

Bible Commentary

1 CORINTHIANS 1

General remarks. It will throw much light on many passages of this epistle to learn something of the city of Corinth. I shall first quote from Smith's Bible Dictionary: "The situation of Corinth and the possession of its eastern and western harbors, Cenchrea and Lecheun, are the secrets of its history. Corinth was a place of commercial and manufacturing enterprise. Its wealth was so celebrated as to be proverbial; so were the vice and profligacy [extravagant living] of its inhabitants. The worship of Venus [heathen goddess of bloom and beauty] here was attended with shameful licentiousness [immoral thoughts and practices]. "I shall next quote from the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia on the city of Corinth: "It soon became one of the most important commercial places on the Mediterranean; but its character was somewhat peculiar. Its population was extremely heterogenous [a mixture]. A numerous colony of Jews settled there when driven away from Rome by Claudius, and among them were Aquila and Priscilla. Everybody went to Corinth to make money or to spend it. All nations were represented there; but nearly the only bonds which held the inhabitants together were their common enterprises and their common debaucheries."

A number of serious defects had come into the church at Corinth when Paul wrote his first epistle to it, which will be commented upon as we come to them in the course of this study. Notwithstanding these evils, the apostle recognized it as a *church of God*. It will help to understand this apparent inconsistency by considering the case of the church at Ephesus as recorded in Revelation 2: 1-5. The Lord had a serious complaint against this church, yet he recognized it as one of His at the time of sending a letter to it. But the candlestick that represented its standing was to be removed if it did not repent. This means that a church (and likewise an individual) does not necessarily lose its standing with the Lord at the mere instance of doing wrong; it loses it when it refuses to correct itself after being admonished. The church at Corinth acted favorably upon the admonition of Paul (2 Co-

rinthians 7: 8-11), hence it continued to be recognized as a church of God.

Verse 1. *Called* is from KLETO, which Thayer defines at this place, "called to some office," and he explains it to mean, "divinely selected and appointed." *Of Jesus Christ* denotes by whom Paul was thus called unto the apostleship, which also was according to the will of God. *Of Sosthenes*, Thayer says historically, "a Christian, an associate of the apostle Paul, 1 Corinthians 1: 1." Paul chose this brother to join with him in the salutation.

Verse 2. The terms *church of God* and *church of Christ* are both used for the same institution because of their common relation to the Deity. For the meaning of *church* see the notes on Romans 16: 16, in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary. The various qualifying terms following the phrase of the church do not indicate separate groups, but are qualities belonging to the one institution. *Sanctified* is from HAGIAZO, which Thayer defines, "1. to render or acknowledge to be venerable, to hallow. 2. to separate from things profane and dedicate to God, to consecrate." *Saints* is from HAGIOS, which Thayer defines, "set apart for God, to be, as it were, exclusively his." *With all*, etc., means to apply the epistle to Christians everywhere. For the meaning of *calling on the name of the Lord*, see the notes at Acts 22: 16 in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary. Lord . . . theirs . . . ours, signifies there is only one God.

Verse 3. *Grace* is from CHARIS, and one part of Thayer's definition is, "kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved." This phase of the word explains why the apostle specifies that it is the grace from God he is wishing for his brethren, since all of God's favors upon man are undeserved. Such favors are bestowed upon man only through the Lord Jesus Christ. That is because the sacrifice of Christ provided the way for God to maintain his justice and at the same time extend this unmerited favor to humanity. (See the notes at Romans 3: 26, volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary.)

Verse 4. In his unselfishness Paul was thankful for the favors bestowed upon the brethren at Corinth. In this

he was carrying out his own words in Romans 12: 15.

Verse 5. Riches do not always consist of material wealth; the Corinthians had been given the wealth of spiritual blessings in the form of *utterance* and *knowledge*. The first is from *LOGOS* which is the Greek term for "word," and is applied in a variety of senses. It denotes any expression of thought, whether in single words or in sentences, or even in entire discourses. It is also applicable either to inspired or uninspired speech, so that it would include the gift of tongues. The second word is from *GNOSIS* and the outstanding definition in Thayer's lexicon is, "intelligence."

Verse 6. This verse shows the preceding one has special reference to the spiritual gifts that were bestowed on the church at Corinth, since that was the primary purpose of those gifts (Mark 16: 20; Ephesians 4: 8-15).

Verse 7. *Come behind in no gift*. Not every member of a congregation was given a spiritual gift, but a sufficient per cent of the membership would be thus endowed to accomplish the Lord's work. The Corinthian church was large in numbers (Acts 18: 8), which would call for a proportionate number of gifted men. *Waiting for the coming*. All persons must of necessity wait literally for the coming of Christ. Strong defines the original word, "to expect fully."

Verse 8. The promise to confirm them *unto the end* does not mean that spiritual gifts will continue that long. The idea is that the Lord will do whatever is necessary for the purpose. After the New Testament will have been completed, spiritual gifts will not be needed and they will cease (chapter 13: 8-10). The grand purpose of all divine means for the confirming of God's people, is that they may be prepared to stand approved by Christ when he comes again.

Verse 9. A part of Thayer's definition of *faithful* is, "worthy of trust; that can be relied on," and this definition is especially applicable to the Lord. It carries the idea that He may be expected fully to fulfill all his promises. God had promised to bless all mankind through Christ, who is the seed promised to Abraham (Genesis 22: 18). In being *faithful* to redeem that promise, God called the Corinthians into the fellowship of his Son.

Verse 10. The apostle now approaches

one of the serious defects referred to in the "general remarks," that of *divisions*. This is not a formal or bodily division, but one of sentiment that causes contention and strife. That is why he specifies the *mind* and judgment in his exhortation, to the end that all would *speak the same thing*. The *mind* means the faculty of reason, and *judgment* denotes the conclusions arrived at with the mind. The apostle beseeches them all to be united in sentiments.

Verse 11. The name *Chloe* does not appear in any other place, and all we can learn of her is that she was a disciple who was concerned about the conditions existing in the church at Corinth. She passed the information on to the apostle which he repeated in his epistle to the church in that city.

Verse 12. The reader should not be confused over the apparent similarity between *contentions* and "contend," both of which are used in the New Testament. The first means quarrels and wranglings over petty matters of personal opinion. The second is from the vocabulary of contests in the physical exercises, in which a man engages with a contestant under recognized rules of combat. *Every one of you*. That is, each man among them had his preference and was wrangling with the others about it. The four persons named were not literally the subject of their quarrels; chapter 4: 6, 7 shows this, which will be commented upon in detail when we reach that place in this study. But until that time, the apostle reasons as if their contentions were actually over these men (even including Christ), and I also shall make my comments from that standpoint. The idea of Paul seems to have been that, having received the force of the argument before their actual prejudices were aroused, they should be prepared to see the folly of their variances.

Verse 13. The three questions in this verse require negative answers. *In* is from *EIS* which means "into" the name of another, that was supposed to have been accomplished by the ordinance of baptism.

Verse 14. There was more than one man named Gaius, one of whom belonged to the congregation in Corinth, and was among the few persons whom Paul baptized.

Verse 15. The apostle gives his reason for the feeling expressed in the preceding verse. *In* is from the same word as in verse 15.

Verse 16. Paul did not place much stress on the question of who personally does the baptizing, consequently he seems to have overlooked this case in verse 14. *Household* is from *oikos*, and in the King James Version it has been rendered by house 102 times, home 4, household 3, temple 1. The first definition in Thayer's lexicon is, "an inhabited house." We know the inhabitants of Stephanas' house were old enough to believe on the Lord, for Acts 18: 8 shows that such were the ones baptized.

Verse 17. *Christ sent me not to baptize*. This statement has been perverted by some who seek to belittle the importance of baptism, and to represent Paul as thinking little of the ordinance. What he teaches in Acts 19: 1-5; Romans 6: 3, 4; Galatians 3: 27 and Colossians 2: 12 indicates the weight that he attaches to the ordinance. But as to what person does the physical act of baptizing a believer, because of the wrong use that might be made of the subject, Paul was thankful he had let others do most of it at Corinth. What Paul could do that others could not was to preach the Gospel, which required more than physical strength. And even that great work was not to be accomplished by the use of *words* or speech that consisted of worldly wisdom, for that would detract from the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ.

Verse 18. The Greek nation was devoted to the importance (as it was considered) of philosophy, or what we would term worldly wisdom. Its people estimated any theory proposed to them in proportion to whether it agreed or disagreed with this philosophy, and it was in view of this truth that Paul wrote as he did in this and several verses following. However, the relation between divine truth and philosophy is somewhat similar to that between it and "science." When this last term is understood, it is found to be in harmony with divine truth. Likewise, when true philosophy is understood, it will be seen that it, too, is in harmony with divine truth. In support of this from the standpoint of history, I shall quote from the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia:

"PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION. Both philosophy and religion must first have had some historical development before their relations could appear for investigation. In fact, they may be said to have proceeded apart until the

Christian era, when they openly met as strangers whose mutual interests were yet to be perceived and adjusted. It was not until Christianity had emerged from the symbols of Judaism, that religion stood forth in a mature form, free from philosophic speculation; and it was not until Grecian wisdom had outgrown the myths of Heathenism, that philosophy appeared in a pure state, disengaged from religious superstition. Nor was it strange that the first meeting of the two great powers should have resulted in misunderstanding and conflict. The early Christians, claiming a revealed knowledge from Heaven, could only denounce philosophy as the foolishness of the world; and the philosophers, in their skeptical pride of intellect, were fain to despise Christianity as a mere vulgar superstition. The struggle had its practical issue in the bitter persecutions which prevailed until the triumph of Christianity under Constantine." Corinth was in Greece and the church there was made up in most part of Greeks, hence the occasion of Paul's teaching on the subject of worldly wisdom. The reader should note this paragraph and refer to it frequently as he reads the comments on the following verses. *Perish* and *saved* in this verse refer respectively to the philosophers and Christians described in the quotation from Herzog. Before this development, the philosophers were inclined to judge religion by the standard of their theories, and Paul was opposing that position.

Verse 19. This quotation is in Isaiah 29: 14. What was once called the wisdom of the sages was proved to be not only unwise, but utterly contrary to natural evidences.

Verse 20. *Where is the wise?* etc., means what has become of the theories of these so-called wise and great ones? *Made foolish* means the foolishness has been made apparent by the light of truth. Only one out of the many examples will be cited here. For years the "wise" men of the world taught that the earth is flat, but today the engineers have been compelled to make certain changes in the operation of television in order to compensate for the curvature of the globe.

Verse 21. The world with all its theories that it called wisdom, failed to attain unto that wisdom that would make known to it the true God. *Foolishness of preaching*. Paul is not admitting that the Gospel is foolish, but

is using the term expressed by the professed wise men. What they consider as foolishness is the very means God uses to save the believers. But it must be made known in order to save anyone. The third word in italics is from KERUGMA and is defined by Thayer, "that which is promulgated [publicly proclaimed] by a herald or public crier, a proclamation by a herald; in the N. T. the message or proclamation by the heralds of God or Christ." (See Romans 10: 13-18 on the necessity of preaching.)

Verse 22. The Jews professed to believe in a higher form of knowledge than was possessed by mere human beings, but they were critical of any teaching that claimed such a quality unless accompanied with some direct demonstration from heaven. The Greeks were not interested in anything that did not come up to the standard of their own philosophy. (See the long note and historical quotation at verse 18.)

Verse 23. The first clause is virtually the same as the last part of verse 21. The preaching of Christ was always a stumblingblock to the Jews (Romans 9: 32). The story of Jesus did not agree with the philosophy of the Greeks, hence they regarded it as foolishness. This was manifested when Paul was in Athens (Acts 17: 32).

Verse 24. *Them which are called* denotes the ones who respond favorably to the Gospel call. There were persons among both Jews and Greeks (Gentiles) who were sufficiently free from prejudice to recognize the merits of the story of Christ, and to them He represented both the power and wisdom of God.

Verse 25. That which seemed like foolishness in the estimation of the ones clamoring for worldly wisdom, was far beyond the best that the philosophers of the nations could display. The *weakness of God* is used in the same comparative sense as the *foolishness of God*, using the language of the philosophers for the sake of argument.

Verse 26. *Are called* has the same bearing as the words in verse 24, namely, those who accept the call of the Gospel. The classes named are among the philosophers and wise men of the nations. The invitation and promises held out by the story of a slain and risen Lord, do not appeal to *many* of those classes, hence a comparatively small number are willing to accept the favor.

Verse 27. In all of these verses Paul uses such terms as *foolish* and *wise* in the sense attached to them by the so-called leaders of thought among the people of Greece especially, and of the world in general. *To confound* means to confuse and baffle. The unpretentious proclaimers of the Gospel were able to put their adversaries to shame. The case of Stephen in Acts 6: 10 is an outstanding one which states: "And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."

Verse 28. This has virtually the same thought as the preceding verse, with a different set of terms. *Base and despised* means the subjects that the philosophers looked down upon. *Things which are not* of any consequence in the eyes of these wise men of the world, were to have such an influence with the sincere believers who hear the sacred story that the *things that* are so important in the estimation of the proud sages would be exposed and shown to be vain.

Verse 29. *No flesh should glory*. The self-exalted accomplishments of fleshly man were to be stripped of their show of wisdom, and leave them without anything of which to boast.

Verse 30. *Ye in Christ* refers to the brethren at Corinth, and Him stands for God in verse 28, who had received these brethren in Christ. *Is made unto us* denotes that Paul ascribed to them the qualities named in the verse, even though the philosophers might belittle them.

Verse 31. *As it is written* has such a wide scope of references that it is unnecessary to cite them. The whole teaching of the Bible is that man owes all to God.

1 CORINTHIANS 2

Verse 1. The vanity of worldly wisdom is still the main subject of this part of Paul's epistle. He verifies his attitude on the matter by referring to the work which he did when he brought the Gospel to them, recorded in Acts 18: 1-11. *Speech* and *wisdom* mean the same as "utterance" and "knowledge" in chapter 1: 5.

Verse 2. *Know* is from EIDO, and the definitions and explanations of Thayer occupy nearly two pages in his lexicon, which indicates the wide range of its meaning. In the present verse it has the sense of "to pay attention, observe; have regard for, cherish." It means that Paul determined not to be

concerned about anything but the story of the cross, with its offered mercies to the children of men.

Verse 3. Even an inspired man may feel anxious and insufficient for certain tasks. In Acts 18: 9 Paul seemed to have some of these signs of personal weakness, for the Lord saw fit to encourage him and tell him to "be not afraid, but speak." In this great center of worldly learning, he trembled lest he might not do the work justice. However, he determined to depend solely on the Lord's help and wisdom.

Verse 4. *Speech* means the language to be used, and *preaching* denotes the public proclamation of that language. Paul asserts that neither of these items of communication was counted on to persuade the hearer because of its wisdom from man. Instead, he depended on the power imparted to him by the Holy Spirit to be so efficient that its true worth would be *demonstrated* or made to become manifest.

Verse 5. Whatever means that would be used to enlist men in the service of the Lord, would need to be relied on as a motive for remaining faithful. The wisdom of man is changeable, and if this faith was based on such a foundation, it would fall as soon as the wisdom of man was exposed.

Verse 6. The notes at chapter 1: 18 should be consulted again. *Perfect* is used in the same sense as *called* in chapter 1: 24. Those who accept the Gospel from the heart will see in it a genuine wisdom that is beyond all comparison with that of the world. *Princes of this world* means the leaders among the philosophers of Greece.

Verse 7. *Mystery* is from *MUSTERION*, which Thayer defines at this place, "a hidden purpose or counsel," then explains it to mean, "In the N. T., God's plan of providing salvation for men through Christ, which was once hidden but now is revealed." The word does not necessarily mean something that is complicated and beyond the understanding of ordinary men. As long as anything is not known it is a mystery, regardless of its character. Hence a popular theory that the Gospel is today a mystery and cannot be understood by uninspired persons, is erroneous and calculated to hinder people from studying God's word. *Before the world* denotes that God planned the salvation of man even before the age of human existence. Not that any certain man was *ordained* to be saved, but the

scheme by which all men might be saved if they would.

Verse 8. *None of the princes of this world knew* because it had not been revealed. Those who crucified Christ did not realize he was *the Lord of glory* (Luke 23: 34).

Verse 9. This verse has been perverted in song and speech for years, and made to mean that the story of divine love for man, including the reward that is to be given to God's servants, is still a mystery that is to be revealed at some future time. That idea is not even any part of the meaning of the passage. The *eye, ear and heart* of man means the natural senses of the human being. No man living, even among the wise sages of the so-called learned world, could discover through his human faculties what the Lord had in store for the faithful.

Verse 10. This verse must be considered in connection with the preceding one. Since the natural mental faculties could not discover these great spiritual truths, it was necessary to give a revelation of them, and that was done by the Spirit bestowed in great measure upon the apostles and other New Testament writers.

Verse 11. The spirit of a man knows what his thoughts are, and likewise the Spirit of God knows the thoughts of Him. Being an intelligent and supernatural being, this Spirit could communicate between God and man and carry the thoughts of the former to the mind of the latter, thus making him acquainted with the truths that his human philosophy and wisdom could not discover.

Verse 12. *Spirit of the world* refers to the matter of human philosophy that has been under consideration through many verses. The spirit which is of God is the source of divine inspiration, and by receiving such a spirit it would reveal the things that are gifts from God. This is the same thought as shown in verses 9, 10.

Verse 13. While the apostle used the language of humanity (Romans 6: 19), he did not form it on the basis of man's wisdom as the philosophers taught it. Instead, he was guided in the selection of terms by the Holy Ghost, so that he would use such of the words of man's language as had a spiritual bearing, in order that they would convey the ideas that were in keeping with the thoughts of the Spirit. *Comparing* might well be rendered "expressing," meaning that Paul expressed spiritual

thoughts with such words as would impart the desired ideas.

Verse 14. *Natural* is from *PSUCHIKOS*, and literally means the animal part of man. In a sentence like our verse, Thayer says it means, "governed by the sensuous nature with its subjection to the appetite and passion." A man thus interested in the things only that will gratify his fleshly desires, will not receive and appreciate the things offered by the Spirit of God, for they are not composed of matters that would give carnal pleasure. Hence they will seem foolish in his estimation so that he will not *know* or realize their real worth. *They are spiritually discerned.* They can be discerned or their true value be recognized only by those who take a spiritual interest in them, seeking only that which will impart spiritual benefits.

Verse 15. He that is spiritual—he who does take such a spiritual view of these subjects coming through the Spirit of God, as set forth in the preceding verse, will be able to realize what they mean, which is denoted by the phrase *judgeth* ["discerneth"] *all things. He himself is judged* ["discerned"] *of no man.* The last word means the natural man described in verse 14. Such a man will not recognize the spiritual truths possessed by the man described in the first phrase of this verse.

Verse 16. No man can know how to instruct the Lord (verse 11), therefore all spiritual information must travel the other way—from the Lord to man. Paul claims that such a flow of instruction had taken place in that *he had the mind of Christ.*

1 CORINTHIANS 3

Verses 1, 2. *Carnal* is from *SARKIKOS*, and its literal and primary definition is, "fleshly, carnal." Without any qualifying context, therefore, it refers to the material part of man and not his mental or spiritual part. But when it is used in a bad sense, Thayer says it means to be "under the control of the animal appetites; governed by mere human nature, not by the Spirit of God." Paul accuses the Corinthians of being carnal because they were showing a desire for that which was prompted by mere human nature. He also compares them to babes, which is logical because an infant knows only such pleasures as its fleshly body demands and can appreciate.

Verse 3. *Envy, strife, and divi-*

sions are prompted by their personal desires, hence the apostle charges them with being carnal. *Walk as men* denotes a conduct that is prompted by the human or fleshly appetites.

Verses 4, 5. See the comments at chapter 1: 12.

Verses 6, 7. The argument in this verse is that the Lord's servants do not all have the same talents or work, even as the production of a crop involves the services of more than one man. Yet all the work of men would avail nothing if God did not give to nature the power of growth.

