



The Lighthouse
NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

1 Corinthians

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Introduction to the First Epistle to the Congregation at Corinth

Theme: Uniting a divided congregational body (1 Cor. 1:10). One of the greatest travesties is the characteristic abuse of this epistle by universal invisible church scholars. Paul's aim is to provide instruction and principles to restore and secure the practical working unity in the congregational body at Corinth, rather than some mystical universal invisible scattered saints who shall never see or work with each other in this world. The metaphorical body of Christ – the congregation – is symbolized in the unleavened bread used in the Lord's Supper. The cup symbolizes the remission of sins of all the elect. However, the bread symbolizes the sanctification of the elect in "unity" and in "truth" under the disciplinary administration of the New Testament congregation. The cup symbolizes the basis for salvation, while the bread symbolizes the basis for sanctified service (Chs. 5:6-8; 12:14-26).

Date: Written on the Third Missionary Journey of Paul around AD 50.

Writer: Apostle Paul (Ch.1:1) – It was written in Ephesus (Ch.16:8) but then sent from Philippi (Ch. 16:5, 24).

Audience: This is a letter written to be read and applied to local visible congregations. It is specifically written to the congregation located at Corinth, and is designed to be read in "every place" where the saints assemble to "call upon the Lord" (Ch.1:2). It is a letter to localized and assembled saints "in every place" instructing them how to conduct public worship in unity and in purity.

Outline:

A. Introduction – Ch. 1:1-9

B. Unity Concerning Priorities and Leadership – Chs. 1:10-4

C. Unity Concerning Purity and Discipline – Chs. 5-6:11

D. Unity Concerning Personal Relationships & Liberties – Chs. 6:12-9

E. Unity Concerning Public Worship Service – Chs. 10-14

F. Unity Concerning the Hope of the Gospel – Ch. 15

G. Unity Concerning Poor in Jerusalem – Ch. 16:1-18

H. Salutations – Ch. 16:19-24

The First Letter to the Congregation at Corinth

Chapter 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.¹

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 [divisions] among you.

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.²

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

¹ “**Joined together**” – They were already joined together in spiritual union with each other in Christ but it is practical union as a congregational body of Christ that Paul is seeking to accomplish by this letter. Paul was not trying to resolve contentions among believers scattered all over the Roman world but “among you” in the congregational body at Corinth (v. 11). However, this letter would serve as a model for resolving divisions in all congregations (“in every place” v. 2) that read and applied its principles.

² “**I am of Paul, and I of Apollos...Cephas**” – Paul begins with the root of the divisions in the congregation at Corinth. It was a division around prominent ministers that God had used to add members to this congregation. After Paul left, Apollos came and worked among them (Acts 19:1). Some converts of Peter (Acts 2:10-11) and even some who had previously been immersed under Christ (Jn. 4:1) had become members of this congregation. The administrator of their immersion became the bragging point causing division among them. The essence of denominationalism occurred within this congregation at Corinth. Paul deals with this issue systematically through chapter four. In these first four chapters, Paul provides the basis for unity for dealing with other areas of division (discipline, practical matters, Lord's Supper, spiritual gifts, membership positions, congregation order and worship) in the remainder of the epistle.

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

15 Lest any should say that I had immersed in mine own name.³

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

17 For Christ sent me not to immerse, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.⁴

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.

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

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

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.⁵

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

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

³ **“Immersed in my own name”** – They had been immersed in the name of Christ, but instead of Christ, the name of their administrator became the boast of their immersion in water. Their immersion became the divisive factor that produced denominationalism within the congregational body at Corinth. Paul methodically deals with this problem in the next four chapters. He begins by pointing out the gospel takes precedence over immersion in water (vv. 17-18) and only God receives the glory for the effectual call through the gospel (vv. 19-31) rather than the eloquence of the preacher (ch. 2:1-5) because the power is in God’s Spirit through his word (ch. 2:6-16). Ultimately, all these ministers were working under the leadership of “one” Spirit (ch. 3:1-16) while building this congregational body at Corinth. *Therefore, under the leadership of one Spirit they were all immersed into this one congregational body and made to partake of all the blessings of the Holy Spirit that indwelt this congregation as His “temple” at Corinth (1 Cor. 12:13).* This is God’s methodology in building each and every one of His congregations in each and “every place” where they call upon the name of the Lord. This truth is encapsulated in 1 Corinthians 12:13 as the basis for unity within the body of Christ, considered as an institution in verses 12-26,28, with concrete application to the congregation at Corinth in verse 27.

⁴ **“Sent not to immerse but to preach”** – Immersing and preaching are both administrative actions. Both administer the same gospel. However, it is in the “preaching” of the gospel that God administers “power” that saves rather than in administering the picture of the gospel by immersion in water. It is the “foolishness of preaching” that “saves” those who believe (v. 21). Paul brings the reader back to the time that Christ “sent” Paul to preach the gospel in Acts 26:15-17. Paul was immersed in water (Acts 9:18) three days *after* (Acts 9:9) being “sent” to preach the gospel (Acts 22:15-17). Christ does not commission and send lost people to preach the gospel. Ananias addressed him as “brother” before he was immersed (Acts 9:17) and was told that he was sent to him only to be “filled” with the Spirit (Acts 9:17) and no man is “filled” with the Spirit who has not already been regenerated by the Spirit. Hence, Paul experienced “the power of God” in salvation long before he submitted to the symbol of the gospel in immersion.

⁵ **“The world by wisdom knew not God”** – When God empowers the “preaching” of the gospel it becomes his creative word to regenerate the elect, and thus the effectual call that brings life out of death (2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Thes. 1:4-5; James 1:18). This cannot be accomplished by the “wisdom” of the world (easy believism, historical faith, saying a prayer, walking the aisle, logical deduction, etc.).

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

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

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:⁶

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;

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.

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

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

Chapter 2

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

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

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

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:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.⁷

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:

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

⁶ **“Not many...are called...but God hath chosen”** – In this context the only ones who are "called" are those who are "chosen" (v. 27) by God (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13-14). Those chosen by God have no basis for boasting (vv. 29, 31) because the totality of salvation is "of God" (v. 30). This is the effectual call described also in Romans 8:29-30 and 2 Thessalonians 2:14. In the general call the gospel always comes without transforming power (Acts 7:51) and in "word only" (1 Thess. 1:5) and the non-elect always "resist" (Acts 7:51) but to the elect it comes in power (1 Thess. 1:4-5) at God's appointed time (Gal. 1:15-16). This is precisely how one can know he is one of God's elect (1 Thess. 1:4-5).

⁷ **“Not stand in the wisdom of men”** – Salvation is not obtained by eloquence, sales tactics, or intelligent and logical force of arguments, but by "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" according to God's choice, and His effectual call through the preaching of the gospel.

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

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

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.

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.

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.⁸

14 But the natural [soul guided] 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 [Spirit guided] discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual [things that pertain to the Spirit] judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

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

Chapter 3

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual [that which pertains to the Spirit], but as carnal [that which pertains to the physical world] even as unto babes in Christ.⁹

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.

