor on which is the right direction and decision for every matter. Men are called to die to themselves (as Christ did), and thus when making a decision the last person's want that is considered is the husband because in love he is deciding not what is best for me, but what is best for every person involved in this situation.

*Ephesians 5:20–24 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of God. <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

### **Man accountable before God / Men you must Lead / Stand before God Daily / Wives You Too**

And, here is what is missed above all else, and that is that man is in submission and is accountable before God. STATEMENT – MEN YOU MUST LEAD. Men, you must realize and completely recognize that you will stand before the Holy God, not just at the end of your life, but today right now, and daily give an account on how you lead your wife and your family. Wives you will give an account on how you supported him.

*Ephesians 5:22–25 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

### **When I see my Accountability – See His Holy Standard / No Auto-Pilot / Tap In & Communion**

As a man, a husband, a father, and I see my accountability before the Holy God, and as I see His Holy standard – I have a holy reverence to do it right. Men we cannot put our marriages on auto-pilot and think all will be well; we must continually be tapped into Him, we must continually have ears to hear His leading, we must continually be getting alone with Him to discuss the issues before us and our families so we can get His direction.

### **Need to Continually Commune – Led by Spirit / Time for Big Decision – Not Immediate / LEAD**

We need to be continually living in close communion with Him, so much so that we continually under the leading of His Spirit. You see I may get the opportunity to get alone and pray because I have this “so-called big” decision to make (where to live, where to work, where for school, etc), but I will tell you an equally big decision and those are those daily moment-by-moment decisions that I must make instantly, where I don't have the time to go pray on how to react and what to say, the ones where you walk in the door and your wife has had nothing but a rotten day, her boss was mean, the kids were rotten, her nerves are fried, and you have to at that moment “LEAD” her. The right response is not, oh it is always about you, or wah-wah, for you may not live to your next decision, but if you do you just missed the chance to lead her into the arms of Jesus, into love and assurance.

### **Where is the Direction to Lead – To Him**

Where is the direction that God wants the world, the church, the family, your wife led to? To Him! That is where we are called to lead men.

### **I don't always do so Well – Hence why need to be Reminded Regularly**

I don't always do this so well, I will be the first to admit that here today, but hence why God places it before us so we can constantly be reminded of our calling.

### **Men – Pressure on us to Lead / Not Stumble – Gifts - Love**

Men the pressure is on us to lead, we have a high calling:

- We need live out chapters 8-10 about living in such a way to not cause our wives and children to stumble.
- We need all the gifts of chapter 12 (gift of wisdom, knowledge, maybe even a miracle here and there).
- We need to chapter 13, know it until we breathe it, leading in love

### **Pastor Romaine**

I am reminded of pastor Romaine who has since gone home to be with the Lord, and he was Pastor Chucks assistant Pastor. This guy came crying to him about his wife was leaving him. The man no doubt expecting Romaine to say woe is you was quite surprised when Romaine said, so she left you because she was so sick of you loving her as Christ loved the church that she couldn't take it anymore?

### **Don't teach much on Submission / Beat Up – Men Lead wife will Follow**

I don't teach much on wives submitting, partly because I am afraid the woman are going to beat me up in parking after service, but mainly because if men will lead as God called them to, woman will have no problem following.

### **Men hear This question to Wife**

Now men I want you to hear how you wives will answer this question, and here it is, woman is there any place you would not follow Jesus? Men follow Jesus and your wives will follow you!

### **What if she won't Follow / Doesn't Change Anything**

What if you say your wife doesn't want to follow Jesus – it doesn't change the way you are going, you just keep following Jesus and let the Lord deal with your wife.

### **Single Gals - Single Guys**

You single gals, as handsome as he may be, as funny as he may be, if he doesn't demonstrate spiritual leadership in his life presently, let me just tell you the wedding ring is not a magical spiritual enabler. You single guys, no matter how cute she may be, how long her eyelashes are batting at you, if she doesn't demonstrate a life following after Jesus presently, just know that 50 years, 18,250 days, 438,000 hours, those 2,628,000 minutes of your is a real long time to hear, why are you doing it that way, why are you going this way. The clock starts ticking the moment you say, "I do".

### **Louis Talbot**

Louis Talbot, preaching at a mega-church in Los Angeles called the "Open Door", in the early 1900's. he taught on wives submitting to their husbands. After the service he was greeting the people and a rather large lady in a flower dress with a big hat on got right up in his face and said, "your message was disgusting...wives submitting to their husbands in everything." She said if you were my husband I'd put poison in your tea, he said maam, if I was your husband...I'd drink it.

### **Now Verses 4-16**

Now verses 4-16, lets read them in one setting, and then at the end we will all say together, what in the world is he talking about.

**1 Corinthians 11:2-16 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered *them* to you. <sup>3</sup> But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman *is* man, and the head of Christ *is* God. <sup>4</sup> Every man praying or prophesying, having *his* head covered, dishonors his head. <sup>5</sup> But every woman who prays or

prophesies with *her* head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. <sup>6</sup> For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. <sup>7</sup> For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. <sup>8</sup> For man is not from woman, but woman from man. <sup>9</sup> Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. <sup>10</sup> For this reason the woman ought to have *a symbol of authority on her* head, because of the angels. <sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, neither *is* man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. <sup>12</sup> For as woman *came* from man, even so man also *comes* through woman; but all things are from God. <sup>13</sup> Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? <sup>14</sup> Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? <sup>15</sup> But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for *her* hair is given to her for a covering. <sup>16</sup> But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor *do* the churches of God.

### **Key to Understanding is Context**

The key to understanding these verses is understanding these things

- You need verse 3, that the context is about order in the home and church (man – woman).
- Verse 16, these are not rules, but remember the context of chapters 8-10, that we do not want to stumble another's walk.
- Big One – the context is about hair. Paul tells us what he is talking about at the end, and that is hair (verses 14-15).
- And then lastly, what we have here is something about hair, and how it was viewed in the culture at that time.

### **What was the Culture?**

What exactly was the cultural issue going on with peoples hair there? There are some writings that indicate that:

- The Temple prostitutes there in Corinth shaved their heads to let it be known to those seeking that they were available prostitutes. I personally could not confirm this in my historical research.
- There were also male prostitutes and they would have long hair as a symbol. I personally could not confirm this in my historical research.
- Other writings spoke that if a woman committed adultery she was to shave her head and make a vow before God of repentance.
- Some say there was a woman liberation movement going on, and woman shaved their head as a sign of freedom, and bucking against the establishment of male-female order.
- I can easily see how today here in the homosexual culture would be the same as then, and that is woman cutting their hair to look like men, to play the dominant role in the lesbian relationship. And men making themselves appear feminine to play the submissive role.

### **Don't need Exact understanding of Culture – But Application**

As we study this we don't have to get ourselves into a narrow-vision place of exact observation of the Scripture, but more so what exactly is the application for us today, and how would we apply the application to the culture we live in today.

**(1 Cor 11:4 NKJV) Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head.**

**(1 Cor 11:5 NKJV) But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved.**

**(1 Cor 11:6 NKJV) For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered.**

### **Woman dress for Physical Attention – then tries to be Spiritual**

What is happening in this verse is that Paul is saying whatever that specific thing was concerning the woman's hair (whether she cut it real short because she liked it short or was making the woman's liberation statement), it was causing the other people to stumble. So she gets up and starts engaging in spiritual exercise such as prophesying or praying, but it was falling on deaf ears because the people looking at her had distracted thoughts thinking about why her hair was cut or shaven as it was. Maybe they wondered if she was going out at night an being a prostitute, or had she committed adultery; whatever the case her spiritual prayer or prophecy was not being head because of the physical distraction.

### **Modern Application / Middle East Culture / Madison Avenue**

Modern application, in the Middle East Cultures the veil is because the woman is saving her attraction for her husband, her beauty is reserved for her husband and no one else; I do admire that in some way. We who are Westernize, physical attraction is forefront, marketed on Madison Avenue, and bought hook-line-and-sinker from youth even through old age by many women; and so it happens in the church today and that is that women dress for attention, for others to look at their physical features, and so much they become a distraction even within the church. I've seen it too many times on television or some famous music artist, that they dress so much to draw attention to their physical features, that no matter what they say, they are not being heard. Something to consider ladies, something to reevaluate with the Lord. Be a prune, no – but maybe a peach, somewhere in between you know.

*1 Timothy 2:9–10 (NKJV)*<sup>9</sup> in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,<sup>10</sup> but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.

*1 Peter 3:3–4 (NKJV)*<sup>3</sup> Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—<sup>4</sup> rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

**(1 Cor 11:7 NKJV) For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.**

### **Men – Your Wife Reflects You**

The woman is the glory—or literally, the outshining, the reflection—of the man. Husband, if you think your wife is out to lunch or off the wall, if you're disappointed in her, tired of her, down on her, or mad at her—guess what. She is simply reflecting you.

### **The Rose**

A man walked into a flower shop on Mother's Day. He said, "What can I get for three dollars?"

The proprietor replied, "I can give you a dozen carnations, or I can give you one rose."

He says, "You mean I can get a dozen carnations for three dollars, but only one rose? How come the roses are just so expensive?" "Oh, real simple. The scent of a carnation doesn't last very long. It's sweet for a moment, but it has no longevity. On the other hand, a rose is known for its ongoing scent. Even when you think it's dead, it can be crushed, turned into potpourri, and the smell can still continue."

Women are roses my brothers, and a wise man of God will seek how to bring that sweet fragrance out, and he will get to enjoy it wonderful aroma.

*Proverbs 18:22 (NKJV)*<sup>22</sup> He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD.

*Proverbs 31:10 (NKJV)*<sup>10</sup> Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.

**(1 Cor 11:8 NKJV) For man is not from woman, but woman from man.**

**(1 Cor 11:9 NKJV) Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.**

### **Completer – Not Competer / Greatest Fulfillment**

Verse 9 – but woman for man - Dear married sister, seeing yourself not as your husband's "competitor," but as his "completer," is where you will find your greatest fulfillment. How do I know that is true, because Word is perfect!

### **Wives Maybe Husband isn't all There / Ever since Garden**

Wives maybe you think your husband is a fool, he is not all there. Ever since the garden something has been missing. As God took something from the man, then He was able to complete him. Wives understand your role of importance in being the completer of man. Men don't get it cause because they are not all there. Husband you need to understand that the woman has never been alone. Ever since the garden man was always there. She needs you to keep her from that loneliness.

**(1 Cor 11:10 NKJV) For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.**

### **Angels are Watching Light of the World / Treasure God would Die For**

Angels are watching the Light of the World, that is you for you are the Light of the World. Angels are fascinated by us for it was us that God came to earth to die for. Angels watched on as God died, and they must say my oh my of what great value they must be that He would be willing to suffer all that for. And times they must say, wow could they, don't they remember what he did for them.

### **Remember Order – Angles say hey that is Out of Order**

Remember the context is order, and the angels would be saying why is she being out of order, this is confusing.

**(1 Cor 11:11 NKJV) Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.**

**(1 Cor 11:12 NKJV) For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.**

### **From Side of Man – From Womb of Woman / Both are Vital**

From the side of man, woman was made. From the woman, however, man is born. Both are of God. Both are vital to His body.

### **Order – Not Worth**

Again, this is about order, not about worth. In all places in the Scriptures you will say men and woman are equal in worth, ability, intelligence, and spirituality. So this submission is about order, not value.

**(1 Cor 11:13 NKJV) Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?**

**(1 Cor 11:14 NKJV) Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him?**

**(1 Cor 11:15 NKJV) But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering.**

### **We are Given the Context**

This is the context of the passage, so we didn't have to dig too deep to understand what the cultural issue is.

### **I didn't Dig too deep / Click & Post**

I did not dig deep into the research on exactly what was happening in Corinth at that time because I would have had to type words into my search engine like, gay, homosexual, prostitution, sex, etc, and I am wise enough to know Satan would be waiting for me on the other side of that search engine results. People, be wise, consider before you click, and ponder before you post – the internet can bless you, or it can curse you.

**(1 Cor 11:16 NKJV) But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.**

### **Paul says don't Legalistic**

In other words, Paul is saying, "If this discussion concerning head covering causes problems or division, it's not worth becoming legalistic."

### **Key to good Theology**

The key to good theology is to note how many times a particular subject is dealt with in Scripture. As opposed to subjects like the finished work of the Cross and the importance of love, this is the only time the subject of head covering is seen in all of Scripture, and thus should be given proportionate attention.

### **Spirituality goes down to Dinner Table / Even down to our Clothes and Hair**

Conclusion – what a book we read, what a calling we have, as we study on week after week that we see our spirituality is asked to go down to the dinner table, of what we eat, and down to the clothes we wear, and even to our hair. Is that legalism? No, it is Love; for our freedom and privileges are regulated by love.



**Why go to great Lengths / Family takes care of Family / We will see Him Face-to-Face**

Why go to such great lengths? Because that is what family does for family; and secondly, one day we will see Him face-to-face, and as amazing as that will be, my mind has a hard time wrapping around that He will hand me, hand you, a crown (the crown of righteousness), and say here you are my son. Jesus Christ, God Himself, will hand to me a crown to place upon my head – I want to be holding my head up high the day He does.

*2 Timothy 4:6–8 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

# It is Holy Communion

## (11:17-34)

### Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### Outline Chp 11-12

In the next two chapters (11-14) Paul will be addressing

- Order concerning men and woman in public worship (11:1-16)
- Order concerning communion in public worship (11:17-34)
- Order concerning the use of spiritual gifts in public worship (12-14)

*1 Corinthians 14:33 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

*1 Corinthians 14:40 (NKJV)* <sup>40</sup> Let all things be done decently and in order.

### Addresses Abuses / Purpose for Unity & Edification / So we do not Come Short

As he does so, he will at the same time be addressing some of the abuses, misuses, and unnecessary confusion of these things that were taking place within the church of God that was in Corinth. And so it still is today that so many people are confused on these things, that instead of bringing unity and edification to the body, they cause division and strife instead; so a very purposeful and practical passage of scripture for us today, and how wise it is for us to look into and understand these things so we can, take hold of all that Paul wrote this letter for, and that is that we would not fall short in any spiritual gift and giving the Lord desires for us his people. As it was then, so it is today, that many churches in the name of liberty are allowing many things into the church that are not profitable, and even diminishing.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV)* so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

### Today – Communion

So our passage today is communion, and we rightly call it Holy Communion, for that is what it is, holy (set apart – not common) communion. Communion means (Greek word – koinonia):

- Fellowship
- Communication
- Distribution
- Contribution
- Association
- Community
- Joint participation
- Intercourse
- Intimacy
- The right hand as a sign and pledge

Think all these words through and we see all the beauty and majesty that communion is to us, and meant to be from the Lord. A time of fellowship with Him, for Him to communicate His love to us, and us to Him. It is a pledge, a reminder, that it is done and He will see us through until we see Him face-to-face. This communion is meant to be of the utmost intimacy with Him, the two becoming one. And, it is a time of us not only being one with Him, but also with each other as a community of believers, as we associate ourselves with Him and each other.

*1 Corinthians 10:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup> For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

### **Let's read for Context**

To understand all that Paul is saying, let's read the verses in a whole, and then come back and take it verse-by-verse.

### **The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)**

**(1 Cor 11:17 NKJV)** Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.

**(1 Cor 11:18 NKJV)** For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.

**(1 Cor 11:19 NKJV)** For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.

**(1 Cor 11:20 NKJV)** Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

**(1 Cor 11:21 NKJV)** For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

**(1 Cor 11:22 NKJV)** What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.

**(1 Cor 11:23 NKJV)** For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

**(1 Cor 11:24 NKJV)** and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

**(1 Cor 11:25 NKJV)** In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

**(1 Cor 11:26 NKJV)** For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

**(1 Cor 11:27 NKJV)** Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

**(1 Cor 11:28 NKJV)** But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

**(1 Cor 11:29 NKJV)** For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

**(1 Cor 11:30 NKJV)** For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

**(1 Cor 11:31 NKJV)** For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

**(1 Cor 11:32 NKJV)** But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

**(1 Cor 11:33 NKJV)** Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

**(1 Cor 11:34 NKJV)** But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

### **Good Plan – Terrible Practice / I could Imagine the Desire**

This church in Corinth had a great idea, but a terrible practice. They would meet together and have a potluck meal together as a family, then have communion. How often we do not know, what else they did we do not know, but from the text they would come together eat a meal together, and then have communion. I could imagine maybe the original plan being something like gathering to eat (everyone bring a dish to share if you could afford to do so), fellowshiping with each other to get to know your fellow brothers and sisters better, and then going into the sanctuary with lights dimmed, candles flickering, and then worship being lifted high unto his name. After a time of settling the heart, maybe they would read some psalms, speak out verbal praises to the King, and then have communion together.

### **Gluttony – Less Fortunate – Drunk / Pure Carnality**

But Paul is telling us that is far from what was happening. The people were coming and devouring the food, so much so there wasn't enough to go around for everyone; including the less fortunate who maybe that was the most filling meal they had all weak. They didn't come to fellowship but they gathered into

groups and talked about other people in the church. And then above all that that, many were drinking it up, getting drunk. So imagine what the worship service must have been like after an hour of gossiping about the person across the aisle, and having to unloosen the belt a notch, and then being all liquored up. It would have been pure - carnality.

**(1 Cor 11:17 NKJV) Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.**

**(1 Cor 11:18 NKJV) For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.**

**(1 Cor 11:19 NKJV) For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.**

**(1 Cor 11:20 NKJV) Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.**

**(1 Cor 11:21 NKJV) For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk.**

**(1 Cor 11:22 NKJV) What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.**

### **Deep Topics 10 Chapters / Spiritual Immaturity – Worlds Wisdom – Lack Humility - Immorality**

We have been through some pretty deep topics over the last 10.5 chapters; Paul has gave instruction and correction to the church for their clicks within the church, for their spiritual immaturity, for their applying the wisdom of the world into their lives rather than the wisdom of the word, their lack of humility, sexual immorality within the church, for suing one another, idolatry, and selfishness with their Christian liberties, and that is just a quick list for list purposes.

### **Paul seemed to Plead with Them / Things change in Verse 17 – Paul Upset**

In all his instructions and corrections Paul has been very gentle and nurturing in the things he writes when correcting or flat out rebuking them. But things change very greatly and very quickly as soon as you get to verse 17 in this chapter. Verses 17-34, Paul will be talking about communion, and he takes on a whole new attitude, and he says "I do not praise you" concerning these things - basically what you have been doing when it comes to communion is totally wrong, and I am totally upset to hear about it. Remind you Paul is under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit when he writes is, so it is God Himself saying I am not pleased with how you have been mishandling and mistreating communion.

### **WOW – Stepmom – Pagan Temple – Mock God / He Pleads – now He Rebukes**

Wow - a man is sleeping with his stepmom, people going down to the pagan temple and hanging out, people doing things that made the non-church community around them mock God, yet we read of Paul pleading with them to make changes, to separate from those things, but when it comes to communion there is no pleading, but direct rebuke!

### **Why – Verses 23-26**

Why? Because verse 24, this is My Body which is given for you, do this in remembrance of Me. Verse 25, this cup is My blood, do this in remembrance of Me.

### **Nothing but Him Crucified**

I desired to nothing amongst you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and look what it has become to you.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

### **Verse 27 – Unworthy Manner / Making Common / Forgetting what it Means**

In verse 27 you are taking communion in an unworthy manner. Unworthy there in that verse means "to make common". Paul is saying you are making communion, this place of remembrance and oneness with the Lord into something common, you have forgot all that is meant to do, bring you back into remembrance of the cross, His sacrifice, our deliverance from sin and death.

*(1 Cor 11:27 NKJV) Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.*

### **Let me Remind You**

Let me remind you of what happened that night Paul goes on to say in verses 23-27.

**(1 Cor 11:23 NKJV) For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;**

**(1 Cor 11:24 NKJV) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

**(1 Cor 11:25 NKJV) In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."**

**(1 Cor 11:26 NKJV) For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.**

### **Gave Thanks – that there is Way**

Verse 24 - it was after He gave thanks. Jesus thankful to be the provision, that there is a way, even if it meant Him being the way, to buy us back.

### **Verb Form – while being Betrayed**

Verse 23 – the night in which he was betrayed – the verb form is "while he was being betrayed". Judas had set in motion the betrayal, before the Passover meal preparation was complete, Judas had alright set the plan for betrayal in motion, and it was unfolding even at the moment Jesus was breaking bread.

### **The Covenant – Old Testament Sacrifice**

Verse 25 – The cup - He gave thanks for the cup, the new covenant in my blood, which is the same word used in the old testament for the sacrifice. In the Hebrew to make a covenant was to cut up the sacrifice and so ratify the agreement (Gen. 15:9–18). I am willing, I will be, the sacrifice Jesus was saying.

### **Last will & Testament**

Verse 25 – Covenant - This new covenant is specifically mentioned in Jer. 31:31–34. The Greek term for covenant originally meant "a will" or "last testament". The Lord Jesus saying here is my last will and testament, I leave you forgiveness, I leave you everlasting life – read my last will and testament often so you remember your great inheritance.

*Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

### **Delivered to Paul – Who was in Upper Room / Jesus Personally Told Paul / Convey with Passion**

Verse 23 – that which was delivered unto me - Paul wasn't in the upper room, he wasn't one of the original 12, he was not there to hear the Lord speak the words of communion; but sometime between then, and the time he writes this, the Lord had appeared to him and said Paul here is what I had said that night in the upper room. So mind blowing to consider this, that somewhere and at some time Jesus came and told Paul personally what had happened. Jesus is telling him personally because He wants Paul to convey not just the story, but the heart, of what happened that night and what communion means. Jesus isn't going to say yea I broke some bread and drank some wine with them and hence we have a new tradition called communion. No, Jesus would have communicated the heart of communion, His heart, He would have retold the story with the same passion as the first night, and Jesus is personally telling Paul the event firsthand so that Paul will tell others, write it down for others, with the same passion. Paul's passion is coming out here in the passage before us.

