

Bible Study Series on.....

*The Letter
of*

1st CORINTHIANS
(#2)

13 Lessons

**Produced by:
PAUL E. CANTRELL**

2005

*The 1st Letter
To the*

CORINTHIANS
(#2)

13 Lessons

**Produced by:
PAUL E. CANTRELL
84 Northview Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050**

pecantrell@juno.com

2005

Table of Contents

“The Study of 1st Corinthians” (#2)

LESSONS	TOPICS	PAGES
1 --	“The Challenge to Unselfish Living” (8:1-13)	1-4
2 --	“Supporting the Preaching of the Gospel” (9:1-18)	5-7
3 --	“Paul, the Great Soul Seeker” (9:19-27)	8-11
4 --	“The Weaknesses of Satan” (10:1-13)	12-14
5 --	“The Degrading Effects of Idolatry” (10:14-33)	15-18
6 --	“Christian Liberty & Covering” (11:1-16)	19-23
7 --	“Problems Connected with the Lord’s Supper” (11:17-34)	24-27
8 --	“Gifts to Profit the Church” (12:1-11, 28-30)	28-32
9 --	“One Body, Many Members” (12:12-27)	33-35
10--	“That Which is Greater Than Gifts” (12:31-13:13)	36-38
11--	“Regulations of Miraculous Gifts” (14:1-40)	39-42
12--	“The Assurance of the Resurrection” (15:1-58)	43-46
13--	“Benevolent Concern for Brethren” (16:1-24)	47-50

Lesson One

“The Challenge to Unselfish Living” (1 Corinthians 8:1-13)

Christianity came into a world filled with idolatry. It permeated every aspect of life: social, political, business, as well as religious. Every way you turned you could see its influence. Even the meat that a person would buy at the “shambles” had been sacrificed to idols. If you were invited to a friend’s house and meat was served it had probably been sacrificed to idols. If you were invited to a public feast at an Idol Temple area, you were quite sure the meat had been offered to idols. It was almost impossible to escape contact with idolatry and its sacrifices.

What was a Christian to do about this meat? Some at Corinth felt that there was nothing wrong with eating it. Others had strong reservations about eating it. Paul deals with the question in this chapter and does it with concern and wisdom (inspired by God’s Spirit). Some great principles are emphasized that are very important for us today as well as dealing with their problem.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st PRINCIPLE—THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTELLECTUAL KNOWLEDGE AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE! (8:1-3)

A. All have knowledge.

- 1) Paul seems to be making a play on an assertion: “*Everyone knows that!*”
- 2) Or, “*Everyone should be able to understand as I do!*”
- 3) Yes, many may know, but knowledge has a tendency to generate pride and arrogance.
 - a) It tends to inflate a person who possesses it.
 - b) Mere intellectual knowledge needs something to go with it—to make it acceptable.
- 4) But, love edifies.
 - a) Knowledge needs love to make it acceptable!
 - b) Love delivers knowledge from selfishness and self-conceit.
 - c) Love tempers knowledge and makes it the wisdom of God.
 - d) Love does not tear down, but encourages and builds up.
- 5) God is both light (knowledge) and love.
 - a) He is a perfect blend of both.
 - b) Man needs the same—enlightenment and loving concern.
 - c) The greater is love (1 Cor. 13:13).

B. Love directed knowledge is needed by Christians.

- 1) If a man thinks that he has all the answers, he is only fooling himself.
- 2) Humility is a test of our knowledge.
- 3) Man never stops learning—there is always more to learn.
- 4) But if a man loves God, he is known of God.
 - a) Paul places an emphasis upon our need to love, as well as to know.
 - b) To have love directed knowledge is to be approved of God.

II. 2ND PRINCIPLE—THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD—AN IDOL IS NOTHING (8:4-6)***A. An Idol is nothing!***

- 1) These Gentiles had turned from idols to the true & living God.
- 2) They understood that He is the God of Creation.
- 3) They knew that Jesus was the only Lord & Savior.
- 4) They also knew intellectually—an idol was nothing.

B. They had been enlightened about the true & living God.

- 1) Idols posed no threat to them of judgment or punishment.
- 2) Only the True God of Heaven can punishment or reward mankind.
- 3) Idols are non-existent gods---false—no reality!
- 4) Only the True God is to be served—fulfilling our purpose for existence.