Verse 8. These men *are one* in the eyes of the Lord. If each will do what he can, he will receive his due reward from God and not from any man.

Verse 9. *We* means Paul and Apollos as laborers in God's vineyard, according to the figure in verse 6-8. God's building is another figure, that of a structure in which various men labor to erect it.

Verse 10. Cooperation or joint labor under God is still the subject of Paul, and he is continuing the figure of a building for his illustration. He gives the grace of God the credit for being able to work as a *wise masterbuilder.* The first thing such an architect will do is to lay the foundation. Paul did this when he introduced the Gospel of Christ to the people of Corinth (Acts 18: 1-11). After he had done this, others came into the community and gave further teaching to the brethren, and that constituted building upon the foundation of truth that he had laid. *Take heed* means that any man offering further teaching should be careful that what he teaches will be in harmony with the original foundation of truth the apostle had laid.

Verse 11. There is but one foundation and that is Christ, which God laid in Zion which is the church, and it was done once for all when He died in Jerusalem and rose from the grave. When Christ was preached to the Corinthians or to any others, that is what is meant by laying the foundation there.

Verse 12. Building upon this foundation means to induce men to accept the Christ as the foundation of their hope. The three degrees of comparison, whether favorable or unfavorable, refers to the different kinds of persons who profess to accept Christ.

Verse 13. No preacher is a mind reader, consequently he may be misled

by some who are not acting with sincerity. However, he should heed the admonition given at the end of verse 10, and not use any unscriptural teaching to persuade his hearers to act. The final test of a man's work will come when Jesus is revealed at the last day. But it may be that some of his "converts" will prove unfaithful even while in the life of the preacher, so that he will behold them falling under the fiery trials that are to come before the professed servants of Christ (1 Peter 4: 12).

Verse 14. If a man does his part by teaching the people what is right, and the converts remain faithful, he will have the *reward* that consists of a joyous observation of such steadfastness. This reward is described in 2 John 8 and 3 John 4.

Verse 15. If a man's "converts" fail to stand the test of persecutions or the self-denials required, he will lose this reward described in the preceding verse. But if he has not shunned to declare all the counsel of God, he will be saved from the fire of God's wrath that is to come upon the unfaithful. In other words, a preacher's salvation does not depend upon the steadfastness of those whom he brings to Christ, but on his own faithfulness in preaching and living the truth.

Verse 16. *Ye are the temple of God* means them as a congregation, which was built upon the foundation laid for them by Paul when he preached Christ to them. The church is the spiritual building in which the Holy Spirit dwells (Ephesians 2: 22).

Verse 17. The temple is the church, and such divisions and contentions as were being conducted in Corinth were defiling the temple. Paul is warning the brethren of the wrath of God which they were liable to receive if they continued their variances.

Verse 18. This verse refers to those who were placing undue emphasis on the personal wisdom and special qualifications of certain men in the congregation. Such men were vain and self-deceived, and as long as they maintained such an attitude they would shut themselves off from real wisdom. *Let him become a fool* is an accommodative expression, meaning that if he will admit to himself that he is not a wise man, he will then be in the proper frame of mind really to learn.

Verse 19. The quotation is in Job 5: 13, and is the statement of one of Job's friends. It is an uninspired re-

mark but is the truth, hence Paul gives it approval.

Verse 20. *The wise* means those who boast of their worldly wisdom; all such are vain in the estimation of the Lord.

Verse 21. *No man glory in men*. One man is no more important in God's sight than another, regardless of his apparently great qualifications. *All things are yours* denotes that all of these seemingly great things have been provided for the benefit of the brethren and not for their worldly glorying.

Verses 22, 23. Again referring to the men as he did in chapter 1: 12, Paul takes in more scope in his general summing up of the lesson at hand, including other persons and also other things, both present and future. This all shows that the specific point in view is yet to be brought out, which we will see in the next chapter.

1 CORINTHIANS 4

Verse 1. *A minister* is a servant and a *steward* is an agent. Paul wished that he and his companions should be *accounted* only in that light.

Verse 2. A *steward* or agent is supposed to be honest in handling the affairs of his master, for which he would not deserve any special thanks.

Verse 3. Paul was the agent of the Lord, and it was to Him that he would have to answer. Man might approve of his conduct, but that would be a *very small thing*, for human judges might pass favorably on his case while the Lord would not.

Verse 4. Even though Paul could think of nothing in himself that was wrong if measured by the wisdom of man, yet that alone would not satisfy him, for the Lord was the one who was to have the final word as to his standing.

Verse 5. *Judge nothing* as to the merits of human accomplishments by human standards of wisdom or philosophy. The Lord will come in judgment someday, and then all will be given due reward for any virtue they possessed, whether their brethren appreciated it or not.

Verse 6. The words *figure transferred* are from METASCHEMATIZO, and Thayer's definition is, "to change the figure of, to transform." He then explains the definition at this passage to mean, "to shape one's discourse so as to transfer to one's self what holds true of the whole class to which one belongs, i.e. so as to illustrate by what

one says of himself what holds true of all." The reader may refer to what is said about this verse at chapter 1: 12. The four persons named were not really the ones over whom the Corinthians were contending. Paul now explains that he was using the names by way of illustration, in order that they would "see the point" without having their resentment aroused against being personally criticized. The men over whom all these contentions were being waged were right there in the congregation. That is why Paul uses the language that *no one of you be puffed up for one against another*. This proves beyond a doubt that the trouble was over men who belonged to the congregation in Corinth. None of the men named in chapter 1: 12 even lived in that city, hence the contention was not over them.

Furthermore, the name of Christ is included with the ones over whom they were contending. It is inconceivable that in their partisan strife, *one of them* would say he was for any teacher as against Christ. No, the men who were the objects of the trouble were those in the congregation with spiritual gifts. The possession of those powers was considered of such importance that it had split the congregation up into groups, not formally but in sentiment, the various sets adhering to the particular gifted man whose gift happened to strike them as the most important. It must be observed that not every member of a congregation would be possessed with a gift, but only a sufficient proportion to accomplish the Lord's plans. This contention over the spiritual gifts was so serious that Paul devoted three chapters—12, 13 and 14—to the subject, which will be commented upon when we come to them in this work. This long note will not be repeated in full, hence the reader should mark it for convenient reference when occasion arises.

Verse 7. The meaning of this verse will be clear when considered in light of the preceding one. The word *another* has been supplied by the translators, so that neither the first nor third personal pronoun is used by the apostle. The entire argument applies to the men of the Corinthian congregation. *What hast thou that thou didst not receive?* This refers to the various gifts that were possessed by members, who were puffed up with pride over such attainments; and it was made worse by the contentions of the groups

in the congregation that were arraying themselves as partisans in behalf of their respective "heroes." Paul is rebuking them for this pride by the question just stated. Those gifts were not anything that had been accomplished by them, for they had received them as direct bestowments through the Spirit and hence they had nothing of which to boast, much less to suffer the congregation to be divided up into contentious groups over it.

Verse 8. *Full* is from KORENNUMI which Thayer defines, "to satiate, sate, satisfy." *Rich* is from PLOUTEO and Thayer's definition is, "to be richly supplied." These are such excellent conditions that Paul would surely not seriously attribute them to these brethren after having just given them such a severe rebuke for their pride over gifts that had been bestowed upon them through no personal merit. The only conclusion, then, that we can reach, is that he used it in irony as a further reproof of them for their pride over the gifts. *Reigned as kings without us* (the apostles). Some more irony, referring to their feeling of self-sufficiency, to the extent that they did not feel the need of apostolic help. *Would to God ye did reign* is a serious phrase, expressing the unselfishness of the apostle. He would have rejoiced had the Corinthians been as strong as they felt, for in that case he also could share in the accomplishment, seeing he was the one who put them into the work to begin with.

Verse 9. The apostles really possessed qualifications far beyond all that the Corinthians could rightfully claim, yet Paul was not being puffed up over it. Instead, he wanted them to know that those very peculiar attainments caused the apostles to be placed in an unpleasant position before both angels and men. *Last* means as to personal advantage, the thing of which the Corinthians were boasting. In spite of all their worth-while gifts, the apostles were exposed to the ridicule and persecutions of the world. *Spectacle* is from THEATRON, which Thayer defines, "a public show; a man who is exhibited to be gazed at and made sport of." The illustration is drawn from the Roman practice of the public theatre. When the main show was over, certain men who had been doomed to die, were brought forth into the arena for the "final act"; their clothing was removed and their bodies were exposed to the beasts to devour, for the entertainment of the

audience. Thus Paul says the apostles were exposed *as it were appointed to death*.

Verse 10. See the notes on verse 8 where the language is used with a similar meaning to that here. In their own estimation the Corinthians were *wise, strong, and honorable*. The apostles were making no pretensions to greatness, but were submissive to the humiliation resulting from the unpopular work of preaching the Gospel.

Verse 11. Being out on the "firing line" and exposed to the hardships of an active soldier of the cross, Paul was made to suffer many things, notwithstanding his many excellencies to which the brethren in Corinth could lay no claim.

Verse 12. Paul often depended on his occupation of tent making to obtain the necessities of life (Acts 18: 3). When he was mistreated he took it in the best of spirit, even enduring all sorts of persecution as long as his character was not challenged. (See 1 Peter 4: 15; Acts 25: 11.)

Verse 13. *Being defamed, we entreat*. This does not contradict the preceding verse. Paul never made any unofficial or personal retort against those who tried to injure his good name, but that did not prevent him from taking the necessary legal steps for his protection. That is what he did when he "appealed unto Caesar" (Acts 25: 11).

Verse 14. The Corinthian brethren were entitled to being shamed, but that was not Paul's motive in writing as he did. His purpose was to induce them to correct their selfish ways, and hoped to do so by calling their attention to his own experiences. Sometimes the example of a loving father will make more of an impression on his sons than will his direct instructions.

Verse 15. There might be no limit to the number of persons who could instruct others, but since a man can be begotten once only, there can be only one person to lead him into primary obedience by making him know what he must believe in order to become a child of God. Paul had done this for the Corinthian brethren, and it is in that sense that he says *I have begotten you through the Gospel*.

Verse 16. Thayer defines the original for *follower* as "an imitator." A son would do well to imitate the example set by a righteous father. If the Corinthians would do that in regard to the life of Paul, they would cease to

be puffed up over the comparatively small matter of spiritual gifts.

Verse 17. *Son* is used figuratively, and Thayer explains the original in this and many other passages to mean, "just as in Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Persia, so in the N. T., pupils or disciples are called children of their teacher, because the latter by their instruction nourish the minds of their pupils and mould their characters." In chapter 16: 10, 11 is a statement of Timotheus' journey to Corinth, but he had not reached the city when Paul wrote this statement; the apostle wished to have a welcome in readiness for him when he arrived. Paul was not seeking any personal praise for his work, but wished the Corinthians to have the testimony of Timotheus (Timothy) that he was doing all his teaching as Christ would have it done.

Verse 18. *Puffed up* means to "be proud" or act in a boastful manner. The ones who were having that feeling were not especially eager for Paul to come, lest he chastise them orally and severely for their contentious behavior. When they learned that Timothy was coming instead of Paul at that time, they triumphantly asserted that the apostle was not coming.

Verse 19. *Not the speech . . . but the power*. Paul did not propose to be worried by the arrogant assertions of those leaders, but intended to test their real abilities.

Verse 20. Not in word (only), for many loud and boistrous talkers have come into the world, but their real power or efficiency has been exposed as a sham.

Verse 21. This verse is a challenge for them to make the necessary changes in their conduct that would put them in a condition to receive the apostle's approval, and thus receive his spirit of meekness instead of the rod of chastisement.

1 CORINTHIANS 5

Verse 1. *Commonly* is from HOLOS, and Robinson defines it in this passage, "everywhere, commonly," and Thayer's definition is virtually the same. The meaning is that the condition was so well known that the fact was not questioned by anyone. *Fornication* is from PORNEIA, and Thayer gives the one word in our verse as his definition. But he adds the following information historically: "Properly of unlawful intimacy in general. That this meaning must be adopted will surprise no one

who has learned from 1 Corinthians 6 how leniently converts from among the heathen regarded this vice and how lightly they indulged in it; accordingly, all other interpretations of the term, such as of marriages within the prohibited degrees and the like, are to be rejected." While on this phase of the subject, it will be well to read the "general remarks" at the beginning of chapter one. Since the ordinary evil of fornication was so prevalent and tolerated so liberally, it makes the attitude which Paul describes all the more significant.

A popular phrase, "living in adultery," is of human coinage, and has no scripture foundation; therefore, we shall examine the word *have* in this verse. It is from the Greek word *echo*, and two full pages are used in the lexicon of Thayer in his definitions and explanations. The definitions (the parts in italics) include, "to have; to hold in the hand; to have possession of; to hold fast, keep; to regard, consider, hold as; to own, possess." Thus the word can be seen to refer to the attitude of a man toward something, without necessarily considering what legal or moral principles are involved. In the present passage, Thayer explains the word to mean, "to have (use) a woman (unlawfully) as a wife." The Lord requires his people to recognize the laws of the land, and they do not regard the fleshly union as constituting the marriage relation as does God (Genesis 2: 24; Matthew 19: 5, 6; 1 Corinthians 6: 16), and that is why Thayer inserts the word "unlawfully" into his explanation. The Gentiles (or heathen), with all their leniency toward immoral conduct, did not endorse such a practice as was being done by this man, and that is the sense in which they would *not so much as name it among themselves*. *Father's wife* means the man's step-mother. The necessary inference is that his father had remarried, to a younger woman than his son's mother, and the difference in age had induced this woman to become intimate with her husband's son.

Verse 2. *Puffed up* means their pride over the superiority they imagined they had as we saw in the preceding chapter. Even this shameful case of fornication had not moderated their self-esteem. They should have *mourned* or lamented over the wicked character, and resolved that he would be put from among them.

Verse 3. Paul was an inspired man

and could speak with authority. This enabled him to form the correct judgment on the present case even though absent and before any hearing had been conducted.

Verse 4. The sentence which Paul is going to pronounce will be in the name of Christ, which means by his authority. The first specification is that the action is to be done *when ye are gathered together*. This teaches that no final act of discipline can be scripturally done except at a meeting of the church. It does not even authorize that a "special meeting" be called for the purpose. The rulers of a congregation may designate the particular meeting at which it will be done, according to their judgment in the case. But when the appointment is made, it must be set at one of the times "when ye are gathered together." Paul informs them that his spirit will be with them in this great and solemn action, which will be true of all congregational actions that are according to apostolic teaching. Moreover, this action would be backed up by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that it cannot be considered as an act of personal revenge on the part of the brethren.

Verse 5. Now comes the verdict of the apostle which must be made that of the congregation also, in order that it may be the action of "the many" (2 Corinthians 2: 6). *To deliver* is defined by Thayer, "to give over into one's power or use." He explains it at this place as follows: "The phrase seems to have originated from the Jewish formulas of excommunication, because a person banished from the theocratic [church and state] assembly was regarded as deprived of the protection of God and delivered up to the power of the devil." *Destruction of the flesh* is explained by Thayer as follows: "Said of the external ills and troubles by which the lusts of the flesh are subdued and destroyed." The idea is that by expelling him from the congregation, it may cause him to realize the terrible condition he is in on account of having lived for the gratification of his fleshly desires, and the result will be his "crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Galatians 5: 24). That will put him in condition to be restored to the fellowship of the saints, where he can so live that his spirit (his immortal being) may be saved when the Lord comes again. Another serious truth taught in this passage, is that when a person is excluded from the fellowship of the church, he is then

in Satan's territory whose inhabitants have no promise of salvation in the world to come.

Verse 6. The Corinthians were so full of pride over their supposed strength, that they seemed to think a single case of wickedness would not hurt them. The illustration of leaven is according to what everyone knows about that product. A woman would not use as much leaven by bulk as the amount of bread she wished to produce, for the small lump deposited in the mass would work until "the whole was leavened" (Matthew 13: 33). Likewise, one bad character who is permitted to remain in a congregation will finally defile the whole body. (See chapter 15: 33.)

Verse 7. Paul has introduced the subject of leaven for the purpose of illustration. There were enough Jews in the congregation to know about the regulations under the law of Moses regarding leaven, and even the Gentiles had seen enough of the Jewish practices to understand something on the subject. At the time of the feast of the Passover and the seven days following, the Jews were required to "put away leaven out of your houses" (Exodus 12: 15), in order that they might keep their feast acceptably. Paul uses the language of that occasion for his instructions to the Corinthians. Purge out therefore the old leaven corresponds to "put away leaven out of your houses" with the Jews. The leaven to be purged out of the Corinthian church was the wicked fornicator. *That ye may be a new lump* means the church will be free from the leaven of this wicked man, and in so doing they would become a body fit for the service of Christ, having become *unleavened*. The Jews were to bring about this condition that was free from leaven, because a creature had been slain and prepared to be used in the Passover feast, and it could be eaten only "with unleavened bread" (Exodus 12: 8). Likewise, Christ has been slain and made a passover for us, and we should be prepared to partake thereof with a condition that has been purged from the leaven of sin.

Verse 8. The *old leaven* refers to the case of fornication that had been working in the *lump* or congregation. All other leaven likewise was to be kept out of the body. In naming the various kinds of leaven, Paul includes *malice* which was not present in the case of the fornicator as far as there is any indication. This denotes that the apostle

is extending the illustration so as to apply to the entire service of Christ. The *feast* may be said to include all of the activities of the life that Christians are to live under Christ; it is all a rich feast. The passover of Christ's body and blood was consummated but once, it is true, as far as the physical ceremony was concerned, but the spiritual partaking thereof is to be continuous. It will be well at this place to corroborate the idea just set forth by quoting from 1 John 1: 7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." This walking in the light is equivalent to maintaining a condition described in our present verse as *unleavened bread of sincerity and truth*.

Verse 9. *I wrote* refers to an epistle Paul wrote previously, for up to this verse there has been nothing said on the subject at hand. Colossians 4: 16 speaks of an epistle sent to the Laodiceans, so we know that he wrote some letters that were not intended to become a part of the New Testament compilation. In the epistle referred to here, Paul gave instructions not to *company with* fornicators. We do not know what occasioned that letter nor why that particular instruction was given. The three words come from the Greek word *SUNANAMIGNUMI*, and Thayer defines it, "to mix up together; to keep company with, be intimate with, one." Further comments will be made when we come to verse 11.

Verse 10. This verse is given to clarify a statement in the former epistle as to whom they were to avoid in their associations. The world is so full of such characters as are named, that if Christians were required to avoid all of them, they would have to go out of the world; that is, cease to live in any populated country.

Verse 11. The preceding verse designated who were *not* meant by the restrictions, this one will specify who *is* to be so treated. *Now I have written* denotes that the apostle is giving his latest instruction on the subject. *Man that is called a brother* means one who had been a member of the congregation, but on account of the evils named had become unworthy of the term "brother," and hence one with whom they should *not keep company*. (See the notes on this phrase at verse 9.) The refusal to associate with this man is to be carried to the extent that they

were not even to eat with him. Some teach this means eating the Lord's Supper, but the apostle has just explained that his instructions do not apply to men of the world; they apply only to those who had been members of the church. This theory mentioned would mean that people of the world were permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper, but the apostle has just explained that his instructions do not apply to men of the world; they apply only to those who had been members of the church. This theory mentioned would mean that people of the world were permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper, which we know is not true.

To eat is from SUNESTHIO which Thayer defines, "to eat with, take food together with," so the word refers to the physical act of partaking of material food. But such an act itself meant more in old times than it does today; read the following passages. Genesis 26: 30; 31: 46; 1 Kings 13: 15; Proverbs 23: 6; Matthew 24: 49; Mark 2: 16; Acts 11: 3; Galatians 2: 12. From these we may see that the act of eating with others had a social significance formerly that it does not have today. However, the same principle holds good now, and the restriction not to company with means any act or association that would indicate a social recognition. If a man has been excluded on such charges as are named in the present passage, others are forbidden to be intimate with him, for such an association would encourage him to continue in his sinful life, thinking himself to be as good as those who associate with him.