**(1 Cor 11:27 NKJV) Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**

### **Not speaking to Unbelievers / Family Affair / Approach it with Reverence and Recognition**

Verse 27 - people apply this to a non-believer partaking in communion and they are bringing condemnation upon themselves, whereas I say communion is a family affair, and if you are not in the family you are just

eating a stale and bland wafer. An unbeliever eating the communion elements is not the unpardonable sin. This passage was written to the church, and believers, and therefore is to be applied to the believer, not the unbeliever. So the warning is to believers to approach communion with reverence and recognition of what it is, and what they are entering into.

### **Written to Believers / Trample Underfoot – Make Common**

This was written to the Church of God in Corinth. – Paul is saying to them, do you not remember what this means? What are you doing! You are trampling the sacrifice under foot. You are making it common.

**(1 Cor 11:28 NKJV) But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.**

**(1 Cor 11:29 NKJV) For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.**

### **Not Unworthy – for Cross makes us Worthy**

Not that the unworthy (oh I messed up this week, I was mean to my wife, I totally blew it) I can't take communion - for the cross makes us worthy. To take in an unworthy manner means to make common, to forget what this bread and cup represent to us.

### **Not just remember His Pain – but be Amazed at our Gain**

I suggest Jesus' intent for us is not just that we remember His pain, but that we are amazed at our gain—that because of the finished work of the Cross, we're miraculously, gloriously totally free from the power and penalty of sin.

**(1 Cor 11:30 NKJV) For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.**

**(1 Cor 11:31 NKJV) For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.**

**(1 Cor 11:32 NKJV) But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.**

### **Connection btwn Sin and Sickness**

*Verse 30 – and there are many sick amongst you* - Paul directly connects this general ill health with the abuse of the Lord's Supper, there is an undoubted connection between sin and sickness in some, though not, of course, in all cases (John 5:14). The word 'sleep' here is the Christian euphuism for death, because the believer doesn't die, they go to heaven..

*John 5:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."*

### **Corinth known for Carnality / Surest Path In – Surest Path Out**

*Judge ourselves – we would not be judged* – more often than not, the price of sin, is the sin itself, for as believers we will reap what we sow, and we will rob ourselves of the blessings that we could have had, had we stayed obedient to the Lord. You see Christian, this church in Corinth was known for their carnality, and I will tell you the surest path to carnality is to make the cross, His sacrifice, common, no big deal that the Holy God came and traded places with me. We don't mean to make it common do we?, we don't mean to forget, but we do, that is part of being leaky vessels, and thus why we have to continually be refilled, continually come back and do this in remembrance of Him. Just as it is the surest "path to", it is the surest "path out" of carnality too. Hence the great power of Holy Communion. When I come back to the place of remembrance, I say no to the things of the flesh, for when my heart, mind, and soul remembers – I say no way, for I am set on following "the Way, the Truth, and the Life", for He has been and is so good to me!

### **No Greater Place**

There is no greater place in the world than walking in His will.

### **Revival & Communion**

It has been rightly said, every communion ought to bring revival. When we truly remember, we will truly follow, our hearts will be revived!

**(1 Cor 11:33 NKJV) Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. (1 Cor 11:34 NKJV) But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.**

### **Speaking of Divisions – Cross the great Equalizer**

*Verse 33 - When you come together, wait for one another* - Speaking of division and factions within in the church - We see the Lord masterfully weave in here the message that the cross is the great equalizer. When we come to the cross no man or woman stands higher or lower, for the ground at the cross is completely level.

### **We look for Each Other**

The cross is the great equalizer as all people stand on even ground; and as we look at Him, we marvel and look at and for each other saying, "did you see that".

### **Look Back – Look Forward – Look Around**

So, at the cross, communion, we are

- To look back (examine ourselves) and be reminded of what we were, what we are in Him, and what He wants us to be.
- To look forward (and remember that He is coming back), and thus with that in remembrance we will live like He is.
- To look around (and see the brothers and sisters), to wait for them, that family takes care of family.

### **Nothing Common / But not to Defeat Us – a Victory Celebration /**

There is nothing common at the cross or at the communion table. Serious yes, but not meant to be a seriousness that is to put us down, but lift us up. Communion is a victory remembrance, it is a celebration, and it is to remind us that we are fighting from victory, not to victory.

### **Nothing Common – It is Where Life Changed / Cross may have Divided Time – But still Daily**

There is nothing common about the cross, for it is where life changed from darkness to light, from death to life, from slavery to freedom, from fear to triumph, and that was not only for that moment when I first believed; for the cross is daily, and every day because of His work on the cross I am still seeing mighty displays of His love for me. The cross divided time (BC/AC), but every day because of the cross, I can walk with Him, and He can work in me, and every day of my life because of the cross - I have life, and that more abundant.

### **My Cardboard List**

If I was to write it down on a piece of cardboard, the list would be long of what He has done, but here are a few people sharing their testimony of what the cross has done in their life today.

### **Video**

See Video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvDDc5RB6FQ>

### ***Partake in Holy Communion***

**(1 Cor 11:23 NKJV)** For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

**(1 Cor 11:24 NKJV)** and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

**(1 Cor 11:25 NKJV)** In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

**(1 Cor 11:26 NKJV)** For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

# 1 Corinthians 12

## Seeking and Serving (12:1-31)

### To Guard and Protect

Moses when giving his final charge to the Children of Israel before entering into the Promised Land, spoke these words (Deut 4:39-40). “Which I command thee this day”—the phrase implies that God must be rediscovered each day. Every day, we get to rediscover the nature and beauty of our Father. Every day, there ought to be a rediscovery of the grace and glory and grandeur of our God. “Take heed to My Word,” God says. “Rediscover Me each day. Listen to what I have to say once more. Go over the Scriptures; pray them in; think them through; act them out and it will go well for you and for your family.”

*A story is told in the Mishnah, the collection of Jewish teaching and writings, of a certain Persian king named Arteban who sent to Judah, the prince in Jerusalem, the largest diamond known in existence at that time. Upon receiving this gift, Judah sent back to Arteban a copy of the Book of Deuteronomy with the accompanying note: What you sent me requires guards to protect it. What I have sent you will guard and protect you.*

I’m so thankful for God’s Word. I really am—because I know, as you do, that it works. When we take heed and do what we’re told to, it is well with us and with our families, too.

*Deuteronomy 4:39–40 (NKJV)* <sup>39</sup> Therefore know this day, and consider it in your heart, that the LORD Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. <sup>40</sup> You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time.”

### Addressing Concerns – Answering Questions

After addressing his concerns for them, here we come to the second section of Paul’s letter to the church at Corinth, wherein he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions they had asked of him.

- Chapter 7 deals with marriage & intimacy;
- Chapters 8–10 with Christian liberty;
- Chapter 11 with church conduct;
- Chapters 12–14 with spiritual gifts;
- Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead;
- Chapter 16 with giving and offering.

### Outline Chp 11-12

In the next four chapters (11-14) Paul will be addressing

- Order concerning men and woman in public worship (11:1-16)
- Order concerning communion in public worship (11:17-34)
- Order concerning the use of spiritual gifts in public worship (12-14)

*1 Corinthians 14:33 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

*1 Corinthians 14:40 (NKJV)* <sup>40</sup> Let all things be done decently and in order.

### Addresses Abuses / Purpose for Unity & Edification / So we do not Come Short

As he does so, he will at the same time be addressing some of the abuses, misuses, and unnecessary confusion of these things that were taking place within the church of God that was in Corinth. And so it still is today that so many people are confused on these things, that instead of bringing unity and edification to the body, they cause division and strife instead; so a very purposeful and practical passage of scripture for us today, and how wise it is for us to look into and understand these things so we can, take hold of all that Paul wrote this letter for, and that is that we would not fall short in any spiritual gift and giving the Lord desires for us his people. As it was then, so it is today, that many churches in the name of liberty are allowing many things into the church that are not profitable, and even diminishing.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV)* so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,



### **Corinth greatly confused on Gifts**

The Church of God in Corinth were greatly confused about spiritual gifts, and thus Paul will use the next three chapters to clear up their confusion. Sadly their confusion was causing divisions, and as we will see the gifts of the Spirit are for uniting and strengthening the body of Christ, not to divide and weaken it.

### **Chapter 12 Outline:**

The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts (to Build up the Body)

The Giver of Spiritual Gifts (God, as He Chooses)

### **Simple Outline – will lose my Preaching License / Corinth way out of Order**

That is a real simple outline, I may lose my preaching license, be defrocked for making this so simple, and to teach this chapter so simply. This is a chapter where you could spend a year in, explaining all the gifts of the Spirit and how they are to be used in the Church; but that is not the theme and context of the chapter and chapters (11-14). Paul is addressing order in the church, and this church was out of order. If they were getting drunk at the communion celebrating, I can only imagine how misused the various gifts were during their get together. People speaking in tongues while this guy over here was prophecy, and this on in the corner was trying to give a word of knowledge, and the other waving their hand trying to bring healing. I think I went to that church when I was in Louisiana; it was total crazy and out of order, people screeching like an eagle, this lady over here was convulsing while the high school kids were looking and laughing, and somebody was speaking in tongues or German, I am not sure. The Pastor said there is someone here today and you think this is all crazy, well you are quenching the Spirit and need to leave, and so I did. The ushers must have been used to it because they are like ok have a nice day, glad you could make.

### **Context is Not the Gifts – but the Purpose**

The purpose is not to teach so much on the various gifts of the Spirit, but to bring clarity on why God gives them to us, and how we receive them. So I will touch on the gifts and what they do, but I will stay in the context as the passage is written so we too can glean the heart of what God was delivering to the Church there in Corinth, and the Church here in Anne Arundel County.

### **Spiritual Gifts (12–14)**

**(1 Cor 12:1 NKJV) Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:**

#### **Definition**

Verse 1 – ignorant – means to not know, to not fully understand, to be wrong about. Paul says I don't want you to know fully understand the spiritual gifts.

#### **Not Ignorant**

“I would not have you ignorant.” Paul voices this same desire concerning:

- The Old Testament typology in 1 Corinthians 10,
- the Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4,
- the tactics of Satan in 2 Corinthians 3,
- and the future of Israel in Romans 11.

### **Historically arises Questions / I Comfort we Study**

The areas about which Paul wanted believers to be knowledgeable are the very ones about which believers throughout history have had the most questions. Thus, his concern was inspired indeed. I take great comfort in knowing that we as a church study these things, yes even at the expense of being funny, entertaining, and doing 12 week topical on marriage, and 20 week series on “How wonderful you are in God's eyes”, and as Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery and forgiven, no go and sin some more (I mean no more). Light and Fluffy ministry. We study the Word, because we know it is what changes us into His image. And we are not ignorant in these things.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

**(1 Cor 12:2 NKJV) You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.**

**(1 Cor 12:3 NKJV) Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.**

### **Saved from Dumb Idols by Spirit fo God**

Verse 2 – Dumb Idols – Paul reminds them of the power that saved them, the power of the Living God, His Spirit moving and speaking into their lives.

### **Without Spirit no one gets Saved**

Without the working of the Holy Spirit in a person’s life, no person could ever receive Him as Lord and Savior and thus never profess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord. This isn’t talking about the ability to speak it with the tongue, but the condition and profession of the heart. We always need to look at all 31,102 verses to balance our doctrine and theology, for we know that people will say it with their mouth, but it never did reach their hearts, and to those Jesus will say depart from me I never know you.

*Romans 10:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

*Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. <sup>22</sup> Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ <sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’*

### **3 Prepositions**

Let’s remember the three prepositions that are associated with the Scriptures, and remember what they mean (see below). Without the Holy Spirit testifying to us of our need for a savior, no man would ever see the need for the Savior. And once we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, he then takes residence within us. Then when God desires to reach the lost world, He overflows from us out to the person. So, this passage before us here in verses 2-3 is about the Holy Spirit being with us and in us.

### **Recap**

The 3 Prepositions of the Holy Spirit

1. With Us “para”
2. In Us – “en”
3. Comes Upon Us – “heppi”

*With (para) - John 14:17 ( NKJV) <sup>17</sup>the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with (para) you and will be in (en) you.*

*In (en) - John 20:21-22 ( NKJV) <sup>21</sup>So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” <sup>22</sup>And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.*

*Upon (heppi) - (Acts 1:8 NKJV) <sup>8</sup>But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon (heppi) you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

### **Same Spirit saves – Same that Moves in You**

He will now go on to say that the same Spirit that saves is the same Spirit the moves in and through you. The church of Corinth must have been confused about that and thus why Paul clarifies that. Good verses for some cults who try to deny the trinity.

**(1 Cor 12:4 NKJV) There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.**

**(1 Cor 12:5 NKJV) There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.**

**(1 Cor 12:6 NKJV) And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.**

### **Again Trinity**

Again, it is the same Spirit, and the Spirit is God. So this verse makes it clear that the Lord and the Spirit, are God. So take note Jehovah witnesses and Mormons.

### **Activities - Energize**

The word for “activities” in the Greek is “energize” and it is where we get our word “energize. The Lord wants to energize us, He wants to get us off the couch and into the service, and He says he will give us the

gifting to do it, and before we finish the chapter we will see all we need to do is get to and get into what He is doing amongst His body.

**(1 Cor 12:7 NKJV) But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:**

**Key Statement – Gifts for bringing Profit to the Body**

Probably the most important point of understanding and that is that the Spirit working in our lives is so that others may profit, and that other is specifically the Church Body.

**Manifestation – to Make Known / Not to Bury but to Bless**

The word “manifestation” means “to make known.” The gifts, ministries, and operations are made known through our lives not so we can write them down in our diaries, but so we can bless others.

**2 greatest Moment**

"There are two great moments in a person's life: the moment you were born and the moment you realize why you were born."

**Next Verses List Gifts / Not Exhaustive / Context – Why Given – to Bless & Unify**

In the next verses there will be a listing of these manifestations of the Spirit that are meant to profit the body. The list is not exhaustive, for the context is about why the gifts are given, and that is to profit the body, and unify the body.

**(1 Cor 12:8 NKJV) for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,**

**(1 Cor 12:9 NKJV) to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,**

**(1 Cor 12:10 NKJV) to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.**

*word of wisdom through the Spirit.*

Wisdom is the ability to handle a situation in the wisest possible way. Jesus exercised this gift when they said shall we pay taxes to Caesar. It was a set-up, but he answered masterfully by saying give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God's what is God. I need to seek this more, for more times than not I think my life experiences or intellect can figure it just fine. No need to enter into the battle of prayer, because prayer can be so tiring. Much easier to just roll on out into the situation and throw some human energy into. That is always easier up front, but when it all goes by the waster-side, I will ultimately spend considerably more time and energy on something had I only sought the Lord and ask Him for wisdom in the matter.

*to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit.*

This gift is when God supernaturally tells you something, that you would never have known had He not. Jesus exercised this gift when He put His finger on the thing that kept the Rich Young Ruler from following Him, and that was his material possessions. Jesus said go sell what you have, but he went away sad. The Spirit may supernaturally reveal to you something about another person, He may say so-and-so is having trouble meeting their bills this month, or so-and-so is depressed even though you can't see it outwardly. And, the Lord tells you those things why, to bring profit to another in the body, He will never tell you something without prompting your heart to do something, whether that be to pray, or to pay, He shows you for a reason.

*to another faith by the same Spirit.*

Faith – that says arises and walk; or faith that has you arise and walk to do that thing that is outside the bounds of reason and comfort. But let's not confuse the difference between faith and obedience. God's commands come with His enabling, so I don't need faith to say no to sin, I just need to obey. Now let's remember this about faith, I need faith to step out of the boat like Peter did, but I need the same faith to stay in the boat. Beloved don't step out of the boat unless you are sure God has told you to.

to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit.

Jesus exercised this gift, Paul and Peter did, and each time and every time it was always for the glory of God, and never for self-exaltation. I am reminded of Pastor Chuck, he was in his mother's womb when his sister died, had been dead for close to a half an hour, and his mother and father said Lord she is yours, but if you give her back to us, we will dedicate this one in the womb to You.

to another the working of miracles.

Miracles – they are around us still today but how often we miss the supernatural because they just look so natural.

to another prophecy.

We will take more about prophecy and tongues in chapter 14; but simply prophecy is for edification, exhortation, and comfort. It is a word from the Lord through men, to men. An example would be someone speaking a word saying, I am with you, fear not, I know your hour is near, but I will deliver you. Prophecy will never contradict the written word of God by the way.

to another discerning of spirits.

Discernment is like the gift of knowledge, but it is very much a protector, to ensure the safety of the body. I met this guy who had quite the story about being HIV positive, then his parents disowned him, then gave his life to Christ, but now he was now down on his luck. He was so convincing. But something in me was saying something is not right here. But I decided to error on the side of grace and help him out with putting him up in a hotel for the night. But as I drove away something just kept nagging my Spirit, and I said Lord what it is, and then the Lord gave me a word of knowledge, and said look at the hotel receipt, and when I did I saw the address where he said he had lived with his parents, and when I googled it, it came up as a homeless shelter in Baltimore City. I confronted him the next day, told him he needs Jesus. Discernment – good to error on the side of grace, but don't trade love for discernment and ignore what God is calling you to do and say.

to another different kinds of tongues.

We will discuss tongues more so when we get to chapter 14. But simply put, prophecy is God speaking to the church body (whether individually or corporately), and tongues is the body (whether individually or corporately), speaking to God.

to another the interpretation of tongues.

Tongues are not a language of this earthly world, it is a supernatural language not of this world, but of heaven, and thus just like when I go to do missions in Nicaragua, I need someone to interpret from English to Spanish. Imagine if I taught this whole Bible study say in German, no one would leave here feeling that they had received anything profitable.

**(1 Cor 12:11 NKJV) But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.**

**Major Key – God Distributes as He Desires**

KEY - How important to see here also is that God distributes these working of the Spirit as he wills. Be free in this beloved and remember that God gives as He wills and it has nothing to do with us. Lot of Christians get uptight, bet themselves down, and feel they are not spiritual if they are not speaking in tongues; but remember God said He gives as He desires.

**Don't think you Get one for Life / But what is Needed for the Moment**

I don't think it is that you necessarily get one or a couple of these gifts for your life, and that is to become you dedicated ministry (although that could happen); but I think more so it is you get the gift that is most needed at the moment for the profit of the Church Body.

### **Not Once and Forever**

Nor are these gifts given once and forever. We have to continually ask, seek, and knock. Why, so we are continually going back to the source of the Gift, to get the heart of the gift, so when we exercise the gift it comes with the very heart of God.

### **Challenge You – Put self in Places that you Need the Gifting**

So, I challenge you to put yourself out there in places where there are needs, and watch what God will do in and through you.

**(1 Cor 12:12 NKJV) For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.**

### **Remember flowing from Communion & Oneness / All Stand in Equal Ground at Cross**

Remember we are coming off the verse about the communion table, and we studied last week how communion is the great equalizer, and the great uniter, as there as we look back up and remember the cross, we see that we all stand on the same level ground.

### **Next Verses / Whole Point – Edification & Unification / Each Person Unique and Vital**

Paul is making the whole point of the chapter and that is that the body is to be unified, and that the body serves the body, that each person in the body has a unique gift that is vital to the body, and without that person, the whole body will suffer.

**(1 Cor 12:13 NKJV) For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body; whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.**

**(1 Cor 12:14 NKJV) For in fact the body is not one member but many.**

**(1 Cor 12:15 NKJV) If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?**

**(1 Cor 12:16 NKJV) And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?**

**(1 Cor 12:17 NKJV) If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?**

**(1 Cor 12:18 NKJV) But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.**

**(1 Cor 12:19 NKJV) And if they were all one member, where would the body be?**

**(1 Cor 12:20 NKJV) But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.**

**(1 Cor 12:21 NKJV) And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."**

**(1 Cor 12:22 NKJV) No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.**

**(1 Cor 12:23 NKJV) And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty,**

**(1 Cor 12:24 NKJV) but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,**

**(1 Cor 12:25 NKJV) that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.**

**(1 Cor 12:26 NKJV) And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.**

**(1 Cor 12:27 NKJV) Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.**

### **Whole Point – Edification & Unification / Each Person Unique and Vital**

Paul is making the whole point of the chapter and that is that the body is to be unified, and that the body serves the body, that each person in the body has a unique gift that is vital to the body, and without that person, the whole body will suffer.

God's giving you a calling here, get involved in the body, your body, His body!

## **God will never Leave You Lacking / Sometimes you are Someone's Supply**

God will never leave you lacking. God wants to richly supply all your spiritual needs. Ask and it shall be given. And sometimes God's answer to another person's prayer – "Is You", you become that someone's supply.

*Luke 11:9–13 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup> If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

*Ephesians 1:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power

## **Human Body Analogy**

Paul is making an analogy using the human body of how the spiritual body functions, and we can easily see it is the same.

### **Imagine all an Eye – Look Out**

Imagine if everyone wanted to be the eye (that would be a weird sight), then there would be no ability to hear when we walked (which we wouldn't be able to – but for story purposes) out in front of the oncoming traffic, hey look out (splat).

### **If No one the Foot**

If no one functioned as the foot, the church would never move forward, it would always be stuck in the same place. Some people say I don't want to be a foot in the body, stuffed in a sock, then shoved into a boot, the weight of the world pounding me every step in the darkness, and then finally when I get out of the boot no one wants to be with me because I'm all sweaty and stinky. Hey the body needs people who are willing be just that.

### **The Body Serving the Body**

And the analogy of the body is perfect because it is the body serving the body, working together, is when the whole body is profiting. The body serves one another, that is part of what Paul is saying here.

- *Be an Ear* – have an ear to listen to that person is hurting.
- *Be an Eye* – and be on the lookout for that person no one is talking to, look for that person in need.
- *Be a Hand* – and serve someone a meal, fix their broken thing that your hands are skilled in doing.
- *Be a Foot* – and walk with them, go the extra mile with them, just walk with them even if you don't say anything, just giving them the comfort of not having to be alone in their hour of need.

### **John 13:35**

John – by this all will know you are my disciples by your love one for another.

