

CHAPTER ONE

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

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

The church of God is the bible title for the Body of Christ. Notice that this is not The Church of Christ. The Church of Christ does not appear anywhere in the Bible. The next phrases show us that all who are saved are “**called to be saints**’ and are sanctified, that is, made a saint. This shows immediately that we are not to pray to nor bow down to saints.

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

Paul does not begin this letter with his usual greeting. He prays that they will know peace as they come to know the grace of God. Every time I see the word “peace” I am reminded of the verse in Isa. That would be 56:3 **Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.** This peace is available to any Christian who studies and prays and keeps his, or her, mind on the things of God. Grace is God’s love that we do not deserve and cannot earn. Paul connects Jesus Christ with God the Father. Jesus is God and works with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. This is the Trinity in action..

4 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

Grace, along with all our other blessings come through Jesus Christ.

5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

In spite of the fact that the Corinthian church was a carnal church they had been given many gifts by God.

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

You know very well the message that we gave you about Christ.

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

Three whole chapters are given to discussing gifts. Paul is here to correct the misuse of these gifts.

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

This is why we do not have to “hold on” to our salvation. It is the Lord who keeps us and “confirms” us until the end. Notice also that the Christian is not blameless until after the Judgment Seat of Christ when we receive the things “done in the body” whether they be good or bad.

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

You can trust God because He has chosen us to share life with his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice here that we are not only to share eternity with Him but we are also to fellowship with Him. That is a personal relationship.

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

This is really a prayer by Paul and one that has never been answered since there is no time in church history where we are all in one accord. This is not likely to happen before the Lord comes back. One of the biggest divisions is caused by Christians failing to rightly divide the Word. Most of the heresies in the Protestant churches today are caused by Christians hanging up in the four gospels while failing to realize that everyone in that period was still keeping the Law.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which

are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

We have tale bearers in the house of Chloe but in this case they did a service by providing Paul with a report of the wrong things going on in the Corinthian church.

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

Here are the divisions. One says, 'I belong to Paul', another says, 'I belong to Apollos, another says, 'I belong to Peter', and yet another says, 'I belong to Christ.' Then Paul gives his opinion of this division and in the process he also seems to downplay baptism.

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

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

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

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

These are the silly things churches split over. We have a large Independent Baptist church in Pensacola that has split twelve times. That is over a long period of time of course. This is not always a bad thing since you could look at these splits as missionary work. The bad part is when these churches split into such small groups that they can not survive.

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

I am quoting here. "God's people who have convictions, are hard to get along with". Paul was sent to preach the gospel but that certainly isn't all he did. For one thing he left us some great directions. He also taught a lot on Christian conduct.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but

unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

So the preaching of the cross is the power of God. To the lost it's just foolishness and you and I are simple minded for believing such nonsense.

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

God said in Isaiah 29:14, ‘Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, [even] a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise [men] shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent [men] shall be hid.

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

So now the world is educated away from believing in God. I truly believe that the worse thing a parent can do is send their child to a secular college or university. They will do everything in their power to turn your child against God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

We need to know what this foolishness is, and is not. It is not some preacher acting like a clown and jumping around the room ,throwing his Bible and screaming like a screech owl. It is the message itself that is foolish to those that are lost. God recreated the earth in six days?Really. That sounds foolish to a lost person. God made a man from mud and a woman from one of his ribs?Really. That sounds foolish to a lost person. God sent a flood to cover the whole earth? That can't possibly be. That is foolishness. Finally,worst of all,a man died on a cross to pay for our sin,and came back to life on the third day. That's not just foolish,that's ridiculous to a lost person. But to us it is the power of God unto salvation.

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

Always keep in mind that the sign miracles to the Jews ceased during Paul's

ministry and it seems to have happened when they became fully integrated, along with the Gentiles, into the Body of Christ.

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

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

Verses 23 and 24 are driving home the fact that foolishness to the lost is still the power of God to the saved whether they are Jew or Gentile. You have the following things, in different places, spoken of as the power of God. Christ is the “power of God” in 1st Cor. 1:24. The Bible is the “power of God” in Matt 22:29. Preaching is the power of God in 1st Cor 1:18. The gospel is the “power of God” in Rom 1:16 and the holy Spirit is the “power of God” in Rom 15:19. By the way, running phrases like this through the bible is an excellent way to study.

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

God is neither weak nor foolish but at His worst he is far stronger and wiser than any man.

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

Since Paul addresses them as brethren we know they are saved people. If you are saved you are called to some ministry. That can be preaching, teaching, music, witnessing or cleaning the church, but all are called to do something.

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

Did you ever notice that God usually chooses people who are less than the best for his work? God chooses the people the world calls foolish. God

chooses the people the world calls weak. Many of our greatest preachers have had serious problems before being saved and called to preach. Billy Sunday is an example. He was a drunk but God cleaned him up and used him greatly.

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

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

The unsaved people think that God's people and his plans are worth nothing, but God will use his plans to further His purposes. God does this so that no one can boast about himself.

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

That is our position. We are in Christ and Christ is in us. When we are saved we are redeemed, sanctified and adopted into God's family.

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

If you feel the need to boast, boast about what God has done for you.

CHAPTER TWO

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

When I came to you it was not with clever words or big ideas. I simply preached to you the truth. Possibly Paul was not a good public speaker, a thing which surprises me. 2 Cor 10:10 says his speech was contemptible and 2 Cor 11: Paul himself says he was rude of speech. Though rude in speech he did have the right message and the boldness to preach it.

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

I decided to concentrate only on the fact of Jesus Christ and his death on the cross as our substitute..

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

Paul was not a coward. He faced everything thrown at him with boldness and trust in God. What he was afraid of was that his ministry in Corinth would not be effective and his converts would not grow in grace.

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

He is saying that he did not preach with fancy words but let the Holy Spirit shine through and demonstrate His power.

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

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

“them that are perfect” are the saved. This does not mean sinless. This is a different phrasing for that saying we have had before “the foolishness of preaching. Those of us who are saved “get it” while the world does not.

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

This speaks of God’s “mystery”, which remained hidden until now. This mystery is what we now know as the Body of Christ which now includes both Jew and Gentile.

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Acts 3: 17 says they crucified the Lord through ignorance. They well knew that they had crucified a good man but did not realize He was the Lord of Glory.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

In other words, nothing in the Bible even comes close to describing what Heaven and eternity hold for those of us who are saved and looking for His return.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Of course we know what the Bible tells us of Heaven but this verse plainly says that the Holy Spirit will reveal even more to the individual. My thinking is that this is a good thing to meditate on. It never ceases to amaze me the different ideas Christians have about Heaven. To one it may be a place of endless rest. To another it may be pleasant work for the Lord, for eternity, or you name it. The point is, everyone's idea of Heaven is different..

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

We never really know what another person is thinking. Only the person himself can know that. In the same way, only the Holy Spirit can know what God is thinking.

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

We have not received the spirit of the world, and remember that the world is under Satan's rule. We have received the Holy Spirit from God, and the Holy Spirit helps us to understand the things of God. For instance, if you are having trouble understanding a passage of scripture, put it aside for a short time and pray for guidance from the Holy Ghost. Most of the time He will give you some new light on the passage.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom

teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Now we get to the heart of the matter. This is one of the verses that clearly show that the scriptures come through men but by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

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

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

An unsaved person does not have the Holy Spirit and cannot believe the things that come from God. They sound foolish to him. There is that foolishness again. We need the Spirit's help to understand spiritual things.

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

That is pretty plain. When we get saved the Holy Spirit comes in and leads us to think like Christ. We have the mind of Christ, we just do not use it. So, if we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us we will make the right decisions in our everyday lives. I don't know anyone who does this but the possibility is there

CHAPTER THREE

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

There are three types in 1st Corinthians. The lost man, the carnal Christian and the spiritual Christian. Paul deals with all three types in this book with heavy emphasis on the carnal Christian.