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?

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?¹⁰

⁸ “**The Holy Ghost teacheth**” – In verse 7 we have inspiration. In verse 10 we have revelation, and in verses 12-13 we have illumination. The lost man is spiritually dead and incapable of understanding the Word of God (v. 14). Hence, there are no boasting rights for the preacher (vv. 1-6) or the person being saved. Only those born of the Spirit are capable of understanding the wisdom of God – these are the “spiritual” (vv. 15-16). However, when a saved person thinks according to the mind of the flesh, they operate after a “carnal” mind/thinking just like a lost person (see Romans 8:10-13).

⁹ “**Unto carnal**” – This can be any Christian at any stage in spiritual growth under the control of his lower nature, fleshly desires. This is typical of a new Christian and lost men. He is not talking about a second lower class Christian. The most mature Christians fall into this condition. However, maturity is spending less time in that condition.

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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.¹¹

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

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry [cultivated field], ye are God's building.¹²

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.¹³

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.¹⁴

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

¹⁰ **"I am of Paul...I am of Apollos"** – He is still dealing with the division over administrators of immersion that has divided the congregation into splinter groups or denominations.

¹¹ **"God giveth the increase"** – They were but instruments. There is no power in their administration of immersion in water. There is no power in their preaching ability or in the gospel alone (1 Thes. 1:5). God gave a minister to each of them (v. 5), and He empowered their preaching – "God gave the increase".

¹² **"Are one...labourers together with God"** – They all work under the same boss. They all work as "one" together toward the same goal because they all work together under the leadership of the Spirit of God in building the "husbandry...building" at Corinth. He did not say "we" but "ye" in verse 9 because Paul is not currently a member of that congregation at Corinth built by God. He is writing about the congregation at Corinth where he and Apollos actually were used by God working together in building this "temple" of God. Paul effectively destroyed the root of division at Corinth by demonstrating that (1) the gospel takes preeminence over immersion; (2) Gospel salvation is due to the power of God and not the eloquence or ability of the minister; (3) that all the ministers were working together under "one" Spirit and therefore it was God the Holy Spirit that saved and immersed them and built the congregation at Corinth and the ministers were but His instruments. He later uses the same principle to deal with division over spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:13), and other divisiveness between members in the body of Christ at Corinth.

¹³ **"Masterbuilder"** – Paul historically laid the foundation for the building of the congregation at Corinth (Acts 19). He preached the gospel, administered immersion, and gathered and constituted them into a congregation of Christ. Ministers that followed could not make them any more of a congregation than what they already were. All they could do is "build upon" that foundation or build up the congregation by their preaching, teaching and administration of immersion to new members.

¹⁴ **"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid"** – Paul has previously demonstrated that it is God from whence the "power" of salvation originates, and that the ministers are simply His instruments to accomplish His work of building New Testament congregations. The foundation of all true congregations of Christ rests solely upon the finished work of Jesus Christ as proclaimed in the gospel, and symbolized in baptism. This foundation is publically identified with; (1) immersion in water; (2) by the authority of a previous congregational-authorized, and congregational-sent administrator who forms them into one congregation committed to observing all things Christ commanded (Acts 13:1-4; Mt. 28:19-20).

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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.¹⁵

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.¹⁶

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?¹⁷

17 If any man defile [ruin] the temple of God, him shall God destroy [ruin]; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.¹⁸

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.

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

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

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;¹⁹

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

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

¹⁵ **"If any man's work"** – The immediate context has in view the "work" of the ministers used by God to build the congregation at Corinth. However, it is applicable to every child of God, and the work that God has gifted them, and placed them in the congregational body to perform (see 1 Cor. 12:14-27; Philip. 2:13). The character of their labors will be manifest on judgment day. The character of their preaching, teaching, leadership, or whatever labors they perform in the name of Christ, will stand or fall on judgment day. They will stand accountable to God for their labors whether they acted under the leadership of God or not.

¹⁶ **"He shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned...he himself shall be saved."** – Individual personal salvation is not subject to this judgment (Jn. 5:24). This is the judgment for rewards. If his works turn out to be "wood, hay or stubble" he only suffers loss of reward but he himself is "saved."

¹⁷ **"Ye are the temple of God"** – Paul did not say "we" but "ye." He is not talking about some universal invisible temple but the congregation, the building, the husbandry (v. 9) that he laid the foundation of in the city of Corinth. They are "the" temple of God at Corinth (1 Cor. 12:27).

¹⁸ **"If any man defile the temple...which temple ye are"** – No man can "defile" the so-called universal invisible temple as it is invisible and universal and existent only in the fertile imagination of mislead theologians. He did not say "we are" but "ye are." However, the kind of Temple built at Corinth by Paul and built up by several other ministers can be defiled by false teaching and human wisdom ("wood, hay and stubble") that weakens and leads them astray. Certain men claiming to be "apostles" (2 Cor. 12) had come to the congregation at Corinth and were trying to poison the congregation against Paul and lead them astray by false teaching. All who "defile" a New Testament congregation will not escape God's judgment. He picks up this threat of judgment in chapter four in regard to those professed ministers who had come among the congregation at Corinth.

¹⁹ **"Therefore let no man glory in men"** – Paul is still dealing with the issue of division over specific prominent baptismal administrators which had served in the congregation at Corinth.

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Chapter 4

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards [one placed in charge and held accountable of his Masters goods] of the mysteries of God.²⁰

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

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.

4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified [declared innocent]: 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.

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?

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.

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.

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

12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled [abusive language], we bless; being persecuted, we suffer [allow] it:

13 Being defamed [injurious false accusations], we intreat [respond kindly]: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

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

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.²¹

²⁰ "Let a man so account of us" – Paul is still emphasizing the warning given to ministers that labor in God's congregation at Corinth or in "any place" (1 Cor. 1:2) where such a congregation is built. He admits to being held accountable by God but he will not be held accountable by certain enemies that had come into the congregation at Corinth who were attempting to lead the congregation astray, and against Paul. Certain persons were attempting to judge and charge Paul with evil motives (vv. 3-5).

²¹ "Begotten you through the gospel" – Paul was the human instrument that God used in preaching the gospel to them through which the "power of God" was made effectual to beget/regenerate them unto salvation. He already acknowledged that it was God, and not the minister (1 Cor. 2:1-4), who effectually called them through the gospel (1

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

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 congregation.

18 Now some are puffed up [**arrogantly proud**]; as though I would not come to you.

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.

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

Chapter 5

It is reported commonly that there is fornication [**illicit sex**] among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.²²

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

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,²³

5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction [**ruin**] of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.²⁴

6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?²⁵

Cor. 1:18-31). God chose to use him to lay the foundation of the congregation through the preaching of gospel (3:10), and administering immersion to the gathered believers.

²² **“Commonly reported”** – The nature of the sin was so well known outside the congregation and so boasted about within the congregation that no further witnesses or evidence was necessary that even Paul had “judged already” (v. 3). This was a member of this congregation that should be “taken away from among you” (v. 2) by following the instructions in verses 4-5.