Verses 12, 13. *What have I to do* means "I have nothing to do with judging them outside the church." Hence the church was not expected to be further responsible officially for those who were already of the world, or who would become inhabitants of it by being excluded from the church. The Lord would then be the sole judge of them. But those in the fellowship of the church are subject to the discipline of the congregation. The whole discussion of the case is closed with the direct command to put the wicked person from among them. Nothing is said about the woman, hence we must infer she was not a member of the church and so it would not be responsible.

1 CORINTHIANS 6

Verse 1. *Matter* is from PRAGMA and Thayer defines it at this place, "a matter at law, case, suit." The word

does not pertain to questions of morals or religion, but to temporal interests between man and man. That is why it is called *things pertaining to this life* in verse 4. Paul tells the brethren they do not have the right to take such disputes to the secular courts.

Verse 2. *Judge* is from KRINO. The outstanding definitions of Thayer are, "To approve, esteem; to be of opinion, deem, think; to determine, resolve, decree; to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong." These definitions set forth the idea that the saints (Christians) are to declare the laws by which the world at present is to be ruled religiously, and is to be judged at last. But they could not do this correctly without an inspired law for their guidance which was given by the apostles. That is why Jesus told them (Matthew 19: 28) that they were to "sit upon twelve thrones, judging [KRINO] the twelve tribes of [spiritual] Israel." And after the apostles produced this law by inspiration, the church was to perpetuate the rule under the apostolic teaching. That is why Paul taught in Ephesians 3: 10 that it was "by the church the manifold wisdom of God" was to be made known. The reasoning of Paul is that if the Lord thought his disciples were wise enough to apply His law on the great matters pertaining to the righteous life now and the judgment to come, they should be able to decide such small matters as disputes over temporal transactions.

Verse 3. On the same basis as the preceding paragraph, Christians are teaching and applying the divine law that sets forth the judgment of angels. A part of that law is shown in 2 Peter 2: 4 and Jude 6, that tells of the judgment to be pronounced against those angels that sinned. It is in this sense that *we shall judge angels*, not that any man will literally participate in the procedure at the last day. But the same point is made as that made in the preceding verse, namely, if Christians are entrusted with teaching and applying the law that is to be imposed upon the former inhabitants of Heaven, they certainly should be able to decide matters pertaining to the inhabitants of *this life* or which concern only temporal life.

Verse 4. The original Greek manuscript did not have punctuations, hence the question mark does not show here, but the inflection of the words in the composition does indicate the form of the sentence. It will help in seeing

the idea of this verse to quote the version in Living Oracles which is as follows: "If, then, you have the cognizance [decision] of such matters, why do you set those to judge who are of no account in the congregation?" The congregation had very little esteem for the judges in those secular courts, yet these brethren who had some personal dispute over a temporal matter, were going to these courts for settlement instead of letting the church decide it (according to Matthew 18: 17).

Verses 5, 6. This paragraph, following immediately upon the statement of the preceding one, shows that it was not an instruction as to what they should do, but was a criticism in question form of what they were doing, which Paul says was shameful.

Verse 7. Instead of disgracing the church before the secular courts, a brother would better take the loss he thinks the other is trying to impose on him.

Verse 8. It would be wrong to go to law even when a brother was being defrauded, but it is worse when he takes the case to court in order to despoil another of his rights, as some of these Corinthians were doing.

Verse 9. Having dealt with the specific evil concerning going to law, the apostle broadens his teaching to consider various forms of evil. Chief among the corruptions that existed among the people of Corinth was the different forms of immorality that were practiced by many with very little concern as to right or wrong. In fact, much of that was a part of the heathen religious ceremonies of that country, which accounts for the indifferent attitude that even the professed disciples of Christ showed on the subject. The present verse, also some others in the chapter, will show us how much concern the apostle felt over it. The word *effeminate* and the phrase *abusers of themselves with mankind* both refer to sodomites. The second means a male who uses another male in the place of a female, and the first means a male who permits his body to be so used. (See the notes at Romans 1: 27, volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary, on the subject in the italicized phrase.)

Verse 10. Most of the characters named are so well known as not to need detailed comment. *Revilers* are those who use false degrading speech against others, and *extortioners* are

men who acquire unjust gain from others on one pretense or another.

Verse 11. Some of the Corinthians had been guilty of these evils, but the Gospel had shown them the way to be redeemed from such practices. Yet they were in constant danger of going back to them if they were not vigilant, hence the apostle is sending them this teaching contained in several of the verses. *Washed, sanctified and justified* all refer to the work of becoming a Christian, which was completed by having their bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10: 22).

Verse 12. The original word for *expedient* is defined "profitable" in Thayer's lexicon. A thing could not be profitable that was not lawful, but it might be lawful and not profitable. This verse has special reference to foods of all kinds. (See next verse.) There is no direct legislation against any kind of food (Romans 14: 1-3; 1 Timothy 4: 4), but it would not be profitable for a Christian to become a slave to his appetite, and Paul says he will not be brought under it.

Verse 13. A more convenient wording of the first clause would be, "foods for the body, and the body for foods." These two are perfectly adapted to each other, but they are both to be done away with, which is the meaning of *destroy*, and that is why Paul declared in the preceding verse that he would not allow himself to become enslaved by his appetite. This teaching is true independent of any other subject, but Paul is using it to introduce another point about the right use of the body. The same physical use is made of the body in the act of fornication as in lawful intimacy, but the Lord did not intend for man to abuse his body in that way, any more than He intended for him to abuse the use of food for the body. It is easy to see why the apostle is again dealing with the subject of immorality, in view of the prevalence of that evil in Corinth.

Verse 14. The *destruction* of the body mentioned in the preceding verse, did not mean its annihilation, but that its temporal form requiring food would be discontinued. The human body is made in the image of God, and its importance in His estimation is great, so much so that it will be raised from the dead at the last day.

Verse 15. The value of a man's body is still in the apostle's mind, and he declares it is a *member of Christ*; not

literally, of course, but a part of that great body of which Christ is a member. In view of such a sacred relation, Paul deplores the sin of using the body to unite with an immoral woman, again referring to the loose morals being practiced by so many in Corinth.

Verse 16. We know the apostle was not using that statement in some special or strained sense, for he supports it by quoting the words of God and Christ where we know the language applies to the intimate relation of the sexes, the only "ceremony" the Lord ever gave as a basis of marriage. (See Genesis 2: 24; Matthew 19: 5, 6.)

Verse 17. The intimate relations of a male and female make them one body, and the faithful joining of a disciple to the person of Christ makes them one spirit.

Verse 18. *Flee fornication.* The prevalence of immorality in Corinth, and its effects on the disciples of Christ, continues to be one of the apostle's chief concerns. To *flee* from a thing means more than merely not partaking; it means to run away as from a poisonous adder. *Every sin* refers to sins of a material or physical nature, not that immorality is the only sin that a man can commit within his own personality, for when he harbors filthy thoughts, that is a sin within his own person. However, they are not bodily sins, while fornication is: it constitutes a sin against his body that was made in the image of God.

Verse 19. In chapter 3: 16 Paul tells the Corinthians that "ye are the temple of God," and it means they as a congregation. In our present verse he tells the same brethren that *your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost*. There is no discrepancy, for the church is made up of individuals, whose bodies must be kept pure in order that the church as a whole may be pure. This is why God claims possession of the bodies of the saints; it is in order that His spiritual body may be right.

Verse 20. If a person wishes to own something he will pay a price for it, and the value of the price will depend on the estimation he has of the thing to be bought. God rated the persons (both fleshly and spiritual) of the disciples so highly, that He paid the price of the blood of Christ for them (Acts 20: 28; 1 Peter 1: 18, 19). It is hence the duty of Christians to use their bodies and spirits (minds) in such a way as to glorify God.

1 CORINTHIANS 7

General remarks. This chapter was occasioned by a condition existing at that time, due no doubt to the activities of the Roman Empire in its military oppression of various religions, which finally affected the church. The general existence of immorality also entered into the teaching of Paul in answer to the letter that was sent to him. The key to many of the expressions of the chapter is in the 26th verse which mentions the "present distress," brought about by the oppression just mentioned. That made it inadvisable to take on further obligations, especially those brought upon a man who begins to organize a family. Under these conditions someone wrote to Paul for advice as to what they should do, and it was that it would be better to remain just as they were, and not take upon themselves the obligations of married life. However, the marriage relation is the Lord's means of meeting the desires of the flesh on this subject, and unless a man is sure that he can resist all temptation to immorality, then he is to discard Paul's advice and enter the state of marriage for the lawful gratification of his desires. While discussing the specific subject brought up by the letter, the apostle will include some teaching on other matters, that are to be observed by disciples today. I urge the reader to become familiar with this paragraph, as it will be helpful for reference at various places, for it will not be repeated in every verse as the comments on the chapter continue.

Verse 1. *Touch* is defined in Thayer's lexicon, "to fasten to, make adhere to," and in this verse it means to have intimate relations with a woman in marriage.

Verse 2. *Nevertheless.* See the paragraph at the beginning of the chapter, about when the advice against marriage was to be discarded.

Verse 3. Since the primary object of marriage (aside from reproduction) is to give lawful gratification of sexual desires, the husband and wife should cooperate with each other to that end.

Verse 4. *Power* is from *EXOUSIA*, which means authority or control. This verse teaches that neither husband nor wife has exclusive right about the use of his body, regarding whether it should be used for the gratification of the other. This idea, especially as it pertains to the woman, is taught in Genesis 3: 16.

Verse 5. The context shows that *defraud* means to withhold from each other the intimate relation. They are permitted to do so only on condition that both consent, so as to be free for exclusive religious devotions. Even then, they should not stay apart too long, lest they be tempted to seek gratification unlawfully; *incontinency* means lack of control of the fleshly desires.

Verse 6. *I speak this by permission.* Whether the pronoun *this* refers to what Paul has just said, or to what he is about to say, is relatively unimportant. The point to learn is the meaning of *permission*. It is taught by some that Paul was only permitted to write on some things and not commanded to do so, and therefore what he said by permission would have no binding force. I believe the distinction is unimportant, for the Lord would certainly not *permit* Paul to write any instruction that was not right for the benefit of all concerned.

Verse 7. Paul's general teaching on the marriage institution, as well as what he says in this chapter, would show us he does not mean to wish that every man would abstain from marriage as a permanent way of life. But if all men had the self-control over their nature that the apostle had, they would have no difficulty in following the advice during the "present distress." The *gift* means the natural ability to maintain control over the passions.

Verse 8. See the advice explained in the first paragraph.

Verse 9. *Cannot contain* denotes they cannot have complete control over the desires. *Burn* is from *PURBOO* which Thayer explains at this place to mean, "to be inflamed with sexual desire."

Verse 10. *Yet not I, but the Lord.* This teaching was not given to them merely by the *permission* of the Lord (verse 6), but He commanded him to give it. *Let not the wife depart.* Some might think that if it was better not to marry, it would likewise be proper for a wife to relieve her husband of these "added obligations," and Paul is teaching against such an action.

Verse 11. Regardless of what might cause a wife to depart, she would have no right to remarry some other man. The husband had no right to put away his wife on the ground of Paul's advice about the "present distress."

Verse 12. *I, not the Lord* means by Paul's permission and not by command

of the Lord. (See the notes on verse 6.) A man might have been tired of married life and thought he could be relieved of the burden by putting his wife away, using as a special excuse that she was an unbeliever. Paul means that he should not do so if the wife is willing to remain with him.

Verse 13. This takes the same comments as the preceding verse.

Verse 14. The unbelieving partner is not sanctified by the other in the sense of religious holiness before God, for in that sense no person can sanctify another. It means that the marriage of one person to another makes their cohabitation moral, since the marriage relation is a fleshly one, primarily for fleshly purposes (see the comments at verse 3). Were this not true, then children born of parents one of whom is an unbeliever would be *unclean*, which means ceremonially improper, whereas, all children of parents who are married to each other are holy as far as their origin is concerned.

Verse 15. It should be noted in this verse that it is the unbeliever that is determined to desert the marriage, in spite of the willingness of the other to continue even under the "present distress." The believer is told to *let him depart*, which denotes that he is not obligated (*is not under bondage*) to hold the unbeliever with him if it would have to be done under continual strife or "family quarrels," for God is wanting his creatures to live in peace if possible, in which they were called. But that has nothing to do with the question of remarriage for either of them. In truth, verse 11 orders that if the departing wife should change her mind and desire the marriage relation again, she must go back to her husband. And that would mean also that the husband would be required to remain single, else the wife could not obey verse 11 even if she wanted to. All of this is in keeping with Matthew 19: 9 which clearly teaches that no married person may be remarried to another, except upon the immorality of the present marriage companion.

Verse 16. The preceding verse was rather a break into the line of thought being set forth in verse 14. In that Paul was showing that a believing husband or wife need not break up their marriage on account of the unbelief of the other; that the morality of the marriage was not affected by the unbelief of one of them. The present verse continues the thought, and gives another reason why he should remain

in the marriage, namely, he might be able to convert his partner. This idea is taught in 1 Peter 3: 1, 2.

Verse 17. Whatever condition may be the lot of a man who has accepted the call of the Lord, let him be faithful to his profession. This command is announced as being applicable to all the churches. (See notes at John 15: 16 on *ordain*.)

Verse 18. *Become uncircumcised*. This refers to a surgical trick whereby it could not be known from appearances whether a man was circumcised or not. The verse means for a Jew not to resort to that if he decides to become a Christian. This surgery is mentioned in Josephus, *Antiquities*, Book 12, Chapter 5, Section 1.

Verse 19. The teaching of the preceding verse is based on the truth of this. Under Christ it makes no difference whether a man is circumcised or not, just so he keeps the commandments of God. (See Galatians 5: 6; 6: 15.)

Verse 20. This verse is a general application of the preceding several verses.

Verse 21. A great part of the people were slaves in the Roman Empire. The fact that a man was in that "calling" or station in life, need not hold him back from accepting the Gospel call, for salvation is for all classes. However, if his master sees fit to release him, he should accept it for the advantages it would give.

Verse 22. Two kinds of service and freedom are meant here, the temporal under a human master, and the spiritual under Christ. Hence a man can be a servant under the former and yet be free from sin while being a servant of Christ.

Verse 23. This does not contradict verse 21. It means not to serve men as to any religious directions. The temporal masters often bought their slaves, and likewise Christ has purchased his with his own blood. (See chapter 6: 19, 20.)

Verse 24. This is the same as verse 20.

Verse 25. *No commandment* in the same sense as verse 6. *Give my judgment* under the permission of the verse just cited. Paul had shown himself faithful to the Lord, and hence he was given the *permission* to use his judgment in the case.

Verse 26. *So to be* means for him to remain just as he is, on account of the

present distress. (See the paragraph at the beginning of the chapter.

Verse 27. This repeats the teaching running through much of the chapter.

Verse 28. *If thou marry, thou hast not sinned*. Paul had never forbidden marriage as being wrong, but only advised against it on account of the *present distress*. While not a sin, yet the marriage will bring them *trouble in the flesh* which means the hardships caused by the condition of the country. *I spare you* is a brief way of saying "I wish to spare you these troubles by advising you not to marry while the present conditions prevail."

Verses 29, 30. The original Greek word for *short* is defined by Thayer at this place, "is shortened," and Robinson defines it, "the time is contracted, shortened." The *time* referred to in this passage is the period of the *distress* caused by the oppression under Rome. Naturally the passing days made that period shorter, and the teaching of this verse is that disciples should not be so concerned about these various conditions in their earthly life. Give chief attention to their obligations as Christians until the conflict was over, which was not to be very long in comparison.

Verse 31. The good things of this world are necessary to man's existence as a temporal being, therefore he must make some use of them. *Abusing* is from a word similar to the one for *use*, with a prefix in the Greek composition that makes it mean "to overdo" the use of them. The logical reason the apostle gives for the exhortation is that all these things are temporary; they will pass away.

Verses 32, 33. *Carefulness* means anxiety over the handicaps of the *present distress*. A married man would have to give his attention to the things of the world, such as those necessary to care for his wife. That would really be his duty if he had a wife, but he could avoid such anxiety for the time being if he took Paul's advice and remained single.

Verse 34. The same things apply to women in that a married woman would be obligated to give some attention to the rightful requirements of her husband. If she remained single she would be free to give her sole attention to religious devotions. *Be holy both in body and in spirit* does not mean that her relations with her husband would be wrong, but they would be temporal and would thus require

some of the time she otherwise could devote to these spiritual matters.

Verse 35. This verse is a general summing up of several preceding ones. It shows that Paul's teaching regarding the advisability of entering marriage during the *present distress* was not on the basis of right and wrong. It was for their *profit* (advantage) in the services to Christ. Being free from the unavoidable burdens the present conditions would impose on married people, they could devote their time to the Lord's service *without distraction*.

Verse 36. This verse (as here translated) is entirely out of line with the general teaching of the chapter. Note the pronoun *her* is in italics which is because the King James translators did not understand the verse. Some later commentators even insert the word "daughter" after *virgin*, for which there is not the slightest ground in the original. They make this verse refer to a father's willingness for his daughter to marry. What would a man's control over his own passions have to do with his consent to his daughter's marriage? The confusion is caused by a common but erroneous notion that *virgin* always means a woman. A look at Revelation 14: 4 would show that to be wrong, even if one could not consult the original. That passage says the persons were "not defiled by women; for they are virgins."

When the word in question is used as a state or condition in life, it means virginity. The Englishman's Greek New Testament renders this verse as follows: "But if anyone thinks he behaves unseemly [improperly] to his virginity, if he be beyond his prime, and so it ought to be, let him do what he wills, he does not sin; let them marry." It is easy to see this verse means the same as Paul's teaching in the rest of the chapter, namely, that it is best to remain single if one has control of his desires. But if he begins to doubt his ability to remain chaste in an unmarried state, then he should marry, and in so doing he would not commit any sin. It is true it says let *them* marry, which is because any marriage requires two persons.

The word *virgin* is from PARTHENOS, and Thayer gives the following definition as it applies to men: "One who has never had commerce [intimacy] with women." *Pass the flower of her [his] age* means a male who has reached the age when his sexual na-

ture has become fully developed and more insistent on gratification. By changing the pronouns from the feminine to the masculine, as the inflection of composition in the Greek text requires, the verse will be easily understood. It will then give the same advice that the apostle has given throughout the chapter, namely, that moral chastity is more important than freedom from the burdens of family life. If a man cannot have sure control over his desires, he should avail himself of marriage which is the Lord's plan for lawful gratification of them. This is directly taught in verse 28, where Paul explains that his purpose in giving the advice was to have them avoid the *trouble in the flesh* that would come to married people in the *present distress*.

Verse 37. This is the same in meaning as the preceding verse.

Verse 38. The pronoun *her* is in italics in both sentences and is not justified by the original. The phrase *giveth in marriage* means to give himself in marriage to another. He that becomes married *doeth well* because he avoids the guilt of immorality, but he that is able to remain unmarried *doeth better* because he not only maintains his moral chastity, but avoids the burdens of married life.

Verse 39. It is sometimes asked if the requirements of this verse would not be on the same proviso of *present distress*, as the advice of Paul about the marriage of those single at the time he was writing. The cases are not the same, for it is expressly stated that if a man married in the first place he would not do any sin (verse 28), since that instruction was given as advice only to avoid the burdens of married life. The present verse plainly says the wife is bound *by the law* (not a temporary condition caused by the *present distress*) as long as her husband lived; not as long as the "distress" continued. Hence the verse involves a matter of right and wrong (not one of expediency as is the other). *At liberty to be married* means she has the right to be married, with the stipulation that it must be *in the Lord*. All marriages are in the Lord in the sense that the Lord is the author of the basis of the physical relation (Genesis 2: 24; Matthew 19: 5), hence the phrase here has a special sense since it is applied only to second marriages. To be *in the Lord*, therefore, can mean nothing else than being in His body which is the church. A Christian widow has no

right to marry a man outside of the church. The same principle would logically apply to a Christian man. The woman is mentioned only because the greater part of the other verses have been dealing with the wives.