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

The carnal Christian is a babe in Christ. They have not learned by study nor by preaching and teaching. Unfortunately this is the state most Christians are in today. Babe in Christ has nothing to do with the amount of time you have been saved. Someone who has been saved for 50 years can still be a babe. It has everything to do with the amount of time, and effort, you are willing to put in.

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

You are still following the ways of the world. Some are jealous, some are quarreling. You must know that you are acting like unsaved people. This is Christians fighting with each other.

I am going to take these next four verses together.

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

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

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

It is important to realize that you can go through life without seeing many results from your witnessing. This Sunday School is a prime example. We get the same small group every Sunday. Once in a while we get a visitor. The ironic thing is that those of you here do not need it except as review. The very ones who could benefit most almost never come. This is why so many remain babes in Christ. But, the word goes out, and God, in His good time, will give the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

This is interesting. All are equal in getting God's word to the lost. If you

witness, and see no results, but another leads that person to the Lord, you get equal reward.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

We work together with God. Consider us God's "field hands". As rewards go, you will get out what you put in.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

God has taught Paul directly and has made him a masterbuilder. Those who come after must be very careful to build according to Paul's plan. The foundation is always Jesus Christ.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

This passage deals with the Judgment Seat of Christ. That is where all works are sifted. All of the new "bibles" have changed the Judgment Seat of Christ to the judgment seat of God. There is no judgment seat of God in the Bible. The nearest thing to that would be the Great White Throne Judgment but those are not the same thing. If your works remain undamaged by the fire then you receive rewards. Tape a sign to your mirror so the first thing you see every morning are the words "You will be judged".

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself

shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

There is that eternal security again. Everything you have done in this life, for God, can burn up but you do not lose your salvation.

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

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

These two verses are loaded. You are the temple and you are not to defile the temple. God has built in punishments for most of the things that defile the temple. Drinking hard liquor defiles the temple. Do too much of that and you get cirrhosis of the liver. Gluttony and stress defile the temple. Too much of either and you die of a heart attack. Smoking defiles the temple. Do it and get lung cancer. I'm sure you get the point. Sexual immorality defiles the temple and in chapter 5 vs 5 we see a man turned over to Satan for destruction of the flesh for that sin. In redneck terminology that means he was killed. It's also worth noting that that person did not lose his salvation, just his life.

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

There is the formula for Godly wisdom. Don't deceive yourself. In order to be wise a person must learn to prefer God's word over his own reasoning.

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

There is no comparison between God's wisdom and man's wisdom. If you must boast then boast about what God has done for you and in your life.

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

Think about the wise people of our generation. Bill Gates, the two leading physicists Stephen Hawking and Michio Kaku and hundreds like them. These are the wise of the world, all brilliant people, and they will wind up in Hell

because they have rejected the Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. How wise is that?

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's;

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's;

It does not matter who taught you as long as the teaching was correct. The end result is the same. It gets you to Heaven and into the presence of God.

23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

CHAPTER FOUR

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

All of the men who ministered at Corinth were the servants of God and as such are answerable to God. This goes back to Paul chastising the Corinthian members for bragging about whose ministry they were saved under and which man they followed. All of us have preachers we would rather hear but this is not what is being discussed here. In this case the ministers were equal doctrinally. This would be like comparing Bro. Danley with Dr. Tabb, Bro Walker and Bro Wright. You may prefer the preaching of one of these, above another, but they are equal in doctrine and all are answerable to God.

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

This verse has two applications. First a minister must be faithful to his doctrine. A Baptist should not take a Pentecostal church and vice versa. The second application has to do with faithful attendance, tithing, witnessing. We most often use the term faithful to apply to attendance but it applies to much, much more. A good way to think of this is that a person must be found trustworthy.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or

of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

Paul does not judge himself because he knows it is impossible to know whether we please God 100% of the time until we get home to Heaven. The Lord alone is the judge so we must wait for Him.

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

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

I do not feel that I have done wrong, but that does not mean that I am innocent. The Lord is the only true judge. Wait until the Lord returns and He will bring to light the sins that people have hidden. He will show the real reasons for people's actions and at that time, each person will receive his praise from God.

6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

You are puffed up and arrogant. Both are sins. You have nothing to be proud of in your salvation since, no matter who led you, it all came from The Lord Jesus to begin with. God gave it to you freely so you have nothing to boast about.

8 Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

You think you already have all that you want. You have become rich. You

have become like kings and you have left us outside the kingdom. Of course Paul is being sarcastic here. He says; “How I wish that you really had become kings. Then we could rule with you”. Ironically the phrase, “**How I wish that you really had become kings. Then we could rule with you**” will become a true statement during the millennial reign.

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

10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.

Verses nine and ten are more sarcasm directed at the Corinthians. This is harsh stuff and Paul seems to be fed up with the whole bunch. But, there is a real nugget in there. Notice the words “us the apostles”. This is something many overlook. This is not the twelve apostles of the Lamb he is speaking of. There are eight, or nine, other apostles.

Paul of course, then Barnabas Acts 14:14, Andronicus Rom 16:7, Junia, Rom 16:7, Apollos 1 Cor 4:9, James the Lord's brother Gal 1:19, 1 Cor 9:5 and 15:7, Silas Thess 2:6 and possibly Sosthenes if the “us” in verse nine includes Sosthenes from 1 Cor 1:1. All of these men were in constant danger of dying or being stoned or whipped.

11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;

12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

Verses eleven through thirteen are Paul's comparison of his, and the other apostles, ministry to that of the average Corinthian church member. Compare Paul's situation to that of the “apostolic” church on highway 90. Big, fancy buildings, big cars, and big salaries. Paul, and the other true apostles, had

nothing.

14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

Paul is referring back to verses 11 through 13 and means these as a warning to beloved sons. He warns them because he cares for them in spite of their failings.

15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

Paul is the spiritual father of the Corinthian church. Apollos had a part but Apollos got it from Paul. We find the exact words of Paul's gospel in 1Cor 15 1-4 which says **Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; {15:2} By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. {15:3} For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; {15:4} And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:** You should have these verses marked for quick reference when witnessing.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

Timothy was often sent as a messenger or as a follow up teacher.

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

There are always those in every church. Can't you just here them? Aw, he's not really coming, he's just saying that. It amounts to calling Paul a liar.

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

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

Paul mentions the kingdom of God nine times in his epistles. The kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of God are different. The kingdom of God is entered by the new birth and according to Luke 17:21 the kingdom of God is within us.

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

CHAPTER FIVE

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

Fornication and adultery are often confused. Adultery is one of the partners in a marriage having sex outside the marriage. Fornication covers that, as well as any other sexual sin. In the case of the one mentioned in verse one the son was committing fornication while the wife was committing adultery. Paul says this sin is so bad that it would not even be spoken of among the lost world. To turn that around, even the lost know better than to do this. Do notice that the term used, "his fathers wife", does not necessarily mean his mother, though it may. Now, with all that said, there are other cases, like this, mentioned in the Old Testament. For instance, Reuben slept with one of Jacobs wives. This would have been a stepmother. Then there was Goliath in 2 Samuel 20 and 1 Chron 20 where the his four brothers are said to be his sons. There is only one way for that to be true.

2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

The Corinthian church were so arrogant and self involved that they were not even concerned about actions of this sinner. If this was allowed to go on then there must have been other gross sins in that congregation as well. This man should have been put out of the church as soon as this sin became common knowledge. That is to say, if he refused to stop and publicly repent of the sin. There is a proper process for putting an unrepentant sinner out of the church

and that process is still in use today in some churches. That process is no longer effective because now we have a church on every corner and most of these have no fixed standards. If a sinner is put out of one there is no need for repentance, just move down the street to the next church. Whether it is effective, or not, it should still be church practice because God said to do it that way.

3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The spirit spoken of in these verses is Paul's human spirit. He has already judged the sinner even though he is not present in the flesh. Verse five is extremely important since it is an anchor verse for security of the believer. If this guy did not lose his salvation, and he did not, then what can you do that is bad enough to lose it? You are not keeping your salvation, God is. **“The day of the Lord Jesus”** in verse five is referring to the Judgment Seat of Christ.