III. 3RD PRINCIPLE—MAN'S ACCEPTANCE TO GOD IS NOT DEPENDANT ON EATING MEAT OR NOT EATING MEAT (8:7-8)***A. Weakness in the church needs to be dealt with.***

- 1) Not every one has been able to free themselves from the idea that an idol has reality.
 - a) Thus, for them to eat meat offered to an idol would be sinful.
 - b) To see a brother eat such meat would be an offense to his conscience.
 - c) His conscience is still weak—still struggling with idolatry.
 - d) For him to eat such meat would be like practicing idolatry all over again
- 2) Thus, for them to eat would be to defile his conscience—to go against it.
 - a) Rom. 14:14—***“I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteems any thing as unclean, to him it is unclean.”***
 - b) Rom. 14:22—***“Happy is he that condemns not himself in that thing which he allows.”***
- 3) Their weakness was a result of:
 - a) Past habits of thinking;
 - b) Imperfect enlightenment;
 - c) Or, lack of re-orienting their conscience to the truth.
- 4) A warning is given—not to go against our conscience.
 - a) It is a very fragile, but important factor in our lives.
 - b) To go against it, to defile it—will lead to our destruction.
 - c) We must not go against this God-given concept within us.

B. Eating of meat or not eating is not what God's kingdom is all about.

- 1) Rom. 14:17—***“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.”***
- 2) We lose nothing by eating—we gain nothing by not eating.
 - a) Neither commends us to God.
 - b) The issue is not meat—whether we eat or not eat.
- 3) The real issue is—the attitude behind such.
 - a) It is the spirit that prompts the person to his actions.
 - b) It is not just a matter of intellectual knowledge.
 - c) It is whether that knowledge is tempered & directed by love.

IV. 4TH PRINCIPLE—LIBERTY TO EAT MUST BE TEMPERED BY LOVE FOR OUR BROTHER (8:9-12)

A. Liberty to eat!

- 1) You may have the liberty (power or right) to eat meat offered to idols.
 - a) In and of itself it is not sinful.
 - b) No law against such.
- 2) Knowledge of this truth does not justify insensibility to a weak conscience of a brother.
 - a) To encourage a brother to go against his conscience is to destroy the value of his conscience.
 - b) A person needs to be concerned about forbearance and love—not his right or privilege.
 - c) The watchword is Love, not knowledge.

B. His point illustrated:

- 1) Suppose, by your knowledge, you could go to a feast of the Gentiles.
 - a) It would be in connection with the Temple area of one of their gods.
 - b) The meat would have been offered to an Idol.
 - c) You sit and eat with others that have gone through idolatrous activities.
 - d) Even though you know that an Idol is nothing.
- 2) What would it do to your brother who sees you do this?
 - a) Would he be encouraged to compromise his conscience and partake?
 - b) If so, he would defile his conscience.

C. He gives three reasons for not wounding the conscience of a weaker brother:

- 1) Christ died for your brother also.
 - a) His soul needs to be saved just like yours.
 - b) He is not like an Idol, nothing, but he is of great value or worth.
- 2) You sin against your brother.
 - a) When you are the influence that causes his perishing—it is sinful.
 - b) It is going against the Spirit of God—of love!
- 3) You sin against Christ.
 - a) To sin against a brother is to sin against Christ.
 - b) Saul of Tarsus was asked: ***“Why do you persecute me?”***
 - c) We do not sin against our brethren with immunity.
 - d) Jesus said: ***“When you did it unto the least of these my brethren, you did it unto me.”***

V. 5TH PRINCIPLE—THE CHRISTIAN IS TO BE AN UNSELFISH PERSON (8:13)

A. Christ's example.

- 1) This unselfish viewpoint that Paul is advocating is a reflection of Christ's unselfishness.
 - a) He willingly gave up all to die for us.
 - b) He gave up heaven to come to earth to become a man among men.
 - c) he became a servant unto death—even the death of the cross.
- 2) Rom. 14:21—***“It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby you brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak.”***
 - a) This is not mere sentimentality.

- b) No sudden burst of emotion towards others.
- c) It is a well-thought-out, genuine concern for a brother in Christ.