²³ **“In the name of our Lord Jesus”** – Jesus gave His congregation the power of the keys of the kingdom in Matthew 18:17-18 and told them that he would be present and supportive whenever they met (“in my name”- Mt. 18:20) in congregational capacity (“two or three are gathered” – Mt. 18:20) to exercise the power of the keys. In keeping with Christ's promise, Paul instructs that when “ye are gathered together” to exercise the keys or authority given them by Christ to discipline this member. Christ gave the keys to the congregation (Mt. 18:17-18 “ye”) rather than the elders or congregational leadership. Paul addresses the congregation rather than the elders (“ye”).

²⁴ **“That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord”** – This is an act by the congregation that removes them from the privileges of membership and hands them over to the Lord for chastening. If they are His children they will be chastened by Him (Heb. 12:5-10). God's whip is Satan.

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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:²⁶

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice [ill will toward another] and wickedness [evil purposes]; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity [without impurity] and truth.²⁷

9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators [those who commit any unlawful sex]:

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

11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater [worshipper of false gods], or a railer [slanderer], or a drunkard, or an extortioner [one who takes financial advantage of another]; with such an one no not to eat.²⁸

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

²⁵ **“The whole lump”** – Paul alludes to God’s command that every house in Israel should purge out all leaven from their dwelling place before observing the Passover (Ex. 12:15). The congregation at Corinth is such a metaphorical “building” or “house” (3:9; 1 Tim. 3:15). The “little leaven” in context metaphorically represents this fornicating member. His sin had already begun its leavening process (“ye are puffed up”). The “whole lump” had reference to the unleavened bread used in the Passover and in the Lord’s Supper. This bread represents the “whole lump” or the metaphor for the whole “body of Christ.” The unleavened bread represented the literal body of Christ as well as the metaphorical congregational body of Christ. Such leaven cannot leaven “the whole” so-called universal invisible body of Christ but it can leaven the “whole” congregational body of Christ at Corinth (1 Cor. 12:27) where such a member resides. The nature of the congregational body cannot exceed the symbolism of the “whole lump” or “unleavened bread” used in the Supper. This “whole lump” represents “one body” (1 Cor. 10:17). The “one body” it represents is “one” in kind – the congregation that can and does assemble in one place (1 Cor. 11:18, 20), and it is “one” in number, or that singular “one,” to which the reader actually belongs (1 Cor. 12:27).

²⁶ **“Ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened”** – Paul makes it clear that this “whole lump” represents the congregational body of Christ at Corinth. He does not say “we are” but “ye are.” The so-called universal invisible body of Christ cannot purge members out of its body but this kind of body of Christ can. Removal of this member by congregational discipline changes the membership of the body so that it becomes a “new lump.” The “one” bread used in the Supper represents the local congregational body observing the Supper.

²⁷ **“Let us keep the feast”** – He is referring to the Lord’s Supper. He characterizes the Lord’s Supper as “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” (v. 7) with the use of “unleavened bread” (v. 8) He forbids that they should “eat” (v. 11) this feast with such leavened members “old leaven” (vv. 7-8) in their midst (v. 11) but must first “purge” out that leaven. The only “feast” the congregation of Christ is commanded to observe where “Christ is our Passover” with the use of “unleavened bread” is the Lord’s Supper. They are commanded not to keep company with fornicators (v.9) but they cannot avoid open sinners in the “world,” since that would require them leaving the world (v. 10). However, they can avoid keeping company with such within their congregation by removing them (vv. 11-13). Those sinners outside the congregation God will deal with (v. 12) but those inside the congregation they are responsible to deal with (v. 13) and remove, or “purge out” (v. 7), so that God will deal with them (v. 5).

²⁸ **“With such a one no not to eat”** – The preceding context demands he is referring to observing “the feast” of the Lord’s Supper. He commands them to “purge out” (v. 7) and not to keep the feast “with old leaven” (v. 8). “With such a one” refers to any member that is characterized by those sins listed in verses 10-11 or any other open and obvious sin.

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

Chapter 6

Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints [set apart ones to God]?

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?

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

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed [in the congregation].²⁹

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?

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.³⁰

²⁹ “**The least esteemed**” – Paul may be using irony – setting the most despised among you as judges is better than going to secular courts. However, don’t you have anyone you respect among you to be set forth as judges (v. 5)?

³⁰ “**Your bodies are the members of Christ**” – Their physical bodies could not be members of a universal invisible body of Christ. Their physical bodies were the members of the metaphorical congregational body at Corinth. Their bodies were immersed in water and added to that physical local assembly. Also, their physical body could be

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

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

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

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?³¹

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.³²

Chapter 7

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.³³

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

3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence [**due sexual benefit**]: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

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

5 Defraud ye not [**don't keep back what is due**] 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 [**excessive sexual separation**].

6 But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.³⁴

brought into sexual union with a harlot and thereby defile the metaphorical congregational body of Christ by the sin of fornication (see 5:1), as a “little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”

³¹ “**Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit**” – Paul is speaking of their physical human body in context and so uses the singular possessive pronoun “your” here. However, in 3:16 he uses the plural possessive pronoun “ye” and the singular “temple of the Holy Spirit” because in context he is talking about the congregational body of Christ at Corinth. The Holy Spirit indwells the physical body of the individual believer, as well as, indwells the institutional and metaphorical congregational body at Corinth or “in any place” where such a institutional and metaphorical congregation exists.

³² “**Glorify God in your body and in your spirit**” – Fornication affects both their physical body and their spirit. It affects their union with the metaphorical congregational body of Christ and their fellowship with Christ in their spirit.

³³ “**Touch**” – has reference to the sexual act.

³⁴ “**Not of commandment**” – Paul is simply giving his own personal opinion. Note the contrast with verse 10 “I command, yet not I, but the Lord.”

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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.

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

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

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 [divorce] his wife.

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 [divorce].

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 [divorce].

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified [set apart] by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean [without sanctifying influence]; but now are they holy [set apart].³⁵

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.

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?

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 congregations.

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

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

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.

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.

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.

³⁵ “**Else your children were unclean**” – If there is no believing spouse (either husband or wife) then the children have no sanctifying influence upon them while being raised in that house. The word “sanctified” and “holy” come from the same root word and simply means “set apart.” This has nothing to do with sprinkling, pouring or immersing infants.

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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.

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.

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

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

Chapter 8

Now as touching [concerning] 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.

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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.

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

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.

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.

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;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?³⁶

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against 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 9

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

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.

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?³⁷

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

³⁶ “**Perish**” – This has no contextual reference to the eternal state of a “weak” brother but to their temporal state in regard to their own conscience “wound their weak conscience” (v. 12). You will render them inoperable or useless under the guilt of their own defiled conscience.

³⁷ “**Cephas**” – Peter was married (Mt. 8:14 “his wife’s mother”). Ordained men are not required or requested to be celibate as Rome demands.