6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

These people were bragging about how spiritual they were. They had some Charismatic gifts and they were so proud of these that they believed it excused the sin going on among the members. Whenever you find someone bragging about their spirituality they are not spiritual. The two do not go together.

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

Redneck version: Get the bum right or throw him out. Get rid of all the sin in the church. Sin required the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, our passover, so sin

should never be tolerated in the congregation of believers.

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

The feast mentioned there is the Lord's supper and we will cover that in chapter eleven.

9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

Redneck version;nothing can get you completely away from this world full of sinners and crooks, except leaving the world itself.

11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

Anyone in the church that you know to be partaking of any sin,do not fellowship with them. That list there in verse eleven covers any type of sin you can think of.

12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

This is in direct contrast to Matthew, “**judge not,that ye be not judged.**” Here we are told that we had better judge people in the church if they are sinning. Remember that when it is necessary to do that be sure we are confessed up.

13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

CHAPTER SIX

1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

Here it is. We are not to sue another Christian in courts of law. Matters between Christians are to be settled in the church if at all possible. There are times when this cannot be done as in cases involving insurance, adoption or anything requiring legal settlement by a judge.

2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

There are seven judgments in scripture. The Christian receives three of these. First, we are judged for sin at Calvary, then judged as a son daily during our life on earth. Finally we are judged as a servant at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

This occurs at The Great White Throne Judgment. We along with Christ will judge angels and the world.

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

Paul is being sarcastic again. Here he says “take the dumbest people you have and let them judge”. That would be better than taking cases before lost judges and juries.

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

This verse lets us know that verse four was sarcasm. Surely there is a man wise enough in the congregation to act as judge between you.

6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law

one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

What Paul is saying here is to let the other Christian have his, or her, way. Give them what they want then turn the matter over to God. Paul then follows up immediately with verse nine and ten where the word extortioners turns up. An extortioner would be the one claiming something against you falsely.

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

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

Sometimes verses nine and ten are used to wrongly prove that those who do these things mentioned can not be saved and go to heaven. One way or another that pretty much covers all of us. According to those verses Heaven is going to be badly underpopulated. Fortunately Paul doesn't leave it that way. Do keep in mind that Paul is addressing Christians here. It is entirely possible for a Christian to do any of those things listed above. Remember the guy in chapter five who was sleeping with his father's wife?

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

Thank God for verse eleven. The kingdom of God is not visible to us, yet. Get this. We enter the kingdom by being born into it due to the spiritual birth when we are saved. Later, in the Millennium, we will see the Kingdom. There are two scriptures for this “**Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God**”. And “**Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God**”. These two verses are found in John chapter three.

12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

A Christian has a great deal of personal freedom. You are free to do whatever you do not consider sin. You are free to go into a beer joint, a gambling hall of anywhere else you choose. That does not mean you should go to these places. The first thing it will do is destroy your testimony. Also notice that I did not say you were free to partake of the things you find in those places.

13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

There was a big discussion going on about what kind of meats were permitted to be eaten by Christians. That discussion is still going on today despite the fact that the Bible clearly settles the matter and that comes up in the next few verses. Can you eat pork, drink beer, smoke cigarettes? Don't get too hung up on these things because God is going to destroy them, along with your body.

14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

Though God will destroy this body, the good news is, we get a new one without the problems of this one.

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

16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

Now Paul switches back to the sin of fornication. I love this verse as much as the "husband of one wife" crowd hate it. Now, you never make a doctrine out of one verse so let's look further at this. Let that sink in while we look at Genesis 2:24. **Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall**

cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. That's old Testament you say? Then let's go to Ephesians 5:31 **For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.** This same thing turns up in Matthew 19:5-6. Look it up. Now modern society regards signing a license and standing before a preacher, or justice of the peace, as marriage. God looks at it differently.

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

We are joined to Christ in a different way. We are joined by the Holy Spirit.

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

The body is the instrument of fornication. It is an act. Do you realize that you can commit adultery without committing fornication? Matthew 5:28 says **But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.**

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

It is so bad because the Holy Spirit indwells you. Whatever you do involves the Holy Spirit directly. I have heard it said that for the Holy Spirit living inside most Christians it must seem like He is living in a nest of buzzards.

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

CHAPTER SEVEN

Keep in mind as we study through this book that it is really a long letter so Paul is often referring back to things in earlier parts of the letter. That is easy to lose sight of since we now have chapters and verses.

1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a

man not to touch a woman.

The thing he is referring to here is the fornication problem mentioned in chapter five but this also covers anyone else in the congregation. Paul referred to himself, in another place, as a natural eunuch.

2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

Now Paul gets down to some rules and regulations concerning marriage and divorce. Notice also that this is a commandment.

3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

I think Paul had something else in mind when he wrote this but I can think of another application. What about the husband, or wife, who uses all the family spendable income on themselves. If you get a new shotgun then make sure the wife gets something of equal value.

4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

The husband's body belongs to the wife and the wife's body to the husband. So, in effect the body of a married Christian belongs to two people, first to God then to the spouse. This is also the reason why adultery is the only New Testament grounds for divorce. When that occurs the marriage is already broken.

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

A couple should only cut off physical relations when they both agree. Otherwise, Satan will surely take advantage of this and work you over.

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

In the next couple of verses God allows Paul to say something He does not

command.

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

In other words Paul wishes that all men in God's service could stay single, but at the same time he realizes not many can do that and avoid temptation.

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

It is better to stay single so that all your time can be devoted to God's work.

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

I like that phrase, "better to marry than to burn". That is, to burn in lust. In some cases even marriage isn't enough. Remember that case recently of the Baptist preacher in Montgomery who came down with AIDS and half the young women in the congregation had to be tested to see if they had it?

In the next verses Paul switches to divorce.

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

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

See, there is no wiggle room there. If a woman leaves her husband, (we would call this a trial separation), she then has a choice. She can choose either to stay separated or to be reconciled to her husband. This verse does not refer to divorce. That is dealt with later in this chapter.

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

13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he

be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

You are not to divorce the spouse because they do not believe.

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

If one person in the marriage is saved the God regards the union as a marriage. If neither person is saved then God regards it as unclean and the children as unclean. That's a tough verse. If you doubt this check it at Lev 15:16-19

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

If the unbeliever wants to leave let them go and let them go in peace.

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

This is the reason for those rules. Proper conduct by the believing spouse may well result in the unbeliever being saved at a later time. It is taken for granted that a believing husband ,or wife,will not desert their spouse.

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

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

I can't let that one pass without comment. How would it be possible to become uncircumcised?

19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

None of these physical things matter concerning your salvation.

20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

21 Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.

If you happen to be a slave when you are saved stay in that condition unless your master sets you free. If he does then use that time profitably serving God. Be content in whatever life situation you find yourself.

22 For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.

23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

You and I are now owned by the Lord. We are bought with the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

Virgins in this context, in addition to the usual meaning, means a young woman who is already engaged to be married. The Jewish custom was for a long engagement when the control of the young woman was passed from her father to her future husband. They were not married and were to remain apart until they were. Further down in this chapter we will see what to do if these two people find out they are human.

26 I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.

27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

If you are saved do not seek a divorce. If you must divorce then do not

remarry.

28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

Now he turns around and gives permission. If you remarry it is not a sin any more than if the engaged couple go ahead and marry before their agreed time. He does say that in either case they will have trouble.

29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

30 And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;

Exercise moderation. Save some time for God.

31 And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

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

33 But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

This goes back to the reason Paul says it is better to remain unmarried. If you are married then time must be given to the marriage and to other earthly things such as making a living.

34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

A single woman worries about the Lord's business. She wants to serve the

Lord with both body and spirit. A married woman is anxious about the affairs of this world. She wants to know how she can please her husband.

35 And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

36 But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

Again, this is the engaged couple that Paul is speaking of. They should get married.

37 Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.

Better to wait to marry until the appointed time. This way there is none of the inevitable talk that “they had to get married”.

38 So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.

Now he is speaking of the father of the young woman. So the father should allow the marriage to go forward if both young people can not wait.