Verse 40. *Happier* if she so abide, but not more righteous, which again brings in the advisability of any single person entering marriage at that time. *I think* does not mean that Paul was uncertain, for it is from the same Greek word as Jesus used in Matthew 22: 42, where he asked the Pharisees, "What think ye of Christ?" We know Jesus did not wish them to give him any answer on which they were doubtful. It simply means to state some idea or conclusion that a person has. Paul had no doubt as to the source of his idea at this place, for it came from the same One who had given him the "permission" to speak in verse 6. Acting under that privilege, he gave it as his judgment that the woman would be happier were she to remain unmarried.

1 CORINTHIANS 8

Verse 1. Corinth was a Greek city and the sacrificing to idols was common. The flesh of the beasts was not burned, but only put through some routine, then sold in the market for meat. The question arose as to whether it was right for Christians to eat that meat. Some of the brethren understood that it did not make any difference, since the idols were dead objects and meant nothing. Those having this knowledge were being puffed up over their supposed superiority and were discouraging the weaker ones. Paul wanted them who were the better informed to show *charity* (love on behalf of the brethren) and thus *edify* or build up the less informed disciples.

Verse 2. These better informed brethren were correct theoretically, yet their boasted knowledge had caused them to be ignorant of what was more important, namely, the proper attitude toward the others.

Verse 3. The greatest knowledge a man can have is shown by his love for God (and his weaker children). Such an attitude shows that the man knows God, which proves that he has the kind of knowledge that is really great. It may well be worded, "If any man loves God, such a man knows the same God."

Verses 4, 5. Various objects in nature were worshiped as gods, which is why Paul uses the phrase *gods many*

and lords many. But the apostle agrees with the "knowing ones" that these gods were nothing.

Verse 6. Repeating the idea just set forth, the apostle adds some truths about the God who created all these things which the heathen were ignorantly worshipping.

Verse 7. Not every man (even among the disciples) had been clearly informed on the subject of meats that had been used in the idolatrous service. For the meaning of *conscience*, see the notes at Acts 24: 16 in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary. When these uninformed brethren were induced to eat this meat, they had a "guilty feeling" because they could not see anything in the act except a form of idolatrous worship. Such an attitude would make them really guilty, because one must have a clear conscience in order to please God.

Verse 8. This is the same as verses 1, 4, 5.

Verse 9. The better informed brethren should not use their privilege in such a manner as to cause the weaker ones to go against their conscience.

Verse 10. *See thee* is a key to the subject, which will be referred to at verse 13. *Idol's temple*. After the religious exercises were over, a temporal meal was served and a visitor could sit down and eat in much the same fashion he would today in a restaurant. There was nothing wrong about it in itself; but if one of these weaker brethren should see it, he would be *emboldened* (encouraged) to eat also. He would reason, "If that brother may eat of that meat, I will also."

Verse 11. But as soon as he had done that, he would have that "guilty feeling" which defiled his conscience. He would *perish*; be in danger of condemnation for defiling his conscience, and it would be through the example of the stronger brother who had no conscientious objections to the meat.

Verse 12. Anything that is done toward the disciples of Christ, whether good or bad, is counted as being done unto Him. (See Matthew 25: 40, 45.)

Verse 13. *Make my brother to offend* means to cause him to stumble or do wrong. *I will eat no flesh*; that is, in his presence (verse 10). If a Christian believes it is right to eat this meat he may do so, but he must exercise that faith or privilege "to himself" (Romans 14: 22).

1 CORINTHIANS 9

Verse 1. *Am I not an apostle?* Verse 2 indicates that some had questioned the apostleship of Paul. He will name some of the reasons for claiming to be an apostle, in both the present and the next verse. *Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?* It was one of the qualifications required of an apostle that he had seen Christ alive after the crucifixion. *Ye my work in the Lord:* Paul started this church (Acts 18: 1-11).

Verse 2. Aside from any work Paul might have done elsewhere, the Corinthians had the evidence in their own experience that Paul was an apostle. *Seal* is from SPHRAGIS, which Thayer defines at this place, "that by which anything is confirmed, proved, authenticated, as by a seal." When a legal paper has an official seal stamped on it, that proves the existence of the seal, just as the letters the reader is now looking at prove the existence of the type somewhere. The bestowal of spiritual gifts could be done only by an apostle (Acts 8: 18). The church at Corinth possessed those gifts after Paul had worked with them, which proved that he was an apostle.

Verse 3. Paul gives an *answer* to the ones who wanted to *examine* him, which denotes the examination consisted of questions as to why he did or did not do some things.

Verse 4. *Power* is from EXOUSIA, which means right or authority. *To eat and drink* means to do so at the expense of those to whom he preaches. (See verse 14.)

Verse 5. Paul means he has the right to do so at the expense of the church, as well as to obtain his own food from it. He abstained from marriage voluntarily, but insists that had he chosen to do so, he would have the right to marry and have his wife travel with him at the expense of the church. His stipulation that his wife would be a *sister* (in Christ) is a strong recommendation that even the first marriage of Christians should be with one in the faith. As an approved example of his right in this matter, he cites that of other apostles including *Cephas* (Peter).

Verse 6. Paul narrows his discussion to himself and Barnabas. *Forbear working* means not to labor with their hands to obtain the necessities of life.

Verse 7. Nobody expects a soldier to support himself while fighting for

his country. On the same principle, a man who produces fruit or stock is granted the right to partake thereof.

Verse 8, 9. To show that he was not making these arguments on his personal authority only, Paul quotes from Deuteronomy 25: 4 in regard to oxen. Before the days of machinery, small grain was piled down on a floor and the beast was driven round over it to break the husk from the grain. It was natural for the ox to help himself to the feed, and the command was not to muzzle him to keep him from eating the grain. *Doth God take care for oxen?* The law against muzzling the ox was in force literally, but the circumstance was used as an example for something more important than the comfort of brute beasts.

Verse 10. *For our sakes . . . this is written.* The law indeed was intended as a merciful provision for the dumb creature, but it was *written* as a lesson for men who were to partake of the fruit of their own labors.

Verse 11. Paul is still discussing his right to financial support, not that he is asking for it. *Carnal things* is another term for the temporal necessities of life. The Corinthians had received spiritual things (the Gospel) from Paul, and it was right if they were asked to contribute to his necessities were he to ask for it.

Verse 12. Having shown his full right to the temporal support of the Corinthians, Paul informs them it is not his intention to require it.

Verse 13. The apostle adds another proof for his position by referring to an arrangement under the Mosaic system, in which the one officiating in the altar service got part of his living from that service. (See Leviticus 6: 16, 26; 7: 6, 31, 32.)

Verse 14. *To live of the Gospel* means to obtain a living from those to whom the Gospel is preached. This is taught also in Galatians 6: 6.

Verse 15. Again Paul explains that he is not hinting for favors. In truth, he would even refuse to receive them on account of a special circumstance to be commented on soon. But he wishes to correct a wrong attitude some had on the subject.

Verse 16. Regardless of all other considerations, it was the duty of Paul to preach the Gospel, else the *woe* or condemnation of the Lord would be on him.

Verse 17. However, if he preaches independent of his fixed duty, there

was a special favor offered to him. If he does not do it under a free motive, then the *woe* mentioned in the preceding verse, here called *dispensation*, would be upon him.

Verse 18. Paul asks and answers the question as to the *reward* mentioned in the preceding verse. That consisted in the privilege of preaching to the Corinthians and not taking any financial support from them. Verse 14 says the Lord ordained that preachers were to be supported by the ones who heard the preaching. Paul was given a special exemption from that law in order to have some satisfaction from the privilege of which he might glory (verse 15). It did not bring all of the enjoyment he expected, for afterward he apologized for it (2 Corinthians 12: 13).

Verse 19. Paul was not legally bound to any man, yet he voluntarily put himself in a position of service to everybody for the good he could do.

Verse 20. The passages from this verse through 22 have been perverted, and made to represent Paul as a time-server for the sake of peace and friendship, even to the extent of compromising the truth. Nothing could be more unjust toward a man whose integrity was shown in such expressions as, "let God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3: 4). There are numberless incidentals in the conditions and lives of people that do not involve any principle of right and wrong. Paul means that in all such circumstances, he conformed to the conditions as he found them, in order to show a friendly interest in the happiness of the people. The customs of the Jews under the law included many items that were not especially of a religious obligation. Jews who were Christians had the right to practice them which Paul did while with them.

Verse 21. When Paul was mingling with those who were not Jews, he did not try to press the Jewish customs upon them, but he did advocate the law of Christ which was and is binding upon all mankind.

Verse 22. *To the weak*. Paul always respected the talents of those with whom he came in contact, and adapted his teaching and practices to their understanding.

Verse 23. By conforming himself to these various conditions, many of which existed in Corinth, the apostle showed a sincere interest in the Gospel. He also placed the whole relation

between himself and the Corinthian brethren on a plane that enabled them all to be fellow partakers of the Gospel.

Verse 24. In the foot races that were common in those days, there could be but one successful contestant for the prize. There need be no limitation as to the number of winners in the Christian race. The point is that each man should run as if only one could win, and he was determined to be that one.

Verse 25. Paul is using the various athletic games of the country for his illustrations. The contestants were *temperate*, which denotes that they prepared themselves by a strict schedule of diet and exercise. *Corruptible crown* means the prize to be won in those games was material and subject to decay, while that for which the Christians were contending was "a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Peter 5: 4). For that reason all Christians should make the greater effort to qualify and perform to the utmost of their ability.

Verse 26. *Not as uncertainly*. If only one person could win in the race, then the success of another would mean defeat, and the whole contest would be hanging on uncertainty. But since it is an individual affair and based on faithfulness only, each runner may assure himself of victory. *Beateth the air* is an allusion to a practice of going through the motions of a boxer preparatory to the real fight, in which the performer threw his arms around in the air, similar to the modern practice with dumbbells for the purpose of physical training.

Verse 27. Instead of the actions described in the preceding verse, Paul says he fights with a real person and that is himself. *I keep under* is from *HUPOPIAZO*, which Thayer defines, "to beat black and blue, to smite so as to cause bruises and livid [black and blue] spots," and he explains it at this passage to mean, "like a boxer I buffet my body, handle it roughly, discipline it with hardships." The great apostle Paul never considered himself to be out of reach of temptation as long as he lived, but believed it necessary to be always on his guard against the wiles of Satan. *Castaway* means one who becomes unfaithful before the end of life's contest.

1 CORINTHIANS 10

Verse 1. The main lesson in several verses of this chapter, is that it is not enough just to get a good start in the

service to Christ, but it must be followed by a faithful life to the end. Emphasis should be placed on the little word *all* in these verses. Since *all* of the fathers had the same start, whereas they did not *all* reach Canaan, the lesson mentioned is set forth. The *fathers* means the early ancestors of the Jewish nation who started from Egypt, to go toward the country that had been promised to Abraham and his descendants. The cloud was what guided them, and the sea was the Red Sea, through which *all* passed "without the loss of one."

Verse 2. Notice that both the cloud and the sea were required to accomplish the baptism. That is because the word means a complete burial or envelopment. The sea at their sides and the cloud over the top made a literal surrounding. They are said to have been baptized *unto Moses* because he was their leader, even as Jesus is the leader of Christians unto whom they are baptized.

Verses 3, 4. The meat they ate was literal but had a typical or spiritual significance, because it had to be provided by miracle; it refers to the manna and quails recorded in Exodus 16. The drink also was literal water but had to be produced by miracle (Exodus 17: 6). The rock at Horeb from which the drinking water was drawn was a type of Christ who is the Rock of Ages.

Verse 5. *For they were overthrown in the wilderness* is stated as the proof that God was displeased with them.

Verse 6. *These things* refers to the judgments sent upon the Israelites, and they were to serve as punishments for them, and a warning for Christians not to lust after evil things as they lusted.

Verse 7. The idolatry referred to is recorded in Exodus 32. Verse 6 of that chapter says the people "rose up to play," which is the passage Paul quotes in our present verse. And verse 19 of the chapter in Exodus says when Moses came in sight, the people were dancing. The word *play* in our verse is from *PAIZO* which Thayer defines, "to play, sport, jest; to give way to hilarity," and he explains it to mean, "by joking, singing, dancing." It is significant that Paul connects *idolatry* with the *playing*, which we now have learned included dancing. That is a serious conclusion, and we are sure the idea is from the truth that in promiscuous

dancing, the participants are devoted to the goddess of lust.

Verse 8. The case of fornication referred to is recorded in Numbers 25. The occasion of it was the failure of Balaam to curse Israel in his speeches. Afterward, however, he gave Balak some advice by which the men of Israel were induced to commit fornication with the girls of Moab; this is mentioned in Revelation 2: 14. The secular history of the event is recorded in Josephus, Antiquities, Book 4, Chapter 6, Sections 6-9. It was especially appropriate to warn the Corinthians against fornication, in view of the immorality that was so common in that city.

Verse 9. We know when this temptation took place by the fiery serpents that Paul mentions in connection with it. The case is in Numbers 21: 5, 6, and consisted in the complaints of the people "against God, and against Moses." Christ was not specifically known to the Israelites, but He was with God in all of the dealings with man. If Christians utter words of opposition against Christ, as those Israelites did against Moses and God, it is regarded as a temptation which Paul is warning against.

Verse 10. *Murmur* is from *COGGUZO*, which Thayer defines, "to murmur, mutter, grumble, say anything in a low tone," and he explains it at this place to mean, "those who discontentedly complain." The instance Paul refers to is in Numbers 14: 1-4. The word is used of members of the church who manifest an unfavorable attitude toward things in general, yet will not specify anything they can show to be unscriptural.

Verse 11. *These things* means the same as the phrase in verse 6, namely, the judgments sent on the Israelites for their sins. They were thus punished on account of their own deserts, and the account of them is *written* for the benefit of us who are living in the Christian Dispensation; we should profit by their mistakes and the punishment inflicted on them. *Ends of the world*. The last word is from *AION* and means "age." The word is plural, so the phrase means "the ends of the ages." God has given the world three ages or dispensations, and the Christian Dispensation is here declared to be the last one. The theory that Christ will come and set up another age (the Millennial age) is therefore false, and implies that Paul did not tell the truth here.

Verse 12. This verse is good general advice, appropriate for all people in all ages. No one is in as much danger of falling as the man who is too sure of himself. (Paul showed the opposite attitude in chapter 9: 27.) The Corinthians were so puffed up over their spiritual gifts and other advantages; they had that overconfident feeling, so the admonition was peculiarly needed for them.

Verse 13. The Bible does not teach that God will do something for the salvation of one man that He will not do for another under the same circumstances, therefore this verse does not justify the theory known as "Special Providence." The plan of salvation is completely offered in the New Testament (Colossians 2: 10), and all of the human race have equal access to it. The other passages showing this truth are too numerous to be cited here. No miracle is promised as an escape from temptation that has not been provided for in the Gospel. If such a favor were intended by this passage, Paul certainly would not have written chapter 9: 27, for he would have expected the Lord to provide such an escape for him that he should not become a "castaway." *Will with the temptation*, etc. In the management of the universe, if it is God's will to bring about some conditions that might be too trying for a Christian, then He will so regulate those conditions that nothing will be beyond the protection offered the Christian in the written Word.

Verse 14. Idolatry was frequently mingled with immorality, both of which were common in Corinth. In chapter 6: 18 Paul exhorts the brethren to "flee" from the latter, and in this verse he urges the same action toward the former. To *flee* from a thing means more than merely not partaking; it means to run as from a poisonous adder.

Verse 15. The original for *wise* means one who is intelligent, a man who is capable of forming logical conclusions. Paul believed the Corinthian brethren were able to "see the point" in all of the present reasoning.

Verse 16. In chapter 8 Paul deals with the subject of meat that had been offered in sacrifice to idols. He shows that the mere eating of such meat was not wrong in itself, but that when it was used as a religious performance it constituted a form of idolatry; fellowship (or communion) with idols. On the same principle, to partake of the cup and bread in the Lord's Supper

means to have fellowship with the blood and body of Christ. Note that Paul does not call the cup and bread "The Communion," as a familiar but careless saying puts it. In truth, the term is not to be found in a single passage in the New Testament, much less is it applied to the Lord's Supper which is only a part of the communion or general service to Christ under the Gospel system of salvation. *Bless* is from EULOGE⁰, and Thayer's first definition is, "to consecrate a thing with solemn prayers; to ask God's blessing on a thing," hence it does not mean to confer some miraculous quality on the cup and bread.

Verse 17. *One bread* means that Christians have only one use for bread as a religious act, and that is to represent the body of Christ that was given for the salvation of man. When it is partaken of for that purpose, all who do so are acting as sharers of the same blessing of salvation through Christ.

Verse 18. Ancient Israel not only offered certain articles in sacrifice upon the altar, but the proper ones ate of a part of those animals. In doing so they became participants of the altar service. On the same principle, when disciples eat of the bread in view of the body of Christ, they receive benefits of His body.

Verse 19. In chapter 8: 4 Paul had said that an idol was "nothing," and yet he showed that if a man participated in the sacrifices offered to the idol, it made him guilty of a real sin, that of idolatry. In the present passage he sees that a wrong impression as to the importance of the idols, might have been made of his comparison to the body and blood of Christ. He wishes to prevent such an erroneous conclusion, which he does with this introductory question. It is as if he would say, "Do you think I have changed my mind, and am granting to the idols some important existence?"

Verse 20. In answer to the foregoing question, the apostle affirms that the beings to whom the Gentiles offer their sacrifices are only *devils*, a word coming from DAIMONION. Thayer defines the word, "a spirit, a being inferior to God, superior to men . . . evil spirits or the messengers and ministers of the devil." He then adds historically, "According to a Jewish opinion which passed over to the Christians, the demons are the gods of the Gentiles and the authors of idolatry." With this view of the subject in mind, the idola-

trous worship is considered as fellowship with devils.

Verse 21. The thought of this verse is that people cannot be in fellowship with the Lord and with devils at the same time, which Christ taught in Matthew 6: 24.

Verse 22. To be jealous means to be fearful of losing something that may be obtained by another. Paul implies that men might give their devotion to idols and thereby cause God to be jealous, which would actually take place according to Exodus 20: 5. The Corinthians may not have been doing it for that purpose, but Paul shows them that their conduct implies it.

Verse 23. *All things* is said with regard to questions on which there is no specific legislation from the Lord, some of which will be considered soon. To be *expedient* means to be profitable; a thing might not be wrong, but if it would not benefit anyone it would not be expedient.

Verse 24. There is no original word for *wealth*. The verse means that no man should be selfish, but should seek to bring happiness to others.

Verse 25. The *shambles* was a market where they sold meat and other provisions of food. Meat that had been offered in service to idols was taken to these markets for sale. Paul means they need not have any conscientious scruples about partaking of food that might have been purchased at these markets.

Verse 26. All articles that are suitable for food have been created by the Lord and no restrictions need be made as to their use. The law of Moses did make some regulations against certain creatures, but that was for the purpose of ceremonial training and not because of any literal unfitness in them. That law passed away and now "every creature of God is good" (1 Timothy 4: 4).

Verse 27. *Them that believe not* mean one's personal friends who are not members of the church. *To a feast* is not in the original but is implied by the rest of the verse. *Asking no question* means the same as the phrase in verse 25.

Verse 28. *Eat not . . . for the earth is the Lord's*, etc. See the comments on verse 26 for the last phrase. That phrase shows that it would be right in itself to eat of any food, yet he should *not eat* for the sake of one who thinks it is wrong.

Verse 29. Paul explains that it is the other man's conscience he means, not the one who would otherwise eat. *For why*, etc., means as if Paul said, "Why do I give you this instruction? Answer, because my liberty is to be controlled by the other man's conscience with reference to these unlegislated questions."