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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?

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

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?

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.

11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal [things that pertain to the physical world] things?

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

13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy [that which is set apart to God] 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 [sustain their living] of the gospel.³⁸

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!

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

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

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

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;

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.

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.³⁹

³⁸ “**Even so hath the Lord ordained**” – Paul argues from verses 7-14 that the Lord has commanded that the minister of the gospel be financially supported just as the ancient Levites were financially supported by tithes (v. 13; Numb. 18:24-32) . See Hebrews 7:8. However, Paul will give up his rights for the sake of the gospel if demanding his rights hinders people from hearing the gospel preached by him (vv. 15-18).

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

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.

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

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 [**disqualified, set aside**].

Chapter 10

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;

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

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

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

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

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted [**desired after**].

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.

9 Neither let us tempt [**test, try**] Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

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

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [**pattern or example**]: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

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

13 There hath no temptation [**trial, test**] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer [**allow**] 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.

14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

³⁹ **“That I might be a partaker with you”** – He is referring to partaking with them in rewards on judgment day for his faithfulness to what God called him to do (“I have a reward”, “What is my reward then” – vv. 17-18). He wanted to receive “the prize” (v. 24) or a “crown” that is “incorruptible” (v. 25) which required self-discipline (v. 27) and faithfulness to what He was called to do (gospel ministry – vv. 18-23a). He did not want to be a “cast away” or “suffer loss” of his rewards on the day of judgment (see 1 Cor. 3:14-15). Personal salvation is not in view here.

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

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [to share in common with] of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.⁴⁰

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

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

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.⁴¹

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.

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

23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient [helpful, profitable]: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify [build up] not.

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

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

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

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

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:

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

⁴⁰ “**We are one bread...one body**” – Every letter written by Paul was to immersed congregational members. He never wrote a letter to any unimmersed and/or non-congregational believer. Every reader was a member of the same kind of institution and shared the same ordinances as he did. Paul like a good teacher, would consistently speak of the congregational body of Christ and its membership in generic and institutional language when teaching general truths common to all his readers (“we”) but then change to specific and concrete language (“ye”) when making a specific application “in any place” where such a specific congregation existed. For example, in verses 16-17 he lays down the general principle applicable to all New Testament immersed congregational believers (“we”), but in verses 20-21 he switches to “ye” when applying this general principle to the particular congregation located at Corinth. This is Paul’s methodology throughout this epistle beginning with 1 Cor. 5:6-7 (specific concrete application “ye”) followed by a general application in 1 Cor. 5:8-9 (“us” and “we”) and in 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (“we”) followed by “ye” (1 Cor. 12:27).

⁴¹ “**They sacrifice to devils**” – Behind all false religions and false doctrines are devils (1 Tim. 4:1). In chapter 8, Paul merely dealt with the physical aspects of idolatry, and foods offered to idols. The materials were harmless in and of themselves. There were no real “gods” except in the imagination of the mind of the deceived. However, here he deals with the spiritual realities behind such religious idolatry. Attending the worship services of false religions was actually entering into “fellowship” with devils as “devils” were the source of that system of worship, its teachings and any manifest power.

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- 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.
32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the congregation of God:
33 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Chapter 11

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

- 2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.
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.⁴²
4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.
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:[hair cut short] but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn [hair cut short] or shaven [hair cut off completely], let her be covered.
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.
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.
10 For this cause ought the woman to have power [authority] on her head because of the angels.
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.
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 congregations of God.
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.

⁴² “**Head**” – metaphor for the position of authority

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

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

20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's [Gr. *kuriakos*] supper.⁴³

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 congregation of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

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.⁴⁴

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.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.⁴⁵

⁴³ **“Not the Lord's Supper”** – Paul uses the Greek term “*kuriakos*” translated “Lord's.” The only other time this term is used in the New Testament is in Revelation 1:10 “the Lord's day.” This term was well known among those ruled over by Caesar. It was the term that described those things properly belonging to Caesar as “Lord.” New Testament writers apply this term to Christ thus denying that Caesar was the true “Lord.” Paul denies what they observed and called the “Supper” belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. They might call it the “Lord's” supper but Paul denied that it belonged to the Lord. There are several reasons given by Paul in the immediate and overall context that invalidates their observance as the Lord's Supper: (1) Division (schism) – v. 18; (2) Heresies (divisive opinions); (3) drunkenness and disorderliness – vv. 21-22; (4) partaking while in a leavened condition – ch. 5. The primary schism is described in chapters 1-4 where the congregation is internally divided into denominational splits with their own leaders. The “heresies” are listed in chapters 5-11. When these things are present within a congregation attempting to observe the Lord's Supper it is to eat the Supper “unworthily” as a congregation and “this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.”

⁴⁴ **“Ye do shew”** – There are two reasons given for observing the Lord's Supper in verses 25-26 (1) do in remembrance of Christ; (2) Shew the Lord's death. The time for observing it is “as oft as ye drink”.

⁴⁵ **“Let a man examine himself”** – Paul has challenged the worthiness of the congregation as a body to observe it in verses 17-20, denied their worthiness to partake of it, and denied their observance is the “Lord's” Supper. Note the plural “ye” and the repeated “when ye gather together” – vv. 17-20. However, beginning in verse 27-32 he examines the worthiness of the individual member to partake of the Supper. The congregation has the responsibility to deal with all known public schism and open doctrinal division within its midst before it can observe it worthily, but it cannot deal with private sins in the life of the individual member unknown to the congregation. It is the individual member's responsibility to deal with all sin known only to them in their own lives before observing the

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29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation [condemnation] to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.⁴⁶

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep [euphemism for death].

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

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

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

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.

Chapter 12

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

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb [unable to speak] idols, even as ye were led.⁴⁷

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.

4 Now there are diversities [Gr. *diairesis*] of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences [Gr. *diairesis*] of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities [Gr. *diairesis*] 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.

Supper. The congregation exercises discipline on public sin but the Lord will discipline the individual for private unconfessed sin – vv.29-32.

⁴⁶ “**Not discerning the Lord's body**” – Paul does not say “not discerning the Lord's blood.” The blood symbolizes the redemption of all the elect but the bread has to do with personal setting apart of the elect unto a life of purity and unity under the disciplinary authority of the local visible congregational body of Christ. The symbolism of the Lord's body has been dealt with in 1 Corinthians 5:6-11. The removal of leaven is symbolic of the absence of all forms of open and public “malice and wickedness,” or those things listed in 5:10-11. Positively, it represents the presence of “sincerity and truth” among one congregational body observing the Supper (5:8). It is “one” loaf (1 Cor. 10:15-16) demonstrating unity between the observers without “division” and “contentions” (1 Cor. 11:18-19). The practice of “open” communion violates “the Lord's Body” as symbolized in the one loaf of unleavened bread.