39 The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

People take this to be a divorced wife but that is not what it says. She is to stay married as long as her husband lives but then is free to remarry if she chooses to do so but only to another saved person.

40 But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.

She will be happier if she stays single and devotes her life to the Lord.

CHAPTER EIGHT

This chapter deals with eating meat offered to idols. While we don't have this problem today there are certainly some applications here that apply to us. The church at Corinth had a double problem. Some said it was alright to eat the meat offered to idols and some said not. Apparently some were “puffed up” with knowledge they believed they had. An animal was taken to the idol temple to be sacrificed. The priest then took his portion and the rest was sold in the market and the money used to support the temple. Everyone knew this. This was basically the same system used in the Jewish temple. We don't think about the daily sacrifices much these days but the Jewish priests were basically butchers who killed and rendered hundreds of animals every day. I think this was one of the reasons God required a rotation of priests.

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

If you love God, God knows it. There are ways to tell. If you love someone you like to talk about them. If you love someone you want to know more about them. If you love someone you want to please them. The same is true concerning God.

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

In other words, meat is meat no matter if it was offered to an idol or not. Paul is saying eat it and enjoy it because an idol is nothing but a piece of wood or metal.

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

What many people fail to realize is that there are other gods, with a small “g”. Satan is one of them and is called the “god of this world”. In addition we can make gods of material things. What about the “money” god, or the “tv” god or that biggest one, the “football god”? Anything placed in a more important position than the things of God, (capital G), becomes your god.

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

To us there is but one God. The other gods are either false gods or Satanic.

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

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

A Christian is not to take advantage of his liberty to eat anything when it will cause a weaker Christian to stumble. Be especially careful of this if you are trying to win one from another faith to Christ. If it's a Jew, or Muslim you are trying to win, don't eat a pork chop, or ham sandwich. If it's a Catholic and it's Friday, eat a mullet.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

Never use your knowledge, or liberty, to cause a weaker brother to sin, or to cause an unsaved person to reject Christ.

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom

Christ died?

Now the weak Christian has eaten food that someone has offered to an idol. So now the weak Christian may lose his faith completely. He is a brother for whom Christ died. The 'strong' Christians had forgotten that they were part of a Christian family. Anything that caused a weak 'brother' sin was a sin against Christ.

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

That verse is plain. Don't cause the weaker Christian to stumble. If you do, you offend Christ.

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

CHAPTER NINE

1 Am I am not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?

2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

Paul says, "you know that I am free and you know that I am an apostle". I have actually seen our Lord and Savior. You people here in the Corinthian church are living proof that I am an apostle. You are the seal that I am the Lord's apostle. Paul then goes on, in the following verses, to speak about his freedom in Christ.

3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,

4 Have we not power to eat and to drink?

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

A wife or a sister. There is a reason for this. In the scriptures a wife is sometimes referred to as a sister. There is precedent as Adam and Eve were brother and sister (same Father). The sons and daughters of Adam and Eve were brother and sister by necessity. Now we have moved on and brother sister relationships are taboo, as they should be. Both Cephas (Peter) and some of the Lord's brothers had wives who accompanied them. The Lord's brothers' were James, Joseph (also called Joses), Judas (or Jude) and Simon. We know this from Mark 6:3. They were sons of Joseph and Mary after Jesus was born. The Catholics get around this verse by claiming these were cousins or children of Joseph by a previous marriage. That is absolute nonsense.

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

This goes back to the biblical principal of supporting pastors and missionaries. It would have been proper for Paul and Barnabas to demand payment for their services but they chose not to do this and worked to support themselves.

7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

This is the same thing said in a different way. Farmers eat of what they produce, shepherds eat the milk and meat from their flock and it is proper for the missionary, and pastor, to be fed by his people.

8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

Paul is pointing out that this is not new with him but was an Old Testament practice as well.

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

Here is the verse from Deuteronomy.25:4 **Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out [the corn.** And a New testament verse from Luke. This is Jesus speaking to the apostles. 10:7 **And in the same house remain, eating and**

drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. From this and other scriptures we know that a pastor, an evangelist and a missionary should be paid a living wage. I heard it said once that a pastor should be paid the average wage of those working people in his congregation. That's working people. Retired persons and deadbeats don't go into the average. That sounds like a good plan.

10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

This is again speaking of preaching and witnessing. Some plow, some plant and some water but God gives the increase. Another way to look at this is that if you are faithful in putting out God's word, do not be discouraged if you don't often see results. God will give the increase to someone but you will get your part of the reward.

11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

We have planted spiritual seed among you. It is not too much to expect that you supply the things that we need..

12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

Other people receive help from you, so we should have even more right to be taken care of.

13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

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

Paul has written all of these things for our benefit since he chose to live by his own work and not to live off the congregation. There was a reason for this

. He did not want anyone to be able to say that he was preaching only for money.

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

16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

Paul's glorying was not in the preaching of the gospel. He called that a necessity. He had no choice about that. His glorying came from preaching willingly and his rewards would come because of that willingness. Paul was like Jeremiah. Jeremiah said that God's message was like a fire inside him. He had to preach.

17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

The "dispensation" in this verse is not a period of time. In the Bible a dispensation is where God gives something to someone to take care of. In Paul's case it was the "gospel of the grace of God."

18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

So, if Paul did not get any money for his preaching, what did he get? He gets a blessing by knowing that he did it willingly and free of charge.

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

Though Paul was free both spiritually and physically he had made himself a servant to both Jews and Gentiles.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

When Paul entered a new city he went first to the Jews who were his own people. Keep in mind that the Jews were still living under the Law and Paul was trying to bring them out and get them saved.

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

Then he would go to the Gentiles. I have a feeling that his work was easier with the Gentiles since it is always easier to win those who know they need something. Those under the Law felt they “had it” already.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

In a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize. Run in such a way as to get the prize. In our race we all get a prize. Everyone who competes in the games trains himself. They do it to get a crown that will not last. We do it to get a crown that will last for eternity.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

The successful people in this life practice great self control. How much more should we practice self control who carry the gospel to a lost world. Look right, dress right and smell right if you want the lost to take your message seriously.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

Do not waste your effort. Christians need to remember that they are aiming for heaven. Nothing should take their attention away from their eternal home.

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

CHAPTER TEN

1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

Paul is referring back to the Exodus when the Israelites came out of Egypt.

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

This was a total immersion baptism. There was the sea on both sides and the cloud over their heads. This is one of seven baptisms listed in the Bible.

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

The “meat” the Jews ate in the wilderness was physical manna but it pointed to the spiritual “meat”, Jesus Christ.

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

The same thing that was true of the spiritual “meat” in verse three is true of the spiritual drink in verse four. Look at John 4:14 **But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.**

Notice that the Rock in that verse is with a capital R and the rest of the verse tells us that the Rock is Jesus Christ.

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

The only adults, from the generation that came out of Egypt, that made it into the promised land were Caleb and Joshua. Forty years marching around in circles when the wilderness could have been crossed in ninety days.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust

after evil things, as they also lusted.

If you happen to be one of those who believes that “God will understand”, then you need to look carefully at these next verses.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

Sexual fornication, along with money are two of the greatest idols in America today. Verse eight refers to Israel intermarrying with the Moabites in Numbers 25. This was forbidden and twenty three thousand died because of it. God does not “understand”. Numbers 25: says twenty four thousand died in the plague. Verse eight here says twenty three thousand died in one day. This is not a contradiction. Notice the difference in the statements. Things that are different are not the same. “In the plague” and “in one day” are not the same statement.

9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

This is found in Numbers 21:5-9. Verse five there has the tempting. **And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for [there is] no bread, neither [is there any] water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. {21:6} And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.** Now what is this? This is griping and not being thankful nor satisfied with what God has provided. Now, that light bread they were griping about was manna. Don't count on God “understanding”.

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

This murmuring is simply another form of griping. Anyone who has raised children has heard them murmuring under their breath. This griping started three days after God parted the Red Sea for them.

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

As Christians we are to study the whole Bible and not just the New Testament. Romans 15:4 ties in with this. **For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.** Some parts of the Bible may not apply directly to us but we are told to study them anyway.