CONCLUSION

1. It is a cowardly act to hurt the conscience of a defenseless person.
2. It is like hitting a man when he is down.
3. But it is also sinful.
4. Intellectual knowledge without love makes us arrogant, haughty, and prideful.
5. But knowledge with love makes us humble & unselfish.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ **1. Since love is the more important, then knowledge is not really important.**
- ___ **2. A person that has both knowledge and love can still be puffed up.**
- ___ **3. Humility is a test of one's knowledge.**
- ___ **4. An Idol is nothing and a Christian should understand this.**
- ___ **5. Eating or not eating determines whether we are acceptable to God.**
- ___ **6. Liberty to eat must be tempered by love.**
- ___ **7. The weak brother should be open to be taught correctly about eating meat.**
- ___ **8. If we offend our brother, we sin against Christ.**
- ___ **9. Unselfishness on the part of the strong will be rewarded by Christ.**
- ___ **10. In reality, we should not eat flesh nor drink wine any longer.**

Lesson Two

“Supporting the Preaching of the Gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:1-18)

Paul has just finished illustrating the proper use of the Christian’s liberty in Christ. We are not to destroy a brother, but to show concern for him. We should willingly forego our liberty for a brother’s soul’s sake. He now turns to illustrate this principle in his own life.

Paul gives reasons why the supporting of the preaching of the Gospel is right and states that he had that right as an Apostle of Christ—just like other Apostles and other brethren. But he chose to forego that right for their good and the furtherance of the Gospel. In doing so, he had suffered bitter hardship. As a part of this issue is the question of his Apostleship. He defends it and then presses home the illustration of this unselfish principle.

DISCUSSION**I. PAUL DEFENDS HIS APOSTLESHIP (9:1-2)*****A. Questions:***

- 1) “Am I not an Apostle?”
 - a) This is possibly understood more as a statement: “I am an Apostle!”
 - b) The following information confers such.
- 2) “Am I not free?”
 - a) Free of men’s laws & obligations.
 - b) Free in Christ to act.
 - c) Freedom, liberty from the binding commands of men.
- 3) “Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?”
 - a) The Lord had appeared to him on the road to Damascus.
 - b) Jesus made him a chosen Apostle.
- 4) “Are you not my work in the Lord?”
 - a) The church’s existence said something.
 - b) Their very existence was the work of Paul primarily.
 - c) From whence did they receive all of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit?

B. The Corinthian Church was Paul’s seal of Apostleship.

- 1) Others might argue against his Apostleship.
- 2) But not the church at Corinth (2 Cor. 12:11-13)

II. PAUL’S RIGHT TO BE SUPPORTED HAS BEEN QUESTIONED (9:3-6)***A. He points out their objections.***

- 1) Some in the church were scrutinizing Paul’s Apostleship.
- 2) By questioning his Apostleship, they also questioned his teachings.
- 3) Paul was put on the defense by some by saying: “Since he did not receive support for his preaching among them, he is inferior to the other Apostles.”

B. He asked more questions:

- 1) Don’t I have the right to be furnished my necessities?
- 2) Don’t I have a right to even have a wife travel with us and be supported just like the other Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord (James, Jude, etc.)?

- 3) If they are being supporting, why not Paul?
- 4) Don't I and Barnabas have the right to also give up manual labor and be supported by the churches in our preaching?

III. PAUL NOW GIVES SIX REASONS FOR SUPPORTING PREACHERS (9:7-14)

A. From ordinary laws of human justice.

- 1) A soldier does not go to war without pay.
- 2) A vinedresser expects to eat of the fruit that is harvested.
- 3) A shepherd expects to get benefits of his labor with sheep.

B. By an analogy from the Law of Moses.

- 1) The Law teaches this principle (Deut. 25:4).
- 2) It stressed that the Ox was not to be muzzled that treads out the corn.
- 3) Even the dumb Ox should be fed for his labors.
- 4) Is God only concerned for Oxen by making this rule?
- 5) No, it is a principle for man's understanding and practice as well.
- 6) It gives hope that a man can reap the reward of his labors.

C. From obligations of common gratitude.

- 1) If we sow spiritual things, surely such deserves at least carnal things.
- 2) If God is concerned about the Ox not starving, isn't He also concerned about the one who preaches the saving Gospel?

D. From their concession of the right of others who had inferior claims.

- 1) They had supported others who were not even Apostles.
- 2) Then, shouldn't Paul have that right—who was an Apostle?
- 3) At this point, Paul seems to anticipate a problem with their thinking.
 - a) Paul had made a decision not to take advantage of his right to support.
 - b) He is not accusing them of not supporting him because he did not expect it.
 - c) He was even willing to suffer all things rather than take support from them.
 - d) Reason—Lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ.
 - e) He did not want to take support and it hinder efforts to reach people.

E. From Jewish provisions for maintenance of Priests.

- 1) Jewish Priests (and even heathen priests) lived off sacrifices.
- 2) Only certain portions were allowed to be taken by the Priests.
- 3) But this was their way of being supported in the work.