⁴⁷ “**Even as ye were led**” – In their previous lost condition they were being led by demons in their idolatrous worship (ch. 10:20-21). All false doctrine originates with demons (1 Tim. 4:1). However, now as saved persons, they ought to be under the leadership of the Holy Spirit (v. 3 “by the Spirit”). The Greek preposition “en” translated “by” in verses 3-13 is defined by this contrast of leadership between verse 2 and verse 3. The preposition “en” (“by”) is contextually defined to mean “by means of, under or by the leadership” of the Spirit. For example, it is “by means” of the Spirit various gifts are empowered and manifested (vv. 7-11). This is the meaning of the Greek preposition “en” found in 1 Cor. 12:13 – “by leadership of” or “under the leadership of” one Spirit.

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

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

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

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally [**to each one**] as he will.⁴⁸

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.⁴⁹

13 For by one Spirit are we all immersed 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.⁵⁰

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

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

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

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?⁵¹

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.⁵²

⁴⁸ “**Dividing to every man...as he will**” – Spiritual gifts are sovereignly bestowed according to God’s purpose not according to the desire of the individual member. God places each member in the congregational body to meet the needs of the rest of that body and gifts them to meet the needs of that congregational body.

⁴⁹ “**So also is Christ**” – Paul introduces the physical human body as an analogy for the metaphorical congregational body of Christ. All of his readers had in common the same *kind* of human body. All the readers, including Paul, shared in common with each other the same *kind* of congregational body of Christ.

⁵⁰ “**For by one Spirit**” – The Greek preposition “en” (“by”) has been defined in the contrast in verses 2-3 to mean “under the leadership” or “by the leadership” of the Spirit. Chapters 1-4 have already demonstrated how the membership of this congregation had been built up through various ministers working together as “one” under the leadership of the Spirit (ch. 3:5-9), and therefore it was God the Holy Spirit that built this congregation at Corinth. This congregation has already been described as “the temple” of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16). All the members have been made to “drink” or partake of the blessings and benefits provided by the Spirit of God indwelling this “temple” (vv. 6-11). The variety of spiritual gifts benefits the whole body (vv. 14-26). What is true in the building of this congregation at Corinth (ch. 3:6-16) is true concerning the same kind of congregation “in every place” it is found, and thus, true of all the readers of this epistle regardless of what congregation may read it (“we”).

⁵¹ “**Where were the....**” – God builds a congregation to be complete for practical service. The so-called universal invisible body of Christ is a monstrosity of division, incoherent, incomplete, and incapable of unified service. God builds the congregation through the Great Commission principles – same gospel, same immersion and same faith and practice through previous authorized congregational missionaries (chs. 3:6-16; Acts 13:1-4), so that the body will be without “schism” (12:25). This is only possible in a local visible congregational body (v. 27).

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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.⁵³

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

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.

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.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.⁵⁴

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.⁵⁵

28 And God hath set some in the congregation, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.⁵⁶

⁵² **“As it pleased Him”** – Diverse gifted members are set in the body in order to edify other members (v. 21) and make the body functional and complete so that it works in harmonious union without division (v. 25). This is true of the congregational body (v. 27), but impossible when applied to the so-called universal invisible body.

⁵³ **“The head”** – This was not an incomplete body metaphor. Just as the wife had her own physical head in addition to her metaphorical “head” (husband) so also each congregation is complete with members who serve in positions of authority (“head”) over the body. Thus here the term “head” does not refer to Christ but to members gifted for leadership and positions of authority over the local congregational body. The term “head” simply means “authority.” Christ is the “head” or final authority over the congregational “head” (members in positions of authority in the congregation). The metaphor “head” never implies any kind of spiritual “union” but only spiritual “authority” or position of authority (1 Cor. 11:3).

⁵⁴ **“Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it”** – This is impossible for the so-called universal invisible body of Christ. This contextual body is one where members are brought together in a working and self-edifying practical unity (v. 27). This is a body built to meet the practical “need” (vv. 21-25) of each member. There is no such thing as a universal invisible congregational body. Protestants have confused the Kingdom of God with the congregation of God. The kingdom of God on earth is universally spread out all over the world and it is “spiritual” and invisible to the eye but the congregation of Christ is given the keys “of the kingdom” to administer the ordinances and conduct public worship as “the house of God” (1 Tim. 3:15) under the leadership of a qualified ordained ministry (1 Tim. 3:1-13).

⁵⁵ **“Ye are the body of Christ”** – Verses 12-26 provide the abstract teaching applicable to any congregation “in any place” (1 Cor. 1:2) but verse 27 takes the abstract teaching and applies it concretely to “ye” (not “we”) as “the” body of Christ at Corinth. Corporately they are the metaphorical congregational body at Corinth. Individually they are “individual members thereof.”

⁵⁶ **“God hath set some in the congregation”** – The abstract use of terms has been used from verses 12-26. No particular congregational body has been in view but rather the congregational body as an institution was being described. In verse 27 Paul switches to the concrete application to the congregational body located at Corinth. Paul switches from the concrete application in verse 27 to the institutional application in verse 28. As an institution the

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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?⁵⁷

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.⁵⁸

Chapter 13

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.

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.

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.⁵⁹

congregation built by Christ has priorities among the diverse gifts placed in the congregation. Apostles are “gifts” (Eph. 4:11) and were set in the congregation “first” shortly before Christ preached the sermon on the mount (Lk. 6:12-15; Mk. 3:12-15). This order of apostles, prophets and teachers is listed in Ephesians 4:11. These are foundational servant gifts by which New Testament scriptures were provided and expounded and upon which every individual congregation was built (Eph. 2:20-21). The remaining are sign gifts that are communicated through laying on of the apostles hands (Acts 8:17-19; 19:6; Rom. 1:11). Not every individual congregation has these gifts. The congregation at Rome had only servant gifts but none of the sign gifts (Rom. 12:7-11). Paul desired to impart the other sign gifts to the congregational body at Rome through the laying on of apostolic hands (Rom. 1:11). The gift of tongues is last and least among all the gifts.

⁵⁷ “**Are all apostles...**” – The Greek text actually contains the answer to each question (Greek –“me”or “no”). Hence, God does not intend for all Christians to speak in tongues any more than he intends for all Christians to be apostles. However, if tongues were necessary to be saved (United Pentecostal Church) then he would have never said this. He would never have said this if tongues were necessary to pray spiritually or necessary to be spiritual or live the Christian life. Therefore, you do not need to speak in tongues to be saved, nor do you do not need to speak in tongues to be spiritual. Furthermore, you do not need to speak in tongues to pray. Therefore, speaking in tongues is not the evidence of a second work of grace or baptism in the Spirit. What is the purpose of tongues then? They are part of the revelatory sign gifts in the apostolic congregations when the New Testament Christians were being imparted.