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

The very minute when you think you are above temptation the Devil will show up. He knows just exactly which buttons to push to destroy your testimony. This verse is telling you not to depend on yourself but to depend on God.

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

According to this verse we all have the same kinds of temptations. The verse says God will make a way of escape but it is up to us to take that avenue of escape. You can do that or give in to the temptation. Most of us know what tempts us so the best thing to do is to avoid those things. Run, don't walk from temptation. Saturate yourself with the word of God.

14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

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

Paul says, "I am talking to sensible people. Judge for yourselves what I say".

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

We give thanks for the cup of wine at the Lord's Supper. It is then that we are remembering the blood of Christ. When we break the bread, we are

remembering in the body of Christ. Do notice that this verse doesn't say that this is the blood of Christ. It is the communion of the blood.

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

We all eat from the same loaf, that is, figuratively speaking, the body of Christ.

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

The Jews and priests shared the offering after God's part was taken out. This was a mutual sharing and fellowship between the Jew and the priest. This is one of the reasons non Jews were forbidden to attend the sacrificial feasts of the Jews.

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

Though the idol itself is nothing there is a spirit behind it and that spirit would be an evil spirit or devil.

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

If then, a Christian attended a heathen feast, he would be fellowshiping with devils.

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

The consequences of such behavior brings on the wrath of God. Paul has pointed this out earlier using Israel as an example.

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

Put in Redneck language. If you attend heathen feast God will git you. If they shared a meal in a pagan temple, Christians would appear to believe that the

god of the pagans was real.

23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

This is Christian liberty. A Christian can do anything he wants and it does not affect his salvation. That said, if he makes the wrong choices it will affect everything else in his life.

24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

Build up the brethren physically when you can and by prayer when at all times. This is that old saying about putting feet on your prayers. Conduct your life so that others benefit.

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake:

The 'shambles' is another term for market. Paul is telling the congregation not to ask where the meat comes from and that way they can eat it with a clear conscience. Just buy the meat and enjoy it.

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

Everything belongs to God anyway.

27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

The same principal here as in verse 25. Ask no questions about the origin of what is served. Eat and enjoy.

28 But if any man say unto you, this is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

Now the flip side. If you are told that the meat was offered to idols then do not eat it. This is not for your sake but for the sake of others present who may

think it is wrong. In other words, you are helping the weaker brother by not exercising your liberty.

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

Paul is emphasizing his own freedom. He should be free to eat food for which he has thanked God, but, in verses 31-32, he shows why he limits his own freedom and he shows why we should limit ours

30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

1. Everything that we do should be for the glory of God. We must do nothing to cause other people to sin. It does not matter whether the other people are Jews, Gentiles or other Christians, nor for that matter any other denomination or cult. Behave in a way that will attract people to Jesus Christ.

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

This is the three groups that the world is divided into today. Everyone is one of the three.

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

CHAPTER ELEVEN

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

Be careful who you follow. It was perfectly safe to follow Paul's example but you would be hard pressed to find a Paul to follow today. Everyone has problems somewhere. Sometimes you just need to take the good and leave the bad.

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

I am proud of you because you remember me in everything. You are holding firmly to the things that I taught you and have kept them just as I taught them. Notice here that Paul is praising the church for keeping their doctrine straight. They have managed to keep doctrine straight despite all the sin problems in the church. There is a lesson there for modern churches. You can confess sin and get rid of it. Curing problems with bad doctrine is almost impossible since many people are raised on bad doctrine from childhood. As far as the ordinances mentioned there are only two for us Baptists. Those are baptism and the Lord's Supper. The supper shows His death and the baptism shows his resurrection.

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

There it is ladies. If you have a problem with that take it up with God. There is a Divine order here.

4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

When men pray they are to remove their hat. This is because Christ is the head of the man and the hat would put something between the man and Jesus Christ.

5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

The rule given for the woman is the opposite of that given for the man. She is to be covered when she prays either by her long hair or by a hat. No rule is ever given as to how long a woman's hair should be but it should be long enough to show that she is a woman.

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

When Adam sinned the part that died was his spirit, the part that communed with God. When a person is saved they return to being made “in the image of God”. The thing that makes the unsaved person not in the image of God is the dead spirit. When a person is saved the spirit is made alive and the person then is “made in the image of God”. That is the difference; a dead or a live spirit.

8 For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man.

9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

Paul does not go back to the curse placed on Eve but all the way back to Genesis 2 to the original order and purpose of creation. Man's authority over the woman does not begin with the curse.

10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.

This power can either come as a covering as in verse five or as long hair as in verse fifteen. By the way, the bible definition of long hair is hair that covers the neck. As far as the mention of the angels in this verse it probably refers back to Genesis six where the angels had relations with women.

11 Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

12 For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.

Now, so far, we have the woman taken out of the man (the rib). From that point onward the man comes from the woman. So, while the saved woman and the saved man are equal in position before the Lord the wife still owes her husband submission and help and the husband owes his wife love, support and protection. An interesting side note is that nowhere, in the bible, is the

woman commanded to love her husband. She is to give him respect. I assume this is because in biblical days the woman had very little say in whom she married.

13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

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

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

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

In other words we are not to fight over the length of a persons hair.

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

I can not praise you because when you come together for meetings you make things worse,not better. Paul is beginning to speak about the Lord's table here.

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

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

Look at verse nineteen carefully. Paul says there must be heresies in the church. At first I read this as if Paul was saying there must be heresies among you because of the way you act. The real meaning hinges on the last part of the verse. There must be heresies so that correct doctrine can be contrasted to them. That being the case we must be in wonderful shape today since we have so many heresies in the Body of Christ. That last was sarcasm on my part.

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

In verse twenty and following Paul is talking about a fellowship supper such as we have here on the second Wednesday night.

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

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

These fellowship suppers had gotten out of hand with some eating at home then eating again at the meeting. Some were having too much alcohol. Some of the poor were left out completely and the thing had turned into a greedy mess.

Now in verse twenty three Paul shifts gears and starts talking about the Lord's Supper which followed the fellowship supper. I will read on down to verse 27

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

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

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

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

Very important. This is about the second coming. We take the Lord's Supper to remember His death until He returns.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the

Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

This is the first warning that Paul gives about taking the Lord's Supper.

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

Redneck version. Be sure you are prayed and confessed up.

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

Another warning. In addition to being prayed and confessed up be sure your mind is on the proceedings and attention is being given to the reason you are doing this.

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

Taking the Lord's Supper unworthily can even lead to death. In my mind I picture a person deliberately making a mockery of this ordinance. Never come to the Lord's table with the wrong attitude.

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

Redneck version again. Either critically judge yourself or God will.

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

When the Lord judges us, he corrects us as sons so that we will not receive the same judgment as the rest of the world.

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

All the church is to take the Lord's Supper together.

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

Satisfy your hunger at home. Show proper concern for each other.

CHAPTER TWELVE

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

Apparently the Christians at Corinth had asked Paul about the spiritual gifts. It is also likely that they wanted to know how to tell the difference between true spiritual gifts and gifts from evil spirits.

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

You and I are no longer Gentiles. We are now Christians. Remember from the last chapter that the world is now divided into three groups; Jew, Gentile and Christian. The word dumb in the verse does not mean stupid. It means that the idols were unable to speak.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

The charismatics misquote that part of the verse that says “Jesus is the Lord”. You even see bumper stickers saying Jesus is Lord. What's wrong with that ?It's a misquote. The correct quote is “Jesus is the Lord”. The Holy Ghost doesn't misquote.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

Notice that the Spirit, capital “S” is the same Spirit referred to in verse three as the Holy Ghost.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

There are different kinds of gifts and they are given for different purposes.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

Manifestation is the evident working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Think ,for a moment,of all the people, that you know personally,who claim to be Christians. Some stand out above the crowd and there can never be the slightest doubt that these few are Christians. The fruit of the Spirit is evident all over them and in everything they do. That is manifestation of the Spirit.