*John 13:31–35 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. <sup>32</sup> If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. <sup>33</sup> Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. <sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

### **The Mushers**

Long before the legendary Iditarod Dog Sled Race was first run in 1973, a more important race took place in Alaska. On January 21, 1925, the lives of countless children in Nome were at stake. An epidemic of diphtheria had broken out, and the gold rush city did not have a sufficient amount of antitoxin. Dr. Curtis Welch telegraphed Fairbanks, Anchorage, Seward, and Juneau, asking for help. There were 300,000 units of the serum at a hospital in Anchorage, and it was the only serum in the entire state.

The problem was to get it to Nome in the shortest time possible. With the Bering Sea frozen and no railroad or roads extending to Nome's remote location, dog teams were the only solution. The hospital packed the 300,000 units were packed in an insulated container and transported them to Nenana on an overnight train.

Once the serum arrived, a 674-mile relay race by dog teams awaited. Musher who delivered the mail normally covered that distance in a month. The first musher took the insulated cylinder of serum 52 miles, where he passed the lifesaving baton to the second musher, who traveled 31 miles. From musher to musher the relay continued until a total of 20 dog-sled drivers had cooperated to get the needed medicine to Nome by February 2nd. The lifesaving serum arrived in only 127 ½ hours due to the cooperative effort of individuals willing to brave the austere Alaskan wilderness, sub-zero temperatures, and blinding blizzards.

This life-saving mission is a picture of how God works through many people over time to bring help to those who need it. These heroes of the faith include godly grandparents, Sunday school teachers, faithful friends, spiritual mentors.

**(1 Cor 12:28 NKJV) And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.**

**(1 Cor 12:29 NKJV) Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?**

**(1 Cor 12:30 NKJV) Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?**

### **This Listing is not Value – But Order in the Church**

The listing of apostles, prophets, teachers, and then various gifts; Paul is not giving a ranking of which is most important, but reinforcing the them of these chapters, and that is that God wants order in His church. It is about order, but it is not about worth. Every person is of equal value and worth before God.

### **Word to Youth**

A word to our youth. Don't wait until you finish school to start serving. Start serving today. Listen I know the lie of Satan and he wants to whisper in your ears that to serve God means no more fun, that is a ridiculous lie. Go serve a meal to a homeless person, go cut the grass for someone disabled, go teach a Sunday school lesson to a child, and you will have a blast. Ask parents on the way home, so where can I/we serve? You will be blessed. Interestingly I met a couple who run an inner-city ministry for youth up Philadelphia. They said we use to take the kids to places like water parks, and the fair, and never fail somewhere during the day we are intervening in arguments and fights they were having because they weren't getting their way. But then we started to take them to help clean up the park, or paint a house of an elderly, and they were hugging and loving on each other all the day, and the whole bus ride home. Serving is joy, do you know why, because the Spirit of God is serving through us – that is pure energy.

**(1 Cor 12:31 NKJV) But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.**

### **Context – Serve One Another**

So the context is being one body, and God giving gifts to individuals so they may bring profit to the others in the body, and the gifts are giving by God's will, not our performance.

### **How to Get these Gifts**

But we want these gifts, because we want to be used by Him to profit others, so what are we to do? Real simple, just abide. When we are attached to the vine, we will naturally produce fruit, and that fruit can them be picked and partaken by others.

*John 15:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

### **A-B-I-D-E**

**A – Associate Openly.** You are not abiding if you are hiding. The closet is for prayer, not for living, get out and enjoy your freedom in Christ and not care what the world thinks (John 8:35-36).

**B – Be in the Body.** If you aren't around the body then there would be no need for a gift because there would be no one to use it on (John 15:7-8)

**I – Imitate Him.** As corny as it may sound, What Would Jesus Do is a still a great test to put all your actions through. Especially when it comes to obeying His Word (1 John 2:6).

**D – Do Daily Devotions.** Daily be in the Word and Worship, draw vital nutrients from the Vine (Luke 24).

**E – Enjoy Him.** God is madly in love with you. He is not mad at you, He is not upset with you. If you have sinned, repent and return, and enjoy His fellowship (John 15:9).

*John 8:35–36 (NKJV)* <sup>35</sup> *And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.* <sup>36</sup> *Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*

*John 15:7–8 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.* <sup>8</sup> *By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*

*I John 2:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> *He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*

*Luke 24:28–32 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> *Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther.* <sup>29</sup> *But they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them.* <sup>30</sup> *Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.* <sup>31</sup> *Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.* <sup>32</sup> *And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”*

*John 15:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.*

### **Our Identity is not what we Do / Our Identity is in Christ**

Can I make a key statement folks, our identity is not in what we do, our identity is in Him. Too often we think our identity is in our ministry and thus if the ministry is so-so, we must be so-so. Or we identify in our jobs. No our identity is in Him.

### **Best Gift – Is the One Needed at the Time**

Verse 31 - But earnestly desire the best gifts - The Best Gift – the best gift is determinant on what is needed at that very moment. I’d rather have a toothpick than a hammer if I have something stuck between my teeth. But I surely don’t want a toothpick to build a house. I don’t want a shovel to cut y meat. The best gift is determined by what is needed at that very moment.



# *1 Corinthians 13*

## The More Excellent Way (13:1-13)

### **Apostle John – Little Children Love One Another**

An ancient story in Church history tells of the apostle John. He would constantly repeat the words, "Little children, love one another." And his disciples became weary of the phrase. Finally, in his old age, as John was being carried to their assembly, the disciples asked him, "Why do you always repeat these same words?" "Because friends," John replied, "it is the Lord's commandment -- and if only this one were fulfilled, it would be enough."

*1 John 3:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.*

### **The Love Chapter**

So we enter into this glorious passage of Scripture, called the "Love Chapter" by many, and well know most. The church in Corinth had many things on going on, some good, some not so good. They were exercising various spiritual gifts we saw as we studied last week's chapter, and they were feeling very spiritual about themselves, but Paul speaks mighty words in the last verse of chapter 12, "let me show you the more excellent way".

*(1 Cor 12:31 NKJV)* *But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.*

### **More Excellent Way**

A more excellent way, "out of measure", "beyond all measure", "excellency" "abundance" "exceeding".

### **Paul says going to Show you Something Beyond all Things - Love**

Paul says I am going to show you something beyond measure, something that is greater and weightier than all other things – It is Love.

**(1 Cor 13:1 NKJV) Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.**

**(1 Cor 13:2 NKJV) And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.**

**(1 Cor 13:3 NKJV) And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.**

### **Good Things – are Nothing / Great Things are Everything**

Move mountains, feed the poor, be a martyr, all things we say are "good things", but God says that if not done in love, they are not "good things", they are "nothing". But, do them in love, and they are "great things", for anything done in God's love, is everything.

### **Love for the Mexicans**

Years ago a young woman went from a small church as a missionary to Mexico. Her heart was aglow with God's love for the Mexicans. Wherever the word "love" occurred in I Corinthians 13, she interpolated: "Love for the Mexicans." She read, for instance, "***Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love for the Mexicans, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.***" Her unfeigned love for the Mexicans enabled her to win many of them to the Saviour. After years of unselfish service she succumbed to illness. Hours before her death she was unconscious. As her Mexican converts gathered about her bed, the sight of their tearful faces brought her back to consciousness. Before she passed to be forever with the Lord she requested her converts not to bring flowers, but Spanish Bibles and New Testaments to the funeral. They were stacked high around her casket. Later, her converts gave them to those who did not have the Word of God.

## **Chapters about Supernatural Gifts / ABIDE – Naturally Produce Fruit**

As we closed out chapter 12 and the supernatural gifts that God bestows on whom He desires, when He desires, we saw our only requirement to receive them, was to simply abide in Him. When we are attached to the vine, we will naturally produce fruit, and that fruit can then be picked and partaken by others.

*John 15:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

### **The Fruit of Spirit**

The Fruit of the Spirit

*Galatians 5:22–26 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

### **Love already Dwells in You / Release that which is In You**

Here is the best part, God is love, and therefore love already dwells in you. So you don't have to get love, you need only release that which is already in you.

*1 John 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

### **A-B-I-D-E**

A – Associate Openly. You are not abiding if you are hiding. The closet is for prayer, not for living, get out and enjoy your freedom in Christ and not care what the world thinks (John 8:35-36).

B – Be in the Body. If you aren't around the body then there would be no need for a gift because there would be no one to use it on (John 15:7-8)

I – Imitate Him. As corny as it may sound, What Would Jesus Do is a still a great test to put all your actions through. Especially when it comes to obeying His Word (1 John 2:6).

D – Do Daily Devotions. Daily be in the Word and Worship, draw vital nutrients from the Vine (Luke 24).

E – Enjoy Him. God is madly in love with you. He is not mad at you, He is not upset with you. If you have sinned, repent and return, and enjoy His fellowship (John 15:9).

### **When we ABIDE – Love naturally Flows**

When we abide in Him, the nature of Jesus Christ flows within, and out of us. People with marriage problems, addiction problems, mean, angry at the world, all have the same thing in common – they are not abiding in Him, and since they don't, the fruits of love never flow within or out of them.

### **Love is Always a Choice / Love is a Verb**

Love is always a choice; just as you choose who you will marry, rather you want to follow God, love is always a choice. And so we still have to choose if we are going to love. Love is a verb, and action verb a that.

### **Storgi – eros - Phileo**

Now we say, I love my wife. I love my kids. I love Big Macs. I love walks in the park on summer evenings. We use the word “love” so freely that we diminish its meaning. The Greeks circumvented this problem by using four words for love...

- Storgi means affection. Storgi is the kind of love one feels toward his cat or dog.
- Eros refers to sexual, physical love.
- Phileo, from which we get the name “Philadelphia,” speaks of brotherly love. Phileo says, “If you're nice to me, I'll be nice to you.”

### **Agape – Created because of NT**

It wasn't until the New Testament apostles introduced the concept of unconditional love that the Greeks added agape to their vocabulary. If you read ancient writings, you would see that one of the rarest words used in Greek literary writings, was the word “agape”.

## **If don't Know Lord – Can't Agape**

Agape is a love that gives simply for the sake of giving, never expecting anything in return. People who don't know the Lord can experience all of the other kinds of love. But for them, agape is impossible to show because it is found only in God, and if He is not in them, then His agape love cannot flow from them. But, they can experience it, as it is loved upon them by the people who can upon His Name.

## **Definition of Agape Love**

Agape Love – is selfless humble service to meet someone else's need. Regardless of how lowly the service is, and no matter how underserving the receipt may be.

## **Jesus on Night He was Betrayed**

Jesus on the night that He was betrayed, washed the 12 disciples feet, even the feet of Judas, why? Because He loved every one of them – even Judas.

*John 13:1–5 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. <sup>2</sup> And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, <sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup> rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. <sup>5</sup> After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

## **Love Supreme Mark of Discipleship**

Love is the supreme mark of discipleship.

*John 13:34–35 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

## **1 Corinthians 13:4–7 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; <sup>5</sup> does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; <sup>6</sup> does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; <sup>7</sup> bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

## **Language for USA - English**

The common language for the United States of America, is English. The common language of Germany is German, the common language of France is French. And, the common language of heaven, is Love.

## **I Learn by Objects**

When I traveled to foreign countries the quickest was for me to learn words of their language was to hold up an object and ask what is this word. The leading language softwares are built on the same principle – picture relationships to associate the word. Hold up a glass in Nicaragua and they said “vaso”, point to the water and they said “agua”, point to a burning fire and they said “caliente”.

## **Sojourners in Earth / Romans 5:8 / The New Language – the Language of Heaven - Love**

Well we who follow Christ become new citizens; we become sojourners here on their earth looking for our true home, heaven and with Him. And God is teaching us our new language, this heavenly language of agape love, which is so foreign to this earth, by holding up an object, His Son on the cross (Romans 5:8).

When I want to truly understand love, I need only look to Jesus to understand what it means.

*Hebrews 11:9–10 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; <sup>10</sup> for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

*Romans 5:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

## **A Cromwell Deserter**

I am reminded of the story, it was in the year 1647, during England's Civil War, a deserter in Cromwell's army was captured and brought before him. “When the curfew bell sounds tonight, you shall be executed,” said the general. But that night, the curfew bell was not heard. Upon investigation, it was discovered that, receiving news of her fianci's sentence, his betrothed made her way quickly to the camp and hid in the bell tower. As curfew neared, she positioned herself within the bell in such a way that when the rope was pulled, the clapper hit her body rather than the inside of the bell. Seeing the bruised and

battered lady standing before him, Cromwell was so deeply touched by her love that the soldier's life was spared.

### **Jesus climbed Calvary**

Jesus Christ climbed not a bell tower, but the hill of Calvary in order that you and I would be spared the execution we so rightfully deserve. Whether the word is charity, love, or agape, the love Jesus showed us, the love we are to extend to one another is spelled one way: S-a-c-r-i-f-i-c-e.

### **Love Chapter – but Really Love Book**

This is often called the “love chapter” for obvious reasons, but read every chapter of this Bible, all 1189 chapters, and you will see a God of love in every chapter, on every page. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16).

### **I Quit Learning English In College**

I quit learning English back in college, I ain't think there was any more for me to learn. Some quit learning English in High School, some drop out way before then. And, that is what can happen to us as Christians concerning our learning this language of heaven, love. I, we, need to continually be reviewing our study notes, and continuing to learn this new language of heaven, love.

*2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV 1900)* <sup>15</sup> Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

### **I'd Fail English Today / I Fail Love Often**

If I took a high school English test right now I would fail; in fact on Camden's Leapfrog Explorer when they ask is this a pronoun or noun, I wait for him to answer before I do. Well, I always seem to fail somewhere in the week on one of these heavenly language (love) tests.

### **The 3 Chapters – Heavens Language**

In these three chapters (11-14) there is a lot mentioned about tongues, but God makes the point real clear, the language of heaven – is love.

**(1 Cor 13:4 NKJV) Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;**

Love Suffers Long (Love is patient) – the love that endures time and time again, love that gives the person time to mature and grow. Love never says, “I've had enough.” It suffers indefinitely. Jesus demonstrated and demonstrates that every day in our lives personally. God's love, waits for the right time. Love has been twisted and perverted in our society as waiting two whole weeks was really holding out before we had sex. If that guy or gal won't wait, willing to sin before the Holy God, then it is not true love, it is simply lust, for lust says I want it right now, I will not wait. We see a beautiful picture of this kind of waiting as Jacob was willing to work and wait seven years to get his wife Rachael.

Love is Kind (love is kind) – there is a sweetness about the love, like a chocolate candy bar if a may associate it as such. I've never met a chocolate candy bar I didn't like. Oh the sweetness of God's love for us; as love came down, and love drew near to us, so near we could personally experience it. I remember this elderly man at Bible College, and he use to joke about this type of love, He would say I love, but from a distance; my point is that love – loves near, not far away. God's agape love treats people with respect, and value, for they are of great worth for they are God's creation.

### **Do These things – The Rest Fall in Place**

If you can do these two things (patient and kind), then the rest falls into place. So we seen what love is, and now what love is not.

Love does not Envy (It does not envy) – envy is either I want what you have, or just wish you didn't have it. It is a jealousy that good things happen to others. The prodigal son came home, dad says kill the fattest calf, we are barbequing tonight; but the brother would not come, he pouted and would not come out, for he

was not happy that his brother was getting lavished upon after all he had done. He had missed the point of the celebration, and that was that his brother had repented and came home.

Love does not Parade itself (it does not boast) – Love doesn't bang the drum, hey did you see me give out that bag of clothes to the needy family. That is the looking for outward accolades from man, not looking upward solely doing these things to please the Lord.

Love is not Puffed Up (it is not proud) – Boasting to get attention for self, the inward accolade, saying wow how wonderful I am. Love looks outward unto others, not inward for self.

**(1 Cor 13:5 NKJV) does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;**

does not behave rudely (It does not dishonor others) – rudely, being insensitive and short with people. The positive application of this verse would be that “love honors and is sensitive to others”.

### **Outstanding Trooper**

I like the story about the state trooper who was presented with an “Outstanding Trooper” award about what the governor said when presenting the award. “He said you haven't once roughed up a drunk or used excessive force on anyone. How can you be a state trooper for fifteen years, dealing with the kind of stuff you deal with, and have that happen?” “Two things,” the trooper said. “First, if I am called to break up a fight at a tavern, I never say to myself, ‘There's a drunk’; I always say to myself, ‘There's a man—someone's husband, someone's son, someone's neighbor—who got drunk.’ I try to think of him as a man, not a crime. “Secondly, the Bible says that a soft answer turns away wrath. So whenever I walk up to the window of an automobile, I always speak a little softer than the person I'm speaking to.”

does not seek its own (it is not self-seeking) – for all the gifts of God are for the profits of others. The positive application of this verse would be “love seeks to profit and build up others”.

*(1 Cor 12:7 NKJV) But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:*

is not provoked (it is not easily angered) - is not irritable or angers. The positive application of this verse would be “love is easy going”.

thinks no evil (it keeps no record of wrongs) - maybe your translation says ‘does not keep a record’ This word can also be translated, “Not resentful”. This is a bookkeeping term, and it is the keeping of records so they can be consulted later to prove something. The positive application of this verse would be “love forgives”. Look to the great object lesson example, Jesus Christ on the cross, saying Father forgive them for they no not what they do. May we have patient love that can say and do the same.

**(1 Cor 13:6 NKJV) does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;**

does not rejoice in iniquity (Love does not delight in evil) – love does not delight in watching people fall. People enjoy watching others fall because the lower they go, they higher they feel. Love also does not gossip about others, as that is a tearing down of others, even if you are speaking the truth about them, but you are doing it because you want to see them brought low.

but rejoices in the truth (but rejoices with the truth) – truth, what is right. Love, loves to see people triumph and to be lifted up. These two together also play out in this way, and that would be, we are not going to say, oh you are gay, living in sexual immorality, in rebellion to God, that because of love I am not going to confront you about that, wrong – for love loves truth, and knows the truth is the only place they will ever experience true love.

### **I Know What you Are Thinking**

Now I I know what you are thinking up to this point (if I am patient, kind, keep no record, etc), and that is, if I love like God then I am going to get taken advantage of, and walked all over, and continually manipulated. The key there is “but rejoices in the truth”.

### **Continue to ABIDE / Best Gift for the Moment / Love always Leads to God**

So, continue to ABIDE in Him, and as we studied last week, the best gift is the gift that is most needed at that moment, so seek the Lord on the right gift at the right time, and of course the gift must be enveloped in love, or it is 'nothing'. But secondly, Jesus is the example, and we see that love always leads people to God. Every act of love that Jesus did, pointed people towards the Father in Heaven. So, we always have to be examining our actions on, will this thing I do, that which I think is love, will it lead people, point the person, to the Father in Heaven. Sometimes the very thing a person thinks is love, is actually evil, because it does not lead the person to the Father, but actually leads them away from Him. In some cases the person looks more to them, than God, for they rely on the person rather than God.

### **Agape Self-Sacrificing / Some are Self-Seeking in the Love they Give / Care more about People Think**

Agape love is self-sacrificing, and some people do things they think are selfless, but in actuality they are really selfish, because they care more what the person thinks of them, than they care what the person thinks of God.

### **Love is not Manipulated**

Love will tell the truth, love will not be manipulated by the world and people.

- Tolerance says, "You must approve of what I do." Love responds, "I must do something harder: I will love you, even when your behavior offends me."
- Tolerance says, "You must agree with me." Love responds, "I must do something harder: I will tell you the truth, because I am convinced the truth will set you free.' "
- Tolerance says, "You must allow me to have my way." Love responds, "I must do something harder: I will plead with you to follow the right way, because I believe you are worth the risk."
- Tolerance seeks to be inoffensive; love takes risks. Tolerance glorifies division; love seeks unity. Tolerance costs nothing; love costs everything.

### **Be Careful – Not an Excuse to be Harsh and Unloving**

Be careful not to use this as an excuse not to love, or to be harsh; for neither of those will lead someone to God, and thus we know are not of the Lord.

### **(1 Cor 13:7 NKJV) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**

bears all things (It always protects), - this word for bears is a military term, and it was for an army protecting possession, people, or property at all costs, even death. Love is willing to stand against overwhelming opposition for the sake of others.

believes all things (always trusts), - has faith, believes God can change people and situations. Jesus demonstrated this kind of love when He trusted that the Father would not leave His soul in hell, but that God would raise Him from the dead. So too for us when we step out and love, that we trust the Lord will work in and through our doing so.

hopes all things (always hopes), - sees the bright side, looks to see what God is doing, and how He is working. Love never gives up on the resurrection power, and the ability to change the darkest moments, into the greatest triumphs.

endures all things (always perseveres), - carries on like a faithful soldier. Love never leaves the battle, loves never leaves the fellow fallen soldier, love stays and fights.

### **Easy to Love the Loveable / ABIDE and we can Love the Unlovable**

It is easy to love the loveable, but how about the unlovable, the rough on the edges, the ungrateful, and the undeserving. But, when we ABIDE in Him, and His love starts to well up, flow up from within us, then we start to love like he does, and we too can love the unlovable, the rough on the edges, the ungrateful, and the undeserving. This is a supernatural love, and it cannot be manufactured or forced upon, but has to spring from the life of Christ that is within us.

### **So How am I Doing – Just Place Your Name in There**

How am I doing in these areas? Real easy, just insert your name and read them out loud to yourself (Ray is patient, Ray is kind, that is far enough). Doubt you will make it too far before you start to whisper and go silent. This chapter is a great mirror to gauge how spiritually mature we are. Had this church in Corinth placed their names in the text, are the problems they were having would have ended right there. Same too today in marriages, families, and ministries.

### **Have you Fallen Short / Chinese Proverbs**

O I have failed you may say, I give up. Love doesn't quit, love trusts and hope that it can make a change. So have you wish you would do something different with your marriage, your children, that family member - Chinese proverb which says, "The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second best time is today."

**(1 Cor 13:8 NKJV) Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.**

### **Love never Fails – But here are some things that will End**

*Love never fails (ends)*, and if God is love, then God never fails!