⁵⁸ “**But covet earnestly**” – The imperative and indicative form of this expression in the Greek are identical and therefore it is up to the translator to choose which one is intended. The KJ translators chose the imperative making it a command. However, Paul had just stated in 12:11 that the gifts are distributed according to the Spirit’s will, not ours, that God provides gifts and sets members in the body as He pleases, not how we please (12:18), and He does not choose to give every Christian every gift (12:29-30). Making this a command would contradict everything Paul has previously denied. The problem in the Corinthian congregation was they all sought to have what they regarded as the better or more showy gifts. If this is translated by the indicative mode it would say “You are coveting the best gifts but yet I will show you a more excellent way” – the way of love – ch. 13. In other words, instead of coveting the better gifts, covet love, because that is essential in order to exercise all spiritual gifts for edification of the whole body. There is nothing wrong in seeking spiritual gifts (14:1) just as long as they are sought and exercised according to the apostolic principles laid down in chapters 13-14 love being the chief principle necessary for edification of the whole congregation.

⁵⁹ “**Though I....**” – Paul is speaking in hyperboles. He is not suggesting it is possible for any human to actually possess “all knowledge” or understand “all mysteries” or speak in the “tongues of angels.” He is intentionally

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- 4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth [boasts] not itself, is not puffed up [proud arrogance],
- 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly [act out of character], seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;⁶⁰
- 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.⁶¹
- 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.⁶²
- 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.⁶³

considering the extreme impossibilities and saying “though I” could, without love it would be worthless. His message to those who are parading the gift of tongues and other showy gifts is that without love is those gifts cannot accomplish what they were designed for by God. Without love they are dangerous. Love is essential to obtain the divine design for the administration of spiritual gifts (12:4-6) which is the unity and edification of the congregational body.

⁶⁰ “**Seeketh not her own**” – Spiritual gifts are not designed for self-edification but for the edification of the body as each gift is placed in the body to meet the “need” of other members. Spiritual gifts are to be governed by love and love seeks the edification of the congregation over and above self-edification. The Christ Spirit is a self-sacrificing spirit for others – self-denial. This is the repeated theme in chapter 14 (vv. 1, 4, 12, 14-15, 17, “Let all things be done unto edifying” of the church rather than for selfish use and gain – 14:26).

⁶¹ “**Tongues, they shall cease**” – Paul uses the middle voice or “cease of itself.” In contrast, he uses the passive voice for prophesy and knowledge indicating that something else will cause these gifts to cease (“when that which is perfect is come”). The reason that the gift of tongues will simply die out or cease of itself is because the purpose for the gift of tongues will cease (see. 14:20-22). In 13:9-10 the gift of tongues is omitted, indicating that it has ceased prior to what would cause the gift of prophecy and knowledge to cease.

⁶² “**We know...we prophesy in part**” – Paul uses the present tense. He is speaking of the apostolic age which is the present time of immaturity (v.11) and the “now” of verse 12-13. These are revelatory gifts because “now” there is no completed inspired revelation to direct the New Testament congregations. To “prophesy” includes speaking forth the revelation from God as well as giving exhortation or a commentary on that revelation. The former ability was reserved to the office of prophet whereas the latter ability was connected with the gift of “knowledge” or insight into what was revealed. The leaders of congregations were those who were “prophets,” and those who possessed the gift of “knowledge” or “teachers”(Acts 13:1). Such gifts provided “part” but not mature and complete revelation in New Testament faith and practice. Only “part” of the congregation had insights – only those with these gifts. When the scriptures are completed (Isa. 8:16-20; Heb. 2:3-4,12) then all the membership will be able to see a full and mature picture of the what they should be like.

⁶³ “**That which is perfect is come**” – Paul uses the neuter gender. This cannot refer to the coming of the Lord as that would require the masculine gender. Neither does it refer to the eternal age. It refers to the full revelation provided by the completion of the Biblical canon predicted to occur “among my disciples” in Isaiah 8:16 through the use of revelatory gifts (Isa. 8:18; Heb. 2:13) by New Testament prophets. Like many today, the Corinthians equated spirituality with possession of certain spiritual gifts, which was really carnality instead of spirituality (1 Cor. 3:1-3). They did not have inspired scriptures to clearly define spirituality within congregational boundaries. However, God was “now” in the process of providing such scriptures (including this epistle by Paul). Such completion of the Biblical canon would “then” provide the basis for defining a clear image of self maturity, and a clear understanding of spiritual gifts and their purpose and use (v. 12) within the congregational body. However, “now” during this time

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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 [**polished brass mirror**], darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

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

Chapter 14

Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.⁶⁴

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.⁶⁵

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

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

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 congregation may receive edifying.

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?⁶⁶

of partial incomplete revelation it is the fruits of the Spirit “love...faith and hope” that define maturity and this is exactly the principles Paul uses in chapter 14 to define the mature use of spiritual gifts in the assembly.

⁶⁴ **“Follow after charity”** – There is nothing wrong with desiring spiritual gifts if that desire is confined within the limits of love or the principles that define love as laid out in chapters 12-14. This is the better way than seeking gifts which God has not seen fit to give you or using them contrary than God’s design and principles. It establishes the mature way to view and handle gifts. The gift of prophecy is made more prominent by Paul because it is the gift that “now” provides “exhortation” and “edification” and “comfort” as it provides partial revelation and thus direction to the congregation. Love does not exclude the “desire” for spiritual gifts but it directs the proper use of that desire.

⁶⁵ **“Unknown tongue”** – The word “*unknown*” is placed in italic by the KJ translators to alert you that it is not found in the Greek text but was added by the translators to make better sense of this context. This is a congregational worship context (vv. 5, 12,16, 19, 23,26,24). The gift of tongues was not designed by God for use in the congregation (v. 19) or for use among believers but as a “sign” for unbelieving Jews on the mission field (vv. 18, 20-22). It is the gift of conveying the things of God to those who do not speak the dialect of the gifted person (Acts 2:6,8,11). When this gift is used in the congregation among those sharing the same dialect it is “unknown” to the speaker (v. 4) and to the congregation (vv. 6-12) and is therefore worthless unless the one speaking is given understanding (vv. 13-15) or there is one who can interpret it for those hearing it in the congregation (vv. 16-17). If such is not the case, then only God understands what is being said and it is only gibberish to everyone else (vv. 6-10).

⁶⁶ **“Revelation...knowledge...prophesying...doctrine”** – In absence of New Testament scriptures the primary way God directed the congregations was through the revelatory gifts (“revelation, knowledge, prophesying”) along with teaching (“doctrine”) gleaned from the Old Testament Scriptures and revelatory gifts.

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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.

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.

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

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

14 For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.⁶⁷

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.⁶⁸

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.

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:⁶⁹

⁶⁷ **“My understanding is unfruitful”** Paul has made his case in verses 2-12 that all gifts used in the congregation must pass the test of edification which demands that all which is spoken must be understood with the mind. Beginning in verse 13 to verse 17 Paul applies this rule to the individual use of tongues. His argument is simple. The individual should pray for interpretation (v. 13). Like all “spiritual” gifts the gift originates from the spirit of man (v. 14a), but if only his “spirit” is involved then there is no “understanding” and the exercise is “unfruitful” or without profit to both himself or others (v. 14b). Therefore, Paul declares that he will not exercise speaking in tongues in any fashion of vocalization (prayer, singing, speaking etc.) without mental understanding being involved as that is the only way edification is attained. The problem is not in what is uttered (v. 17) but what is understood by the speaker and/or audience (v. 16). Hence, what he says in tongues may be good but it is without edification for anyone if the mind of both the speaker and hearer does not understand what is being said.