Verse 30. This verse means the same as the preceding one.

Verse 31. In regulating one's liberty on these matters of eating and drinking so as not to offend a weak brother, it will redound to the glory of God.

Verse 32. *Give none offence* means not to do anything that might cause another to stumble or sin. Some things would be regarded wrong in the eyes of the Jews that would not offend the Gentiles, and vice versa. Also, there might be matters on which neither would have any scruples as far as their nationality is concerned, yet would be objectionable to the brethren. Paul means for the disciples to have regard for the conscience of all these classes.

Verse 33. This is the same as chapter 9: 19-23.

1 CORINTHIANS 11

Verse 1. *Followers* is from MIMETES, which Thayer defines, "an imitator." The word does not require the presence of authority, although an apostle would have that: it may be said of any Christian when the proviso that Paul names is observed, namely, that the person who is imitated is himself an imitator of Christ.

Verse 2. *In all things* is said in the sense of a general statement. The Corinthian brethren were generally favorable to the apostle's teaching, and for that he praises them. But there were some particulars in which they were at fault, and Paul is dealing with them in this chapter.

Verse 3. This verse presents four persons: God, Christ, man and woman, named in the order of their rank. The last two are on earth and are visible to others, which accounts for some regulations of customs that are discussed in this chapter.

Verse 4. *Praying* does not require spiritual gifts, hence the *prophesying* need be no more specific than the description given in chapter 14: 3. The original Greek word for *covered* means to be veiled so as to hide the face. If a man covers his head he dishonors it, because it should be exposed to view

due to his position of authority in the social world.

Verse 5. *Praying and prophesying* have the same meaning as explained in the preceding verse. The word *shaven* shows Paul is considering the hair as the veil or covering. It was customary for women to veil or cover their face with their hair when praying in the presence of men. To neglect this was a dishonor to her head, because it exposed it and put her in the class of men who are the rulers in the social rank. If she thus keeps her hair away from her face, she is as much exposed to shame as if her hair had been cut.

Verse 6. *If the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn.* This does not endorse a woman's shearing her hair but rather condemns it, for Paul compares it to something else that we know he condemns because it is a dishonor to her. *If it be a shame* is a phrase that takes it for granted that the thing named is commonly thought to be a shame, namely, for a woman to have her hair cut.

Verse 7. God, Christ and man are all rulers in their respective ranks, hence a man should not cover his head and thus put himself in the same subject class as the woman. A woman can be a glory to man only by maintaining an attitude of submission to him.

Verse 8. This verse refers to the fact recorded in Genesis 2: 21-23, which shows the woman was made from a part of the man.

Verse 9. The woman was created for the man because God said it was not good for the man to be alone (Genesis 2: 18).

Verse 10. Submission to authority is the outstanding thought which Paul has been discussing. We have seen that an unveiled head indicates authority, for which reason a woman should be veiled as a sign that she is under authority. Angels are ministering spirits under the authority of God, and are invisible persons in the assemblies of Christians. Some of their class have been rebellious in times past (2 Peter 2: 4; Jude 6), and Paul wishes the woman to show to the faithful angels who are present in the assembly, that they are submitting to the authority that is over them.

Verses 11, 12. Lest the foregoing teaching might make a wrong impression as to the importance of the woman, Paul adds these verses to show

that both man and woman are necessary in the general plans of God; the same is taught in verses 8, 9.

Verses 13. *Judge in yourselves* has about the same force as "nature" in the next verse. *Comely* is from PREPO, which Thayer defines, "to be becoming, seemly, fit."

Verse 14. *Nature* is from PHUSIS, which Thayer defines at this place, "nature, i.e., natural sense, native conviction or knowledge," and he adds the explanation, "as opposed to that which is learned by instruction and accomplished by training or prescribed by law." Robinson gives virtually the same definition. The explanation given of the definition is an exact description of the customs discussed in the preceding verses as to what use a woman should make of her hair, and he says it is opposed to (different from) that which nature teaches. Customs change because they are the product of man, while nature never changes because it is the creation of God. As long as nature exists it will be a shame for a man to have long hair, and, as a necessary conclusion, it will be a shame for a woman to cut her hair.

Sometimes a quibble is made by asking just what it takes to constitute *long hair*. In the first place, the statement of Paul remains in the text, and it is as much the obligation of the quibbler to answer the question and prove his answer, as it is that of the one who insists on observing the teaching of the apostle. However, for the benefit of the sincere inquirer, I will state that the Lord has given us a clear-cut definition of what constitutes *long hair*, in the stipulations for a Nazarite which included long hair. The passages that state the law on it are Numbers 6: 5; Judges 13: 5; 1 Samuel 1: 11. These all require that no razor is to be used on the head, hence by *long hair* the Lord means hair that is as long as nature makes it. If a man cuts any of it off he ceases to have long hair, and exposes his head to shame. By the same token, if a woman cuts any of her hair she also ceases to have long hair in the sense the apostle is using the term, and thus she does that which is a shame.

Verse 15. This verse is virtually explained in the preceding paragraph. It has the added thought that by having long hair, which nature teaches her that she should have, she is in a condition to observe also what custom has established in the time of the

epistle, namely, using that long hair as a veil when praying in man's presence.

Verse 16. This verse is often pounced upon by the quibblers, like a "drowning man grasping at a straw," in their desperate attempt to find some justification of women in their unnatural and unfeminine act of cutting their hair. I have never yet heard anyone who made a serious effort to show this passage to be related in the remotest degree to the issue at hand. *Any man* is from the one Greek word *τις*, which means any person or thing, indefinitely, and would apply to a woman as well as a man. *Contentious* is from *φιλονεικος*, which Thayer defines at this place, "fond of strife, contentious." No one would be contentious over anything that was not objectionable to another. It would have to be over something he wished to do that some other one did not want him to do. In the present case it could not be over short hair for women, for nobody was wanting that. Instead, verse 6 shows that there was common objection to that, which was a basis for one of Paul's arguments. The only thing in dispute was whether a woman should cover her face with her hair, or keep it away in a manner that would look as if it were *shorn*, a condition which Paul states would be a shame. Since no person was contending for short hair with women, the contention could not be over that. The point the apostle is making in this verse, is that the custom of all the other churches was for the women to veil their faces with their hair when praying in the presence of men.

Verse 17. In verse 2 the apostle told the brethren there were some things for which he would praise (commend) them. In the present verse there were some things for which he would not praise them, one of which was that their coming together was not for the better but for the worse.

Verse 18. The *divisions* in the church were over several subjects, but Paul is writing of a particular one in the rest of this chapter; and one that is very important because it pertains to the Lord's Supper. A report of the divisions in the church had come to Paul in some manner not stated. *Partly believe it* cannot apply to the degree of his belief, for a man either believes a report or he does not. The idea is that Paul believed the report to be true in regard to a part of the congregation, but that some of them dis-

approved of the divisions. The argument in the next verse justifies this conclusion.

Verse 19. *Must* is from *dei*, which Thayer defines, "it is necessary," and explains it to mean at this place, "necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end." Robinson's definition and explanation give virtually the same thought as Thayer's. It is clear the word means that heresies are necessary for a certain purpose, and that is stated to be, *that they which are approved may be made manifest among you*. This agrees with the conclusion expressed in the preceding paragraph, namely, that a part only of the congregation was guilty of the divisions among them, the faithful ones being "approved" by their opposition to the heresies. But this necessity for heresies should not encourage anyone to promote evil doctrines, for Jesus pronounces a woe on those who cause offences, even though He had just declared that it was impossible for them not to come (Luke 17: 1).

Verse 20. Having set forth some general principles concerning heresies in the foregoing verses, Paul comes to the special subject at hand, namely, the Lord's Supper in the course of their coming together. The Englishman's Greek New Testament renders the last clause, "it is not to eat the Lord's Supper." Of course Paul does not deny the Corinthians professed to come together for that purpose, but he means that under the circumstances what they did could not be rightly called so for reasons soon to be stated.

Verse 21. *Taketh before* means that such persons were so eager to eat that they did so before the others were ready. In the first years of the church it was a custom for the disciples to partake of a common meal before attending to the Lord's Supper. This was somewhat after the order of events occurring at the time Jesus established the Lord's Supper, namely, they had the passover first, then Jesus set forth his memorial supper next. These common meals are referred to in the New Testament as "feasts of charity" (Jude 12; 2 Peter 2: 13). In some way the Corinthians tried to blend the common meal with the Lord's Supper. That corrupted it and caused Paul to say they were not eating the Lord's Supper when they came together. *Drunken* is from *μεθυνο*, and primarily means to be intoxicated with drink. But it is used here as the opposite of *hungry*,

hence it is in the sense of being filled. Groves defines the word, "to be filled, plentifully fed," and it has that meaning in our verse. Those who *look before* their own supper would be filled, while the ones who waited—the "approved" ones whom Paul's word "partly" in verse 18 included—would still be hungry.

Verse 22. Some might claim they would become too hungry to wait until the rest were ready to eat. Paul tells all such that they should eat at home before coming to the assembly if their appetites were thus demanding gratification. But instead of doing that, they were abusing the purpose of the feasts of charity by their disorderly conduct. By such practices they *despised* (belittled or put to shame) the the public assembling place, and also embarrassed the poor, who are meant by the phrase *them that have not*. I shall quote Thayer's remarks about the feasts as they were related to the poor of the congregation: "AGAPAI, agapae, love-feasts, feasts expressing and fostering mutual love which used to be held by Christians before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and at which the poorer Christians mingled with the wealthier and partook in common with the rest of the food provided at the expense of the wealthy." Such disorderly conduct of the more prosperous brethren as Paul describes, would confuse the poorer ones and make them feel that they were not welcome to the public feasts of the congregation. This is one of the things for which the apostle said he would not praise them. The poorer sort of the brethren would not appreciate these free meals (feasts of charity) when they saw the corruption practiced by the wealthier classes, and the whole procedure thus made a mockery of the institution of the Lord's Supper, which is why Paul said when they came together they would not eat the supper.

Verse 23. The Corinthians had so corrupted the divine institution that the apostle thought it necessary to describe it to them again, just as he had delivered it to them when he was with them for so long (Acts 18: 1-11). The simple phrase *took bread* states all we need to know as to the article to be eaten in the Lord's Supper. In every place where it is referred to after the church was set up, it is mentioned by the simple word "bread" (Acts 2: 42; 20: 7; 1 Corinthians 10: 16; 11: 23; 27, 28). In all of these

places except our present chapter, the word is used independently of any consideration for the Jewish passover. Therefore, to insist on any particular *kind* of bread for the Lord's Supper is to be more specific than the Lord is.

Verse 24. *Break it*. The term is from the same original Greek word as "break" in Matthew 14: 19 and it has no more spiritual significance in one place than in the other. The only reason for breaking the bread is that more than one person may partake of it in decency. I have known instances where a group of disciples was so few in number that only one attendant (commonly but erroneously called "deacon") was used. Then if the one presiding at the table happened to forget about "breaking" the loaf in two pieces, it was thought a terrible mistake was made. Such a tradition shows that the real significance of the institution is overlooked almost as much as the Corinthians did it. Whether the one presiding breaks the bread (so as to place it on a number of plates), or the attendants break off a piece to serve to each participant, or he breaks it off himself, the bread is sure to be "broken," and that is all that is required. *My body, which is broken for you* is another expression that is misapplied. It is a common thing to hear the one "presiding" to quote this, then refer to the Roman spear that "broke" the body of Jesus after his death. The mechanical act of piercing His side, or even that of driving the nails through his hands and feet, was only a means to an end, namely, "to be shattered, as it were, by a violent death"—Thayer. Robinson says virtually the same thing. Had it been the Lord's will that Jesus be killed by a violent blow on the head but leaving the surface of the body intact, it would still have been true that his body was broken for us, in the sense the apostle uses the term. When Christians eat of this bread, they are to do so in remembrance of the "violent" death of Christ. It is significant that in Luke 22: 19 where the supper is being instituted, it is stated that the body of Jesus was "given" for his people, which agrees with the idea that the mechanical fact of the spear and nails was not necessary to the word "broken."

Verse 25. *After the same manner* is not a comparison to the form or performance in the procedure, for the phrase is from the same word as "likewise" in Luke 13: 3, and we know Jesus did not mean that all impentitent

sinner would perish just as the Galileans did. It means as if it said, "for the same purpose," etc. *Supped* is from the same Greek word as "supper" in Luke 22: 20; it means He took the cup after the passover supper was ended. *New testament in my blood*. In Hebrews 9: 16 Paul says that a testament requires the death of the testator. The beasts that were slain under the Mosaic system constituted the testator for that covenant, which is the reason they were slain. The New Testament (or covenant) also required the shedding of the blood of the Testator (who was Christ), hence we have the phrase italicized here. The expression *is my body* in the preceding verse, and in my blood in the present verse, are used with the meaning that they represent the body and blood of Christ. Partaking of the cup, like that of the bread, is for the same purpose, namely, to be *in remembrance* (a memorial) of Christ.

Verse 26. *Often* is not used in view of the frequency of the observance of the Lord's Supper, for Acts 20: 7 and 1 Corinthians 16: 1, 2 settles that question, and shows it is to be done once each week. The term means that each time the institution is observed it is for the one purpose, namely, to *show* ("proclaim publicly" — Thayer) *the Lord's death*. A common speech that may be heard at the table is as follows: "We now come to the Lord's Supper in which we will commemorate the death, burial and resurrection of Christ." Such a statement is not only unscriptural but is foolish. It is evident that anything that represents the death of Christ could not also represent his life. The life of all creatures is in the blood, and when the body and blood are separated, that body is bound to be dead. Likewise, when the guests see the fruit of the vine in one vessel, and the bread in another place on the table, it represents the separation of the body and blood, and in such a condition it "shows" or represents the *death* of Christ. *Till he come* signifies that the Lord's Supper is to be perpetuated until the end of the world.

Verse 27. The general character of the persons eating and drinking is not under consideration, but the manner or purpose of the act is the subject. (This will be enlarged upon in verse 29.) *Guilty of the body and blood* means to be guilty of sin against the body and blood of Christ.

Verse 28. *Examine himself*; this phrase is perverted many times. The

speaker will say, "I cannot examine you nor you me, for I do not know how you have been living." The way a brother "has been living" is not in this text, and such a remark shows that the one making it is in danger of condemnation himself. The manner or purpose of eating and drinking is the point. If a man asks himself why or for what purpose he is about to partake, he will be examining himself in the sense the apostle means. When he does this, and concludes it is for the purpose of showing the death of Christ, he is then ready to eat and drink worthily (an adverb and not an adjective).

Verse 29. *Discerning* is from *DIABRINO*, which Thayer defines at this place, "to separate, make a distinction, discriminate." The thought is that the participant should eat and drink with his mind on the body and blood of Christ, *remembering* that the two parts were separated and that He died for us. Unless this is done, the person partaking will bring condemnation upon himself. The Corinthians did not *distinguish* between the body of Christ and food for natural hunger. The same guilt may be brought upon us today without eating to satisfy our hunger. If we partake of the "emblems" while our mind is on some other subject instead of the death of Christ, such as our plans for the day, etc., we will be just as guilty as were the ones at Corinth. Sometimes disciples will be engaged in conversation at the time, and will partake of the bread and/or cup mechanically or as a habit only. When they do so they eat and drink damnation to themselves.

Verse 30. The question is asked at this verse whether it means physical or spiritual sickness, and my answer is that it includes both. In the first years of the church God sometimes inflicted physical punishment upon disciples, even to the extent of putting them to *sleep* (in death). (See the case of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5.) But the days of such demonstrations are over, while the guilt of corrupting the Lord's Supper is just as possible, and also just as deserving of being *judged* (condemned) as ever. Therefore, when disciples corrupt the holy ordinance, or commit any other violation of the Lord's spiritual law, it brings upon them the serious condition mentioned here unless they repent.

Verse 31. This verse states a principle that may have an application to

other subjects besides the one at hand with the Corinthians. Had they *examined* themselves as directed in verse 28, and then brought themselves under the necessary correction (judgment), it would not have been necessary for the Lord to judge them. Likewise, the New Testament today gives very positive instructions about the conduct of disciples, and they should be able even in themselves to decide between right and wrong. However, if they will not do so, it then becomes the duty of the rulers of the church to make the application for them, and administer such corrective discipline as needed.

Verse 32. In the days of miracles the judgment or punishment was administered directly by the Lord (verse 30). Today the correction has to be delivered by the church, and when it is done it is counted as coming from the Lord (chapter 5: 3, 4; 2 Corinthians 2: 10; 7: 11, 12).

Verse 33. *Tarry one for another.* This is another statement that is often perverted and made to mean that public services should not start until others arrive. Not only does such an application miss the thought intended by the apostle to be conveyed, but it violates other scripture. Romans 12: 11 forbids Christians being slothful or lazy in coming to the services. A soldier who fails to appear at the time he is told to receive the stain of AWOL, and the disciple who is late in arriving at the place of services deserves the same blot. The tarrying of our verse was to be done *after* the congregation was assembled, and it means not to *take before other* (verse 21) his supper, but to wait (tarry) until the others were ready to eat.

Verse 34. *If any man hunger* is explained by the comments on verse 22. It does not mean to rule out the observance of the feasts of charity, but only to correct the abuses of it by those who claimed to be too hungry to wait. *Come together to condemnation* is the same subject that is considered in verse 17. There were other items that needed to be set forth for their instruction, but the apostle thought it well to do that when he made his next journey to them (chapter 4: 18, 19).

1 CORINTHIANS 12

Verse 1. *Spiritual gifts.* The second word has been supplied because it has no separate one in the Greek. The first one is from PNEUMATIKOS, and Thayer explains that it is used both "in reference to things," and "in refer-

ence to persons." Paul says he wants the brethren to be informed on the subject, hence this and the next two chapters are written to show the truth concerning such matters; both as to spiritually-gifted men and their gifts. We learned at chapter 4: 6 that the church at Corinth was divided (in sentiment) over the men among them who possessed spiritual gifts. That contention was so serious that the apostle wrote chapters 12, 13 and 14 to discuss the subject. If this is overlooked, any attempt to explain the various parts of the three chapters will likely be a failure.

Verse 2. The Corinthians were Gentiles and worshipers of idols before they received the Gospel. Since the idols were dumb things, to be carried away with them or be devoted to such services was a proof of their spiritual blindness, and no such worshipers could exhibit any fruits of the Spirit.

Verse 3. There were many false teachers coming round in those days, claiming to possess supernatural knowledge. A test of their genuineness was their manner of referring to Jesus. If they pronounced any evil wish or prediction concerning Him, the Corinthians were to know that no such persons were speaking by the Spirit. *No man . . . but by the Holy Ghost.* The idolatrous teachers would never be induced by the dumb idols to confess Jesus; the Holy Ghost only would so inspire them.

Verse 4. Up to this place the remarks of the apostle are general, and are offered as a preparation for instruction on the true spiritual gifts and the disciples possessing them. The dissensions over the gifts previously mentioned are now the direct subject that Paul is considering. *Diversities of gifts . . . same Spirit.* The Corinthians were contending with each other over the comparative importance of their different gifts. The point Paul is making is that since there is but one Spirit, there could be no actual difference as to the value of the various gifts.

Verses 5, 6. *Administrations* and *operations* means the outworkings of the Spirit through the gifts; that all come from the same divine source.

Verse 7. A foreman over a crew of workers knows his men and which tool each can use to the best advantage for the whole project. Likewise, the Lord knows which spiritual gift each disciple can best use to the *profit* of the

Gospel work. Hence not all members of the church received the same gifts, and yet the diversities of the various assignments indicated no partiality as to the different brethren.

Verse 8. *Wisdom* and *knowledge* have much the same meaning in general use, but as spiritual gifts there is a difference. The second one means supernatural understanding, and the first means the special ability to teach it to others.