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

Now Paul begins to name the gifts. The first two named are misused today by some of the TV preachers. If one of them says," I have a word of knowledge that someone watching by television has a large growth on the end of their nose and God is healing that growth as we speak". It's a pretty good bet that out of perhaps a million people watching at least one of them has a growth on their nose. If there is one,it won't be healed of course,but who will ever know the difference? Actually,both of these gifts are still in the church today. Any gift in Paul's list here that is not a sign gift to Israel is still active in the church today. These are not showy gifts but rather they are quiet and behind the scenes. For instance,there are people who will automatically know if another person is hurting and needing help. Knowledge is knowing the facts. Wisdom is knowing how to apply these facts.

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

The next two mentioned are faith and healing. One of these is still in the church. That is the gift of faith. Some have more than others in the congregation. It is worth noting that this is a gift that grows with prayer,study and meditation. The gift of healing was a sign gift and we do not have it in the way the apostles,and early church, had it. All they had to do was to lay hands on a person and the person was healed. Now we do it differently. Remember from the Book of James that healing now comes by the fervent prayer of a righteous man.

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

Working of miracles is a sign gift and is gone. Prophecy is not a sign and is probably still in the church today. Prophecy is easy today. We have the Book that tells the future. 1 Corinthians 14:22 says “**Wherefore tongues are for a sign**”. So, tongues and the interpretation of tongues are gone, or should be. It is worth noting that every time there were tongues spoken, there were Jews present.

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

The Holy Spirit gives these gifts to individuals as He will. Some one gift and some another. We do know though that every saved person has at least one gift. The problem is that many Christians never find what their gift is.

We leave the gifts temporarily and pick them up again later in this chapter.

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

The church is compared to the human body. One body but many members with one head and that head is the Lord Jesus Christ. We lose sight of that sometimes. If one member is hurt, or suffering in some way, we should all be suffering until we get God to clear up the problem. I am not speaking of the usual drama kings, and queens, that all congregations seem to have but rather those that have real problems that we can not meet, and that must be turned over to God for a solution. Keep on praying for those. In other words, worry God until he solves the problem. By the way, we have scripture for that. It's found in Luke 18:5-6, in the parable of the unjust judge **Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. {18:6} And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. {18:7} And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?**

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be

Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

The body is not the local church. There are well over a hundred churches in this area and most of them have at least some saved people in them. Even that is not the body. The body is every living, born again believer, anywhere in the world. That is the body of Christ. This verse says **“for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body”**. So, that is every believer, no matter which congregation or what part of the world they are in.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

Now Paul goes on to illustrate this in verses 15-17.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

John 10:29 says; **No man can pluck them out of my Father's hand.** That's a good eternal security verse. When you think it through, our position is even better than that. You are not in His hand, or in His arms, but are a part of those arms. You are in the body and Christ is the head.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more

feeble, are necessary:

Some members are stronger physically and some are stronger spiritually. All are equal in the body. All the members are necessary to the proper function of the body. Only the gifts are different.

23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

Some body parts are more beautiful than others. Some members have gifts that seem better but they are not. All are necessary. If you took out one of your lungs and put it on the chair next to you, there would be nothing beautiful about it, but your body could not function as well as it would if it had all its parts.

24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

Schism is division. The members should have the same care for each of the other members.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Notice that there are gifts listed here that are not given in the lists above. These are “helps” and “governments”. So now we have eleven gifts of the Spirit listed in this chapter. I suppose that governments covers both political and church government. Both are important. Christians should run for public office if qualified. “The gift of “helps” is something all Christians should

pray for. I can use my own dad's last couple of years as an example here. He was in assisted living and was a difficult client. He was a member and deacon in the First Baptist Church of Andalusia. So he had a person, from the church, assigned to him to help him with anything he needed. This person definitely had the gift of “helps” and took a lot of the burden off of us. That was this man's ministry and he did a wonderful job and kept us children in the loop.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

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

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

These languages of people would be foreign languages. But the language of angels can only mean speech that people cannot understand. There is a teaching today that the language of heaven is Hebrew. Whatever the language, the Christians at Corinth were not using this gift in the right way. It is odd that Paul starts this off with the least gift in his list from the last chapter. We were told to covet the best gifts and tongues is the least, or last, gift.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

Most of the modern “translations” have changed the word charity to love. As usual, the King James is right since the word charity carries a broader meaning than the word love. Charity is love with giving, and love without giving isn't love at all.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Now the giving in verse three is giving without love. Just giving by itself misses the mark set by God.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

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

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

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

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

This passage lists sixteen characteristics of charity. Seven of these things are positive and nine are negative. The phrase “suffereth long” is patience and is part of the fruit of the Spirit. Charity is kind it says. To whom is it kind? To the brethren of course but it goes beyond this. Jesus also said we are to love our enemies. That's the harder part. Envy is mentioned and this was one of the problems in the Corinthian Church. If a person loves God enough then they will overcome envy. A person with charity does not brag about himself. The phrase “does not behave itself unseemly” fits well with some of the things we see going on today. In other words, don't riot and loot stores. Don't march in gay pride parades, and don't suddenly change your stand against abortion or homosexuality if it involves one of your children. It says charity never fails, so, no matter what comes and goes, charity, in it's full meaning, goes on forever.

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

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part

shall be done away.

This is usually taught in the wrong way. It is usually taught that the New Testament is “**that which is perfect**”, but that can not possibly apply to all that is mentioned in these verses. “**That which is perfect**” is the Second Coming. That is when we will see Christ face to face. We know in part in this life and can not even know ourselves as well as God knows us. After the Second Advent we will know ourselves as God knows us.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Now we even look at the word through a glass darkly. When we get to Heaven we will have perfect knowledge and will understand clearly. We will know ourselves and others just as God knows us. No one will need to introduce you to Paul and Silas or anyone else. You will know them when you see them.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

The church at Corinth had a problem with the gifts. In chapter twelve Paul listed “tongues” as the least gift and prophesy as the most to be desired. He goes into more detail in this chapter. Now, let me say here that I have a different view of “tongues” than many other Baptists. Many believe that “tongues” was always a known language. I believe there were two types of “tongues”. The first was the type spoken at Pentecost where Peter and the others spoke Hebrew and everyone there heard it in their native tongue. In other words, Greeks heard Greek, Jews heard Hebrew and Arabs heard Arabic and so on. The second type was a supernatural language given by the Holy Spirit for instruction to the church before there was a New Testament. At any

rate, Paul was not a fan of “tongues” and considered it the least of gifts.

Chapter Fourteen

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

You should be eager to have the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Most of all, you should want the gift of prophecy. The writers of the New Testament all had prophecy of future events somewhere in their writings. Now we have come to regard prophecy as preaching. I have no idea why since the two are different entirely. The Apostle John closes out prophecy in the nineteenth chapter of Revelation with these words; **the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.** That tells me that we now get our prophecy from the Book.

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

Do notice that the spirit here is with a small “s” so it is man's spirit. In this example no one understands what is being said so it is useless.

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

But if you prophesy, or read prophecy from the Book, of preach, if you like that term, then people understand and are able to learn from it and to take comfort from it. Therefore prophecy is profitable..

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

The one who speaks in a tongue benefits his own spiritual life, but the one who prophesies, or preaches, benefits the whole church.

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

I would like all of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather you prophesy. Those who prophesy are more important, to the church, than those who speak in tongues.

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

If I were to speak in tongues to you, I would be of no use. I would be no use unless I came with some truth, knowledge, prophecy or teaching. Those are the important things.

Now Paul gives some examples of uncertain sounds.

7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

We might say, "it's just so much hot air". Desire gifts that help the church.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.

11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.

If I do not know a language then I shall be like a foreigner. Here he seems to be speaking of known languages.

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

If you must seek after gifts,ask for one that helps the church.

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.

This is where known languages make no sense. If the person speaking in “tongues” is speaking a known language and then interprets why not speak in the language to begin with?Why speak in a foreign language first and then interpret?

14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

Notice again that this spirit is with a small “s”so it is man's spirit.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

Again Paul is emphasizing that tongues are of no use to the church except in the case where someone comes in from another country and with an interpreter. This would be a case like our missionaries going to a country where they did not speak the language .