⁶⁸ **“I will”** – beginning in verse 13 to verse 17 Paul argues that speaking in tongues without understanding does not edify the speaker or any who listen to him. Paul refuses to exercise any spiritual gift without mental edification of what he is saying. The content of what is being said may be understood by God and may be good, but it is profitless to men without interpretation.

⁶⁹ **“More than ye all”** – Paul was a missionary. He was sent first to the Jew living outside of the land of Israel who did not speak Hebrew but the various dialects found in the countries they resided (Acts 2:6-11). Therefore, he routinely spoke in tongues (foreign dialects) when coming to those dispersed Jews. Only the Jew would understand this “sign” predicted by Isaiah (Isa. 28:11-15) whereas, it was not designed for gentiles (Corinthians – Greeks; etc.) as they had no training in the scriptures and would think you were crazy. He knew and understood God’s design for the gift of tongues and therefore refused to use it in the congregations (v. 19) or among gentiles because it was designed by God specifically for lost Jews as a “sign” their Messiah had come.

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19 Yet in the congregation 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.

20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.⁷⁰

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.⁷¹

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.

23 If therefore the whole congregation 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?⁷²

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:

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.

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.⁷³

⁷⁰ **“In understanding be men”** – Only scripture or divine revelation provides mature understanding of the things of God (ch. 13:10; James 1:22-24; Eph. 5:26-27) and Paul appeals to the scriptures to define the Biblical purpose and design behind the gift of tongues (vv. 21-22) and its abuse (vv. 22-23).

⁷¹ **“It is written”** – Paul is directly quoting Isaiah 28:11,14. In context Isaiah is giving a special sign to Israel from God that the promised “rest” or Messiah had come and refusal to receive that “rest” would bring destruction upon the nation Israel. Tongues were that sign (Isa. 28:11) to those who ruled over “this people” from Jerusalem (Isa. 28:14). Notice that the people God designed tongues to be spoken unto “will not hear me, saith the Lord.” Therefore, tongues are not designed to be spoken unto believers but to the unbelieving house of Israel “Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not for them that believe, but to them which believe not.” This is why Paul refused to speak in tongues in the congregation as the congregation consisted of believers. In the congregation, the gift designed for believers is “prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.” What is God’s purpose of tongues? Not as the “sign” of the baptism in the Spirit for believers! Not for prayer or singing or preaching, or any other kind of ministry to believers. It was given as a “sign” to unbelieving Jews that their Messiah had come and that is why Paul spoke in tongues more than all of them as he used it daily when going to the Jew first in his missionary work. It was a missionary gift in Acts 2 to the dispersed Jews.

⁷² **“Unlearned, or unbelievers”** – He has just used scripture to give the mature purpose and design for the gift of tongues – “as a sign” to “this people” or the Jews. However, the Jews are not “unlearned” unbelievers. They are well learned in the Old Testament Scriptures including Isaiah 28:11-14 where the “sign” of tongues is predicted. Paul tells them that the gift of tongues is not designed for “unlearned or unbelievers” meaning non-Jews or Gentiles who are ignorant of the Scriptures. Those ignorant of the scriptures will not understand that this gift is a “sign” of the Messiah, but will think you are “mad.”

⁷³ **“Let all things be done unto edifying”** – In lieu of the absence of New Testament Scripture, direction was given from the Old Testament Scriptures and from various revelatory gifts. By the time the Pastoral epistles were written there was sufficient New Testament scriptures that the worship services were more centered on the preaching of the word (2 Tim. 4:1-5) than upon revelatory gifts. From this statement Paul proceeds to set forth the principles of edification for public speakers in the congregation (vv. 27-41). The principles for edification in the use of tongues

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- 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.
- 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the congregation; and let him speak to himself, and to God.
- 29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.⁷⁴
- 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.
- 32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.
- 33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all congregations of the saints.
- 34 Let your women keep silence in the congregations: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.⁷⁵
- 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 congregation.
- 36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?
- 37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.⁷⁶
- 38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.
- 39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.
- 40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

is spelled out in verses 27-28. The principles for edification for prophets are spelled out in verse 29-32. The principles for edification for women speaking publicly are spelled out in verses 33-35. The authority for these principles is spelled out in verses 36-37.

⁷⁴ “**The prophets**” – This refers to those who hold the prophetic office in the congregation whereby new revelation from God is derived, in lieu of the absence of New Testament scriptures. Only “two or three” are allowed to prophesy publicly in the congregation. However, in the general sense of the term prophesy “to speak forth” the inspired Word of God for the purpose of exhortation, comfort and edification (v. 3) “all” may do this as long as it is done in an orderly and decent fashion without confusion (vv. 33, 41).

⁷⁵ “**In the congregations**” – Paul is referring to all the congregations of Christ whether they are Jewish or Gentile. This is in keeping with Pastoral instructions given to Timothy as the Pastor of the Gentile congregation at Ephesus (1 Tim. 2:11). It is in keeping with the creation order and position between the Adam and Eve and between the principle of submission manifest in the Old Testament scriptures (“as also saith the law” – see Isa. 3:11). It is also consistent with the spiritual leadership invested by God in the position of the husband at home. The order in the congregation should not usurp the order established in the home as they are both institutions established by the same God. This is the commandment of God (v. 37) and has nothing to do with the cultural customs of the day or the commandments of men.

⁷⁶ “**Think himself to be a prophet or spiritual**” – Another test of a prophet is recognition and obedience to these Pauline instructions concerning the use of spiritual gifts in the congregation. Those who are genuinely “spiritual” will acknowledge and obey these injunctions as they are given by inspiration through the Holy Spirit, Who is the Author of spiritual gifts. If they speak not in keeping with this word it is because there is no light in them (Isa. 8:20).

Chapter 15

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;⁷⁷

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.⁷⁸

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:⁷⁹

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

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.

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

8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.⁸⁰

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

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.

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

⁷⁷ **“The gospel which I preached to you”** – He tells the Galatians there is no other true gospel than what he preached and any who preach “another gospel” are accursed – Gal. 1:6-9. Jesus says the same thing in John 14:6 and in Matthew 7:13-14 – one Savior, one name, one way. Luke says the same thing in Acts 4:12. The use of Abraham as the example or “father” of all that believe demonstrates there has only been one way of justification by faith in the gospel (Rom. 4:11,16; Gal. 3:6-8,17).

⁷⁸ **“If ye keep in memory”** – This phrase translates one Greek word “katexete” which is composed of two words “kata” (according to, down) and “exo” (to have or hold on to). This same word is translated in the KJV as “hold, hold fast, keep, possess, stay, take.” The idea is that they are saved if they took hold of what he actually preached. He preached a gospel that declared the resurrection of Christ and if that is the gospel they took hold of by faith then they will be saved. However, if they took hold of a gospel that denied the resurrection then it is not the gospel he delivered to them and their faith is “vain” because that is not “good news” at all because it guts the true gospel of all hope for victory over sin and death.