F. By rule laid down by Christ, Himself.

- 1) The Lord ordained it, taught it, and commanded it.
- 2) Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7
- 3) ***“The Laborer is worthy of his hire.”***
- 4) Paul rephrases it: ***“They which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.”***
- 5) **NOTE:** All of these should settle the matter once and for all.

IV. PAUL'S REWARD IN PREACHING (9:15-18)

A. Paul willingly gave up this right of support from new churches.

- 1) He had not taken advantage of this right—nor is he condemning the church at Corinth for not supporting him.

- 2) He would prefer death than to lose his basis for glorying.
- 3) His preaching was done out of a deep sense of gratitude & moral compulsion.
 - a) Preaching was a necessity—a must for him like Jeremiah (20:9).
 - b) His glorying was not in his preaching—for he had to preach!

B. Paul's basis for glorying!

- 1) It was to preach the Gospel without cost to them.
- 2) He seems to be saying: “If I had to preach the Gospel without support, it would be merely a duty. But if I willingly give up that support, then I have gone beyond what is expected.”
- 3) This was Paul's reward—to preach without cost to new Christians.
- 4) He did not abuse his liberty that he had—he did not want to be a stumblingblock.

CONCLUSION

1. Paul established his Apostleship before their eyes.
2. He established his right to be supported in the work of preaching.
3. But he illustrated in his life the use of liberty—to refuse that support if there was a possibility that it might hinder the work of the Gospel.
4. Two laws for the Christian to go by:
 - a) What is lawful, necessary, commanded, I must do!
 - b) What is expedient, becoming—I may or may not do, as it affects others.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ **1. Corinth's existence as a church was a strong proof of Paul's Apostleship.**
- ___ **2. Paul said that Corinth was his seal of Apostleship.**
- ___ **3. Paul was inferior to other Apostles because he did not take support from Corinth.**
- ___ **4. Paul was actually supported some at Corinth by the churches of Macedonia.**
- ___ **5. Cephas (Peter) and his wife traveled among the churches and were supported.**
- ___ **6. The statement, “Do not muzzle the Ox that treads out the corn” proves that it is right to support those who labor in the Gospel.**
- ___ **7. Jewish Priests depended upon support from the sacrifices as part of their living.**
- ___ **8. Jesus actually taught that only certain ones can be supported by the church.**
- ___ **9. Paul's glorying was in his preaching the Gospel.**
- ___ **10. Paul took advantage of his liberty to be supported by receiving such from Corinth.**

Lesson Three

“Paul, the Great Soul Seeker”

(1 Corinthians 9:19-27)

What is our business as a church? What kind of answers would we give to such a question? Are we in the business merely to hold public worship? Or, is our business merely decision making? The answer to these questions can be found in Jesus’ commission to His Apostles (Matthew 28:18-20). It is Evangelism, Edifying, as well as Training to do these things. Jesus’ emphasis was upon reaching out to people. He said himself that he came to seek and save the lost.

Paul has captured this concept in these verses of study. He gave up all things to follow Christ. His concern was for saving souls. He was willing to suffer, be persecuted, and endure hardships to save souls. He was even willing to give up his rights as a Christian, if it would save souls. Paul continues his emphasis upon Christian liberty and illustrating it in his life of soul saving.

DISCUSSION**I. FREEDOM VERSUS SERVANTHOOD (9:19)*****A. Freedom:***

- 1) He was free from all men.
- 2) Jesus had made him free from all the trappings of men.
- 3) He was no longer brought under bondage to any man.
- 4) Gal. 1:10—***“For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”***

B. Yet, a Servant:

- 1) He voluntarily abandoned this freedom for the good of others.
- 2) It was not forced on him—“I enslave myself to all.”
- 3) Gal. 5:13—***“For, brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”***
- 4) Paul was more concerned about saving souls than holding on to his liberty.
- 5) ***“That I might gain the more.”***

II. THE EXTENT OF HIS SERVANTHOOD TO SAVE SOULS (9:20-23)***A. “I became as a Jew”***

- 1) Paul was a Jew by background, but no longer one by religion.
 - a) Yet, he still identified with them in order to win them.
 - b) Example of Timothy being circumcised in order not to be a hindrance in reaching Jews.
 - c) He also took Nazarite vows in order to help Jewish people to accept Christ.
- 2) He tried to identify with his audience as much as humanly possible in order to reach them.

B. “As under the Law”

- 1) Paul was no longer under the Law of Moses as he was previously.