### **Things that will end**

But here is what will come to an end.

**(1 Cor 13:9 NKJV) For we know in part and we prophesy in part.**

**(1 Cor 13:10 NKJV) But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.**

**(1 Cor 13:11 NKJV) When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.**

**(1 Cor 13:12 NKJV) For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.**

### **Debate over that which is Perfect**

Debate continues over the meaning of "that which is perfect." Some say "that which is perfect" refers to the Bible. They say the canonization of the New Testament negated the need for prophecy, words of knowledge, and words of wisdom, since everything man needed to know could be found in Scripture.

### **Jesus is Perfect**

"that which is perfect" refers to the perfect One—Jesus Christ.

### **Prophecy – Tongues – Knowledge will Vanish / Jesus will be There in Heaven**

Prophecy, tongues, words of knowledge will one day all vanish. Why? In heaven there will be no need for prophecy—words of edification, exhortation, or comfort—because everyone will be perfectly comforted and edified in heaven and will no longer need to be exhorted. Unknown tongues will vanish because everything will be known in heaven. And words of knowledge will be swallowed up in the perfect knowledge we'll have when we see Jesus (verse 12).

### **Gifts Given today because we are not Perfect**

Gifts are given to the church today because we are not perfect, and we will not be perfect until we are in our glorified bodies. So verses 9-12 are great because they tell us what we will be, and we will be this perfect love when we see Him face-to-face, so there will that day when I will no longer struggle against my flesh and my tendency to hold grudges, to demand my way, to want to be justified. But the beauty also is, that if I am willing to invest the time, seek Him and Abide, I can here today, right now on this earth, love supernaturally, and be just like Him. But, mistake not this, and that is that verses 9-12 is saying, it is time to put away childish attitudes, as children are so self-absorbed, and step into maturity, and spiritual maturity is called to love like verses 4-8.

*Ephesians 5:1-2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.*

**(1 Cor 13:13 NKJV) And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

### **Can't understand this Love without Perfect Example / The Love that Came Down**

We can't understand this type of love without the perfect example of, and that is the love that came down – Jesus the Christ.

### **1 Cor 13 – Jesus is Love**

I know I can love like this chapter says I can, because God is Love, and thus love lives in me.

**<sup>4</sup> God suffers long and God is kind; love He does not envy; He does not parade Himself, God is not puffed up; <sup>5</sup> God does not behave rudely, He does not seek its own, He is not provoked, He thinks no evil; <sup>6</sup> He does not rejoice in iniquity, but God rejoices in the truth; <sup>7</sup> God bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. God never fails.**

How sweet this chapter is.

### **Hannah Story**

So I was sitting at the table in your classroom looking over their next lesson when Hannah came in to get one of her coloring books. As she was about to walk out she climbed in a chair across the table from me and said:

Hannah: Mommy did you know that when you hold your bible up like this, as she put her coloring book on it's spin to show me. It opens to the book of Psalms because we learned in church that the book of Psalms is in the middle of the bible.

Mommy: I said you did that is great sweetie, as I got great joy to look at the smile on her face as she get's when she talks about the Bible and God. Then I said that is so neat and that I to had learned that also when I was a little girl in Sunday school.

Hannah: And you know what else? When I open my favorite coloring book just like this and it opens to the middle it is a CHOCOLATE CANDY BAR! as she said with a higher pitch of excitement. See mommy it is a CHOCOLATE CANDY BAR! I LOVE CHOCOLATE CANDY BARS! as she sit there she closed the coloring book and opened it again see the Book of Psalms then she closed it and opened it again see a Chocolate Candy Bar. Mommy I love the Book of Psalms Chocolate candy bar. As she got down and walked away I could hear her say it is soooooo good.

It gave me great Joy and it warmed my heart and it was so funny. O to have the simple love of a child oh how I wish I could just sit and savory the word of God like that. You would of thought she had a real chocolate candy bar it was so genuine and real to her as she called it the Book of Psalms Chocolate Candy Bar.

### **Middle of the Bible – Psalm 117**

What is the middle of this book -

*Psalm 117:1-2 (NIV) <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples. <sup>2</sup> For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD.*

### **How sweet it Is**

Oh what a word, his love for me, and when I mediate on that love, and know that that love lives in me, oh how sweet it is – sweetness to my soul.



# 1 Corinthians 14

## *Decently and in Order (14:1-40)*

### **Recap – They had some Issues / Asking Paul for Counsel**

Well, as a recap, the church of God there in Corinth had some serious issues going on, they were known throughout the whole area for their sexual immorality, they were getting drunk at the home fellowships, they were suing each other, and that is just to name a few. Some folks in the church wrote Paul and asked the brother to send some godly counsel, and here we get to hold that godly counsel in our very hands today. The Lord made sure that this letter was preserved for us to read, because God wants to make sure private lives are right with Him, and when we come together to corporately worship, that we do church right.

### **Still Important in 2011**

So how important this letter for us in the year 2011, for much of the crazy things that were happening in the church in Corinth, are going on this very day, and none more abused than what we see out of this Christian nation, the United States of America.

### **Decently and In Order / Much Immaturity and Carnality**

Paul will close this chapter by saying verse 33 and 40, that God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, and thus we are called to do all things decently and in order. We are really closing out a four chapter discussion of Paul as He has been telling the church how they are to behave when they come together in public worship, and he has been correcting them for their spiritual immaturity and even carnality that they were bringing into the church.

*1 Corinthians 14:33 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

*1 Corinthians 14:40 (NKJV)* <sup>40</sup> Let all things be done decently and in order.

### **Not my Pick for a Sunday Morning**

Today's very specific topic is that of the speaking in tongues, and how it was totally out of control there at the church, and when they were coming together it was a total free-for-all we will read, and don't have to go much further than the remote on your television to see it being relived today in many churches across the world. Now I will say that this wouldn't be a topic I would ever pick for a Sunday morning, but I am glad that we go verse-by-verse, because the understanding of this is vital for the church today, and the misunderstanding (or just plain ignoring) of this chapter is leaving many people robbed of having all that the Lord is desiring them to have; the very purpose of this letter is so that the believer in Christ is not lacking anything spiritually, and that they can receive all that the Lord has for them in their walk, as we wait for His soon return.

*1 Corinthians 1:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

### **My Passion**

Although not a pick I would have picked, I do have a passion about this topic, and will admit I still get mad when I reflect on how pastors totally left me hanging on the topic of tongues and spiritual gifts. I talk more about that as we go.

**(1 Cor 14:1 NKJV) Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.**

### **Pursue Love**

Before we can rightly divide the teaching on tongues and prophecy, we have to fully understand chapter thirteen, the unconditional love (agape love). A type of love so foreign to the world, that they had to create a new Greek word just to describe it, because there was no word of its kind that could full describe the love God is, and calls us to be. Please review chapter 13 to fully understand chapter 14.

*1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; <sup>5</sup> does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; <sup>6</sup> does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; <sup>7</sup> bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup> Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

## **Love is Defining Result of Being Disciple / Not because we preach or Raise the Dead – but Agape**

So chapter 13 was the simple point, that whatever you are doing in this life, do it in love. By this all will know you are My disciples, by your love one for another. Not because we can preach, not raise the dead, not feed the poor, do mission work, nor speak in tongues, make prophetic statement. Love is the defining resultant of being a disciple.

*John 13:34–35 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love (agape) one another; as I have loved (agaped) you, that you also love (agape) one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love (agape) for one another.”

## **Pursue Love**

Verse 1 - the word for "pursue" means to follow hard after, to run after (not jog), to seek diligently after, it is actually used elsewhere in the scriptures to mean "persecute" so we can see how diligent we are to follow after love. Just like Paul devoted his pre-Jesus life to persecuting the church, following hard after the believers, searching them out, pulling them out of every nook and cranny he could find them, he now says seek and search out love the same I sought after the early church.

## **Do You Pursue Love**

So, how about you, do you? Do you seek after, do you run after, the kind of love that God calls us to be and to do? Or do you kind of jog after it; if ya catch it that would be great, but let's not break a sweat trying to catch it. Oh may we be a people who pursue it, seek it, follow it, and catch it and do it and live it. May we be a people who say I will not live any other way except to love like I am called to love in chapter 13. Tell ya what Christian, it will take more discipline than any workout or job you have or have done, for it will take a continual focus, and unrelenting conscience thought process of this is how I am to act at this very moment, this is the calling that is upon my life for today, not something I may grow into, but a love that is a choice, and if I choose to love as this agape love says to, God immediately enables me to love that way, because God is love, and God lives in me, and thus I don't have to reach up or out for this love, I need to only release that which is already in me. Pursue it beloved! Abide with all your heart, mind and soul.

*John 15:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

## **Difference between Tongues and Prophecy**

### **99% of the Foolishness will End**

So first thing Paul is going to tell us the difference between tongues and prophecy; and if the church can understand the difference, then 99% of the foolishness that is happening in some of these so-called “charismatic churches” will come to an immediate end as people will recognize the that which is of the Lord, and that which is of the flesh.

### **Some 9 Times – Understand**

Some nine times the word “understand” is used in this chapter, and that is significant considering that the word is only used like 71 times in the whole New Testament, so like 13% of the time it is used in this one chapter alone. Point, God wants us to understand very clearly the gifts of prophecy and tongues.

**(1 Cor 14:2 NKJV) For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.**

**(1 Cor 14:3 NKJV) But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.**

**(1 Cor 14:4 NKJV) He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.**

### **Difference**

Verse 2 - For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God – so very clearly, when someone speaks in tongues, they are speaking to God and not to man.

Verse 3 - But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. - Prophecy is the speaking forth of God's word. It could be in the form that God lays it on your heart to go tell someone, hey the Lord wants you to know today how special you are to Him, or it could be that God tells you to go read a

bible verse to them, and all this doesn't have to be spoken of in some trembling voice, or in the old king James language, but just your normal everyday voice will do.

### **Examples**

*Example of Tongues* - Lord you are more beautiful than diamonds, Lord you are more costly than gold

*Example of Prophecy* - the Lord says be still my children, know that I am the Lord, fear not I will protect you.

### **You know it is False**

You know when it is not a true tongue by two reasons, first there is not interpretation (which we will read here in a few verses) and/or when someone speaks in tongues and the interpretation goes something like this, thus says the Lord, I am coming quickly,,,,,, you see tongues speaks to God, and the interpretation would be God speaking to Himself, and that would make God Schizophrenia.

### **If Only People would Know This**

If only people would know this difference, then 99% of that foolishness would cease; and countless people who followed the fake, or the flesh, would not be left hurt and broken, wondering where God is in their lives, and why God isn't giving them peace.

**(1 Cor 14:5 NKJV) I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.**

### **Not Ranking**

And, just to clear up errant teaching, as some teachers say that based on this verse that prophecy is higher than tongues, but that is only if the tongues has no interpretation. So if the tongue does have interpretation, then all are edified, and thus tongues and prophecy would be equal.

### **I Believe in the Gifts**

Verse 5 - I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied – Paul says I wish all of you spoke in tongues. Let me make the statement before we begin today that I believe all the gifts of the Spirit are available for today, and they will be until that which is Perfect, Jesus Christ returns. So tongues, prophecy, words of knowledge, discerning of spirits, and all the other gifts are available today I believe based on the scriptures.

*(1 Cor 13:10 NKJV) But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.*

### **But let it be Known**

But let me state, so you know where I am at, I do not speak in tongues personally. Paul said rhetorically back in chapter 12 that not all would. I am one of those who do not, even though I believe the gift is available for today and God gives it to whom He will. I feel the same way Billy Graham does, when they asked him about tongues, he said that he had never received the gift, but he knew it was a wonderful experience for those who had, such as some of his friends like Corrie Ten Boom. Yes did you catch my point? Billy Graham said he doesn't speak in tongues.

*1 Corinthians 12:30 (NKJV) <sup>30</sup> Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?*

### **Some others who Didn't Speak in Tongues**

So if you don't speak in tongues you are not alone, there are at least three of us then that don't. There were a few before us, not Spurgeon, not Wesley, not Moody, not Torrey, not J. Wilbur Chapman, not Gipsy Smith, not Billy Sunday. I am amazed that in his dozen or so books, the great expositor and teacher on the works of the Holy Spirit, RA Torrey, never once mentioned in his books the speaking of tongues.

### **Do All Speak in Tongues / Still Mad**

Do all speak in tongues, no! You know I am still mad today of the bible teachers that told me to come forward to the altar when I was a young believer and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, but never once did one of them say, if you asked, it has been given. Rather each time I went away driving home

questioning if I was saved, wondering what was wrong with me, still remembering the faces of the people watching me go up, and watching me sit down, smiling at me with that look of keep trying there young man, I still remember the one lady saying to me after one of these afterglows, wow Ray I didn't know you weren't spirit filled. Look God will give you the appropriate gift at the appropriate time, as He wills. And when you ask Him, He gives you, rather you feel something or not.

*Luke 11:9-13 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup> If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

**(1 Cor 14:6 NKJV) But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?**

**(1 Cor 14:7 NKJV) Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played?**

**(1 Cor 14:8 NKJV) For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle?**

**(1 Cor 14:9 NKJV) So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.**

**(1 Cor 14:10 NKJV) There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance.**

**(1 Cor 14:11 NKJV) Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me.**

### **Babble profits no One**

So noises that have no meaning, we call that babble. Funny thing, it is called babble everywhere in the world, but in the so-called charismatic church, where it is called spiritual. No meaning – means nothing!

**(1 Cor 14:12 NKJV) Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.**

**(1 Cor 14:13 NKJV) Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.**

**(1 Cor 14:14 NKJV) For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.**

**(1 Cor 14:15 NKJV) What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.**

### **Seek to Edify / Heart of God – Edify His Blood Bought Bride**

*Verse 12 - let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel* - the heart of God is to build up and edifying His blood bought Bride, especially in these perilous times.

### **Tongues need Understanding / Unfruitful - Barren**

Here the Lord clearly says through Paul, if you can't understand it, then it is unfruitful. Unfruitful means barren. If my memory serves me right, Jesus cursed the fig tree that was unfruitful. I'd be careful of exercising some gift, whether that be speaking in tongues, or teaching a lousy Bible study, that was unfruitful and barren.

*Matthew 21:18-19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. <sup>19</sup> And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away.

### **Bad Teaching – Just start making Noises**

Sadly I read of a few pastors that I highly respect and they said to just start making noises and that will open the door for speaking in tongues. Funny thing, when I try to teach my son how to speak I didn't say to him, just make noises son and eventually you'll be speaking English like the rest of us. Now I helped him sound out the word, I linked intelligence with specific words. Beloved, don't fall for that stuff of just make sounds and eventually God will take over and you will be speaking in tongues.

**(1 Cor 14:16 NKJV) Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?**

**(1 Cor 14:17 NKJV) For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.**

### **Naba**

Now I don't want to freak anyone out, but let's say I utter the following from my lips Naba nama creta ebosythro ved den na, ebosythro blagaslavana, ebosythro ved den na.

### **What in the World**

You would be like what was that. Now if I lifted my hands and started to sway back and forth you be like wow what in the world is going on here. However if I went to certain other places and did it they would think I was on-fire for Jesus Christ with the Spirit overflowing from me. But for you it would not be fruitful, you would not be edified; you wouldn't leave here feeling like you met with the Lord. But if I interpreted for you, if I told you what I just said was actually a song I learned while on mission trip to Russia, and the words were (and I am just making an example for I don't remember the words): Lord you are, more precious than silver, and Lord you are more costly than gold, Lord you are more beautiful than diamonds, and nothing I desire compares with You. Then you would be lifted up, you would be edified, you would probably actually start to sing along with me and have your Spirit lifted up.

### **Just and Observation**

Just an observation, but did you ever notice how everyone who speaks in tongues on these television programs all speak in tongues really fast. Like no one it seems talks slowly. Just and observation.

**(1 Cor 14:18 NKJV) I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;**

**(1 Cor 14:19 NKJV) yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.**

**(1 Cor 14:20 NKJV) Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.**

### **Don't be Children**

Paul will now go on to describe how tongues and prophecy are to be handled in the public gathering so it doesn't turn into a circus; and he is saying don't be children in understanding, I want you to be mature. We take our children to the circus, but when they mature we expect them to go to school and learn – Amen!

**(1 Cor 14:21 NKJV) In the law it is written: "With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me," says the Lord.**

**(1 Cor 14:22 NKJV) Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.**

### **Historical Context**

In Deuteronomy 28, the Lord prophetically said, "As My people turn their back on Me and become cold toward Me, they will hear the tongues of other nations when foreigners invade their land." We see the fulfillment of this in Isaiah 28, when, because God's people had grown indifferent toward Him, the Assyrians were allowed to occupy their land. It came to pass exactly as God said it would.

### **Unbelievers became Believers – Word of God is True / Believers Believed in the Prophecy**

Those who didn't believe became believers in God, because when they heard the strange language of the Assyrians, they couldn't deny the Word of God is true. So a strange tongue became a sign to them that God's word is true. But there were those who did believe, they knew God's word would come to pass, and thus when it happened, they were not surprised.

*Isaiah 28:11-13 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, <sup>12</sup> To whom He said, "This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest," And, "This is the refreshing"; Yet they would not hear. <sup>13</sup> But the word of the LORD was to them, "Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little," That they might go and fall backward, and be broken And snared and caught.*

### **Verse 24 – A Therefore / But a Total Flip**

But now in verse 24, God inserts a therefore, and He is playing off this example, but as we will see, He flips it and reverses it.

**(1 Cor 14:23 NKJV) Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind?**

**(1 Cor 14:24 NKJV) But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.**

**(1 Cor 14:25 NKJV) And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.**

#### **Come from Outside – You are Crazy**

Now he is back talking about tongues the prayer language, and he says so if someone comes in from outside and hears and sees this chaos, they say I am out of here.

#### **Prophecy will Pierce their Heart**

But, others will come into a service and people are talking about the Word of God, and God will often at that very moment have a person speak a word that is directed right at that unbeliever, and their heart will be convicted, they will say, that had to be God for no one else could have known such a thing.

**(1 Cor 14:26 NKJV) How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.**

#### **Everyone wanted into the Act**

Corinth was out of control, they had quite the circus going on when they met together, and everyone wanted to get in on the act so apparently they could be recognized as spiritual - thus why Paul had to teach chapter 13 before chapter 14, so they can hear the words that love is not self-seeking, and the public display of gifts they were exercising was clearly to draw attention to themselves.

#### **Verse 27-28**

In the next two verses Paul will lay out the order for public worship so it doesn't turn into a circus.

**(1 Cor 14:27 NKJV) If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret.**

**(1 Cor 14:28 NKJV) But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.**

#### **Must have Interpreter / One at a Time**

Each tongue must have an interpreter, and thus if there is not interpreter, then the tongue is not of the Lord. And the whole service is not to be one tongue after another, but at the most three, and not all at the same time.

#### **God is Peaceful and Clam**

Let all things. Be done decently and in order. It is. Picture of God, as God is calm, and He is peaceful. I don't enter into my prayer closet and have it turn into a circus, and thus why would we expect that is what is to happen when we have public prayer and worship.

#### **This Verse should Bust Many / If you see It – walk Out**

This verse should bust many of the side-show circus acts that are seen today, and so called spirit-filled moves of God. If and when you see it, get up and walk out, you are just wasting your time in that place.

#### **End and Means**

I once talked to a man and wife who held healing crusades, and this was when I was very young in the Lord and I was much more aggressive, and I was challenging on the whole authenticity of these crusades, and first of all they immediately questioned my salvation, but they said something that I will never forget, and it was basically, "the ends justify the means"; I took that statement to mean, that if people get saved out of a phony healing they see, then it is justified. Look if the Word of God isn't enough to save them, then nothing will ever be enough, to save them and to keep them, for that is a key, after the show is over, you

still have to face that difficult marriage, that stack of bills and no job to go to, and the terminal illness, that wayward child. The word of God is enough, for it is the Word that became flesh and dwelt amongst us, and He will do it over and over again. And the guarantee of every trail that God gives us, is that He promises to give us – Himself.

**(1 Cor 14:29 NKJV) Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.**

**(1 Cor 14:30 NKJV) But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent.**

**(1 Cor 14:31 NKJV) For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.**

### **3 Prophecies – 3 Tongues**

And up to three prophecies may be given in a public worship gathering, and that too is one-by-one, not all speaking at once. So up to three tongues with interpretations, and up to three prophecies, and after that is it time to remain silent.

### **Don't Forbid**

So the scripture says in verse 39 not to forbid the speaking of tongues, so we do not here at Calvary Chapel forbid the speaking in tongues, but the scripture says that it must be interpreted, so should someone speak in tongues and there is no interpretation, then will reject the tongue. The Holy Spirit would never cause confusion either, so whether that be tongues, prophecy, or just making a comment, if it is done during the teaching, then we know that is not of the Lord either.

### **I was Asked if we Spirit Filled Services**

I was asked once if our service were spirit filled and I said absolutely, for God is Spirit, and He moves in His word. Do you know that, that every week the Spirit of God is moving in this place, and if you will get yourself in the way, He will move right over and in you, for His word will never return void, no matter how on or off the man behind the pulpit may be that day. Every time God's word moves, His Spirit moves, for the Word of God cannot move apart from God, let me say that again, the Word of God cannot move apart from God. Well as for the person asking if we had spirit-filled services, I told them you may want to go check out this church down the road, because I think that is more of your definition of spirit-filled, but if you want to study the Bible with us, we meet every Sunday at 10am. I let him know that we don't have a show here on Sunday; we study the Bible, chapter by chapter, verse by verse, book by book.

### **Spirit Moved – May not Even Heard a Word**

When the Spirit of God moves, you may not even have heard a sound, for the Spirit is moving in the heart, it may even be in a still small voice, the Creator of the Universe speaking His words of life and love to you, but make no mistake, the Spirit moved.