Verse 9. This *faith* is the miraculous kind such as Matthew 17: 20; 1 Corinthians 13: 2. Miraculous *healing* requires this gift of faith, but the phrase is used as a specification of it, in relieving persons of their physical ailments.

Verse 10. *Working of miracles* is more general, referring to any situation coming before the possessor of the gift that gives an opportunity for demonstration of spiritual power. This *prophecy* is the kind that enables the possessor to make predictions, not that described in chapter 14: 3. Without the complete Word it was not always possible to detect an evil spirit claiming to be of God, hence this *discerning of spirits* was possible through the gift. One man could speak in a foreign tongue, perhaps, but would not know its interpretation. Another man had the gift of interpreting such tongues. (See chapter 14: 27, 28.)

Verse 11. This is virtually the same as verse 7. *As he will* denotes as the Lord willed in directing the Spirit as it delivered the various gifts.

Verse 12. The human body is used to illustrate the church which is the body of Christ, with the unified work of spiritual gifts in that body.

Verse 13. The main thought running through these several verses is that there is only *one Spirit*, hence no difference should be made in the importance of the different gifts of the Spirit. Men would never have been taught the necessity of baptism had not the Spirit given the apostles and other inspired teachers the instruction to pass on to others. The point is that all people who have been baptized have received the instruction as a result of teaching from *one Spirit*.

Verse 14. It takes more than one member to constitute a human body.

Verses 15-17. This imaginary conversation between the different parts of the fleshly body, is written to show the point stated in verse 14. No one of the members of the body can take

the place of the other. This reasoning drawn from the fleshly body is continued through verse 26.

Verses 18-21. This paragraph is similar to the preceding one.

Verse 22. Every part of the human body is necessary and should not be removed by surgery, unless it becomes so diseased that medication will not cure it.

Verse 23. *Less honorable* is from *ATIMOS*, which Thayer defines "less esteem." The comparison is made to the feet and certain hidden parts of the body. According to Thayer, *more abundant honor* means more "preciousness or value." That is true, for the feet and other parts referred to are prized very highly, even though we seek to cover them as not being comely or attractive.

Verse 24. The *comely* or more attractive parts of the body, such as the face and hands, need no special attention, but are able to "take care of themselves."

Verse 25. God has so arranged the human body that there need be no *schisms* (lack of harmony) in the body. For instance, if the feet and hands opposed each other, a man would be constantly hindered in what he wished to do or where to go.

Verse 26. The unity of the members of the fleshly body is demonstrated by this very sympathy of one for the other. If a man injures his little finger, his entire being is concerned and caused to suffer, and the whole person will try to help the wounded member to get well. Of course the point is that the different members of the body of Christ should have a like sympathy for and interest in each other. The spiritual application of the comparison is made in Romans 12: 15.

Verse 27. The apostle now comes directly to the application of his illustration. The church is the body of Christ, and it is composed of disciples who are the members of the body. As the parts of the fleshly body act in harmony with each other, shown in the preceding verses, so the members of the body of Christ should be interested in each other and seek to assist them in the mutual service to Christ. If that is done, the dissensions over the different spiritually-gifted men and their gifts will be stopped.

Verse 28. Every function or office named in this verse still exists in the church except the spiritual gifts. In the early days of the Gospel age the

gifts were possessed by each of these officers or workers, in order that they might perform them the better. After the New Testament was completed the spiritual gifts ceased, and these officers and workers continue down to our time, but are working only with the guidance of the Gospel. The apostles are still in authority (Matthew 19: 28), doing their ruling or "judging" through the Gospel which they wrote and left with us. I shall next notice the various officers and functions mentioned in the verse.

First, secondarily, etc., denotes the numerical order in which they were set in the church, the comparative importance of them being denoted as we discuss them. The apostles were first in order because Jesus selected them before the church was set up, and they had charge of the work under the Lord when the divine institution began (Acts 2). They are also first in importance because their inspired word is the permanent law of Christ, and will be until the end of the world. These *prophets* were men who could make predictions by the aid of their spiritual gifts. *Miracles* and *healings* are explained at verses 9, 10. *Help* is from ANTILEPSIS, and Thayer explains it at this place to mean, "the ministrations of the deacons, who have care of the poor and sick." *Governments* is from KUBERNESIS, and Thayer's definition is, "a governing, government." We know from 1 Timothy 5: 17; Hebrews 13: 7, 17 and 1 Peter 5: 1, 2, that the elders are the rulers in the church, hence they are the ones meant by these *governments*. *Diversities of tongues* refers to the men who could speak with various foreign tongues by the help of spiritual gifts.

Verses 29, 30. *Are all apostles?*, etc. All of the questions in this paragraph should receive the negative answer; they are a summing up of the argument that Paul has been making regarding the relation of the different members of the church in the exercise of their spiritual gifts.

Verse 31. *Covet earnestly* is from ZELOO, which Thayer defines, "to desire earnestly, pursue." *Best* is from KREITTON, and Thayer defines it, "more useful, more serviceable." Paul has consistently taught that all of the gifts are important, and he has rebuked the brethren for their contending with each other over their respective gifts. We should conclude, therefore, that he here means their main interest should be in that which will do the church

the most good, and not which of them can exhibit the greatest power. *More excellent* way signifies that after all that can truly be said of the spiritual gifts, there is something that is more excellent; that will be shown in the next chapter.

1 CORINTHIANS 13

Verse 1. This chapter continues the same general subject that Paul has been considering, namely, the proper estimate to be placed on spiritual gifts. The Corinthians were so devoted to them that they had fallen to wrangling against each other. This spirit of dissension had caused them to slight the "more excellent way," which is prompted by *charity* or love. The apostle will devote this chapter to showing the emptiness of all their boasted gifts without having this greatest of all virtues, love for each other. *Sounding brass* and *tinkling cymbals* were used in both religious and military exercises. Smith's Bible Dictionary says they were used "as an accompaniment to other instruments." They would therefore not express any distinct note or other useful term in themselves. Paul compares that fact with the use of spiritual gifts when not connected with love.

Verse 2. Some of the most outstanding spiritual gifts are named in this verse for specimens, and even they are *nothing* in the absence of love for the brethren.

Verse 3. Bestowing goods upon the poor is possible even in the absence of what the King James translation calls *charity*, which shows the word does not mean what is commonly called "liberality." The word is from AGAPE, and the common version renders it "love" in 86 places. For further information, see the comments at Matthew 5: 43, volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 4. This and a number of verses following will show some things that charity (or love) will do, and also what it will not do. *Suffereth long* means it will cause a man to be patient and kind. *Envieth not* denotes that one man will not be grieved because some other one has a gift that he does not have. This teaching especially was needed by many of the Corinthians, because they were contending over the respective gifts of each other. To *vaunt* means to make a vain display, and it would be caused by being *puffed up*.

Verse 5. *Unseemly* means unbecomingly, and the Corinthians had certainly been guilty of such behaviour. *Seeketh not her own* signifies that one is not selfish. *Not easily provoked* denotes one who does not become angered at every little provocation. *Thinketh no evil*. If a man loves his brother, he will not hold him guilty of any evil if he has only his personal opinion as an evidence.

Verse 6. *Iniquity* is placed as an opposite of *truth*, which shows that one does not have to commit some outward act of wrongdoing to be guilty of iniquity; his rejoicing in it makes him guilty. Paul taught the same principle in Romans 1: 32.

Verse 7. *Beareth* means to cover or hide the faults of others as far as possible without encouraging sin. *Believeth* and *hopeth* must be understood in the light of other passages. Hebrews 11: 1 tells us that hope is based on faith, and Romans 10: 17 says that faith comes by hearing the word of God. The present phrase means that a man who has the love of God and the brethren in his heart, will believe all that God declares. *Endureth* denotes a willingness to remain faithful throughout all trials.

Verse 8. *Charity* (or love) *never faileth*. A part of Thayer's definition of the original for *faileth* is, "to perish," which means that it will cease to be. That is not true of love, for it will never cease to be, even after the spiritual gifts mentioned in this verse cease to be.

Verse 9. *In part* is said in view of the temporary use and purpose of the spiritual gifts. While the church had such helps only, the knowledge of spiritual things was but partial.

Verse 10. *That which is perfect* (complete) means the completed New Testament, called "the perfect law of liberty" in James 1: 25. When that was given to the church, the temporary and partial information derived through the spiritual gifts was to be no longer necessary.

Verse 11. The illustrations in this and the next verse are to show the difference between the time when the church had to depend on spiritual gifts, and when it would have the complete New Testament. The contrast is likened to the immature activities of a child as against those of a man.

Verse 12. The *glass* means a mirror which was made of polished metal in

old times. Seeing a thing as it is reflected against one of these plates is compared to the knowledge attained through spiritual gifts. Seeing the things directly or *face to face*, is compared to the full and direct knowledge to be attained through the New Testament. *Know as I am known*. This is the text usually cited by advocates of "future recognition," meaning that we shall "know each other in Heaven." Of course that has to mean knowing others as we know them now; and that requires that we will be "as" we are now, or the "recognition" will be impossible. The theory is Sadducean, infidel, and a debasing of Heaven. It is Sadducean in that it implies a continuance of marriage as the Sadducees contended. It is infidel in that it contradicts 1 Corinthians 15: 50, which says flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, yet which must occur if we are going to be "as we are now." It debases Heaven in that it puts the joys of that eternal place on the basis of fleshly relationship. We know such is the motive for the theory, for its advocates will say, "I would not be happy in Heaven if I did not know my loved ones." Such remarks mean that human beings know better what will be necessary for happiness in that world than does the Lord.

This passage has nothing to do with conditions after this world is ended. It is an item in the same argument Paul has been making since the beginning of chapter 12, namely, the use and comparative importance of spiritual gifts. Before the New Testament was completed, the church had to rely on the spiritually-gifted men and their gifts for information to a great extent. These men could not always be speaking, nor could they be in evidence in every place, due to the many handicaps of human life. As a consequence, some disciples would have knowledge of spiritual matters that others would not. "But when that which was perfect was come" (the complete New Testament), all would have equal chance for such knowledge. The words *know* and *known* are from *EPIGINOSKO*, which Thayer defines, "to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know thoroughly; to know accurately, know well." Of course this knowledge pertains to our spiritual relationship in the church. On that subject we may "know as we are known," since all members of the body have equal access to the full information offered in the New Testament. Personal recognition is not being considered.

Verse 13. *Now abideth* signifies that after the complete New Testament has been produced — after the spiritual gifts have ceased, there will still be *faith, hope and charity* (or love). That is because the Christian life will always need such graces. *Faith* (which is produced by hearing the word of God) will be necessary to guide the disciple of the Lord aright, and *hope* will be needed to urge him that through perseverance he may gain the reward at last. *Charity* is the greatest of these three, because faith will be changed to sight, and hope will give place to actual possession, after this life is ended. But love is eternal and will exist on into the life with God in Heaven.

1 CORINTHIANS 14

Verse 1. The reader should keep in mind that the subject of the preceding two chapters and the present one, is the spiritual gifts that were possessed by disciples in the first years of the church. Paul is showing the proper purpose and use of the gifts, and is trying to correct the many abuses that had crept into the church in Corinth in the exercise of them. This chapter, therefore, was not written for information concerning "the duties and privileges of women in the church," as it is so frequently claimed. Such a use of the chapter is a perversion of it, for it has no connection with that subject. Instead, it has to do with the conduct of the church when assembled, showing the proper procedure in the exercise of spiritual gifts. *Follow after charity* is in line with the preceding chapter which shows that charity is the greatest of all graces. If it had been in effect through all of their proceedings, the abuses would not have occurred which the apostle is trying to correct. *Rather . . . prophesy*, because it is "more serviceable" as was stated in chapter 12: 31.

Verse 2. Speaking with tongues manifests miraculous power, but it does not contribute as much benefit to the brethren as does the gift of prophesying, when the latter is done after the manner described in the next verse.

Verse 3. This verse gives the practical form of prophesying, that which edifies, exhorts and comforts men.

Verse 4. Being the possessor of the gift of tongues, this man will be benefited by its use, but the church as a whole would not be benefited as it is by prophesying.

Verse 5. Paul did not begrudge any man his possession of the gift of tongues, and he was not conducting the present discussion from that motive. He had a practical reason, however, for preferring the gift of prophesying, namely, it edifies the church (verse 4). *Except he interpret*. I believe this is correctly translated, and hence that at least some men were given two gifts, that of speaking in a foreign tongue, and also of interpreting it; otherwise he could not "edify himself" (verse 4). Verses 13, 14 also indicates that the same man may possess both gifts.

Verse 6. *If I come*. The apostle uses himself only as an example as if he said, "suppose I come," etc. To speak with tongues would not profit the church unless they were so used as to bestow upon it some of the following results. *Revelation* means a communication of some new truth; *knowledge* denotes the supernatural kind that had not been previously recorded; *prophesying* refers to the kind described in verse 3; *doctrine* means teaching in general.

Verse 7. *Without life, giving sound*, means things that do not have life yet that give off sounds, such as the *pipe or harp*. *Give a distinction*. These instruments should be so used as to conform to some accepted code, else they would mean nothing to a hearer. The blasts of a locomotive would mean nothing to railroad men, if they were not made according to the code in use by the company.

Verse 8. The same illustration is used in Numbers 10: 1-9, where a non-living trumpet is used as a signal device. Certain blasts were to indicate a corresponding action. If the "code" was ignored, the soldier would not know whether to line up for action or remain in his tent.

Verse 9. Paul makes the application of his illustration in this verse. He means for them to make such a use of their gift of tongues as will contribute beneficial information to the hearers.

Verse 10. *Voices* is from the Greek word *PHONE*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "speech, i. e., a language tongue." It is true that several different forms of language are in use in the world, and each has its own significance according to the vocabulary of the people speaking with it.

Verse 11. But unless the hearer knows the meaning of the word when

it is spoken to him, he will receive no exchange of thought from the speaker. Barbarian is from BARBAROS, and Thayer's definition in this passage is as follows: "One who speaks a foreign or strange language which is not understood by another." Hence the word does not necessarily mean a term of reproach in the New Testament. But when used with regard to language between different people, it does always mean they are barbarians to each other, if there is not a mutual understanding of the speech that it uttered.

Verse 12. The desire to *excel* merely from the motive of rivalry over others is wrong. The word in this verse is in the intransitive form, and is defined by Thayer "to abound in." The thought is that each member of the congregation should wish to abound in that gift that would best edify the church.

Verse 13. *Wherefore* means a conclusion in line with the exhortation in the preceding verse. *Pray that he may interpret* is commented upon at verse 5, regarding the possession of two gifts by the same man.

Verse 14. *My spirit* refers to the spiritual gift possessed by the one who is praying, while *my understanding* pertains to the one hearing the prayer. If a man prays with an unknown tongue, the hearer who does not understand that tongue will not get any benefit from the prayer.

Verse 15. The first half of this verse is explained in the preceding one. The second half is generally misapplied today. A song leader will arise before the congregation and try to get it in condition for some good singing. He will probably tell the people to wake up and sing as if they meant it, then remind them that Paul said to "sing with the spirit and with the understanding," as if he was conducting a "pep meeting." He may continue his erroneous use of the passage by telling them to study the words of the song so as to understand what they are singing, else they could not "sing with the understanding as Paul commands."

The passage as it reads and is quoted did not apply to congregational singing in Paul's day even, much less does it so apply today. It was a part of the exercise of miraculous gifts, and the spirit that is named is the Holy Spirit, given to Christians in such measure that they could speak and sing with words that had not yet been revealed to others. In selecting his words, the

singer was instructed to use those that the *audience* (not himself only) could understand. The term "my understanding" has reference to the ability of the hearer to understand what he hears.

Verse 16. To *bless* means to praise the Lord for his blessings. One man may be expressing thanks in the audience of disciples, which is supposed to represent the sentiments of the hearers. *Occupyeth the room* is a figurative expression that means one who is *unlearned*, or not educated in the various languages. It is also defined in the lexicons as a private person in contrast with one who is in public life. *Say amen*. The manner of Paul's question implies that it was taken for granted the audience would use this word after the public prayer of one speaker, thus making his sentiments their own. Doubtless the Lord expects the disciples to do the same thing after a public prayer today. No one can pray with a spiritual gift now, but all should express their prayers in such a manner that the congregation may hear and understand them. If a man mumbles a prayer in an undertone, or drops his chin upon his chest, it will make it impossible for others to know what he says, and hence an "amen" after such a prayer would be as unscriptural as the prayer. I never say amen to a prayer unless I have heard every word of it, and also believe it was a scriptural prayer.

Verse 17. A prayer uttered in a foreign tongue could be well formed, but it would not edify the unlearned man.

Verse 18. Being an apostle, Paul could speak in a multitude of tongues, which was a necessary qualification for one who was to preach the Gospel in various parts of the world. He was grateful for the gift, but also was considerate of the church in the exercise of it in any established congregation.

Verse 19. *My understanding* means the hearers could understand his words (verse 14). Paul's motive for preferring a few of these words to ten thousand of the others was an unselfish one; it was because it would give more teaching to others.

Verse 20. The brethren at Corinth had behaved so foolishly over their spiritual gifts, the apostle likened them to children. He was willing for them to be as free from malice as children, but in *understanding* (activities of the mind) he wished them to be as men. They certainly had shown malice toward each other, when they had be-

come contentious among themselves over their spiritual gifts. It was like children quarrelling with each other over whose mechanical toy would do the best performances. No wonder Paul thought it necessary to give this subject three whole chapters, and parts of some others.

Verse 21. The quotation is from Isaiah 28: 11, 12, which shows that the term *the law* includes the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. The connection shows that Isaiah was writing about conditions just previous to the captivity of Israel by the heathen. Israel had refused to listen to the law of the Lord even when it was spoken to them in their own tongue. Hence He said he would cast them into the midst of a nation speaking a tongue foreign to the people of Israel. Therefore, the use of tongues was not primarily for the purpose of instruction to believers, but as an evidence to unbelievers, to convince them of the existence of supernatural power. In view of this truth, Paul makes the point that the brethren made a mistake in trying to impose their gift of tongues onto the whole church to the extent they were doing.

Verse 22. On the basis of the preceding verse, the brethren should give the use of tongues a comparatively small consideration in the assembly, and make greater use of prophesying since it would edify the church.

Verse 23. We are sure the Bible does not contradict itself; but when the language seems that it does so, there is always a reasonable explanation possible. Verse 22 says tongues are a sign for the benefit of unbelievers, while the present verse says that tongues will cause them to regard the church as a group of madmen. The word *unlearned* is from *IDIOTES*, and Thayer's definition in this verse is one who is "not a prophet; destitute of the gift of tongues." The key to the question is in the word *all*, for an unbeliever would not require that a whole group in an assembly be able to speak in a foreign tongue to be convinced of the presence of supernatural power; one or two would be sufficient. Therefore, if the whole group did so, it would naturally seem to this "outsider" that the crowd was beside itself.

Verse 24. *All* is the key word again, for it is applied to *prophesying* which was the gift that imparted the most edification or instruction. *Convinced* and *judged* are used in virtually the same sense, meaning that the informa-

tion imparted by this general display of the gift of prophecy, would have a beneficial influence upon this man who was previously an unbeliever.

Verse 25. *Secrets of his heart* are the thoughts produced by the edifying prophesying just heard. See the note at Matthew 2: 2 for the meaning of *worship*.

Verse 26. *How is it then* is an introductory expression, as if the apostle had said, "How about it, brethren?" *Every one of you* means "each one of you has something to contribute to the services." The general program was approved, with the stipulation that it be so conducted as to edify the church. The items named were to be in the line of spiritual gifts. *Psalm* as used here is defined by Thayer, "a pious song." *Doctrine* is defined, "teaching, instruction." *Tongue* is from the Greek word *GLOSSA*, which occurs 50 times in the New Testament, and is always translated by this one word. It means the language of any people that is expressed by the natural tongue. *Revelation* is from a word that means a making known some truth that was hitherto not known. *Interpretation* denotes an explaining of a foreign word or sentence that has been spoken by some other person.