⁷⁹ **“According to the Scriptures”** – This phrase is twice repeated. The book of 1 Corinthians was one of the earliest writings of the New Testament Scriptures. Paul is referring to the Old Testament scriptures (see Acts 10:43; 26:22-23; Heb. 4:2; Rom. 10:16; Isa. 53).

⁸⁰ **“Last of all”** – The word “last” translates the Greek term “eschatos” used three times in this chapter (vv. 8, 45,52). There is no other Adam after Christ (v. 45), but Christ is the “last” Adam with none to follow. There is no “trump” after the “last” trump, but that is the “last” trump with none to follow. Likewise, there is no “apostle” after Paul. Paul is the “last of all the apostles,” with none to follow. He is the very last to be a witness of the visible resurrected body of Jesus Christ and receive personal instruction by Jesus Christ (Acts 1:21-22). There is no such thing as Apostolic succession as there are none beyond Paul who are personal eye witnesses of Christ. Roman Catholicism and its apostolic succession or the line of Popes is a false doctrine.

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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?

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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.

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.⁸¹

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

26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

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.

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.⁸²

29 Else what shall they do which are immersed for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then immersed for the dead?⁸³

⁸¹ **“Then cometh the end”** – This refers to the resurrection of the lost which occurs after the millennial kingdom is finished (Rev. 20:7-8) when Satan is cast into the lake of fire, with death and hell and all the enemies of God. The resurrection of Christ with some old Testament saints is the “firstfruits” of the resurrection. However, the greater harvest of the saints occurs “afterwards...at his coming.”

⁸² **“That God may be all in all”** – The Old Testament period was the dispensation of the Father primarily. The New Testament period was the dispensation of the Spirit primarily. The Millennial period will be the dispensation of the Son primarily. Eternity will be co-jointly the dispensation of God as One Triune God.

⁸³ **“Immersed for the dead”** – The preposition “for” represents the Greek preposition “eis” and means “with reference to” or “unto” the dead. Paul’s argument is very simple. Why be immersed in water if you do not believe in the resurrection, as immersion in water not only identifies with the death, but the resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:4-5) in hope of our own resurrection to come. If Christ did not rise from the dead and we do not rise from the dead then why submit to immersion in water? Why risk physical death if there is no hope of resurrection after death (vv. 31-32)?

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- 30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?
- 31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.
- 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.
- 33 Be not deceived: evil communications [companions] corrupt good manners.
- 34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.
- 35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?
- 36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened [made alive], except it die:
- 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:
- 38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.
- 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.
- 40 There are also celestial [heavenly] bodies, and bodies terrestrial [earthly]: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.
- 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.
- 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:⁸⁴
- 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 [soul guided] body; it is raised a spiritual [spirit guided] body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

⁸⁴ **“So also in the resurrection”** – You should expect that the body that comes up out of the grave ("it will be raised") will have differences than the body that went into the grave (vv. 35-39). There will be a difference in manifest “glory” or appearance (vv. 40-41). There will be a difference in corruptibility (vv. 42-43). The body that went into the grave was “natural” and derived its life from natural means (food, water, air) but the body that comes out of the grave is “spiritual” or will derive its life from the Spirit of God. As the spirit was brought into union with God giving eternal life to our spirit so that when our physical body died the spirit never died (Jn. 11:28), so also the resurrected body is spiritually made alive ("quickening spirit" or more literally "made alive by the Spirit") or regenerated by the Spirit of God and deriving its life by the Spirit - eternal life. There will be a difference in the governing aspect of human nature over it (vv. 44-46). The body that went into the grave was governed by the soulish or fleshly nature (Rom. 7:14-25). The body that comes up out of the grave will be governed by the regenerate spirit and thus a spirit governed body. The resurrected body will be suited to live in heaven (vv. 47-54) by removal of the death and decay principle (vv. 54-57). The metaphor "flesh and blood" summarizes the natural man in his natural corruptible condition. The natural man will not enter heaven because the natural man has indwelling sin and its consequences still at work in him. Not only must sin be removed from his "spirit" (1 Jn. 3:9) and be brought into union with God (Jn. 3:3,5,6) but sin must be removed from his body (Philip. 3:21) and be brought into union with God. The human nature must be totally freed from the presence of sin and dominated and sustained by the Spirit of God.

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

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

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

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

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.⁸⁵

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,⁸⁶

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.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [**subject to death**] must put on immortality [**not subject to death**].

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?

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

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

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

Chapter 16

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

2 Upon the first day of the week [**Sunday**] let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ “**Flesh and blood**” – This is a consistent metaphor used in the New Testament to denote the essence of un-glorified humanity. For example, Jesus tells Peter that “flesh and blood” had not revealed to him the truth he confessed about Jesus but it came from the Father in heaven (Mt. 16:17). His source of revelation did not originate with un-glorified humanity. See also Galatians 1:16 and Ephesians 6:12.

⁸⁶ “**A mystery**” – Job knew that his body would be changed (Job 19:26-27) in the resurrection. What Old Testament saints did not know was that some would not die, but still be living at the resurrection, and what would happen to those living at the resurrection. Paul reveals that they would be transformed in an instant while being taken up to meet the Lord.

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- 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality [**free gift**] unto Jerusalem.
- 4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.
- 5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia [**province in northern Greece**]: for I do pass through Macedonia.
- 6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.
- 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 [**city on sea coast in modern turkey**] until Pentecost [**50th day after giving of first fruits**].
- 9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.
- 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.
- 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.
- 13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit [**act**] you like men, be strong.
- 14 Let all your things be done with charity.
- 15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, [**southern province in Greece**] and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)
- 16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.
- 17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.
- 18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.
- 19 The congregations of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the congregation that is in their house.⁸⁸
- 20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss [**common form of greeting like handshaking today**].

⁸⁷ **“Lay by him in store”** – The Greek term translated “store” is the exact Greek term used in the Septuagint in Malachi 3:10 translated “storehouse” (Gr. thesaurizo). Paul is speaking of the congregation as the “house of God” where one brings their tithes and offerings. In this case it is a special offering for the poor in Jerusalem. There is not one verse in the New Testament that indicates or infers that the congregations of Christ ever conducted worship on the Jewish Sabbath. Paul witnessed to the Jews on the Sabbath when they met in the synagogues, but congregational worship was observed on **“the first day of the week.”**

⁸⁸ **“Congregations....the congregation”** – The only kind of congregation of Christ that was known to Paul was the kind that could be referred to in the plural “congregations” and “the” kind that could exist within a single “house.” Aquilla started such a congregation in his house in Ephesus as well as in Rome (Rom. 16:3-4).

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21 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.

22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha [**accursed when the Lord comes**].

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

24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. [The first epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi by Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus and Timotheus.]