**(1 Cor 14:32 NKJV) And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.**

**(1 Cor 14:33 NKJV) For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.**

### **You Control the Gift**

The spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets. - the gift doesn't control you, you control the gift. So anyone who says they just couldn't control themselves is in the flesh.

### **My Baptist Friend**

Man, I have to tell you the story about my Baptist friend. Now the Baptist aren't known for the speaking in tongues. And one day I was driving around with this elderly Baptist woman and her now grown children. We got on the subject of tongues, and the mother was like I do not believe in that gift for today. The son says well mom I always talk in tongues, and then he blurted out these weird noises from his mouth, and he is like see mom I always talk in tongues, in fact I can't stop it, it just comes out. So he did it again, and the mother was like you stop that right now, you are scaring me, and he would keep doing it and the mother would keep yelling, oh stop it, Jesus forgive him. Ah, what a freak show that day was. Anyhoo, the prophet is subject to the prophet.

### **People think there are Exceptions**

Do you think you are an exception - there are no exceptions, the Word is the Word – Period!

**(1 Cor 14:34 NKJV) Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says.**

**(1 Cor 14:35 NKJV) And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.**

### **Cultural Setting**

Following Jewish tradition, when the church at Corinth met together, the men sat on one side, the women on the other. Because laleo, the Greek word translated “speak,” can mean “chatter” or “interrupt,” there are those who say Paul is simply forbidding women from calling out to their husbands on the other side of the church, “Hey, Joe, what did he mean by that?”

**(1 Cor 14:36 NKJV) Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached?**

**(1 Cor 14:37 NKJV) If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.**

### **People think more Spiritual**

*Verse 37 - If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual* - People think they are more spiritual when they speak in tongues, and that was going on in Corinth as Paul is writing to correct them about that, and he masterfully made the point that you think you are something because you speak in tongues, so much so you look down on other people, but let me remind you, that love doesn't parade itself not is it puffed up.

### **In Russia**

When I was in Russia the people immediately asked me if I spoke in tongues and I told them that I did not. Now you can see all this pressure on me to want to try to just make noises so I can say I do, but I can't because my mind just can't allow me to believe that it is something real, the spirit is testifying to me that "hey that is not Me - that is just noise". But in Russia when I said I didn't I immediately dropped in importance before them. Some even asked me if I was saved, because a blessed preacher had passed through earlier and told them it was proof of salvation. Yes there was a great diminish before them of me; but you know what, even though I had only been saved for two hours, as I spent my days with them, as I opened up the scriptures to them, as I taught them how to study the bible for themselves, something wonderful happened along the way, they wanted to hear me speak the Word more than they wanted to hear me speak in tongues. They quit asking about tongues, and started to ask me what does the bible say about the trinity, what does the bible say about heaven, hell, hope, love, joy - what is Jesus like.

**(1 Cor 14:38 NKJV) But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant.**

**(1 Cor 14:39 NKJV) Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.**

**(1 Cor 14:40 NKJV) Let all things be done decently and in order.**

### **Challenge is Finding Heart of God / Don't let Theology Rob Chapter 14**

The challenge and blessing of every bible study is to find the heart of God in every passage, to discover Jesus in a fresh new way. It is a shame to take a passage where the heart of God is crying out to man, and then turn it into some dead dry words on page, to dissect the words so precisely that I see words and not the Word that became flesh. Oh we need perfect theology, but as 1 Corinthians 13 says and though I speak with the tongues of angels and perfect theology, yet if I do not have love I am a dead sounding cymbal.

### **God wants to Hear Your Heart**

May we not miss a key point here, and that is that regarding tongues, God loves to hear our hearts, and our praise. We can lift up our hearts to Him whether that be in the language of tongues, the language you speak, or even words that are not utterable when we are so broken, so overflowed with His goodness, that we can only groan and sob before Him.



### **When the Last Time just Say “I Love You”**

Have you ever, when was the last time that you prayed had a deep-deep longing for just Him. A cry from the depth of your heart for just Him, to be with Him, to experience Him, and nothing else, not your personal need, not a personal situation, not a personal heartache, but just Him for who He is to you. Don't confuse what I am saying, the Lord surely wants us to bring every need and heartache to Him, but what I am saying is that often that is the only time we cry out, but after all is well, we leave the well, and we miss that the well is deep and there is so much more to experience.

### **Do it and You will Find Depths of Love**

There is a peril in prosperity, and the business of life, for they can keep us from those times with the Lord. But when was the last time you just got alone and away with Him to tell Him that you love Him. Oh, do it, and you will find what is meant in Ephesians of the height and depth of His love.

*Ephesians 3:14–19 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup> from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup> that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—<sup>19</sup> to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

*Psalms 84:1–2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> How lovely is Your tabernacle, O LORD of hosts! <sup>2</sup> My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

*Romans 8:26–27 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. <sup>27</sup> Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

*Galatians 4:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”

### **Will not happen in 10 Minutes**

This will not happen in 10 minutes, I find I need at least 30 minutes to break through my flesh, the thoughts of the world of all that I have left undone and need to get done, before I settle into a sweet depth of communion and fellowship with him.

### **Hear Your Heart / Heart His Heart**

The Heavenly Father wants to hear your heart (your tongue), and He wants you to hear His heart (prophecy).

# *1 Corinthians 15*

## The Stones Been Rolled Away (15:1-10)

### **Party Animals / Epicurean Mentality**

So carnal was the city of Corinth that the term “Corinthian” was synonymous with “party animal.” This was due in no small part to the fact that Corinth was the center of the Epicurean philosophy, which said that, because there is no eternity, man should eat, drink, and be merry on earth. Part of this Epicurean mentality had filtered into the church. Specifically, there were those in the church who taught there was no resurrection from the dead. “Be a Christian,” they said. “Believe in Jesus Christ. Believe that on the Cross He atoned for the sin of mankind. But don’t believe He really rose again.” Paul tackles this issue head-on in chapter 15 as he talks about the reality of the Resurrection in order to counteract the philosophy of the Epicurean.

### **Everything Hinges off Resurrection**

Paul will say in our study today “If you do not believe in the Resurrection, your faith is in vain, empty, and useless,” contends Paul. “It all hinges on the Resurrection.”

### **The Resurrection (15)**

**(1 Cor 15:1 NKJV) Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,**

**(1 Cor 15:2 NKJV) by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you; unless you believed in vain.**

### **Same 2000 years Later**

It is the same gospel 2000 years later, for this gospel does not change, regardless how many tries to.

### **Holdfast – Keep it in Memory**

Holdfast means to retain, to hold, to possess, keep it in your memory, and as it was used it meant to keep the ship on course, even if you have to steer into the wind to stay on course.

### **Don’t Argues / Celebrate It – Proclaim It**

Oh how people argue and debate over this statement, (if you hold fast – or is it since you hold fast – can a person lose their salvation) Christians don’t argue over the debate, celebrate the provision personally, and then go proclaim it globally. I am tired of the argument because I am tired of watching people buy Satan’s lie hook line and sinker, I am tired of watching people perish into eternity, the line grows longer everyday (conservatively estimated at 150,000 people a day in this world die without knowing Jesus personally (7 billion people, average statistical death rate is close to 1 percent, that is 70 million a year, 190, 000 a day – if 20- 25 percent know Jesus personally that still leaves 150,000 a day, 55 million a year, perishing into hell – just if I live 70 years in my lifetime that will be close to 4 billion in my life).

### **And – I am tired watching the Destruction / Live it and the Debate would Cease**

Along with that destruction, I am tired of watching all the people who say they believe in this resurrection power living like God is impotent, never rising to live the abundant Christian life, still living in fear, depression, their past, their guilt. I’m tired of watching our youth quit on God, walking away, saying no thank you, and then head into the mouth of the world that will devour them. Christian, quit arguing over the foolish debates, and go tell people He is alive, your sins can be forgiven, and new life and that more abundant is your to be had. If Christians would live in the power and joy of the resurrection, the debate would cease because no one would want to walk away from the Lord, and the Church would be living with such abundant life the unsaved would be saying – tell me about your Jesus. And, if you are a person who believes eternal salvation, then you should be the happiest person in the world and be telling the whole world; and if you believe it isn’t eternal security, then you should be out there fighting tooth-and-nail to help others holdfast!

**Church Confused – Paul writes to Clarify / Today People Confused – But what does it Mean to you**  
The philosophy of the day in Corinthian philosophers - no resurrection of the dead. The church in Corinth was greatly confused on the facts of the resurrection and thus Paul is writing to make clarification on the resurrection. Today there is still much confusion on the resurrection, the question of challenge of did it really happen, and if it really did happen what does it mean to me, and what is to be my response to it - how is it to change the way I presently live today.

**Vain Means / Believe in Vain – Friend Request Jesus / Today Paul shows how to Respond**

Vain means without cause, without success, without effort. To believe in vain means that it has no effect on a person's life, it is just something they speak with their mouths, but not with the actions of their lives. They believe the words spoken, but it isn't enough to make them change, and they continue to live on totally unchanged. Essentially all they did was "friend request" Jesus. Before we finish our study today, if you believe in the resurrection, you will see how you are to respond to such grace.

**(1 Cor 15:3 NKJV) For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,  
(1 Cor 15:4 NKJV) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,**

**Two-Fold Definition / Death and Resurrection**

Here, Paul gives us the two-fold definition of the gospel: that Christ died for our sins, and that He rose again—as was prophesied in Old Testament Scripture. The resurrection is the power of the gospel!

**OT Scriptures**

That Christ would die for our sins is seen clearly throughout the Old Testament...

- Psalm 22 presents a clear and accurate description of the process of crucifixion centuries before crucifixion was first practiced.
- Psalm 69 speaks of the vinegar Jesus would be offered to drink on the Cross.
- Isaiah 50 foretells that Jesus would be spat upon, that His beard would be plucked, that He would be hit in the face.
- Isaiah 52 and 53 describe how Jesus would be beaten for our sins, bruised for our iniquities.

*Psalm 22:14–18 (KJV 1900)* <sup>14</sup> I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint: My heart is like wax; It is melted in the midst of my bowels. <sup>15</sup> My strength is dried up like a potsherd; And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; And thou hast brought me into the dust of death. <sup>16</sup> For dogs have compassed me: The assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: They pierced my hands and my feet. <sup>17</sup> I may tell all my bones: They look and stare upon me. <sup>18</sup> They part my garments among them, And cast lots upon my vesture.

*Psalm 69:21 (KJV 1900)* <sup>21</sup> They gave me also gall for my meat; And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

*Isaiah 50:6 (KJV 1900)* <sup>6</sup> I gave my back to the smiters, And my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

*Isaiah 53:4–7 (KJV 1900)* <sup>4</sup> Surely he hath borne our griefs, And carried our sorrows: Yet we did esteem him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him; And with his stripes we are healed. <sup>6</sup> All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned every one to his own way; And the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, Yet he opened not his mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, So he openeth not his mouth.

**Genesis 22**

In Genesis 22 we find an even more descriptive picture.... “Take thy son, thine only son unto a mountain I shall show thee of and there offer him as a sacrifice unto Me,” God said. Abraham carried fire and a knife while Isaac carried the wood. Together, father and son set off toward a mount called Moriah. At the bottom of the mountain, Abraham said to the two servants who accompanied them, “You stay here. My son and I will go up and worship and we will come again unto thee.” When Abraham and Isaac reached the top of the mountain, Isaac said, “Here’s the wood. There’s the fire. But where’s the sacrifice?” And Abraham looked at his son and said, “God will provide Himself a lamb” (Genesis 22:8). Not, “God will provide for Himself a lamb,” but, “God will provide Himself a lamb.” He will be the Lamb. I don’t know if Abraham understood the significance of his statement. I’m not sure Isaac got it at all. But as Abraham was ready to plunge a knife through the chest of his only son, God said, “Stop, Abraham. Now I know that you fear

God.” The picture is as complete as it can be—for that mountain called Moriah is today called Calvary. The very spot Abraham was ready to offer his son, Isaac, is the spot God did, indeed, offer His only Son, Jesus Christ. Even as Isaac carried the wood, Jesus carried the Cross. Even as Jesus was crucified between two thieves, Isaac walked with two servants. Even as Abraham was ready to put a knife through his son, a spear pierced the Son of Man. Even as Abraham had fire in his hand, the fiery wrath of God’s holy indignation was hurled down upon His Son as He bore my sin and yours.

### **Jonah**

Like the Crucifixion, the Resurrection is also seen throughout the OT, and Jesus Himself makes it clear as He refers to the story of Jonah.

*Jonah 1:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

*Matthew 12:39–40 (NKJV)* <sup>39</sup> But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup> For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

**(1 Cor 15:5 NKJV) and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.**

**(1 Cor 15:6 NKJV) After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.**

**(1 Cor 15:7 NKJV) After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.**

**(1 Cor 15:8 NKJV) Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.**

### **Seen by Many**

“After Jesus rose again, He appeared to Peter, then to the twelve disciples, then to five hundred others—most of whom are still alive today,” Paul said.

### **Resurrection made James a Believer**

This refers to the half-brother of Jesus who, as seen in Mark 3, initially didn’t believe his brother was who He claimed to be. Following Jesus’ Resurrection, however, James changed his mind so completely that he went on to become a leader in the early church. Jesus’ death didn’t change his mind, it was the resurrection that did, and that is the power of the gospel, for anyone could die, but only Jesus rose from the dead. The one word that makes a difference between Christianity and all religions is the word resurrection.

### **Arabian Desert**

It was in the Arabian desert that Jesus taught Paul how the Old Testament types and pictures all spoke of Him. “Although I came on the scene after the other guys, I saw Jesus, too,” said Paul.

*Acts 9:3–5 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. <sup>4</sup> Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” <sup>5</sup> And he said, “Who are You, Lord?” Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.”

*Galatians 1:11–12 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. <sup>12</sup> For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

### **The question – who Moved the Stone**

The question has to be asked, who moved the stone. History says Jesus lived, that is indisputable that a man name Jesus Christ walked this earth. Like every man He died. But the debate is did He rise from the dead, that is what was being challenged in Corinth and still to this day.

### **4 Proofs**

Paul is giving us four proofs of the resurrection

1. Your transformed life (Corinthians – but also every believer since) (1-2)
2. God's Word according to the scripture (3-4)
3. Eyewitness (5-6)
4. Paul's changed life (8)

### **Our Judicial System loves Witnesses**

In our judicial system, if you produce 2 witnesses of an event, the event is considered sure. God leaves nothing to wonder by having 500 witnesses, and many of them were still alive, still alive to personally tell the believers in Corinth that Jesus had indeed resurrected from the dead. Ask any lawyer even today and they will say give me witnesses, and I will win my case.

### **Garden Tomb's Soil Analyzed**

We live in the day of Crime Scene Investigation, they show us the forensics and we will believe. Here is an interesting tid-bit, take it for what it is worth. When the Garden Tomb was discovered in 1885, the godly General Gordon was convinced that this was the place where the body of Jesus had lain. There is a traditional tomb inside the wall of modern Jerusalem, but no certainty attaches to the site.

The Garden Tomb, hidden for centuries, was covered with rubbish twenty feet high. When they first cleared the spot, with great caution they gathered all the dust and debris within the tomb and carefully shipped it to the Scientific Association of Great Britain. Every part of it was analyzed, but there was no trace of human remains. If this is the real tomb of Christ, then Jesus was the first to be laid there and he was also the last. —Alliance Weekly

### **Tomb Guarded by Navy Seals**

Some say the disciples stole the body, and that is absurd. The tomb would have been guarded by 16 of the elite soldiers of the Roman Army; it would be the equivalent of 16 Navy Seals or Army Rangers, our Special Operations Forces guarding the tomb. Historical writings say that if just one member was found sleeping, all 16 would be put to death. If the prisoner escaped, all 16 would be killed, if the seal on whatever they were guarding was broken, and they would not confess who broke the seal, they would kill all 16 and then go and kill their families. The Navy Seals did not steal the body or allow a bunch of fisherman to steal it either.

### **Jesus Rolled away the Stone – Really?**

Some says Jesus rolled away the stone, that is equally absurd when you consider, after being beaten with 40 lashes, nailed to a cross through His hands and feet, then hung on a cross for six hours, then pierced in the side, and then put in a 100+ degree tomb for three days, and then Jesus rolls away a stone weighing about a ton, and then He snuck past or beat up 16 Navy Seals - No man no way, could ever do that. Jesus in His resurrected body could have walked through the stone (just as He later did John 20:19), but the stone was rolled away so the world could look in, and see that He is gone.

*Matthew 28:1-4 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. <sup>4</sup> And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

*John 20:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."

### **They all Wanted the Body**

And, really, no one wanted to produce the body of Jesus Christ more than the Jews and the Romans, because they would want to end any speculation but they couldn't produce the body because He was alive. Because there was no dead body, every year for 2000 years, wise men still seek Him.

### **JV McGee**

Amazingly, there are pastor teachers today who teach that the resurrection truly didn't happen. A woman wrote J. Vernon McGee: "Our preacher said that on Easter Jesus just swooned on the cross and that the disciples nursed him back to health. What do you think?" McGee replied, "Dear Sister, beat your preacher with a leather whip for thirty-nine heavy strokes. Nail him to a cross. Hang him in the sun for six hours. Run a spear through his heart. Embalm him. Put him in an airless tomb for three days. Then see what happens."

**(1 Cor 15:9 NKJV) For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.**

### **Least Apostle – Least Christian – Chief Sinner**

“Because I persecuted the church, I’m the least of the apostles,” says Paul. Later on, he would say, “I’m less than the least of all the Christians” (see Ephesians 3:8). And finally at the end of his life, he would say, “I’m the chief of sinners” (see 1 Timothy 1:15). The longer Paul lived, the more aware he became of his own sin in light of the beauty and grace of Jesus.

**(1 Cor 15:10 NKJV) But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.**

### **If Ever Anyone who Could think Disqualified**

If there was ever anyone that would say I am totally disqualified from ever serving the Lord it would have been Paul, but Paul did not fall for that lie from Satan, the flesh, or the world, and he exemplifies to us - Whomever is forgiven much, loves much

### **Laborer to Complete Exhaustion**

The word labored means to work to complete exhaustion. It also meant to take a beating, but to continual going.

### **Paul Pouring it all In / Forget Theology / Paul Saved – Anyone saved**

Paul is pouring all that he has in his very being, in the service of God. Paul speaks that unknown place of the sovereignty of God and human responsibility - and the best theological explanation I can give you is - to whom is forgiven much, loves much, and my what each of us have been forgiven. As for Paul, his debt was to God, but his payment was to man. Paul recognized his offense, he remembered how low he had gone, how rotten he was, and reflecting back on who he was, and who he now is, continually revealed to him God's great love and grace for him. And, if God saved him, he knew God could and would save any and all who would be willing to come; and God will use any and all. Regarding the story of the prostitute washing Jesus feet, it isn't that she was a bigger sinner, but that she recognized more than the “so-called” good people that any sin, all sin, is an offense before the Holy God. She recognized the holiness of God, while the others (religious people and leaders) did not. Still the same today!

*Luke 7:40–50 (NKJV)* <sup>40</sup> And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.” <sup>41</sup> “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?” <sup>43</sup> Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” <sup>44</sup> Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. <sup>45</sup> You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. <sup>46</sup> You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. <sup>47</sup> Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” <sup>48</sup> Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” <sup>49</sup> And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” <sup>50</sup> Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

### **I Often don't Witness – Next Ray**

I think so often i don't witness because I say they won't care, they won't receive, and I forget that they may be the next me, a person who found life empty and vain, putting up a front, putting on a mask like all was great in my life, when all the while I was empty and lonely - but then the grace of God came to me, and I was changed in a twinkling of an eye.

### **Paul Serves Because of Grace / Paul did next best Thing – God's Love Affection is His People**

Paul says here that it is by and because of grace he serves. Grace is what fueled Paul on, it what gave him the ability to take a beating and keep going, to keep going even while everyone else was quitting or taking a break, grace is what allowed him to laborer for the Lord even though he was tired and exhausted. Paul couldn't wash the feet of Jesus personally like the prostitute did, so he did the next best thing, he washed the feet of God's love affection, God's people, and Paul considered it as washing the feet of Jesus Himself. *Matthew 25:37–40 (NKJV)* <sup>37</sup> “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?’ <sup>38</sup> When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?’ <sup>39</sup> Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’

### **This is the Response to the Resurrection**

Paul gives the gospel in verses 3-4, and then he tells us in verses 5-10 what his response to the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) meant and did for him, and he preaches the same thing to all who believe the same, imitate me as I imitate Christ, verses 5-10 are to be every believers response to this gospel, to the resurrection. Chapter 15 is by divine design to talk the resurrection after chapters 11-14, the supernatural gifts bestowed upon the church for the edification and building up of the body. Chapter 15 is the response to chapter 13, agape love is a verb and thus love is an action, and love is meant to continually be moving. *1 Corinthians 11:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

*Philippians 3:7-11 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. <sup>8</sup> Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, <sup>11</sup> if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

### **Grace is the Fuel Tank**

Verse 10 - But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me - Christian, listen to this, grace fuels your body for service. I will suggest to you that if you don't have the energy or desire to serve in some capacity to and for the Lord, to follow hard after Him to be pleasing to Him, it is because your grace tank is empty. You see the person who lives in the light of His great grace, His great price He was willing to pay for them, is fueled and can't be stopped, because they recognize oh how good the Lord is.

### **Born out of Time**

Verse 8 - one born out of time, the least - Paul is saying I was the runt of the litter, for that is the least, and the runt of the litter is pushed away by the mother because she doesn't want to give precious and limited nourishment for one that most like won't make it, and thus gives the resources to the ones that will survive; but Paul is saying the Lord fed and nourished him and made him into the person he became.

### **Paul had Christ Esteem**

Verse 10 - by the grace of God - Paul didn't have high self-esteem, Paul had Christ-esteem. He knew who he was in Christ, and what the resurrection power of God could do in his life personally.

### **Paul didn't waste the Grace**

Paul did not waste his grace; he served as a response to God's grace. How about you? Christian you were born for so much more, don't waste it.