Verse 27. *Man* in this verse and the pronoun in the next being singular, indicates the terms *two* and *three* refer to the number of words or sentences that were to be spoken in any given assembling. *By course* means he should utter them in turn with the interpreter. That is, he should speak one of the words or sentences and then let the other man interpret it. Next speak another word and let the other interpret, and after the third word or sentence, he should cease his speaking.

Verse 28. The speaker in tongues was subject to a further restriction, namely, that there be an interpreter present. If none were in the assembly then he was to keep *silence*, and the word is from the very same Greek original as the one in verse 34. So here is an instance where even a *man* was to keep silence, a truth that is ignored by the extremists on the "woman question."

Verse 29. The prophets were a preference as to the gifted men (verses 1, 2), hence the apostle is not as specific in his restrictions on them as he is about the speaker with tongues, where he adds the words *at the most* (verse

27). Two or three would be sufficient for any one gathering, and others were to *judge* or discern the meaning of their words.

Verse 30. Verse 26 shows that certain ones might come into an assembly with a communication to be offered to the church. After coming together, however, the Lord might see fit to make a special revelation to another. In that case the first one was to give way to the one receiving the later revelation.

Verse 31. All of the men who had the gift of prophecy were to be given opportunity to speak in their turn, since prophesying was so highly esteemed (verses 1, 2), so that all might be comforted.

Verse 32. *Spirits of the prophets* means the spiritual gifts that they possessed. These men were not compelled to speak unless they so willed, hence there would be no excuse for their being disorderly in the exercise of the gift.

Verse 33. *God is not the author of confusion.* This is a reason for the foregoing instructions about the proper conduct of the prophets, as well as of other men with spiritual gifts. *As in all churches of the saints.* I see no importance in the question whether this phrase belongs with the present verse, or should be attached to verse 34. The point in both verses (as it has been throughout the chapter), is to have the exercises of the assembly so conducted as to edify the church in an orderly way. The Lord desired such a result in all of the congregations but the one in Corinth seemed to be in special need of the instruction.

Verse 34. If the reader has carefully followed the teaching that has been offered from chapter 12: 1 down to this verse, he will see that it has nothing to do with the subject of "woman's duties and privileges in the church," as that is considered today. The extremists on that question will ignore all of the context, and settle upon this one passage, because they think it justifies their unholy restrictions against a part of the body of Christ. Such a use of the verse is as gross a perversion as any sectarian ever committed against Acts 2: 38.

This verse is just another item in the attempt of Paul to restore order in the public assembly when exercising the spiritual gifts. Notice it says *your women*, which shows it was not said to women in general, but to the wives

of the gifted men. The perversionists try to dodge this by saying the pronoun refers to the church as a whole. That will not do for the next verse shows these women had husbands, so the attempt at perversion fails again. To say this verse is of general application and in force today, makes it contradict Ephesians 5: 19, where the word "speak" is from the same Greek term as the one in our verse. Yet no one denies that the women have the right to sing, and when they do they are "speaking" according to the apostle's command. *Obedience* is from a word that denotes "subjection," and it does not always require that any specific command has been given. The wives of the gifted men were to be in subjection in that they remain quiet while their husbands were performing their spiritual gifts.

Verse 35. Since it is the wives of gifted men who were commanded to keep silence, it follows that the things they might wish to learn about are those pertaining to the gifts of their husbands; wish to know more details about them. Otherwise they could not hope to obtain such information even at home. Furthermore, we know it does not pertain to information in general, for that was supposed to be obtained in the assembly (verses 3, 5, 12, 19).

Verse 36. The Corinthians were so puffed up over their spiritual gifts, that it made them vain enough to regard themselves as a source of divine knowledge. The key to this verse is in the words *from* and *unto*. The word of God had not come out from them—had not originated with them. Instead, all the knowledge they possessed had been bestowed by the Lord, hence they had no ground for boasting.

Verse 37. No spiritual gift is more important nor based on any more authority than the writings of an apostle. If the claimants for spiritual gifts were genuine, they would acknowledge the writings of Paul to be divine commandments. Furthermore, if they go that far, they will be required by the rule of consistency to bring their conduct under the teaching of the same.

Verse 38. No one is ever asked to acknowledge anything that he does not profess to know. The evidences in support of Paul's claim for his writings were so weighty, that everyone should have been in position to recognize them. Therefore, if some man claimed that he knew nothing about what Paul was saying—had nothing to

acknowledge, it would be prompted by stubborn indifference. In that case the apostle said *let him be ignorant*, which means that he was not worthy of further attention.

Verse 39. *Covet* is from ZELOO, and Thayer defines it, "to desire earnestly." Among the different spiritual gifts, that of prophesying was the one which Paul preferred because it was the more serviceable (verses 3, 19), hence he advised the brethren to desire it. At the same time he instructed them not to slight the other gifts.

Verse 40. This verse is the grand conclusion of the reasoning that Paul has been offering throughout the chapter. *Decently* is from a word that Thayer defines, "in a seemly [becoming] manner." *In order* means for the various items of their services to be done at the proper time, or in a systematic manner so as not to create confusion. (See verse 33.)

1 Corinthians 15

General remarks. This chapter offers a complete change of subject matter from that of the preceding three chapters, and takes up a question involving some of the philosophy of the Greeks. Corinth was one of the chief cities of Greece, and the church in that city was somewhat tinged with the philosophy of that nation; that accounts for much of the teaching in chapter 2. The Greeks would not have very much interest in any proposition that did not measure up to their ideas of reasonable philosophy. This fact was displayed in Acts 17: 31, 32, where Paul introduced the doctrine of the resurrection, which seemed to the people of Athens as a foolish notion. That same attitude toward the resurrection had crept into the church at Corinth, which called forth the matter contained in this chapter. The false teachers who were agitating that, professed to be believers in Christ, yet denied the resurrection of the body. Paul shows in this chapter that it is inconsistent to profess faith in Christ as the risen Lord, yet deny the truth of the rising of His disciples from the dead. He shows that if one has been raised, we must believe that the other will be also.

Verse 1. *Moreover* is from the little Greek word *DE*, and in the King James Version it has been rendered by *and*, but, even, for, further, howbeit, nevertheless, now, then, therefore and others. A part of Robinson's explana-

tion of the word is that "it marks a transition [change] to something else." Thayer's description of the word is virtually the same. Paul uses it because he is passing from the subject of spiritual gifts to that of the resurrection. *I declare* is from *GNORIZO*, which Thayer defines, "to make known," and at our verse he explains it to mean, "to recall to one's mind, as though what is made known had escaped him." Robinson's explanation is, "by way of putting again in mind." These definitions are appropriate, because the apostle had previously preached the Gospel to the Corinthians (Acts 18: 1-11). It was hence not a new subject, for they had *received* it and professed to *stand* upon it as the foundation of their faith. But some of them seemed to have forgotten it through the effect of the philosophy described in the "general remarks" above.

Verse 2. The mere believing of the Gospel will not save a person, but he must also *keep in memory* the truths concerning it. The phrase is from *KATECHO*, which Thayer defines, "to hold fast, keep secure, keep firm possession of." But all of these considerations would be *in vain*, according to the teaching of some persons at Corinth. (See verses 13, 14.) It is the purpose of the apostle to show them the logical conclusion that must follow if such a proposition is established, namely, *that there is no resurrection of the dead* (verse 12). By this they meant there would be no future resurrection of the body. They tried to teach some vague kind of theory that would make the word "resurrection" mean only a spiritual event, and that all of the facts concerning a raising of the body had already occurred—that it was "past already" (2 Timothy 2: 18). In that passage Paul declares that such a doctrine was overthrowing the faith of some, which is equivalent to the phrase in our present verse, namely, *believed in vain*. Having advanced the serious conclusion necessarily following their false teaching, Paul repeats the facts of the Gospel to which he referred in verse 1.

Verse 3. Paul did not originate the story of the Gospel; in Galatians 1: 12 he says he was taught it by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The mere death of Christ was not sufficient, for other men had died and even been resurrected. But Jesus is the only man who ever died *for our sins*. *According to the scriptures* means the Old

Testament. One outstanding portion is Isaiah 53, particularly verses 4, 5, 8 and 10.

Verse 4. The burial of Christ was not directly connected with our salvation, for had He not revived, whether in a grave or outside, no one would have been saved. But Jesus had predicted that he would spend three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and his burial made that prediction true. *Third day according to the scriptures.* Psalms 16: 10 is quoted by Peter in Acts 2: 27, 31, and Paul quotes it in Acts 13: 35. This is the only passage in the Old Testament that directly predicts the resurrection of Christ, and yet it says nothing of the "third day," although Paul so applies it. The conclusion is to be seen by considering John 11: 39 which shows that by the fourth day a body would begin to "see corruption." Jesus must not remain dead that long for his body was not to undergo that change. And yet it must remain the three days in order to fulfill the prediction in comparison with the three days and three nights that Jonah was in the body of a whale.

Verse 5. A few verses are given to cite the evidences of the bodily resurrection of Christ. Cephas was another name for Peter (John 1: 40-42). He was one of *the twelve*, but is mentioned separately because he saw Jesus at a time when he was not with the rest of the apostles.

Verse 6. There is no other direct mention of these *five hundred brethren*, but Matthew 26: 32 and 28: 7, 10, 16 indicates that Jesus saw many of his disciples in Galilee after his resurrection. For additional comments on this subject, see those at Acts 1: 15 in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 7. This *James* was not one of the twelve apostles, but was the one named in Acts 15: 13 and Galatians 2: 9, and is the author of the epistle of James. *All the apostles* means the eleven (Judas having killed himself), and Luke 24: 33-36 gives the account of their seeing Him.

Verse 8. *Last of all.* From the time of Paul's journey to Damascus (Acts 9: 3-5 and 26: 16), no human being has seen Jesus that we know of. *One born out of due time* is from the Greek word ΕΚΤΡΟΜΑ, and Thayer defines it, "an abortion, abortive birth; an untimely birth." Paul uses the term to illustrate his feeling of unworthi-

ness to be called an apostle. Thayer's explanation of the word as the apostle uses it at this place is as follows: "Paul likens himself to an ΕΚΤΡΟΜΑ, and in verse 9 explains in what sense: that he is as inferior to the rest of the apostles as an immature birth comes short of a mature one, and is no more worthy of the name of an apostle than an abortion is of the name of a child."

Verse 9. This verse explains the feeling of inferiority that Paul expresses in the preceding verse. He specifies it to mean his record as a persecutor of the church of God. The extent of his persecution is indicated by the relief that his conversion brought to the churches throughout Palestine (Acts 9: 31).

Verse 10. The grace of God is his unmerited favor, and Paul attributed all of his good lot to that source. To show his appreciation for the favor, he labored more than any of the other apostles. But even then he considered the labor as the work of God, using the apostle as an instrument for the work.

Verses 11, 12. Having given proper credit for the work done under God, the apostle settles down upon the argument that is indicated in the beginning of the chapter. He will proceed to show the inconsistency between the professed faith of the Corinthians in the bodily resurrection of Christ, and their denial of a like event for those who die in Him.

Verse 13. This short verse states the major premise for the great argument that Paul intends to present. But the mere assertion of a basis for argument is not sufficient for the support of it, because that would be assuming the very point under discussion. The statement must be either self-evident, or be supported by vital facts or truths. In 1 Thessalonians 4: 14 Paul makes virtually the same statement as the one in this verse. The death and rising again of Jesus is there coupled with the assurance of the bringing of the dead in Christ "with him" from their state of death. Since the body of Jesus (as to its material) was like that of all other men, it follows that it would be as impossible or unreasonable to believe in the resurrection of His body as to expect the same thing of the bodies of other men. Such a proposition is self-evident and needs no further evidence. Reasoning the other direc-

tion, therefore, if philosophy denies the bodily resurrection of men in general, then it must deny that of Christ, and hence the professed basis of the faith of the Corinthians, namely, the bodily resurrection of Christ, is disproved, and the major premise of Paul's great argument is established.

Verse 14. Having presented an unquestionable basis regarding the question in dispute, Paul will devote a number of verses showing some of the logical conclusions that must follow, thereby proving to the brethren that their whole program of religious activities and hope is fundamentally wrong. One conclusion is that the preaching of the apostles was in vain or of no avail. That necessarily would mean that their faith was vain, since it was based on the facts that had been preached to them. Reference is made to this "vain" belief in verse 2.

Verse 15. The Corinthian brethren would not intend to accuse the apostles of fraud, yet their theory about the resurrection implied that the preachers were guilty of it. They had preached that Christ was raised from the dead, but Paul has shown that it was false according to the teaching held at Corinth.

Verses 16, 17. This paragraph is covered by comments over verses 2, 3, 13, 14.

Verse 18. The Corinthians had never been taught that eternal salvation was to be actually possessed before the end of the world. But if the dead were never to be raised, then their bodies would be destroyed along with that of the earth. That is why Paul says that those who had died in the Lord were *perished*, which means they had come to their end.

Verse 19. Another conclusion following this false theory advocated by some people at Corinth, is that all benefits to be had from being in Christ must be had in this life—nothing to be received after death. In that case Christians are the most miserable of all men, because they must be denied the pleasures of the world and also undergo many persecutions in behalf of their faith, with no prospect of any joys beyond the grave. While this was true especially of the apostles because of their direct contact with the enemy, it was and is still true of all faithful disciples of Christ. It is true that Christians should be the happiest people on earth, but that is because of

their hope of endless bliss in the life to come.

Verse 20. Taking for granted he has proved his point, Paul reaffirms the third fact of the Gospel, namely, that Christ arose *from the dead*. The italicized words are significant in that they specify from what Jesus arose. He previously arose to the cross (John 12: 32, 33), and arose from earth to Heaven, but those facts were not in dispute; that from the dead was. The body is the only part of Christ or any other man that dies, hence if the body is not to be raised from the grave, then there will be no resurrection at all. Paul has shown the awful conclusions made necessary by the theory that there is to be no resurrection of the dead. He will next show the glorious conclusions made possible by the truth of the resurrection. The first one is that Christ has become the *firstfruits of them that slept*; that is, he was the first person to rise from the dead to die no more. For detailed comments on this subject, see those on Romans 8: 29, in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 21. Adam was the first man, and after joining with his wife in eating of the forbidden fruit, they were both driven out of the garden and permanently prevented from re-entering it. That cut them and all of their descendants off from the tree of life, so that all had to die whenever their bodies failed through disease or other causes. But none of Adam's descendants were to blame for that condition, hence God arranged it so that through another man's resurrection they could all be raised from the dead without any conditions on their part.

Verse 22. This verse specifies the two men of the preceding verse to be Adam and Christ. The latter is called a man because he was given a body (Hebrews 10: 5) that was like that of other men, in that it was fleshly and was subject to death. That made it possible for Him to die and be raised again, thereby opening the gates of death to all men to come therefrom.

Verse 23. The literal resurrection from the grave will come to all men whether they are good or bad, since they are not responsible for their bodily death. However, that experience is all that mankind in general will receive unconditionally from the resurrection of Christ. What will come to them after the resurrection depends

on how they lived on earth (Daniel 12: 2; John 5: 28, 29). This is why Paul makes the assertion of the words *every man in his own order*; that is, *every man* means of those who are the Lord's own. Some of them were raised immediately after the resurrection of Christ among whom he was the *firstfruits*, then at His coming the others who are dead in Him will also be raised. While all mankind will be raised whether good or bad (verses 21, 22), yet from now on through the chapter the apostle will be writing only of those who are His and who have been "asleep in Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 4: 14).

Verse 24. *Then* is an adverb of time, and refers to the words "at his coming" in the preceding verse. This verse gives the information as to what is to come to end at the coming of Christ, namely, the kingdom or rule of Christ. Paul directly says that the kingdom with Christ as its head will end when He comes, and he will deliver it up to his Father. From this inspired prediction come two other important truths, namely, that the kingdom of Christ will have been in existence before His second coming, and also that he will not be a king after that coming. Therefore, the doctrine that the kingdom is still a thing of the future, and that He will set up a thousand year reign when he comes is false.

Verses 25, 26. When Jesus came from the dead to die no more, he annulled death or gave it the "death stroke" (2 Timothy 1: 10). However, not until every human being has been brought back to life, will it be a fact that death is destroyed; Jesus must be king until the great event is accomplished. This does not contradict the statement that He will give up his kingdom "at his coming," for all of the mentioned events, the coming of Jesus, the resurrection of the dead and the transfer of the kingdom to his Father, will take place "in a moment" (verse 52). After the dead have all been raised to die no more (as to bodily death), the triumph will be complete, and Jesus will then be qualified to relinquish the kingdom to God who shall continue to reign endlessly, thus putting the final fulfillment to the prediction that the kingdom of "the God of Heaven" shall "stand for ever" (Daniel 2: 44).

Verse 27. The pronouns stand for God and his Son. God has put all things under the feet of Christ except

himself. Jesus declared this fact in Matthew 28: 18, and it was on that basis that He gave to his apostles the Great Commission.

Verse 28. Eliminating the pronouns, this verse means that after the Son has brought all things under subjection, then that Son will become subject unto God the Father. The grand motive for this consummation is *that God may be all in all*.

Verse 29. *What shall they do*. The pronoun is in the third person, while Paul is writing to the church in general as in the second person. This shows that not all persons in the Corinthian church were practicing this baptism, even as not all were denying the resurrection, as is indicated by the words "how say some among you" (verse 12). This item must not be overlooked in considering this verse, for any professed explanation of it that would apply to all Christians in general would necessarily be wrong. The word *for* is from HUPER and Thayer defines it at this place, "in the place of, instead of." I shall quote Moffatt's translation of this verse: "Otherwise, if there is no such thing as a resurrection, what is the meaning of people getting baptized on behalf of their dead? If dead men do not rise at all, why do people get baptized on their behalf?" Not all of the brethren in Corinth were practicing this inconsistency of being baptized on behalf of their dead, neither were all of them denying the resurrection (verse 12). But Paul considered it necessary to notice them in his epistle to the whole church, even as he deemed it worth while to notice the group that was practicing this "proxy" baptism. The apostle does not endorse the foolish practice, but brings it up to expose their inconsistency.

Verse 30. *Stand in jeopardy* means to be in danger of death from the enemies of Christ. All Christians and especially the apostles were constantly being persecuted (verse 19), some of them even unto death. How foolish, then, to cling to a profession that threatens one with death if there is to be no resurrection.

Verse 31. *I die daily* is figurative, meaning that Paul was daily exposed to the danger of death because of his service to Christ.

Verse 32. *I have fought with beasts*. These words are all from the one Greek word *theriomacheo*, and Thayer defines it, "to fight with wild beasts."

I believe this was a literal experience of Paul and shall state my reasons. We know it was an action that endangered the physical life of the participant, else Paul would not have connected it with the resurrection in his reasoning. It is certain that he has the same event in mind in 2 Corinthians 1: 8-10, where he relates that he had "despaired even of life." He did not know whether the Lord was ready to release his faithful apostle from his labors through this event, hence he was willing to do his part in the combat with the beasts, trusting in God to help him overcome the beasts if He so willed. Or, if that was not the case, he would meet his fate with his trust in God "which raiseth the dead." Furthermore, had it been vicious men who attacked him, he would not have "resisted the evil" (Matthew 5: 39), but would have submitted to his fate as he did when he was subjected to other threatening brutalities. *Let us eat and drink* is said as representing all the fleshly pleasures of this life. If there is no life beyond the grave, there would be no reason for denying ourselves any of the fleshly pleasures of this world.

Verse 33. The original for *evil communications* is translated "bad company" by James Macknight, and Thayer's lexicon agrees with it. Thayer defines the original of *man-ners*, "custom, usage, morals, character." We have seen that not all of the brethren at Corinth were advocating this evil doctrine concerning the resurrection. This verse is a warning against others having company with such bad teachers, lest they also be drawn into the heresy. If a man does not believe that he will live again, it is logical that he would be tempted to engage in that which would give him fleshly pleasure, and hence his otherwise good practices would become corrupted.