- 2) He is now under the New Covenant of Christ.
- 3) Yet, he identified himself with such people in order to reach them.
- 4) At one time, he was of the strictest sect of the Jews.
- 5) He used it to identify with them when it could help.

C. “As Without Law”

- 1) The Gentile world was not under the Law of Moses.
- 2) Yet, they did have Law to which God held them responsible (Rom. 2:14-15).
- 3) He never willfully insulted their beliefs (Acts 19:37).
- 4) He judged them with perfect forbearance (Acts 27:30).
- 5) He treated them with courtesy and kindness.
- 6) He even defended the Gentiles’ rights not to be brought under the yoke of the Law of Moses.
- 7) He tried to become a Gentile in mind and heart to identify with them.
- 8) Yet, Paul preached that all should come under the Law of Christ.

D. “As weak”

- 1) Paul was far from being a weak person or in his beliefs!
- 2) He was fully assured of what God wanted of all men in order to be saved.
- 3) Yet, he was willing to identify with them in order to understand and help.
- 4) He even gave strong emphasis on helping a weak brother (Rom. 14-15).

E. “I am made all things to all men”

- 1) 1 Cor. 10:33—**“Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”**
- 2) 2 Tim. 2:10—**“Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”**
- 3) Paul was not a man-leasers, but a soul-saver.
- 4) He held to his universal sympathy and tolerance for all men.
- 5) He was willing to give in and give up to all men in order to save them.
- 6) He acted with wisdom and sympathy towards all men.

F. “For the Gospel’s sake”

- 1) What Paul did was to further the effect of the Gospel in people’s lives.
- 2) But it was also to save his own soul.
- 3) He wanted to be a partakers of the benefits of the Gospel with them.

G. CAUTION!!

- 1) Paul did not engage in sinful practices or tolerate sinful practices.
 - a) Neither did he keep back any truth necessary to salvation.
 - b) He did not compromise the name of Jesus Christ, nor His Gospel.
 - c) Paul had a strong will and resolution to follow Christ.
- 2) But he was just as strong in his:
 - a) Flexibility of disposition;
 - b) Ability and readiness to adapt to different characters & circumstances.
 - c) Be like others in things indifferent.
- 3) His concern for souls was demonstrated over & over.
 - a) Upon his conversion, he turned from his course of seeking position, power, and the praise of men—and began a life of self-sacrifice.
 - b) The reason—to save souls!

- c) He traveled extensively over the world & endure all kinds of dangers, privations, and sufferings that went with such?
- d) The reason—to save souls!
- e) He constantly exposed himself to dangers & death in foreign fields.
- f) The reason—to save souls!
- g) Soul saving had become the first emphasis of his life.
- h) No sacrifice was too great to save a soul.
- i) *“A human soul won at the cost of a little sacrifice is a very cheap price to pay for its salvation.”*
- j) Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself to save mankind was Paul’s example.
- k) WHAT ABOUT US?

III. EXHORTATIONS TO EARNESTNESS (9:24-27)

A. Run to win the prize!

- 1) In the Isthmian games at Corinth, they had special games that over-shadowed the Olympic games.
- 2) They all ran in order to win a carnal reward.
- 3) We run to win a spiritual reward.
 - a) It starts at the foot of the cross.
 - b) It ends with eternal life.
- 4) But we must get rid of the encumbrances (Heb. 12:1).
 - a) All world cares, selfishnesses, prejudices, and bad habits.
 - b) So we can run with persistency—faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10)
- 5) The nature of the Christian race is often severe and continuous.
 - a) Eph. 6:12—***“We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”***

B. Necessary preparations for the race.

- 1) Runners in a race had to prepare for it—self-denial & discipline.
- 2) They had to be pure, sober and enduring.
- 3) They had to obey orders, to eat correctly, and rest.
- 4) They had to bear up under effort and fatigue.
- 5) The Christian must also be temperate in all things.

C. The Christians race.

- 1) Requires that we be temperate in all things as well.
- 2) We run with certainty.
 - a) We know where we are going—we have our eye fixed on the goal.
 - b) Col. 3:1-2; 2 Tim. 4:8
- 3) It will be a struggle.
 - a) The Christian life is a real struggle.
 - b) It is not shadow-boxing, but the real thing.
 - c) It is a battle against the world, the flesh, the devil, etc.
- 4) We run for an incorruptible crown.
 - a) It is not a reward that will fade in a short time.
 - b) It will never fade in its desirability and glory.
 - c) Nothing can change its greatness.