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

Now,here Paul is speaking of known languages. He was fluent in several.

19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

This verse is one the Charismatics would like to take out of the Bible. Read it

again.

20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

21 In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

This was prophesied in the Old Testament.

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

If there was ever doubt about the “tongues” gift this one phrase could put it to rest. **Wherefore tongues are for a sign.** And we know signs are for the Jews.

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

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

This verse shows that prophesy can be associated with preaching. The purpose of this was to demonstrate divine power to the unbeliever. There was no benefit for the saved.

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

Again, this is the unbeliever. He is convicted not by the tongues gift but by prophesy and preaching of the word. He will carry this out into the world and others may come to believe.

Now, what follows are the guidelines for speaking in tongues. It is not done this way today. What we have today are a bunch of people playing with the

gifts of God. Many of them “faking it” and some being influenced by evil spirits.

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

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

By course here means one at a time. It says any man, not women. There are never to be more than three speaking in tongues at any service.

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

This could be a foreign language which would need an interpreter.

Now Paul switches to prophesy.

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

The judging here is to make sure the doctrine is correct.

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

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

So prophesy is for learning.

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

The New Testament prophets are to study, and learn from, the Old Testament prophets. In contrast to tongues, prophesy is to be done decently and in order.

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

Again, decently and in order.

Now here we go. These next verses tell us exactly why the modern tongues movement is heresy. Who does most of the tongues speaking in modern charismatic churches? The women. They “get it” before their husbands so they can claim to be more spiritual.

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

This is speaking in tongues or prophesying, the two things Paul has just been discussing. This has nothing to do with testifying or business meetings and the like. Paul was speaking expressly about tongues and prophesy.

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

That should settle that.

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

Paul is being sarcastic. The word came from Jesus through Paul.

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

A true prophet or spiritual man, or woman, will acknowledge the truth of the things Paul has written.

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

If they won't acknowledge Paul then let them remain ignorant.

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

40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

Again,decently and in order. What is it we always say about the Holy Spirit? If He puts it in two or more times He means for you to get it.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

In the next four verses you find the true gospel of salvation reduced to it's bottom line. This is the Gospel of the Grace of God in a nutshell. It does not get any easier to understand than this. It is a passage that should be marked in your bible and you should have a reference ,and page number, written on the back flyleaf as well.

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

In other words,if you have the following, and truly believe it,then you are saved and safe.

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

This is where heart knowledge as opposed to head knowledge comes in. If you go back to scriptures like John 3:16,Romans 10:9-10,Acts 16:31 and others you will find that they all say the same thing;**believe.**

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

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

So there it is. When Paul says “**confess with your mouth**” in Romans 10:9-10 this is what he is speaking of. That He died on the cross for our sins. He was buried and he rose again on the third day according to the scriptures. If you believe those things, in your heart, then you have it.

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

Now we have come to the witnesses. First Peter. This is where Jesus restores Peter's discipleship which was lost when he denied him. In Mark 16: 7 the angel says **But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.**

This is why he went to Peter before the other apostles. Notice also that Paul does not say that Peter was the first to see Him. The first were Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Salome.

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

Now he is seen by more than 500. This would be enough eyewitnesses to hold up in any court. The only thing that could refute this would be to find the body of Jesus and that won't happen.

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

James was the Lord's half brother and an unbeliever until this time. I am sure if a dead relative came back it would make a believer out of anyone. There is no record of any of the other of the Lord's half brothers and sisters being saved. Keep in mind that there were more than just the twelve apostles. At the Lord's appearance in the upper room "other disciples" are mentioned.

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

This verse says Paul was born as a Christian (saved) when he saw Christ on the Damascus road. Now notice the following: Paul was blind for three days and three nights and then was baptized. If anyone tries to tell you that baptism saves point them to this verse.

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

Paul never forgets that he persecuted the church of God. In 1 Tim 1: he even called himself the chief of sinners. I thank God that he put in the bad along with the good.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was

bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Paul is well aware that it is God's grace that made him what he was. He has labored more than the other apostles but he gives God the glory.

11 Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

It does not matter who preached it so long as it was the correct gospel. It might have been any of the apostles but the end result was the same.

12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

There were those at Corinth as well as at other places that did not believe in the resurrection of the dead.

13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

If Christ did not rise then certain things are true. All the preaching and our faith is worthless. If he did not rise then we are all liars no matter how sincere our belief. And finally, if he did not rise from the dead then we are still lost sinners.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

If Christ did not come up then our spirit is still dead and our soul is stuck to this body. If Christ is not risen then we are still in our sins.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

If Christ is not risen then those believers who died are simply dead forever.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

Let's compare verse nineteen with Eph 2:12 which says **That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:** That is the condition we would be in if Christ had not risen from the dead. This also brings to mind the fact that from the time of Abraham (a Gentile) until the time of Paul very few Gentiles were saved. Naman the Syrian, Job, many in Nineva when Jonah preached and a very few during Christ's earthly ministry come to mind but there were not many.

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the first to come back from the dead and stay alive. Those like Lazarus, Eutycus and Dorcas etc. later died again. Now, Christ did bring some with him when he came up but he was first. So, Jesus Christ is the firstfruits and the main harvest comes at the Rapture and Second Advent.

21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

By Adam came death. We inherit death from Adam, and not Eve, because Adam was the head of the human race. Adam was not the first to sin. Both Satan and Eve sinned before Adam.

Furthermore, if there was a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, then we have a whole race of angels sinning before this re-creation. That would account for all the Satanic and demonic spirits that now inhabit the first heaven.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

We have an order here compared to harvest. There are three stages. Christ the

firstfruits, **“They that are Christ's at his coming”** are the main harvest and are at the second coming. Third the Book says **“then cometh the end”**. Now, stay with me on this because this is a little tricky. The Bible never calls the Rapture the first resurrection. So, when Christ comes back to reign the first resurrection has to be over. This is how we know that. Turn to Rev 20:4-5 this is the millennial reign. **And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received [his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. {20:5} But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This [is] the first resurrection.** So, the Rapture is part of the first resurrection and the first resurrection has three parts. Firstfruits, main harvest and gleanings. Be sure to notice that all who are saved (OT and NT) before the millennial reign are up in the first resurrection. This is wonderful, interesting, stuff and deserves more time and study than we can give it this morning.

I can't leave this without mentioning that there are three Raptures mentioned in the Bible. God says **“come up hither”** three times in the Bible. The Old Testament saints came up with Jesus, the Church is called up at the end of the Age of Grace and later the post Tribulation rapture of the Tribulation saints.

24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

This will happen in the millennial reign. Gog and Magog will be destroyed at the last battle for Jerusalem.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

Verse 26 takes place at the Great White Throne Judgment. At this point Satan, who is the cause of death, is cast into the lake of fire. Rev 20:14 says; **And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.** Don't fail to notice here that death and hell seem to be some type of demonic being rather than just a place. My personal take on this is that while Hell

is a place it may well have some demonic in charge of it. That's me and not scripture.

27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

This verse has a tricky clause. Notice “it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. That is God the Father is the exception. All things are put under the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ except God the Father.

28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Now that all things are under his feet Jesus gives it back to God the Father. This seems to take place after the Great White Throne Judgment and before the New Heavens and New Earth.

29 Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

The dead referred to here are all the dead both saved and unsaved. This is speaking of our method of baptism where you are first down (that is dead), then raised (that is resurrection). It is a picture of being dead, buried and resurrected. This verse is misused by the present day Mormon Church in that they do actually baptize for dead people. We had a converted Mormon in our church who said he had been baptized over fifty times for dead people.

30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

If there is no resurrection then why do we suffer persecution for Christ? To put this in our terms, why do we spend our time in church attendance, study, bible reading and trying to lead a Godly life? If there is no resurrection we might just as well eat drink and be merry.

31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

Paul's life was always in such jeopardy that he never knew when he might be called on to give his life for the gospel. This also shows that Paul constantly had to put himself down and bring Christ up.