Verse 34. This is a further warning against being led into the sin of these false teachers. Paul attributes their evil doctrine to ignorance of God, just as Christ charged the Sadducees on the same subject, that of the resurrection (Matthew 22: 23-29). The apostle considers it a shame that some of the Corinthians were so ignorant of the wisdom and power of God.

Verse 35. When advocates of error cannot offer a just defense of their own position, nor show an honest objection to that of their opponent, it is often a trick of theirs to pose a

quibbling question which they think will puzzle him. As if a man is required logically to account for all the apparent difficulties that his position may suggest. Nothing could be farther from the truth, nor from the universal practice of reasonable men in accepting a conclusion that has been shown to be fundamentally sound, notwithstanding any incidental items that cannot be explained. Such a subterfuge as herein described was resorted to by the promoters of the heresy that Paul was exposing, when they asked *with what body do they [the dead] come?* Even if Paul could not have answered such a question, that would not have proved that the dead could not come to life again.

Verse 36. *Fool* is from APHEON, and Thayer defines it, "senseless, foolish, stupid; without reflection or intelligence, acting rashly." It does not mean that the person does not have natural mental ability, for then he could not justly be censured. But he is one so devoted to his notion that he will not use his mind to consider other matters with which he is familiar, and which would meet his own quibble in the question at hand. Such a matter is the well known truth that a vegetable grain will never reproduce its kind unless it dies and mingles with the earth in which it was placed.

Verse 37. *Bare* is from GUMNOS, which literally means "naked." The Englishman's Greek New Testament uses the indefinite article "a" in connection with it, making the phrase read, "a bare grain." The verse means that a man puts a mere grain of any kind in the ground from which he expects a crop; not the grain just as he placed it in the soil. And when it dies and decomposes, it partakes of the materials around it and from them a new body is formed with added parts. And while it is another body in one sense, in another it is the same, for the new growth is produced out of the old seed or body. Paul uses this circumstance to illustrate the death and resurrection of the body of a faithful servant of Christ.

According to the theory of the ones in Corinth whose heresy Paul was exposing, and of all others today who say that our bodies will never come from the grave at the last day—according to them, the grain should just all remain in the ground, and in another spot of the earth the farmer would dig up some other grain and consider it as his new crop. No, the

bodies of the saints will all come forth, but they will be in another form which will be like that of Christ at his coming (Philippians 3: 21). *It may chance of wheat*, etc. Paul uses the wheat for his illustration, but the same reasoning would be true of any other grain.

Verse 38. The stock with its roots, leaves and fruit, is the new body that God is pleased to give to the original grain. Likewise, He will give to the body of the dead in Christ another form, that will be like the immortal body of his Son, possessed with the new harvest of eternal glory.

Verse 39. To show that it is in keeping with the works of God to have the body of a saint take on another form (although it is the same body), Paul refers his readers to other conditions in the creation, such as the different kinds of flesh.

Verse 40. He uses this as still another illustration of God's wisdom and power. *Celestial* means of the air or sky, *terrestrial* means pertaining to the earth.

Verse 41. The sun and other bodies in the universe all have their own peculiar form and glory, showing that the Creator is not limited in the number and kinds of bodies that He may create.

Verse 42. God's ability to create and change and otherwise manage all of His works has been shown by the preceding verses. The apostle now comes directly to the subject under discussion, the possibility and character of the resurrection. *The dead* is the antecedent of the pronoun *it*, which certainly proves beyond all question that it is the body that is to be resurrected, since it is the only part of man that ever dies literally. *Corruption* means to be subject to decay, and *incorruption* means the opposite.

Verse 43. *Dishonor* is not used in any moral sense, for the same kind of body was possessed by Jesus that Paul is writing about here. It means the state that would be subject to decomposition, which the body of Jesus had which was the reason he must not have remained dead more than three days and nights. *Raised in glory* means more than an existence that is never to end (the wicked will have that; Mark 9: 44, 46, 48), but a state in which the body will be given the same glorious form as that of Jesus in his present condition (Philippians

3: 21; 1 John 3: 2). *Weakness* and *power* are used for the same purpose as the preceding terms because they are opposites.

Verse 44. *Natural* and *spiritual* bodies are applied to the same thing, namely, the human body. But the first applies to it when it is *sown* (is placed in the grave), the second applies to it when it will be resurrected. The false teachers in Corinth, and all others today who deny the resurrection of the body, are disposed to ignore this verse. They say it is impossible for a material thing to be changed into an immaterial one, thus limiting the power of the Creator. Yet in the realm of nature as they must recognize it, there is an indisputable proof of changes virtually as great. For instance; the universe is divided into three distinct classes, namely, the mineral, the vegetable and the animal. The first is inorganic and the others are organic. Notwithstanding these independent and different existences, the inorganic mineral is absorbed into the vegetable, the vegetable is next absorbed and converted into the animal. If there is a Creator who can establish such laws of change within our own knowledge, why doubt His power to lift the animal to one more stage and convert it into a spiritual state? With God all things are possible that are right (Genesis 18: 14).

Verse 45. This statement is written in Genesis 2:7, and Paul calls Adam the first man. This refutes a theory of some visionary followers of a visionary false teacher, that a prior creation of man occurred to that recorded in Genesis. The *last Adam* is Christ according to Romans 5: 14, considered in connection with verse 22 here.

Verse 46. The first Adam did not give us a spiritual body, but instead it is one that was made subject to death and decay by being separated from the tree of life. After that came Christ who has the power to give a spiritual body to all His faithful followers.

Verse 47. This is virtually the same as the preceding verse.

Verse 48. This offers the same thought as that in verse 45.

Verse 49. All men whether good or bad receive their fleshly bodies from Adam. Likewise, all will be brought from the dead through the second Adam, whether good or bad as taught in verse 23. But in addition to this,

those who die in Christ will come from the dead with a *heavenly* body. To avoid a misunderstanding, let it be said that every human being regardless of conduct will be raised from the dead, and will continue to exist consciously without end. But only the righteous have been promised a body like that of Jesus. This should not confuse any person, for God is able to preserve the bodies of men continuously in whatever form He sees fit. Hence we read that the bodies of the unsaved will be cast into the lake of unquenchable fire, where their worm dieth not (Mark 9: 44, 46, 48). Those who say that the wicked will have immortal bodies are making an assertion without showing any proof.

Verse 50. *Inherit* is from KLERONOMEO, and Thayer defines it at this passage, "to partake of eternal salvation in the Messiah's kingdom." That is why those to be admitted into the eternal home in the next life must be changed from a body of flesh and blood, to one that is spiritual and like that of the Saviour. But such a change of body is not necessary with the unsaved, for there is no restriction as to what kind of beings can enter into the lake of fire and brimstone, since God is able to preserve all creatures cast therein in whatever state He sees fit.

Verse 51. *Mystery* is from MUSTERION, and Thayer's second definition is, "a hidden purpose or counsel; secret will." It does not necessarily mean something that is complicated or technical in its nature, but only that it has not been hitherto made known. *Sleep* is a figurative term that is defined in the lexicon, "to die." The same truth is stated in 1 Thessalonians 4: 14, 15. In each of these passages the connection shows Paul is speaking only of faithful disciples of Christ. We thus have the precious information that as long as the earth exists there will be those who are true to the Lord, and hence that saving faith "shall not perish from the earth." But though Christians living at the coming of Christ will not die, they will have to be *changed*, as the preceding verse states that a fleshly body cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Here is another point against the heresy that our bodies will not rise nor go to Heaven. These Christians will not die, hence their soul and body will never separate. Yet they are to be taken to be ever with the Lord as Paul asserts in the pas-

sage cited in 1 Thessalonians. And if God can and will convert the flesh and blood bodies of these living Christians into a spiritual form that will be fit to "ever be with the Lord," it is foolish to deny His power to effect the same change in the bodies of those who are "dead in Christ."

Verse 52. This verse is virtually the same as the preceding one, except that it adds the information that the resurrection of these saints and the changing of the living ones, will all take place at one instant.

Verse 53. The body is the only part of man that is *corruptible* and *mortal*, hence it is the body that is to be changed into an incorruptible and immortal form. This applies necessarily to both dead and living in Christ when he comes.

Verse 54. When the change just mentioned has occurred, a prediction in Isaiah 25: 8 will be fulfilled, namely, death is swallowed up in victory.

Verse 55. *Where is thy sting?*, etc., is a shout of triumph by the saints, as they rejoice in their victory over death.

Verse 56. *Sting of death* means that because of sin death threatened the human race with the *sting* of God's eternal wrath. The *strength* or effect of sin in bringing about this sting, is through the law against sin, which makes mankind responsible for their conduct.

Verse 57. *The victory* does not mean only the rising from the dead, for all mankind will have that regardless of conduct. But Paul has been writing about the faithful in Christ only from verse 23. Hence this victory means that one over the eternal results of individual sin, which is to be accomplished by faithful service to *our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Verse 58. The grand conclusion to the argument of the chapter is stated in this verse. Since death does not "end it all," but the faithful shall enjoy endless bliss in the world to come, even though death from whatever cause may intervene, they have great reason to press on in their service to Him. There is not much difference between *stedfast* and *unmoveable*. The first means to have a fixed purpose in life, the second means to be determined not to be moved from that purpose. *Abounding* is from PERISSEUO, which Thayer defines, "to be pre-eminent, to excel." Of course it means

for each Christian to excel himself—never to be satisfied with present attainments in the Lord's work, but ever striving to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3: 18).

1 Corinthians 16

Verse 1. A great dearth was predicted in Acts 11: 27-30, which came with such force that the disciples in Judea were thrown into a state of want. The condition lasted for some years and it is referred to in Romans 15: 26; 2 Corinthians 8: 1, 2; 9: 1, 2. Collections were made at various times and from different communities for the relief of the saints. It is concerning this matter that Paul is writing in this chapter. We have no record elsewhere of this order given to the churches in Galatia. *As I have given order* indicates that Paul gave those churches the same instructions on the subject that he wrote to the church in Corinth. Such a plan, therefore, should be regarded as the Lord's way for churches to raise money for carrying on His work.

Verse 2. The Englishman's Greek New Testament translates the first clause as follows: "Every first day of the week," and Thayer's explanation of the passage agrees with such a rendering. It was on this day the money was to be contributed for relief of the dearth-stricken saints, and since the disciples came together on that day for the Lord's supper (Acts 20: 7), it was a consideration of convenience on that part of Him to ordain this public collection to come at the same gathering. *Lay by him* has been an occasion for controversy as to where the members were to put their contribution. The pronoun *him* is not necessarily in the masculine gender in the original, but may properly be rendered "itself." *In store* is from THESAURIZO, and James MacKnight defines it, "putting it in the treasury." This critical information agrees with the reasoning Paul makes, namely, *that there be no gatherings when I come*. *Gatherings* is from the same Greek word as "collection" in the first verse. If the brethren were to put this contribution some place in their homes, then it would have to be collected when Paul came, and that is what he wished to avoid. Besides, the fact that they were told to do this on the same day the disciples came together, indicates it was to be a public collection. *As God hath prospered him*

means each one was to give according to his financial ability.

Verse 3. This advice is on the principle of Romans 12: 17 and 2 Corinthians 8: 18-21. A man who is entrusted with the property of another should wish to protect himself from any suspicions of dishonesty. I have known of cases where brethren who handled the money of a congregation, would resent all inquiries about the amount of funds in their hands. They would probably make some peevish remark such as, "If you think I am not honest, I will just turn the job over to someone else." There is something wrong with a brother who takes such an attitude, to say the least, and he lays himself open to just suspicion.

Verse 4. When Paul wrote this verse he did not know whether he would go to Jerusalem on this mission; Romans 15: 25-27 shows that he did.

Verse 5. Acts 20: 1-3 records this work of Paul in those Greek countries, in which he was threatened with bodily harm from the Jews.

Verse 6. *Bring me on my journey*. The first word is from PROEMPO, which Thayer defines, "To send before. To bring on the way, accompany or escort." He then explains the word to mean, "To set one forward, fit him out with the requisites [things required] for his journey." Hence when a church furnishes a preacher the things he needs to take him to his "field of labor," it is bringing that preacher on his journey to the Lord's work.

Verse 7. The apostle did not count on seeing the Corinthian brethren in the immediate future, but he was expecting to see them later, subject to the will of the Lord.

Verse 8. The Mosaic system was both religious and secular as a government. When Christ gave his institution to the world it was intended to supplant the old one for religious purposes (Romans 10: 4), but the Jews were still left the privilege of observing their national institutions, as long as they did not try to obtain spiritual benefits from them. That is why Paul planned to continue his work at Ephesus until Pentecost. That being one of the Jewish national feasts, the apostle wished to go to Jerusalem to attend it.

Verse 9. The first part of this verse is somewhat awkwardly constructed by the translators. The words *great*

and *effectual* are adjectives, modifying *door*, which means as if it said "a great and effectual [efficient] door." The fact of there being *many adversaries* was the reason Paul wished to remain at Ephesus as long as he could.

Verse 10. Chapter 4: 17 mentions the fact that Timotheus (Timothy) was told to go to Corinth. Paul asks the brethren to give him a friendly reception; as a recommendation in support of the request, the apostle tells them of the work of the Lord in which Timothy was engaged.

Verse 11. To *despise* means to belittle or treat with improper regard. Timothy was supposed to spend some time at Corinth and then return to Paul. He did this, for 2 Corinthians 1: 1 shows him joining in the salutation of that epistle.

Verse 12. Paul was an apostle while Apollos was only an unofficial preacher, yet he was not bound to make the journey to Corinth, for the apostle only *greatly desired* him to go. This indicates that Paul was not inclined to abuse his position by commanding another brother in matters where the legislation of God was not involved.

Verse 13. *Watch ye, stand fast* contains a twofold exhortation. To watch means to be alert for any challenge to their faith, and if it appears it should not be suffered to shake them from their faithfulness. *Quit you like men* is all from one Greek word which Thayer defines, "to show one's self a man, be brave." Such an attitude was necessary to meet the attacks of enemies.

Verse 14. *Charity* is from one of the Greek words that are usually translated "love." For a complete explanation of the word, see the notes on Matthew 5: 43 in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 15. *Achaia* is another name for Greece, the country in which Corinth was located. The baptism of Stephanas and his household is recorded in Chapter 1: 16. (See the notes on Romans 16: 5.) *Addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints* denotes they were devoted to the service in behalf of the saints or disciples.

Verse 16. Thayer explains the original for *submit* to mean, "to yield to one's admonition or advice." Hence it is not used in the sense of an authoritative command, for even a righteous household like that of Stephanas

would have no such authority. The statement of Paul is more in the nature of an advisory exhortation. It is always well to listen to the instructions or exhortations of faithful disciples of Christ. If they are scriptural they should be accepted on the principle of chapter 11: 1.

Verse 17. The lack on the part of the Corinthians, which was supplied by the coming of these brethren, was not in regard to material things as the next verse shows.

Verse 18. These brethren refreshed Paul by their coming to him, and by the message which they evidently brought from the Corinthian church (chapter 7: 1). Paul reasons that such brethren were a blessing wherever they dwelt, and therefore must have been so among the brethren at Corinth; he commends them to the favor of the church.

Verse 19. Revelation 1: 11 names seven churches in Asia, and Ephesus was one of them, where Paul was when he wrote this epistle (verse 8). *Salute* is from ASPAZOMAI, and in the King James Version it is translated by embrace 2 times, greet 15, salute 42, take leave of 1. Thayer defines it, "to salute one, greet, bid welcome, wish well to; pay one's respects to." He explains that it can be done either in person or by letter, and of course it was done by the latter method in the present case. Special mention is made of Aquila and Priscilla because they were outstanding disciples and had been closely associated with the apostle in the Lord's work (Acts 18: 1-3). They were at Corinth at the same time that Paul labored there, but later went to Ephesus and hence gave their salutation to the Corinthian church through the epistle that Paul was writing. *Church that is in their house*. In the first years of the church the brethren did not have regular church buildings in many places. That was due either to their financial limitations, or to the fact that the group in the community was too few in numbers to require it. In such cases the church had its meetings in private homes, and Aquila and Priscilla used their home for that purpose.

Verse 20. *All the brethren* would necessarily mean those in contact with Paul as he was writing the epistle, especially those engaged in public work for the church. *Holy kiss*. I have examined a number of dic-

tionaries and histories, as well as four lexicons, and they all represent the kiss to have been a form of salute between persons of both sexes, the custom dating back to ancient times. The instruction of the apostle, then, was not to start any new form of salutation, for that of the kiss was in existence centuries before he was born. The point is in the word *holy*, and it means for the salutation to be sincere and not hypocritical as was that of Judas.

Verse 21. Paul wrote some of his epistles with his own hand (Galatians 6: 11), others he dictated and then signed them to show that they were genuine.

Verse 22. *Anathema* means a curse, and it is pronounced upon a man who does not love Jesus. *Maranatha* is transferred into the King James Version without being translated. Thayer defines it, "our Lord cometh or will come." It denotes, therefore, that such a person will be accursed when the Lord comes. (See 2 Thessalonians 1: 7-9).

Verses 23, 24. Paul wishes that the grace (favor) of Jesus may be with the brethren at Corinth. As a secondary favor upon the church, the apostle assures it of his love for all in Christ Jesus. *Amen* is explained in the notes on Romans 16:24, volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary.

2 Corinthians 1

Verse 1. Much of this epistle will reflect the results of Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth. Because of the conditions in that church due to the habits of the Gentile citizens of the country, it will be well for the reader to reread the "general remarks" offered at the beginning of the first epistle. The apostleship of Paul was supported both by Jesus and his Father. With such a weighty endorsement, the epistle to the church should have the most respectful consideration from those to whom it is addressed. It was sent directly to the church in Corinth, which was the Roman capital of Greece, and the salutation included all the saints (disciples) in *Achaia*, the name the Romans gave to Greece. For comments on *Church of God*, see those on Romans 16: 16, in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary, and those on 1 Corinthians 1: 2.

Verse 2. For comments on this verse, see 1 Corinthians 1: 3.

Verse 3. A father and son could not be the same individual, and God is declared to be the Father of Christ. This refutes a false teaching in the world that Jesus is "the very and eternal God." It also exposes another heresy known in religious circles by the name of "Jesus Only." God and Christ are one in purpose and goodness, but are two separate persons. Father and God of mercies and comfort simply means that all such blessings come from Him.

Verse 4. Paul regarded himself and all other Christians who were having persecutions for the sake of righteousness as "companions in tribulation" (Revelation 1: 9). The preceding verse says that all comfort comes from God, hence he is the One who enabled the apostle to pass his comfort on to others.

Verse 5. Jesus was in Heaven clothed with a spiritual body when Paul was writing this epistle, hence He could not literally undergo personal sufferings. But the church is His body in another spiritual sense and is subject to sufferings, and in that manner He may well be said to suffer with the faithful disciples. Besides this, Hebrews 4: 15 says that Christ can "be touched with the feelings of our infirmities," and in this sense He is also able to suffer with the saints. By the same token, the faithful disciples will share in the triumph of their Master over all trials and hardships experienced for the sake of righteousness.

Verse 6. The afflictions heaped upon Paul in his defence of the Gospel, should be a source of consolation to the Corinthians, in that they would have an encouraging example of saving faith that is put to the test. That is, it will be thus *effectual* (will have that effect) provided they are willing to withstand that same kind of sufferings if called upon to do so. The assurance that Paul could find consolation in spite of his sufferings, would result in consolation for the Corinthians. This is the same thought that is set forth in verse 4.

Verse 7. Paul's hopefulness in regard to the Corinthian brethren was based on their general attitude toward the Gospel. We shall later learn that they reacted favorably to the first epistle, hence it was reasonable to hope for their continued devotion to the Lord, even though great tribulations might come upon them.

Verse 8. The apostle has been making general references only to his difficul-