### **[Video – Something More](#)**

### **Vain – is to waste the Resurrected Life / Roll Away the Stone**

Vain - is to not live the resurrected life. Many people believe Jesus died for their sins, but they are still sitting outside the tomb. Oh Christian roll away the stone and live. You were made for so much more.

*Ephesians 1:19-21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

# The Celebration of the Resurrection

## 1 Corinthians 15:1-58

### [Video – What Really Happened 2,000 Years Ago](#)

#### **Party Animals / Epicurean Mentality**

So carnal was the city of Corinth that the term “Corinthian” was synonymous with “party animal.” This was due in no small part to the fact that Corinth was the center of the Epicurean philosophy, which said that, because there is no eternity, man should eat, drink, and be merry on earth. Part of this Epicurean mentality had filtered into the church. Specifically, there were those in the church who taught there was no resurrection from the dead. “Be a Christian,” they said. “Believe in Jesus Christ. Believe that on the Cross He atoned for the sin of mankind. But don’t believe He really rose again.” Paul tackles this issue head-on in chapter 15 as he talks about the reality of the Resurrection in order to counteract the philosophy of the Epicurean.

#### **Everything Hinges off Resurrection**

Paul will say in our study today “If you do not believe in the Resurrection, your faith is in vain, empty, and useless,” contends Paul. “It all hinges on the Resurrection.”

#### **Chapter 15 – the Great Celebration Chapter**

This chapter 15 is one of the greatest celebration chapters in all the Bible. I will say up front there are some word plays that we will read, they can be quite lengthy, but I think Paul is preaching as much as he is teaching, as he is on-fire proclaiming – He is Alive! The stone has been rolled away, and His body isn’t there! The resurrection is true!

#### **Large Jewish Mix / 7 Feasts for 1500 Years**

The church in Corinth had a large Jewish make-up, we can deduce that from so many of Paul’s references in the past 14 chapters were references that the Jews would know from being raised in Judaism. Now speaking of celebrating, the Jews knew how to celebrate their faith, as God established and taught them, in that they celebrated 7 Feasts every year. Some of the Feasts lasted for a whole week. It was a continual celebration that God was their God, and He provided for them. Now as many of you know, all of these Feasts pointed and were pictures of the Messiah, Jesus. So seven times a year before Jesus would come, for over 1500 years they would celebrate these Feasts.

#### **Paul covers all 7 Feast in this Chapter**

I will show you today, in this celebration chapter, that Paul covers all seven Feast of Israel here in this chapter (not in chronological order – but in the heart of the Feast), and thus what a celebration chapter this is – Christian, It is Done, He has done it for us!

#### **In a nutshell, here is the prophetic significance of each of the seven Levitical feasts of Israel:**

1) Passover (Leviticus 23:5)—Pointed to the Messiah as our Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) whose blood would be shed for our sins. Jesus was crucified on the day of preparation for the Passover at the same hour that the lambs were being slaughtered for the Passover meal that evening.

2) Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:6)—Pointed to the Messiah’s sinless life (as leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible), making Him the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Jesus’ body was in the grave during the first days of this feast, like a kernel of wheat planted and waiting to burst forth as the bread of life.

3) First Fruits (Leviticus 23:10)—Pointed to the Messiah’s resurrection as the first fruits of the righteous. Jesus was resurrected on this very day, which is one of the reasons that Paul refers to him in 1 Corinthians 15:20 as the “first fruits from the dead.”



4) Weeks or Pentecost (Leviticus 23:16)—Occurred fifty days after the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and pointed to the great harvest of souls and the gift of the Holy Spirit for both Jew and Gentile, who would be brought into the kingdom of God during the Church Age (see Acts 2). The Church was actually established on this day when God poured out His Holy Spirit and 3,000 Jews responded to Peter’s great sermon and his first proclamation of the Gospel.

5) Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24)—The first of the fall feasts. Many believe this day points to the Rapture of the Church when the Messiah Jesus will appear in the heavens as He comes for His bride, the Church. The Rapture is always associated in Scripture with the blowing of a loud trumpet (I Thessalonians 4:13–18 and I Corinthians 15:52).

6) Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27)— The chief annual fast day in Judaism on the tenth day of the seventh month, TISHRI. The ritual is detailed in Lev. 16. On this day, when the temple or tabernacle still existed, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to atone for the sins of Israel. Now it is called Yom Kippur

7) Tabernacles or Booths (Leviticus 23:34)— The Feast of Tabernacles was established to follow the Day of Atonement by a few days on Israel’s sacred calendar. God instituted this festival so that Israel’s descendants would know that their ancestors lived in tents when He brought them out of Egypt. Many scholars believe that this feast day points to the Lord’s promise that He will once again “tabernacle” with His people when He returns to reign over all the world (Micah 4:1–7).

### **The Feast of Passover**

1) Passover (Leviticus 23:5)—Pointed to the Messiah as our Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) whose blood would be shed for our sins. Jesus was crucified on the day of preparation for the Passover at the same hour that the lambs were being slaughtered for the Passover meal that evening. Paul celebrates this provision in verses 3–4:

*(1 Cor 15:3 NKJV) For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,*

*(1 Cor 15:4 NKJV) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,*

**(1 Cor 15:11 NKJV) Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.**

#### **Paul referring to all Who had Seen**

Paul is referring to those who had seen the resurrected Jesus—himself, Peter, the apostles, James, and five hundred others.

**(1 Cor 15:12 NKJV) Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?**

**(1 Cor 15:13 NKJV) But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.**

**(1 Cor 15:14 NKJV) And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.**

**(1 Cor 15:15 NKJV) Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up; if in fact the dead do not rise.**

**(1 Cor 15:16 NKJV) For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.**

**(1 Cor 15:17 NKJV) And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!**

**(1 Cor 15:18 NKJV) Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.**

**(1 Cor 15:19 NKJV) If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.**

#### **Most Pitiable**

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, why are we of all men most miserable?

### **Feast of Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)**

6) Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27)— The chief annual fast day in Judaism on the tenth day of the seventh month, TISHRI. The ritual is detailed in Lev. 16. On this day, when the temple or tabernacle still

existed, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to atone for the sins of Israel. Now it is called Yom Kippur

### **Show us a Sign**

“Show us a sign that You are who You claim to be,” they said.

“One sign I’ll show you. Destroy this temple—this body—and in three days I will raise it up” Jesus answered (see John 2:19).

### **Jesus Our High Priest**

Jesus uniquely, singularly rose from the dead. Lots of people make all sorts of claims, but our Hero, our Leader, our Lord Jesus Christ delivered. He came through. And had His offering not been acceptable, our Great High Priest would never have emerged from the tomb on Easter Sunday....

*Hebrews 3:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup>Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,*

### **Day of Atonement**

As the high priest, dressed in linen, went into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement to sprinkle blood on the mercy seat, the people would wonder and wait. If the high priest was himself defiled, if the high priest was himself polluted by sin, he would be smitten dead in the Holy of Holies. But if he emerged, his linen garments sprinkled with blood, the people would know the offering “took.” They would know their sins were forgiven.

### **Jesus walked out of Tomb**

What about our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ? Wrapped in linen, He was placed in the tomb. All of heaven wondered. All of history waited. Did the offering take? Was His blood accepted? Because He emerged from the tomb on that glorious Easter Sunday, we know the offering did, indeed, take. We know His blood was accepted. We know that we are forgiven.

### **Fallen Asleep**

Verse 18 – those who had fallen asleep is a euphuism, it meant those who had died, but Paul is saying Christians don’t die, they fall asleep on earth, and awake in heaven.

*2 Corinthians 5:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.*

**(1 Cor 15:20 NKJV) But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.**

**(1 Cor 15:21 NKJV) For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.**

**(1 Cor 15:22 NKJV) For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.**

**(1 Cor 15:23 NKJV) But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.**

### **Feast of Firstfruits**

**3) First Fruits (Leviticus 23:10)**—Pointed to the Messiah’s resurrection as the first fruits of the righteous. Jesus was resurrected on this very day, which is one of the reasons that Paul refers to him in I Corinthians 15:20 as the “first fruits from the dead.”

### **Adam Sin Entered**

So through Adam sin entered the world, but through Christ there is resurrection from the dead for all who believe in Him.

### **Feast of Firstfruit**

In the Levitical calendar, the day following Passover was a day of celebration called the Feast of Firstfruits. During this feast, the Jews waved wheat from their crops toward heaven, signifying their gratitude to the Lord for His provision and the promise of more to come. When did Christ rise? The day following Passover—on the Feast of Firstfruits. Jesus is the Firstfruit because there’s more to come. Who? You and me. Jesus was the first One truly resurrected never to die again—but many more will follow.

### **We have Hope / There is a Tomorrow**

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, why are we of all men most miserable? Because we have hope that life will get better, that things will be right, that bills will be no more, that tears will cease to flow.

### **When I Die – Put up a Sign**

When I die don't put me in no casket, no box, don't send the message that i am bound up in some box. I am free, I am more free than ever before, I will be in my body and out of this one that is already starting to fail me. Put up videos, show pictures, of me holding my son, sitting with my wife, teaching this word, and let it be known I am waiting for them, for I know the resurrection is true. Put a sign up here on the pulpit that Sunday, “gone home”

### **As Long as I have Breath**

But - as long as I have a breath today, I will proclaim the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection.

### **The Feast of Tabernacles**

**(1 Cor 15:24 NKJV) Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.**

**(1 Cor 15:25 NKJV) For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.**

**(1 Cor 15:26 NKJV) The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.**

**(1 Cor 15:27 NKJV) For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.**

**(1 Cor 15:28 NKJV) Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.**

### **Feast of Tabernacles**

7) Tabernacles or Booths (Leviticus 23:34)— The Feast of Tabernacles was established to follow the Day of Atonement by a few days on Israel's sacred calendar. God instituted this festival so that Israel's descendants would know that their ancestors lived in tents when He brought them out of Egypt. Many scholars believe that this feast day points to the Lord's promise that He will once again “tabernacle” with His people when He returns to reign over all the world (Micah 4:1–7).

### **Revelation 21**

My oh my how verses 24-28 sound so much like Revelation 21.

*Revelation 20:14–21:4 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. <sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. <sup>1</sup> Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. <sup>2</sup> Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”*

### **When Death Destroyed – Death will never Hurt us Again**

When at last the kingdom of death is cast into outer darkness, Christ will rule and reign unchallenged. What a day that will be! The last enemy to be destroyed, nevermore to haunt or burden anyone, will not only be physical death, but the death of marriage, the death of joy, the death of peace, the death of everything that brings about hopelessness, heaviness, and sorrow.

### **Resurrection Promise of Heaven**

The resurrection is the promise of heaven, it will be! I have a special needs child, and some days are unbearable, mentally and physically taxing, but we have a saying – tomorrow will be better. We live many days, just getting through the day, waiting and looking for tomorrow, and one of those tomorrow's – will be heaven, where I will living Revelation 21 out, where God will tabernacle with me, my wife, my children. If we didn't have the hope of the resurrection, we would have no hope.

## Note

Verse 27 - it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted - With the exception of God, all things are under the feet of Jesus Christ. Soon, He will take control of that which is twice His—that which was given to Him by the Father and that which was purchased by His own blood on Calvary.

## Note

Verses 28 - then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him - The Son shall remain in submission to the Father not because He is inferior, but because it was a choice He made (Philippians 2:7, 8), the effects of which remain.

**(1 Cor 15:29 NKJV) Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?**

## Pagan Practice – Contradicts their belief

Paul here is making reference to a pagan practice of the day where the living would do a proxy stand in and be baptized for someone who had already died. Paul is saying hey if they don't believe in the resurrection, why are they doing this baptism thing.

## Mormons baptize for Dead

Now, just as an important note, the Mormons use this verse to teach that a person can be baptized in place of relatives who died generations ago. This is why they place such importance upon genealogies. However, unbeknownst to most people, a dark spiritualism is linked to this aspect of Mormonism. What Paul is talking about is actually quite simple. Baptism is a symbol of death, burial, and resurrection. "If Jesus is not risen," he asks, "why would you be baptized?"

*Deuteronomy 18:9–14 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> "When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. <sup>10</sup> There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, <sup>11</sup> or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. <sup>12</sup> For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. <sup>13</sup> You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. <sup>14</sup> For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you.

**(1 Cor 15:30 NKJV) And why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?**

**(1 Cor 15:31 NKJV) I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.**

**(1 Cor 15:32 NKJV) If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"**

## Paul Dies Daily

"While you are celebrating your Epicurean Christianity, I'm risking my life every day. Why would I do this if there is no resurrection?" asks Paul.

*2 Corinthians 11:22–29 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. <sup>23</sup> Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. <sup>24</sup> From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. <sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; <sup>26</sup> in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; <sup>27</sup> in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—<sup>28</sup> besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. <sup>29</sup> Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?

## What good is a Dead Savior / The Whole Point / Paul dies Daily

What good is a dead savior? If there is no resurrection then what is the point, but if there is a resurrection, if He is alive, then it is the whole point, it is the whole point of life finding out what the resurrected Jesus means to me personally, and how then am I to live according to the knowledge and revelation. Paul gives a subtle, yet clear application of how he applies the truth of the resurrection – he dies daily. How about you, is that the degree you apply the fact of the resurrection? I die daily, to my selfish wants and desire, I die daily for the needs of my spouse and children, I die daily for the furtherance of the gospel. Christian, how often do you die?

**(1 Cor 15:33 NKJV) Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."**

**(1 Cor 15:34 NKJV) Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.**

#### **Paul would be a Party Animal / Friend Request Jesus / Vain**

*Verse 32 - If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"* - Paul is saying that if the resurrection wasn't true he would be a party animal; but since the resurrection is true, he will live his life as such. You will live what you believe. Your actions will reflect what you truly believe. As we said last week, some people merely "friend request" He is just one of their 100, 500, 1000 on their list. Vain means without cause, without success, without effort. To believe in vain means that it has no effect on a person's life, it is just something they speak with their mouths, but not with the actions of their lives. They believe the words spoken, but it isn't enough to make them change, and they continue to live on totally unchanged.

*(1 Cor 15:1 NKJV) Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,*

*(1 Cor 15:2 NKJV) by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you; unless you believed in vain.*

#### **Definition of Deceived / Watch your Company**

*Verse 33 - Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."* – the word "deceive" means "go astray, "seduce", "wander" "be out of the way" , to lead away from the truth, to lead into error. "Your discussions with the Epicureans are making you confused about the simplicity of the gospel," Paul warns the Corinthian believers.

#### **The Goal of Satan**

The whole goal of Satan, the pinnacle of his evilness is that you might be lead away from the Lord. We think his goal of evilness is that a person does drugs, gets drunk, commits sexual immorality. No, no those are merely means that he uses to accomplish his ultimate goal, and that is to separate, lead away, the person from Christ. So people are continually being lead away from the Lord by this thing or that thing, and hey they are evil the person thinks, but they miss that they serve the same purpose as the "evil things", in that they lead a person away from the Lord. Don't be deceived Christian. Die daily, let every thought and action be daily taken to the cross, and in light of the cross you will see what their true worth is – does this thing or someone bring me closer to the Heavenly Father, or not.

**(1 Cor 15:35 NKJV) But someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?"**

#### **Mockers will say How can that Be**

In this verse Paul says there are going to come some mockers, and say ok then tell us exactly how that is going to happen that someone dies, and then they come back to life.

**(1 Cor 15:36 NKJV) Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies.**

**(1 Cor 15:37 NKJV) And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain; perhaps wheat or some other grain.**

**(1 Cor 15:38 NKJV) But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.**

**(1 Cor 15:39 NKJV) All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds.**

**(1 Cor 15:40 NKJV) There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.**

**(1 Cor 15:41 NKJV) There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.**

#### **Every Star Different**

*Verse 41 - for one star differs from another star in glory* – Interestingly that Paul would say this because it is only in the recent modern technology age that scientist can confirm that statement that every star is different from another.

### **See the Resurrection all Around You**

Paul is saying the resurrection is around you every day, in nature. Look at nature. If you put an ugly brown bulb in the ground, what happens? It sends down its roots, cracks in half, and sends up greenery. As the warm sun beats down on the budding plant, a beautiful yellow daffodil appears from what once was an ugly brown bulb. So, too, Paul says the same thing we observe in nature will take place in the resurrection.

### **Genetic Coding**

There is genetic coding in the grain seeds to grow, and thus for the believer God imparts his genetic code into our bodies that when we die we are genetically coded to resurrect.

### **Our Bodies will be Different**

Just as we see different bodies now—those of lions, fish, and beasts; those of sun, moon, and stars—our resurrected bodies will be different from those we have now. Because our present bodies are designed for fourteen pounds of pressure per square inch, we can only travel in the air or underwater in pressurized cabins or suits. And because our present bodies are designed to take in a specific mix of air composed of 78 percent oxygen, 21 percent nitrogen, and 1 percent of assorted gases, we remain essentially earthbound.

### **Need New Body fit for Heaven**

But our eternal bodies will require neither space suit nor oxygen tank. We're going to be free to explore, soar, and do all kinds of things we can't even dream about doing today as we cruise the cosmos without limitations or restrictions. Right now, we inhabit ugly brown bulbs. But when we see Him, we shall be like Him. Oh, happy day that will be!

### **The Feast of Unleavened Bread**

**(1 Cor 15:42 NKJV) So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.**

**(1 Cor 15:43 NKJV) It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.**

### **Unleavened Bread**

**2) Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:6)**—Pointed to the Messiah's sinless life (as leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible), making Him the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Jesus' body was in the grave during the first days of this feast, like a kernel of wheat planted and waiting to burst forth as the bread of life. It was prophesied that the Father would not leave His body in the ground to rot (Psalm 16). And, thus Him being firstfruit, means we will follow in like manner.

*Acts 2:25–28 (NKJV) <sup>25</sup> For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. <sup>26</sup> Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. <sup>27</sup> For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. <sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'*

*Psalm 16:8–11 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. <sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. <sup>10</sup> For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. <sup>11</sup> You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

### **Body Unwinding -**

The body is unwinding, it is fading, even all the exercise and juicer drinks, it is fading. But I say since we are getting a new body, let's make sure we wear this one out.

**(1 Cor 15:44 NKJV) It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.**

**(1 Cor 15:45 NKJV) And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.**

**(1 Cor 15:46 NKJV) However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.**

### **We begin as Natural first**

We begin as natural men. It is not until we're born again by the life-giving Spirit of the last Adam that we become spiritual beings.

### **Last Adam is Jesus / Only Through Jesus can Man Live Again**

The first Adam, life and sin entered the world, the last Adam speaks of Jesus Christ. It is through Jesus and Jesus only that man can live again. And Jesus did do this from afar, but came near, took on our sin and shame, became the Passover Lamb, so that we might overcome death and the grave.

### **Resurrection – Word that Differentiates**

The word “resurrection” is the word that differentiates Christianity from all other religions.

### **Illustration**

Let me give you an illustration of the difference between God and the false religions. One day a traveler fell in some quicksand and was going under. Confucius came by and said, it is evident that man should avoid such situations then he kept walking. Then Mohammed came by and shaking his fist at the man said, It is the will of Allah, and kept walking, Buddha came by and said, Let this man's dilemma be an example to many and kept walking. Krishna came by and said Better luck next time and kept walking. Then Jesus Christ came, reached His hand down and said, Take my hand, I will pull you out. Only Jesus has the power and the love to pull you out of the quicksand of sin.

**(1 Cor 15:47 NKJV) The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.**

**(1 Cor 15:48 NKJV) As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.**

**(1 Cor 15:49 NKJV) And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.**

### **Just an Earthen Vessel – Someday a New Image**

Although presently I am free to be who I am—just an earthy, clay pot—I know someday I'll be much more. Someday I'll bear the image of Christ, in a body custom-made for the heavenlies.

*1 John 3:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

**(1 Cor 15:50 NKJV) Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.**

### **Must be Born Again**

The natural body cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; a person must be born again.

*John 3:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

### **The Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)**

**(1 Cor 15:51 NKJV) Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed;**

**(1 Cor 15:52 NKJV) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**

**(1 Cor 15:53 NKJV) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.**

### **Feast Trumpets**

5) Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24)—The first of the fall feasts. Many believe this day points to the Rapture of the Church when the Messiah Jesus will appear in the heavens as He comes for His bride, the Church. The Rapture is always associated in Scripture with the blowing of a loud trumpet (I Thessalonians 4:13–18 and I Corinthians 15:52).

## **Mystery – New Factor in this Death Thing**

The Greek word translated “mystery” is musterion. Musterion speaks of something that has previously been hidden, but is now known. Following Paul’s discussion of the necessity of dying in order that we might move into the eternal realm, he says there is something new to factor in to the equation....

## **Reference to Rapture**

Here is the first reference to the hope of the Rapture. Paul tells us that, rather than dying, some will be changed in the twinkling of an eye. When the trumpet sounds, as 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 more fully explains, the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven. The dead in Christ shall rise, and then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet with them in the clouds. We’ll be changed immediately without going through the death process at all.

*1 Thessalonians 4:15–18 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**(1 Cor 15:54 NKJV) So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."**

## **Death Swallowed Up / 2 Cor 5:8**

Death is swallowed up in victory. Because our hearts tell us this is so, because the Word declares it to be, instead of moaning and mourning over believers who have died, we can truly be happy and elated for them if we understand the big picture of eternity.

*2 Corinthians 5:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

**(1 Cor 15:55 NKJV) "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"**

**(1 Cor 15:56 NKJV) The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.**

**(1 Cor 15:57 NKJV) But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

## **Jesus took the Stinger**

A little girl was having a picnic with her daddy. Deathly allergic to bee stings, she became terrified as a bumblebee buzzed overhead. Seeing the bee, her father caught it and held it in his hand for a few seconds before letting it go. As it buzzed around once more, the little girl cried, “Daddy, Daddy, why did you let the bee go?” Rather than explain, the father chose to simply open his hand to show his daughter the stinger embedded in his palm. That’s precisely what Jesus did for me when He absorbed the sting of my sin and stupidity.