32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

By this statement Paul says that those who deny the resurrection are false teachers and heretics. As a practical matter this is fighting against the flesh daily. As for our doctrinal position, we are already dead in Christ. Roman 6 1-6 says it best. **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? {6:2} God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? {6:3} Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? {6:4} Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. {6:5} For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also [in the likeness of his] resurrection: {6:6} Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him,] that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.** So, doctrinally speaking your body is dead already but you have to drag it around until the Lord comes back or death frees you from it.

33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

This is another verse that should be memorized. This one shows us that bad company will corrupt us. The bad will always drag down the good.

34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

Paul tells the Christians at Corinth to come to their senses. They are confused and like people who are drunk on alcohol. To deny the resurrection is not a sign of superior 'knowledge but rather it is a sign they are like pagans. Their lack of love for others is also a sign that they do not know what God wants.

35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what

body do they come?

Paul poses a question some infidel may ask. Since it's a rhetorical question, he goes on with his answer in verse 36.

36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

In his answer he quotes Jesus from John 12:24 **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.**

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

What comes up in the resurrection is very different from what went into the ground. They come up better than they went in.

38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

We will get a body that is perfect and in it's early thirties. This will be a body that does not get sick, it cannot die, it doesn't age and, with the resurrection mind to go with it, it does not sin. Phil 3:21 tells us about the new body.

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

39 All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

All you have to do is compare a bite of steak with a bite of chicken or fish and you are well aware that not all flesh is the same.

40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

He goes on to tell us that the flesh of our earthly body and the flesh of our glorified body are different. We are given some comparisons in the next few

verses.

41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

The Mormons try to use verse 41 as a proof text for there being different degrees of salvation and resurrection in heaven. The first two words in the next verse, **so also**, show that this is an illustration.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

It is sown in corruption and dishonor. Of course it is. It rots and falls to pieces. It is raised a perfect, spiritual body. Notice that it is not raised a spirit, but a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

The last Adam is a reference to Christ. Not only was he raised from the dead, he is able to raise others.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

The natural came first. Adam is of the earth. The spiritual came afterward. Christ is of Heaven.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the

heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

We are like the man from earth. We will be like the man from heaven, so that we can live in heaven. The spiritual body will be flesh and bone, no blood.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Now we get to one of the best Rapture passages

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

Behold I show you a mystery; This is something that has not been revealed before. Paul has now revealed another mystery to go along with the Church as one Body consisting of saved Jews and Gentiles and salvation by grace through faith..

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Let's compare this with 1 Thessalonians 4:17 which says, **For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. {4:15} For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. {4:16} For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: {4:17} Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.** These passages from 1 Cor. and 1 Thess. Should settle the matter of the Rapture for everyone.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

Paul uses two scripture quotations here. **Death is swallowed up in victory**, is a quote from Isaiah 25:8 and **O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?** Is a paraphrase from Hosea 13:14

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

If Christ were to come at this minute then we would never know the sting of death.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Now we get to talk about one of our favorite subjects; money. Tithes and offerings support the work of the ministry and poor saints. Do keep in mind that tithes and offerings are separate issues. The tithes are owed to God and, as far as I can determine, there is no reward for tithing. Offerings, on the other hand, produce rewards.

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

The Church at Corinth knew that Paul had been taking up a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem and had inquired if they might contribute. Apparently, from the context, this was not voluntary but an order from Paul.

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Notice the change here from the Book of Acts where they met in the synagogue every sabbath. Now, just as we do, they are told to meet on the first day of the week. Have the collection ready to go so there is no running around to gather things when I come. Right here I want to jump ahead to 2 Cor. chapter 9 and read verses 6,7 and 8 because they tie right in with this. **{9:6} But this [I say,] He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. {9:7} Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give;] not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. {9:8} And God [is] able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all [things,] may abound to every good work:** Be sure to notice the promise in verse 8. This is not a promise to make you rich but rather a promise to make sure you have plenty of everything so that you can use it for yourselves and for good works. This is conditioned on your willing generosity.

3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

The church is to appoint someone to go to Jerusalem to carry the money to the saints there. Paul is careful to make sure that no one can accuse him of misusing the collection. Collections in the New Testament are for two things; the poor saints and the support of the ministry. Support of the ministry can consist of several things such as pastoral support, missionaries, keeping the lights and water on and such. It should never be spent for show nor for unessential things such as jet planes and stained glass windows. Strictly speaking, it should not be spent for service of debt since there should be no debt in the first place. Money should be spent for the direct preaching, and teaching, of the gospel.

4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

If Paul decides to go on to Jerusalem then he and the representatives can travel together. This seems to hint that Paul was not sure of his next destination after Corinth.

5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia.

Verses 5-8 are Paul's travel itinerary.

6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.

Travel during winter in the Mediterranean area was difficult so Paul plans to winter in Corinth.

7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.

8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

When we see a door opened in the New Testament it is an opportunity to spread the gospel. This same is true today. God opens doors for churches and for evangelist and missionaries. I believe he also opens doors for us as well. So Paul sees a great opportunity to preach in his near future but also expects many adversaries. That would be the devil using man to fight against the spread of the gospel.

10 Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.

11 Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

This is Timothy, Paul's "son" in the ministry. This goes with 1 Tim 4:12 where Paul says to Timothy, **Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.**

We know from these verses and others that Timothy was a young man and might not be taken seriously by older members of the group. Paul is telling the church to send Timothy to him. In other words to give him support for the journey.

12 As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto

you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

Apollos, once he was saved and taught right by Aquila and Priscilla went out preaching to the Jews and had made a great impression on them. I believe that Apollos was second only to Paul when it came to the number of converts. These were two very strong willed men and were not often serving together though they backed each others ministries.

13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

“Quit you like men” is an old way of saying, act like men. We see too little of this today. This is not the so called macho image we see sometimes but rather men taking responsibility, earning a living for their families and raising children in the right way. Even our television shows now portray men as some kind of bungling idiot who must constantly be corrected by his wife and kids. I'm thinking of shows like Everybody Loves Raymond or any other sitcom you care to name.

14 Let all your things be done with charity.

There is that word charity again. Do everything with love. Watch all the time for the enemy of Christ, the devil. Be brave and be strong and firm in the faith. Verse 14 is Paul's final command about the relationships of Christians to each other, and to those outside the church.

15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

The house of Stephanus was the first household saved at Corinth and it is likely that the church met in their house. There were no church buildings at this time and the congregation met in members houses. Buildings came after 300 AD. Addicted means given over completely to something and this household was said to be addicted to the ministry. What a way to be.

16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.

Paul tells the membership to follow those like the house of Stephanus and others like them. Now we know from this verse and others like them that there were some really good Christians in Corinth. We tend to lose sight of that and concentrate on the carnal Christians there.

17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.

I see Paul chiding these Christians a little. You didn't do quite enough but Stephanus, Fortunatus and Achaicus made up for what you lacked. These were the three members of the Corinthian church who ministered to Paul at Ephesus. Notice the Latin names of the three. Corinth was largely a Roman city.

18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

Since these three men have been such a blessing, both to me and to you, treat them accordingly. Refreshing our spirit is something we should all get when we meet the brethren at church services. It should always be an uplifting experience.

19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

Apparently Aquila and Priscilla moved from place to place and wherever they went they made their house a sanctuary for the saints. They were at Ephesus at this time. These are the two who had instructed Apollos earlier and set him on the right path.

20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

This is an Oriental and middle eastern custom even today. We will not be doing that here.

21 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.

Paul has written the salutation, not the entire epistle, with his own hand. He usually dictated his letters since, apparently, his eyesight was poor. This may

have been leftover from the Damascus road experience. When these Apostolics try to tell you that they have the gift of healing remind them of Paul who could not cure either himself nor Trophimus who he said he had to leave in Miletum sick. If Paul can't then they certainly can't.

22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

This is the only place in scripture where these two words appear together. Anathama is translated as “accursed” and Maranatha means “our Lord is coming”. So, the redneck translation of this passage would be, “if you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ then go on to Hell. Nevertheless He is coming”.

Now Paul's closing blessing. Peter and John use “peace” but with Paul it is always grace.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.