## **The Feast of Pentecost**

**(1 Cor 15:58 NKJV) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**

## **Feast of Pentecost**

4) Weeks or Pentecost (Leviticus 23:16)—Occurred fifty days after the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and pointed to the great harvest of souls and the gift of the Holy Spirit for both Jew and Gentile, who would be brought into the kingdom of God during the Church Age (see Acts 2). The Church was actually established on this day when God poured out His Holy Spirit and 3,000 Jews responded to Peter’s great sermon and his first proclamation of the Gospel. In our study last week we saw what fueled Paul on, and it was his recognition of God’s great grace.

*(1 Cor 15:10 NKJV)* But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

*Acts 2:16–21 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: <sup>17</sup> ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. <sup>18</sup> And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. <sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. <sup>20</sup> The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. <sup>21</sup> And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.’



### **Always Abounding in work of Lord / God Doesn't pay on Commission**

In light of the reality of eternity, in light of the Cross of Calvary, in light of the fact that what we do on this earth will determine our heavenly intensity, Paul says, "Work for the Lord so that your labor will not be in vain." So much of what we do with our time, energy, and money is vain. So much of what we do is going to fall apart, pass away, or break down. But that which we do for the Lord—the worship we give Him, the work we do for Him, the gifts we bring to Him—will not be in vain. Even if it seems that what you're doing for Him is not making a very big impact, know this: Your labor is not in vain. The Lord does not pay you on commission. He pays you for your labor. He doesn't pay you depending upon how successful you are in service. He pays you by the hour. Just be faithful to do what He has called you to do, and leave the results to Him.

### **He will give us Holy Spirit**

Remember our studies of chapters 12-14, the Holy Spirit has been poured out and given to these people, and Paul wraps this multi chapter journey up with verse 58, and this is what it is all for – for the laborers of God, to be laboring for the cause of the Kingdom.

# 1 Corinthians 16

## Open thy Mouth and I will Fill It (16:1-9)

### **Church in Corinth having Problems / They think they are Mature / Foot in World - Church**

The Church of God in Corinth is having some problems, their problems are causing them to be fractured and divided, sinning and selfish, and although they speak in tongues and think of themselves as spiritual, we see from Paul's writing they are spiritually immature and personally deceived. They live in one of the most carnal places in the whole world at this time, and they haven't figured out how to separate themselves from the world, and unto Christ. They have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. Paul is writing them so that they lack no spiritual gift, so they reach spiritual maturity.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Letter of Correction – Instructions in Righteousness / Spiritual Maturity**

So Paul is writing them this letter. It has been called a letter of correction, and that is so; but let it not be confused in what it ultimately is, instruction is righteousness, the path to spiritual maturity. So here is a high level overview of where we have been in this book.

### **BRIEF OUTLINE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS**

(Correction in Error – Instructions in Righteousness)

- Sainthood (1:1–9)
- Unity (1:10—3:23)
- Servanthood (4:1–21)
- Morality (5:1—6:20)
- Marriage (7:1–40)
- Liberty (8:1—11:1)
- Men and women in the church (11:2–16)
- The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
- Spiritual Gifts (12–14)
- The Resurrection (15)
- Stewardship (16:1–4)
- Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)

### **Stewardship (16:1–4)**

**(1 Cor 16:1 NKJV) Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:**

**(1 Cor 16:2 NKJV) On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.**

**(1 Cor 16:3 NKJV) And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem.**

**(1 Cor 16:4 NKJV) But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me.**

### **Not on Tithing / Jerusalem Church on Hard Times**

Most teach this is a passage on tithing, but I do not think so myself. The collection is being taken up by Paul as he went through and visited the various churches in Galatia, and the offering would then be given to the church in Jerusalem which at this point was in poverty. The Believers in Jerusalem were excommunicated from their families, the local Jewish residents would no longer buy wares from their business, and employers would be telling their Christian workers that their services would no longer be needed, to be a Believer in Jerusalem was the hardest place to be a Christian at in the entire world at this time. There is also an indication that there is a famine going on in the area of Jerusalem at the time of this writing, so tough times going on for the Believers in Jerusalem.

### **Can you Relate?**

Maybe that sounds like your life right now; maybe your family has distanced themselves from you, maybe the water cooler grows strangely silent when you walk up, maybe friends you once called best, no longer return your phone calls, and maybe you are on financial or physical hardship – well God sees you just like He saw the saints in Jerusalem, and He is in work for you to supply all your needs.

*Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

### **Paul will ask for Others**

So Paul is taking up a collection for the struggling church. I like this about Paul, as we seen he wouldn't ask a denarii for himself, but had no problem asking for others.

### **Tithing was before Law**

Now the tithe was required in the Old Testament law; but it also precedes the law, as seen in the account of Abraham giving tithes to Melchizedek—a pre-Incarnate appearance of Christ (Genesis 14:20). In addition, tithing is seen in the New Testament—for although Jesus indicts the Pharisees for neglecting the weightier matters of justice and mercy, He, nonetheless, says they shouldn't leave tithing undone (Matthew 23:23).

*Matthew 23:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.*

### **Not a Law – But Love**

I believe tithing is a New Testament principle, but it is not a law, the law is simply that God loves a cheerful giver. And I note that Jesus elevated every law, He took it beyond action but elevated to the heart. Anger was elevated to murder, lust to adultery, death to life, and sin to righteousness. So give from what is on your heart, and thus seek the Lord to impress His heart upon your heart, and you will know you are in His will.

*2 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> *So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*

### **We Receive – Not Take an Offering / We Trust God**

We do not take an offering; we receive an offering, because we do not by any way want to be a part of someone giving because they felt pressured into it. God seeks people, not their stuff, and we follow His heart's desire, and thus we don't give the pressure pitch for money. We trust God will provide for His Church. I think a church that continually pressures for money is not trusting in the Lord.

*2 Corinthians 12:14 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> *Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*

### **I Don't Pressure – But can Testify / Release Materialism – Trust God – Wisdom on Money**

So I don't pressure, but I can testify, and I can testify to what He said in Malachi, see if He will not open the heavens, and since I have been faithful in my giving, God has been faithful in His provision. Never too little that I did not make my bills, and never too much that I forgot Him, and got myself wrapped up in materialism. It is more than faith (trusting He will provide), it is also wisdom as He teaches me how best to handle the money I do have. I can tell you from my heart, when I began to tithe, I immediately started to become wise in my spending and investing.

*Malachi 3:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.*

### **Layoffs at Work**

Well we are in round three of layoffs at work, this time they are cutting 800. Round one and two each were 500. So when this one is over that will be 25% of the workforce gone in 18 months. If I get laid off I don't want to look back and wonder if it is because God is discipline me for not being faithful in three areas.

One, I complained and was not thankful for the provision God gave me in my job; Two, I said no when I could have said yes, meaning I did not give 100% every day, but just did the bare requirements; Three, my job became a distraction that I put it first before serving the Lord, and Fourth I was not faithful with my tithe, I held back from God. So I have and am faithful in these four areas, so if I get a notice, then I will not question that it is discipline, but it is God's desire to do something else in my life whatever that may be.

*Malachi 3:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.

### **Statement – Can’t out give God**

Let me make a statement - you can’t out give God – Period!

### **Tithe and Offering**

Now nearly every commentator says this passage is about tithing, but it is not, it is about a love offering being collected for the Believers in Jerusalem. The tithe has to go to the church so it can pay the rent and expenses. That is what was modeled in the OT. But here Paul is speaking of a special collection. So there is tithing and offering, and bottom line, you will never out give God, so for those who practice tithing and contributing to special offerings when they come, you will never be left lacking because you have.

*Malachi 3:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ *In tithes and offerings.*

*Malachi 3:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.

### **God called us to Support Foreign Churches / We get Blessed Tremendously – Cant Out Give God**

Now when we first began we felt that the Lord called us to give ten percent of our tithe to support the less fortunate churches, widows, and orphanages abroad. So we model this model, as we are the prosperous American church, we look out for our brothers and sisters in economically depressed area. We support churches in Nicaragua and India. By the way, being that you can’t out give God, guess whose church also gets blessed for doing so, amen that would be us.

### **Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)**

**(1 Cor 16:5 NKJV) Now I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia (for I am passing through Macedonia).**

**(1 Cor 16:6 NKJV) And it may be that I will remain, or even spend the winter with you, that you may send me on my journey, wherever I go.**

**(1 Cor 16:7 NKJV) For I do not wish to see you now on the way; but I hope to stay a while with you, if the Lord permits.**

### **If the Lord Permits / Proverbs 3:5-6 / Expect to be Bothered**

Although it was Paul’s plan to winter in Corinth before traveling to Jerusalem, he adds a very important phrase when he says, “if the Lord permit.” “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart,” Proverbs tells us. “And lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths” (3:5, 6). Therefore, wise is the man or woman who says, “This is the way the day is mapped out or the week is supposed to go—but, Lord, You can interrupt it as much as You want whenever You want.” I have found that if I am expecting to be divinely interrupted by this person, that situation, or the unknown event, I go through the day with a smile on my face. But if an unexpected interruption comes on a day when I have written my schedule in stone—watch out! The key? Expect to be bothered, and you’ll never be bothered.

*Proverbs 3:5–6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

### **Guard Your Time**

Now, even with that said, Christian guard your time, protect it as the greatest resource you have, for once the day is spent, it is gone, and so treat your time as an investment, and everyday invest wisely in the things of the Lord. First and foremost, invest in your personal relationship with Him. We must be wise about our day, because some disruptions are merely distractions of no fruit. For instance, I block my calendar at work for lunch, I hide myself away somewhere, and I spend an hour with the Lord. I need that three times a day just like David did. I seek to redeem my time for the days are evil, and I must be on guard for Satan trying to send people and things my way which only end up with me casting my pearls before swine’s.

Now if there if there is a lunchtime meeting that a manager wants, I attend it. But I clearly recognize when Satan sends people my way who are there to only rob me of my private time with the Lord. But how vital that I keep my ear tuned to the voice of the Father, because sometime I recognize that the Lord is opening

up a divine moment right now for me with this person, and I need to fully immerse myself in the opportunity before me. So the balance, divine interruptions, Satan's distractions, how do we know, I would say it all begins in the morning devotion with the Lord, getting refilled, and then walking with Him throughout the day. Too often I say good bye to the Lord after the morning devotion, and say I talk with You again at lunch. Pray continuously, fire it up in the morning, and continually stoke the fire throughout the day, and just move and flow where God leads you throughout the day.

*Psalm 55:17-18 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice. <sup>18</sup> He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle that was against me, For there were many against me.

*Ephesians 5:15-16 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, <sup>16</sup> redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

*Matthew 7:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

*1 Thessalonians 5:16-22 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not despise prophecies. <sup>21</sup> Test all things; hold fast what is good. <sup>22</sup> Abstain from every form of evil.

**(1 Cor 16:8 NKJV) But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost.**

**(1 Cor 16:9 NKJV) For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.**

### **A Door was Open in Ephesus**

So there was a great door open in Ephesus for Paul, and he was taking it for all it is worth. We have a great door opened for us at the local high school and we are taking it for all that we can, because we don't know when it will close.

### **But Adversaries come with Every Door**

Paul says the door is open and it is great! But notice that he says there are many adversaries that come with that great door. One of the greatest failings in ministries is that people quit because they get resistance and adversaries, and then say, well God must not be in it because at every turn we have this problem or that person coming against us. When Satan sees a door, he takes it too, because he is not going to sit by and watch his territory be taken. I don't know how many times I have said to my wife, well we must be doing something right because Satan sure does have our address. And, as I have said before, we sit in the seat of the heart of the greatest Nation in the world, and we can be sure that Satan is working hard against allowing any type of spiritual revival from happening here in the Nation's Capital.

### **When Open – be Ready to Walk through It**

When the door is opened, we need to be ready to walk through it and minister effectively in it. In Acts 14 Paul spoke of the door that was opened to him with the Gentiles, and when it opened, he took full advantage of it. He spoke of a great door that opened to him in Troas to preach Christ, and he took full advantage of that when it opened.

*Acts 14:21-27 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, <sup>22</sup> strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." <sup>23</sup> So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. <sup>24</sup> And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. <sup>25</sup> Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. <sup>26</sup> From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. <sup>27</sup> Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

*2 Corinthians 2:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord,

### **Door not Always Open / Pray that it Opens**

But, that door isn't always open, and the Lord points out to us to pray that it may open, and we see that in Paul as he asks for prayer that God would open the door for him to preach Christ we need to be praying for a great and effective door to open. Keep praying that He will open the door.

*Colossians 4:2-3 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; <sup>3</sup> meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains,

## **My Long – No Prayers Answered**

Well I have to share with you, I am on quite a “winning streak” when it comes to my prayer life as of late (and I am saying that sarcastically). As of late, the last two to three months, none of my prayers have been answered, I can look through my prayer journal and see no “praise reports”. I like to write my praise reports in my journal as well so when I go back through my journals I can read all my requests, and see answers, and doors that opened for me. Well, in the last few months, I have been totally shut out. And to be honest when weeks turn into months, I find myself becoming defeated in prayer, discouraged, even to the point that I don’t look forward to prayer time. The thought of praying for those things again immediately produces fatigue within me, I feel what is the use, nothing is going to change, so why labor any more in it. Is it only me, or do you feel that way yourself when you have prayed, you have prayed, you have wept, you have cried out to the Lord, and day after day, week after week, month after month, maybe year after year, those particular prayers now seem hopeless.

## **Prayer Matters! / Luke 18**

Precious saints, always remember this – “Prayer Matters”. The Lord says that even in these times of no answer, to not lose heart, but to keep praying, even when all looks lost.

*Luke 18:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,*

## **How to Come out of Defeat**

What have I learned of how to come out of those times, to revive my prayer life when it seems so hopeless? How do I pull out of it, and what can I offer to you? I keep a set of promises of God, and then I just pray the verses, I claim them, I believe them, and God revives me, He reminds me, that He is faithful and He wants to work in the situation. So I read them, and dwell on them continually, and God has never once failed me, that when I do, as I do, I mount up on wings of eagles again:

*Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV) <sup>31</sup> But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.*

## **When Defeated – Come to these Verses / prayer Matters**

When I am Defeated – I come back to these verses and it doesn’t take long to be confident again that “Prayer Matters”

## **Forget your Theology**

Just a real simple and clear statement, you do not have because you do not ask. Maybe your theology gets in the way of asking, maybe you think God is going to do what God is going to do, so what is the use and sense of spending the energy when God is going to do what God is going to do. I struggle greatly with that often, but then these verses flood back to me, and He (God) is saying to me, saying to you, ask me, Forget my theology, forget my excuses, just real simple – ask! And more than that, Ray you have not, because you ask not.

*Luke 11:5–10 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; <sup>7</sup> and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you’? <sup>8</sup> I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. <sup>9</sup> “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*

*James 4:1–3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? <sup>2</sup> You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. **Yet you do not have because you do not ask.** <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

## **Pray for Them**

Oh the reminder, the need for us to pray for our loved ones and friends, for those that are being deceived and devoured by the Evil One, those who are being blinded by the god of this world, those that are buying the lie of this world, for those that once walked with us, but no longer do. God says come and let’s talk about this together, let us battle for them together, give Me a reason to go knock on their hearts door, I will go do it because you asked Me to do it. And, when the door of opportunity opens, My heart and your heart will be one, and you will speak and minister to them effectively on My behalf.

*Colossians 1:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, **do not cease to pray for you**, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;*

### **See If I won't Open Heaven for You**

What is I that you are worried about Ray, I will provide, I will meet you at your need, I will be to you all that you need!

*Psalm 81:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *I am the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt; **Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.***

### **Call to Me**

Come to Me in prayer Ray, I want to talk with you, I want to calm your heart, I want to ensure to you that I hear you. Even when you think I don't, I do, and I am working.

*Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *'**Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.**'*

*Jeremiah 29:11–13 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.* <sup>12</sup> *Then you will call upon Me and go **and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.*** <sup>13</sup> *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

### **Ask or Think / Prayer Life – in Light of Resurrection**

A reminder of His strength, and His promise to give me strength; the same power that rose Jesus from the dead is what is available to me to overcome whatever is set before me. Your prayer life must always be in the shadow of the empty tomb, and the light of the resurrection, the reminder that God delivers on His Word. Oh the power of chapter 15, the resurrection chapter.

*Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> *Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above **all that we ask or think**, according to the power that works in us,*

### **Read the Verses – He will strengthen your Heart**

Read these verses, meditate on them, and he shall strengthen your heart, I can tell you that not from a theological position, but from personal proof.

*Psalm 27:14 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> *Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!*

### **We Must not Faint / Pray for door to Open – be ready when it Does**

We can't faint, we can't grow weary, we cannot quit, for prayer matters and it is how God moves. We pray for the door to open, and because we have, when it opens we are prepared to minister effectively when we enter into it.

# *Stand Fast*

## *1 Corinthians 16:10-24*

### **Church in Corinth having Problems / They think they are Mature / Foot in World - Church**

The Church of God in Corinth is having some problems, their problems are causing them to be fractured and divided, sinning and selfish, and although they speak in tongues and think of themselves as spiritual, we see from Paul's writing they are spiritually immature and personally deceived. They live in one of the most carnal places in the whole world at this time, and they haven't figured out how to separate themselves from the world, and unto Christ. They have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. Paul is writing them so that they lack no spiritual gift, so they reach spiritual maturity.

*(1 Cor 1:7 NKJV) so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

### **Letter of Correction – Instructions in Righteousness / Spiritual Maturity**

So Paul is writing them this letter. It has been called a letter of correction, and that is so; but let it not be confused in what it ultimately is, instruction is righteousness, the path to spiritual maturity. So here is a high level overview of where we have been in this book.

### **BRIEF OUTLINE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS**

(Correction in Error – Instructions in Righteousness)

- Sainthood (1:1–9)
- Unity (1:10—3:23)
- Servanthood (4:1–21)
- Morality (5:1—6:20)
- Marriage (7:1–40)
- Liberty (8:1—11:1)
- Men and women in the church (11:2–16)
- The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
- Spiritual Gifts (12–14)
- The Resurrection (15)
- Stewardship (16:1–4)
- Personal plans and greetings (16:5–24)

### **After 15.5 Chapters – The Charge**

So now after 15.5 chapters we finish off this letter. Mind you, when the letter arrived they would have gathered together and someone would have stood up and started to read the letter to the congregation. So maybe an hour to read the whole thing; but for us it took us about 20 hours to read through this letter. So after one hour of sitting (20 for us) Paul gives his closing charge, a summation of all they had heard and been instructed to do, and he says verse 13-14,

*(1 Cor 16:13 NKJV) Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.*

*(1 Cor 16:14 NKJV) Let all that you do be done with love.*

### **Very Timely for our Time**

So our charge, our application, and I think a timely calling considering how the world around us (an I mean Christians) see to have their eyes elsewhere, are not standing fast as they are swayed by the this thing or that thing, and being strong and brave is a hard route, and people are saying it is too hard to swim against the current.

*2 Timothy 3:1–5 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: <sup>2</sup> For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, <sup>4</sup> traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!*

### **Let's Finish**

So let's pick up where we left off, and finish this wonderful letter from our brother Paul, and may it help us to finish strong in our Christian walk.



**(1 Cor 16:10 NKJV) Now if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do.**

**(1 Cor 16:11 NKJV) Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren.**

### **I've had some Tough Days / Timothy going to a Carnal Church / What a Heart for God's People**

I have to tell you I have had some days in ministry where I could feel the knives going through me with their eyes. I have done funeral services where people have got up and walked out on me, oh the nerve of him they thought for talking about Christ at a funeral. I am glad I teach here in this church, for I could imagine myself being run out of town, or at least the sanctuary, if I went to preach the same message of sin and repentance at certain other denomination, and God save me when I say homosexuality is a sin. Well, could you imagine our brother Timothy, sweet and gentle Timothy, going to this carnal church in Corinth. All the carnality, and the factions and divisions, and then here comes Timothy. Timothy had an incredible heart for God's people, that is obvious by his willingness to come to such a church. No doubt with all the pride and showmanship (with their so-called spiritual gifts, as everyone was getting into the act, and the church service was like a three-ring circus), and here comes Timothy to minister to them. I can imagine people saying who does he think he is, why didn't Paul send him, why didn't Paul recognize my spiritual salt and have me give the speech, why does Paul send us some little kid (as Timothy was a young man). Wow, not a great environment for Timothy, but out of love he went. I am not sure how well received he was, but that is beside the point, we see a young man of faith going out and serving the Lord.

### **Hey Youth / Not Despise your Youth / Stir up your Gift**

Hey youth, don't let anyone despise your youth, go out there and serve the King, and don't worry what people think. Why would Paul have to tell the Corinthians not to despise Timothy? Because Timothy was weak physically (1 Timothy 5:23) and emotionally (2 Timothy 1:7). Yet Paul saw in him a heart for the kingdom. "Don't let your gifts lie dormant because of your timidity," he said, "but stir up the gifts within you" (see 2 Timothy 1:6). Timothy lived up to the potential Paul saw in him and went on to become a giant in Church history. You have a gift, everyone has a gift, find out what is yours and begin to use it, and you will only find out what your gift is by stepping out in faith and serving, and seeing where the Lord leads you. Parents, school and extracurricular activities are great, but don't neglect the gifts your kids have, take them out to serve, teach them how to serve.

*1 Timothy 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

*2 Timothy 1:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

### **Where does Promotion Come From**

And, let me make a point about promotion; don't worry about it (Psalm 75). Now this would apply at the work place, on the sports team, and in the church and ministry. I am so embarrassed to tell this story, but if it helps one person then it would be worth it. But oh I remember when I had been saved a whole 2 years (almost 20 years ago), and the church I was at announced their new children's pastor, and it wasn't me. My friend said why didn't they ask you, and I gave some holy Joe answer, but deep inside me I said yea, why not me. Well, time would reveal to me that I wasn't all that I thought I was, in fact, I was all full of myself. The man they picked was the man for the job. When I realized this a few years after I repented before the Lord saying oh how you are so patient with a fool. But, that event also brought me to a place that, Lord I will wait on You to open doors, and I won't resent another man's promotion over mine, but support them in any way I can. But, I'll add this, and was three more times it happened, and I said well Lord, I rest in you, and I will wait for You to open up a door of ministry. But all three of those times, the wrong person was picked, and two of them ended in disaster. I am glad those doors didn't open for me, because then it is doubtful I would be here, and I know I am currently standing in God's perfect will for my life. So too for you, Psalm 75. God will not let your gift go to waste, so if this door closes, try the door over there, and if that doesn't open, try the next door. I personally believe the best door to try is the door no one else wants to try.

*Psalm 75:6-7 (KJV 1900) <sup>6</sup> For promotion cometh neither from the east, Nor from the west, nor from the south. <sup>7</sup> But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another.*

**(1 Cor 16:12 NKJV) Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time; however, he will come when he has a convenient time.**

### **Apollos not Competition**

Even though Apollos had a fan club in Corinth, Paul was eager for him to come. Paul did not view Apollos as a rival or a competitor—which is further evidence of Paul’s maturity.

### **Convenience rarely Comes**

But, I will say this, if you are waiting for a convenient time for serving, it is doubtful to ever come. Ministry will always come with warfare just as brother Paul said back in verse 9. Ministry will rarely be convenient; because Satan will do all that he can to make it inconvenient. You have to choose to do it, regardless of how inconvenient it becomes. My wife will often say, why don’t you get someone to fill in for you this week because you have so much going on, and I always say then someone would have to fill in for me every week. I need to put the remote down, get to bed early, adjust my schedule, whatever it takes, else Satan will see all he has to do is pile this on, or disrupt that, and I will say it is too much, it is not convenient, I need a break.

*(1 Cor 16:8 NKJV) But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost.*

*(1 Cor 16:9 NKJV) For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.*

### **Now the Charge**

Now Paul gives us two verses, 5 points, and literally if we apply these five things, we will walk and live in a victorious Christian life.

**(1 Cor 16:13 NKJV) Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.**

**(1 Cor 16:14 NKJV) Let all that you do be done with love.**

## **Verse 13 - Watch**

### **1 - Watch for Roaring Lion**

Three things we should be watching for, and the first is that we need to be watching for the roaring lion roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8), who seeks to attack the weakest among us.

*1 Peter 5:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

### **2 - Watch for Jesus**

Second we should be watching for the Promised Lion of the tribe of Judah, who is coming back for us. Our perspective is balanced to the degree that, as we watch what’s going on around us, we also watch for Jesus’ return for us. Satan the antichrist, trying to be a lion, but that lion only seeks to devour men, while the Lion of Judah fights and protects His people.

*Matthew 24:42–44 (NKJV) <sup>42</sup> Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.*

*<sup>44</sup> Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

### **Parents tell your Kids Regularly the Jesus is Coming Back**

Parents, are we talking about the coming of the Lord with our kids? We must continually tell them He is coming, not as a fear factor, but as a hope factor. For a kid, and even most people, they think they will live to a ripe old age. Even for older people, they still think that old, is ten years older than they are today. But for youth, hey I got 70 more years of living, I want see Jesus for a long time, thus I have plenty of time “to get right”. We must be teaching them that His return is near, and who would have ever thought it, but one of the best commentaries on the Bible is the newspaper as we see the Biblical prophecies unfold before our eyes. He is coming soon, I fully believe He will return in my lifetime, how about you? If you do, your life will reflect it! Your actions will follow your faith.

### **3 – Watching for Others Sake**

Paul gives us a third “to be watching for”, and that is we are to be watching out for others, warning them for protection sake, that there is a roaring lion seeking to deceive and devour them, and that the Holy God is nearer than they think, and they will be seeing Him face to face.

*Acts 20:30–31 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup> Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. <sup>31</sup> Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

### **Responsibility with Age**

To whom much is given, much is required, and this I believe there is a responsibility as older Christians and that is to be watching out for others, seeking their wellbeing until they are strong enough to watch on their own. Don't wait for a convenient time to give, for it will never come.

*Luke 12:48 (NKJV)* <sup>48</sup> But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

### **The Family Hurts / Dad's Watch what they Watch**

Mom and Dad's you need to watch out for what you kids watch, for the lion is seeking to devour them, and you need to be strong, go to war, even if it means going to war against you child's flesh and carnal nature, and say – No Way!

### **Wow – How Sexualized Teen Shows Are**

Oh man, what an onslaught that is being spewed out upon you today teens. I cannot believe how sexualize teenage shows have become. Be on guard youth, don't get drawn into them, for they aren't just entertainment, for what you watch enters into you, and becomes a part of you. As you think on those things, the Word says you become them.

*Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. “Eat and drink!” he says to you, But his heart is not with you.

### **Hey Teens – The World is Lying / Dead Fish Float down the Stream**

Parents listen, and you young men and ladies, teens and young adults, it is a lie! What lie am I talking about, the lie of their definition of what a man is. The world says a man and a woman are the ones who are sexually active, the ones who draw the attention of the opposite sex. The world says you have reached adulthood when you become sexually active – lie! That is contrary to the word of God! Hey any dead fish can float down the stream with the tide, but it takes strength to swim against the current, to be immovable as the world pushes against you. Real men, real woman, stand against the tides of what the world considers “in”, and real men and woman, live out the word of God in their lives.

### **Sex - Separates**

Listen, let's not miss what the point is, and the point of the sexualizing (drawing people into sexual immorality) is to separate the person from Christ. The heart of the matter isn't the sex, it is the separation – the sexualizing is just a mode Satan uses to separate the person from Christ. No one engaged in fornication enters into true worship with the Lord, because their sin separates them from the Lord, and the spiral carries over into every area of a person's life.

*Isaiah 59:1–2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. <sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

### **Teens watch the Continual Dripping Homosexuality**

And, teens be on guard for this, and that is the continually dripping of “accepting” that the homosexual lifestyle is natural, and now it is even being promoted as “exciting”. So many teen shows are including gay character (teen shows include, Gossip Girl, Glee, Teen Wolf, Secret Life of an American Teenager, and the OC).

### **Teen Nick**

MTV is airing through their Teen Nick channel for kids episodes of the show called Degrassi which affirms and promotes the homosexual and transgender lifestyle and other inappropriate behavior to an audience of millions of young teens and children. Teen Nick is now including in their pro-gay, pro-transgender show Degrassi a promo for TheTrevorHelpline.org. The promo states in part "The Trevor helpline is a free and confidential service that's open for gay and questioning youth. Be proud of who you are.

### **Watch out Vampire Movies**

Watch out for these vampire shows (they are now one of the most watched television shows and movies in our Country), for since the inception of vampire books and shows, vampires have been associated with sexuality, and the attack on the virtuous and innocent. The books and the shows are loaded with skin and carnality, very sensual, and many of them now have the hint at the gay life.

### **Youth – Study the Life of Daniel / dare to be a Daniel**

Youth, study the life of Daniel, and dare to be a Daniel even when the rest of your peers are going the way of the world. Don't defile yourself with the kings (Satan god of this world) delicacies. The rest of your peers may be eating this stuff up, but you need be a Daniel, refuse the delicacies of the flesh and seek to honor and please the Lord.

*Daniel 1:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.*

### **Youth get into Ministry – Now / Commit yourself to Being Here**

Youth, get into the ministry right now! Be a Timothy. Commit yourself to being here in the church, come and let's all stand together.

### **Parents – Who has Greatest Influence on your Kids**

Now parents, let me ask you this very direct question, who is raising your children? Who has the greatest influence on your kids? You must watch for them!

### **Verse 13 - Stand fast in the Faith**

#### **We Need to Stand Under Pressure / Not moved by the World**

Stand fast means to be immovable, to not move when under pressure, to stand firm, to persist. We are to be immovable in the faith, and thus not to be moved by the pressure of this world.

#### **Nepal**

Now I am not a fan of "pledge cards", but I want you to hear about what is going on in other parts of the world (from a ministry I crossed path with when I was in the Ukraine, and they have branched out to Nepal), and what they believe it means to "stand fast in the faith", and wow what a difference! Following their discipleship class, candidates for baptism are required to sign a pledge which says:

"I am willing to:

1. Lose family & home
2. Lose my job
3. Be beaten, persecuted, & imprisoned
4. Lose my worldly inheritance
5. Bring in my tithe
6. Share the Gospel with all and forgive all who persecute me
7. Die for Christ."

#### **We Stand Together**

Look I know we are in this together and I hope you know that when I teach here on Sunday I am not preaching to you, but that I need every word for myself personally. It is hard to be a steadfast and immovable Christian in this world today, and I take great comfort in knowing that each Sunday and through the week, that we have each other to help us walk this walk, and live out our lives together.

#### **But God Stands with Us**

But even beyond us standing together, may we remember that the Lord stands with us. I am reminded of Paul in prison and there arose the plot to kill him when they were going to transfer him to the prison in Rome, and God came and spoke to him, the Lord came and stood beside him.

*Acts 23:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."*

### **I will Promise you This – God will stand with You / Shammah**

I will promise you this based on the word of God, and that is that God will never leave you, even if everyone else does, He will stand with you, and He will fight for you. I am reminded of Shammah - one of David's mighty men. He was given the job to guard the lentils (beans), and when the Phillistines came, everyone else ran, but Shammah, he said this is the job I have been given to do, and I will do it at all cost, come on Philistines, bring it on, make my day! The Lord smiles when He sees men like Shammah, and the Lord delivered him a miracle as Shammah singlehandedly defeated the Phillistines. Christian, whatever the Lord has called you to do, stand fast and be faithful in doing it. Witnessing, parenting, Sunday school, homeless ministry, stand fast and God will come and stand with you.

*2 Samuel 23:11-12 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines. <sup>12</sup> But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.

### **Lord Stands with You / I know you are Tired / But Stand – Outnumbered & Abandoned**

So if the Lord stands with you and fights for you, then why would we ever want to be moved. I know you are tired Christian, I know you want a break from the battle, our flesh can say I want to go with the easy flow like I watch the world take, but stand fast in the faith, stick to the words that have been given to us, and stand your ground regardless of how outnumbered you may be, regardless if all have abandoned you, the Lord will stand and fight with and for you.

### **Verse 13 - Be Brave (Act Like Men)**

#### **OKJV**

The Old King James Version reads, quit like men. The word “quit” means “act. So the translation is act like men.

*1 Corinthians 16:13 (KJV 1900)* <sup>13</sup> Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

#### **What is a man to Be – Strong**

And what is a man to be? The last part of this verse – STRONG!

### **Verse 13 - Be Strong**

#### **Definition of Man has Changed / In touch with Softer Side**

Boy the definition of a man sure has changed in the last decade here in our Country. Seems like men are seeking to get in touch with their sensitive side. Seems like men are afraid to fight anymore, stand up anymore, willing to let their wife lead while they play games and watch the television.

#### **Men are to be Warriors**

Men are to be warriors, they are to fight, but too many men today have laid down their swords, and taken off their armor.

#### **Be Strong – Can't Help but think of Joshua**

As for being a man, a man that stands against all the world is spewing out upon us and our children, I can't read those words without thinking of Joshua. When he succeeded Moses and was about to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land, the Lord appeared to him, and

*Joshua 1:1-9 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: <sup>2</sup> “Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. <sup>3</sup> Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. <sup>4</sup> From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. <sup>5</sup> No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. <sup>6</sup> *Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.* <sup>7</sup> *Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.* <sup>8</sup> *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.* <sup>9</sup> *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”*

### **Joshua – As for me and My House**

The congregation said to Joshua we will follow you, only be strong. Joshua said we as a family we will follow the Lord. Congregation you do as you will, but as for me and my family we will follow the Lord.

*Joshua 24:14–15 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> “Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! <sup>15</sup> And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

### **Train Up – Don’t be Defeated**

If we train up a child, they will return, it is a promise of God, therefore stand fast in the faith on that promise, don’t let the Evil One discourage you or cause you to quit.

*Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

### **Draw a Line**

Draw the line - don't wish and wonder what you did or didn't do in the past. The issue is today, and today is always greater than yesterday, because you have today, and yesterday is gone! The greatest day in your life is today, for you have “today”.

### **Men Fight**

Men fight, so go fight for that is what men do!

### **Not Against Flesh and Blood**

The warfare is not against flesh and blood but principalities and powers. If you are fighting against flesh and blood you are in the wrong fight. I wish it was flesh and blood, that comes much more naturally for me, but the battle is principalities and powers, it is supernatural, and I need help, I need my Warrior, My Savior, to come join my battle, and He does, when I call out to Him, as He lives to make intercession.

*Ephesians 6:10–13 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

### **Job sacrificed for his Kids**

Job got up every morning and made sacrifice for each kid, and prayed. Scripture tells us Job made a sacrifice for each of his children daily (Job 1:5). That’s strength; that’s hard work. I’m not asking you to kill a bull, Dads. But we must sacrifice our energy, our comfort, our ease on behalf of our wives and our children. In the perilous days in which we live, to do anything less is simply not an option.

*Job 1:4–5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. <sup>5</sup> So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job did regularly.

### **Field Dressing an Animal**

I asked my friend a hunter how long it takes him to field dress a deer, and he said 1 hour. So let’s just say Job was so efficient he could ready his sacrifice in 15 minutes; that would mean that Job still spent 2.5 hours a day in prayer for his kids.

### **Spiritual Forces against our Kids / Must Watch for Them / How much Time this Week?**

Spiritual forces are coming against our families. We must watch for them, it is our responsibility. Playtime, sure go golfing, go bowling, watch the game, but ask yourself, how much time do you spend in a week on your knees praying for your wife, your kids? Intercession is not an option, the battle is on. Mom's and Dad's did you labor five minutes today, how much time this week?

### **Verse 14 - Do it in Love**

#### **Watch – Stand – Be Strong / But be Tender / Jesus is the Model**

“Watch out. Stand fast. Grow up. Be strong”—but lest we go out of here chewing nails, Paul comes right back with the most important exhortation of all when he says, “Let everything be done in love.” How can we watch out and stand fast and grow up and be strong—and at the same time be loving? We can’t. This

can only happen as the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, lives His life through us day by day. Jesus could overturn the tables in the Temple of the moneychangers, but not the table with the doves, rather he just overturned the people sitting in the chairs at the table; he could rebuke the hypocrite, and then comfort the repentant sinner, He could face the cross, and its shadow entrust His mother to His disciple John (behold your son, behold your mother). He is our perfect model of gentleness and strength.

### **Jesus was Soft as Velvet – Strong as Steel / Be not Macho – Nor Overly Soft**

Jesus is the perfect example of solid as steel, but still soft as velvet. He is velvet-steel. We must be careful that we are not some macho my way or the highway love, nor an overly soft that we don't stand for the truth, and thus like Jesus we need to strike that balance, soft to touch but solid as steel. Velvet-Steel. You will only find that balance by spending time with the One who is Velvet-Steel.

### **I can be all Business / Dance with your Kids**

I have to continually watch myself, for I can be so "get it done", as I have to provide for my family, I have pray and read, I have to do this and do that in the house, that I can just become a working machine. I have to remind myself to be that velvet-steel, to stop and dance with my son. Wednesday I was enjoying my morning devotion, and Camden my five year old called me from the living room, daddy come dance with me, and I said to myself, dance when you can, you may never get asked to dance again. We need to balance the velvet and the steel.

**(1 Cor 16:15 NKJV) I urge you, brethren; you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints;**

**(1 Cor 16:16 NKJV) that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us.**

### **OKLJV**

**1 Corinthians 16:15 (KJV 1900)** <sup>15</sup> I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

### **Whole Family became Addicted**

It would seem as though the family of Stephanas was among the first of Paul's converts in that region. Of them, Paul says the whole family was addicted to the ministry of the saints. I like that! Every single person will eventually be drawn to and infatuated with a master passion. For the family of Stephanas, this passion was ministry. They must have seen Mom and Dad committed to the congregation at Corinth. They must have watched Mom and Dad opening up their home and hearts, spending time with the saints. They must have been included in the home meetings, in the congregational setting. Traveling with Mom and Dad, these kids were not left behind spiritually. As a result, they got hooked on ministry.

### **What is your overarching Passion?**

What is the overarching passion in your life?

### **Our Kids will be Addicted to Something**

Addicted - our kids will be addicted, have a passion for something, would to God it be Him. Set the standards and then live it out, let nothing compete for your passion personally, and pray that you kids will get addicted to ministry of God and to God themselves

**(1 Cor 16:17 NKJV) I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied.**

**(1 Cor 16:18 NKJV) For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men.**

**(1 Cor 16:19 NKJV) The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.**

### **Corinth – Rome - Ephesus**

When Paul first went to Corinth, he lodged with fellow tentmakers, Aquila and his wife, Priscilla. Not only did Aquila and Priscilla become believers, but they became so strong in the faith that when Paul went to Ephesus, he left Aquila and Priscilla in charge of the fellowship (Acts 18:18). After ministering in Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla joined Paul in Rome, where a church met in their house (Romans 16:5). Then they

returned to Ephesus to help Timothy, who would eventually become the pastor at Ephesus. Aquila and Priscilla were a couple who were on the move, flexible, determined to serve the Lord in any way possible—wonderful models for you and me.

### **God Blessed them for Opening their Home / Every Place is an Opportunity**

They opened their home and God blessed it. Anywhere you open yourself up for the serving of others, God will bless it. Thus every place is a great place, every place is an opportunity (the work place, on your campus, and in your home).

**(1 Cor 16:20 NKJV) All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.**

### **Church shouldn't Compete with World / But we have – Love and Truth**

The church neither can nor should compete with the world in areas of technology or entertainment because the world will “out-glitz” and “out-hype” us every time. Rather, it is the responsibility and privilege of the church to offer junior-highers and collegians, high-schoolers and senior citizens something they'll never get anywhere else: love and truth. Only the church can say, “We'll tell you the truth, and we'll speak it in love. Unlike the world, we're not out to make merchandise of you or to exploit you. In Jesus' name, we're here to love you.” The world is in desperate need of love and truth. Paul had told the Corinthians the truth. And yet he had a deep love for them and encouraged them—even through their doctrinal differences—to love one another.

**(1 Cor 16:21 NKJV) The salutation with my own hand; Paul's.**

### **Paul grabs the Pen**

Here, Paul takes the pen out of the hand of the secretary to whom, perhaps due to an eye disease, he had been dictating.

**(1 Cor 16:22 NKJV) If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!**

### **You Curse Yourself**

The word anathema simply means “accursed.” The word maranatha means “Lord, come.” “Whoever doesn't love Jesus, let him be accursed.” Is this a word of harshness? I don't think so. I think Paul took pen in hand to plead with the Corinthians, saying, “If you don't love the One who is altogether lovely, the One who died for you, the One who cares about you, the One who gave everything that He might be with you in this life and in the ages to come; if you don't love this One who is all-wise and all-knowing yet all-loving and all-forgiving, then you curse yourself. Maranatha. The Lord is coming. You need to make your decision.”

### **The Precious Close**

Then the precious close of this precious book

**(1 Cor 16:23 NKJV) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.**

**(1 Cor 16:24 NKJV) My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.**

### **Do it with Passion**

Paul's passion has poured through these 16 chapters, as his heart burned for these people. Paul's message burned within him, for he knew that if they applied this word, they would have life and that more abundant. Paul believed these words mattered, and Paul spoke them with passion and power.

### **Teddy Roosevelt**

In the autumn of 1912, presidential hopeful Teddy Roosevelt was in Milwaukee to deliver an important campaign speech. Throngs of well-wishers lined the motorcade route, hoping for a glimpse of the American icon. Roosevelt was only too happy to accommodate them, waving his hat and flashing that famed “bully grin” from his open-air motorcar. But from out of nowhere, a deranged man stepped to the edge of the car and aimed a pistol at Roosevelt. From point-blank range he fired a single bullet deep into Roosevelt's chest.



The blast knocked TR across the car and into a crumpled heap. Blood was everywhere. Chaos reigned. The police gang-tackled the gunman. All eyes focused on the fallen hero. Immediately, TR's handlers discussed contingency plans and the quickest routes to nearby hospitals. But the wounded Rough Rider would have none of that. "You get me to that speech. It may be the last one I ever deliver, and I'm not going to miss it." A man with a message is a powerful force. Minutes after the shooting, Teddy Roosevelt stood before his appreciative, albeit unaware audience. And without a microphone, the usually robust TR, meekly said, "Friends, I shall ask you to be as quiet as possible. I have just been shot, and even now the bullet is in me. So I cannot speak for long, but I will do my best." As Roosevelt opened his coat to retrieve his handwritten notes, he exposed for the first time his blood-soaked shirt. The crowd gasped. Doctors rushed to the stage, only to be held off by Roosevelt. Medical attention would have to wait. The message was the priority. That night TR's speech was more candid than scripted, more urgent than routine. It was driven by passion, not politics. It contained no campaign rhetoric, no jockeying for votes, no idle promises. Instead, he spoke with deep resolve to cure the nation's problems, even at the risk of his own. The truth had to be told. Political correctness took a beating. Winning an election was less important. Declaring his deepest beliefs was the issue. Even the many detractors who had come to jeer and protest sat silently. Ninety minutes later, an exhausted and colorless Roosevelt was finished. He had done what he came to do. Slowly he turned to the nearby doctors and said, "Now, we can go to the hospital." A thunderous applause erupted and continued until the motorcade was out of sight. It's interesting that audience reactions tend to change when they sense the urgency of a message; they evaluate it differently. Truth is more acceptable. Vision is caught. Passions are stirred. Even Roosevelt's greatest critic, the New York Herald, saluted him in the next day's headline: "WE'RE AGAINST HIS POLITICS, BUT WE LIKE HIS GRIT."

#### **Man with Message – Powerful Force**

A man with a message is a powerful force. Brother Paul was a man with a message; and we too have one. May we speak and share it with ours as if we have a bullet lodged in our hearts. May the hearer, hear the passion, may they see the blood soaked message in our hands.

*1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*