- 5) It is a race that requires self-discipline.
- a) Paul said that he buffeted his body.
 - b) He brought it into subjection to the will of Christ.
 - c) He did not want to win others and then be lost himself.

CONCLUSION

1. A growing church has to be a soul-conscience church.
2. To see people all about them and reach out to them in whatever way they can.
3. Why spend so much time on physical attainments when the greatest attainment is saving souls!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ **1. Paul was free from all, but felt a strong obligation to help save all he could.**
- ___ **2. Christians can use their liberty as an occasion to satisfying the flesh.**
- ___ **3. Paul was not under the Law of Moses, but he did some things that the Law taught.**
- ___ **4. The Gentiles were obligated to keep the Law of Moses, but had rejected it.**
- ___ **5. Paul was a man-pleaser in the real sense of the expression.**
- ___ **6. Paul no longer sought position, power, or the praise of men—but only to save souls.**
- ___ **7. Paul's great example that he followed was the Apostle Peter.**
- ___ **8. A runner must run the race according to the rules if he expects to win the prize.**
- ___ **9. Self-discipline is a necessity for one to run the Christian life.**
- ___ **10. Christians can run their race with certainty of a reward at the end.**

Lesson Four

“The Weaknesses of Satan”

(1 Corinthians 10:1-13)

Examples from the Old Testament are a tremendous tool to use to help us today. Paul used one of them here in 1 Cor. 10:1-13 to teach some vital lessons. He reminds them of how God delivered the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. And then, how they wandered in the wilderness for forty years and died without having gone into the promised land. The Hebrew writer said that they did not enter in because of their evil heart of unbelief (Heb. 3:12-19). But Paul’s example shows how their unbelief was shown:

1. They lusted after evil things (v. 6).
2. They engaged in Idolatrous worship (v.7).
3. They committed sexual immorality (v. 8).
4. They tempted Christ (v. 9).
5. They complained (v. 10).

The Apostle then points out that Christians should not let themselves get caught up in these same snares of the Devil and be lost. God had this and other examples recorded for our benefit that we might learn from them. A primary thought that comes from these verses—**don’t under-estimate the power of Satan**. They fell and so can we if we do not resist Satan’s temptations (James 4:7). If we can resist Satan, then Satan has some weaknesses.

DISCUSSION

I. SATAN DOES NOT KNOW EVERYTHING!

A. He is not all-knowing, but God is (Omni-science).

- 1) The Psalmist says that God’s understanding is infinite (Ps. 147:5).
- 2) He knows all things perfectly.
- 3) Nothing is hid from His all-seeing eye.

B. But Satan is limited in his knowledge.

- 1) He may know more than man, but he is limited in his knowledge.
- 2) An example—Where Moses’ body is buried.
 - a) Jude 9 states that Michael, the archangel, contending with the Devil over the body of Moses.
 - b) Was Satan wanting to know where Moses’ body was buried so that he:
 - Might leak the news to men?
 - So the Jews might want to worship at his shrine?
 - Or, the Jews might want to make pilgrimages to the site?
- 3) Other examples:
 - a) Satan did not understand fully the prophecy in Gen. 3:15.
 - He might have understood about the seed of the woman to bruise his head.
 - But would not know how and to what purpose.
 - When Jesus was put to death, Satan thought he had won the battle.
 - But, it was short lived when Jesus rose from the death and dealt the death blow to Satan’s power of death over mankind.
 - b) The same could be said of many other prophecies.

- 4) Example: Rev. 12:7-9 talks about war in heaven.
 - a) This is not literal—God’s will is perfectly done in heaven.
 - b) It is symbolic language describing the struggle of God’s people with Satan’s efforts to destroy them through the Worldly Roman Empire.
 - c) Satan saw where it said that he was defeated—humiliated.
 - d) But he did not understand the how and when.

C. Satan doesn’t know everything—He is not God!

II. SATAN CAN’T BE EVERY WHERE AT ONCE.

A. Satan can’t, but God can be everywhere at once. (Omni-presence).

- 1) Such is a mark of Deity (Jere. 23:24)
- 2) God’s creatures are under God’s notice at all times.

B. No such power is attributed to Satan.

- 1) He is depicted as in continual motion—traveling (Job 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:8).
- 2) He seems to be subjected to the same limitation of other Angels (Dan. 9:21).
- 3) He cannot be everywhere all at once like God.
- 4) But he does have a host of wicked agents scattered worldwide that help him.
- 5) They are unceasing in their efforts to deceive us.

III. SATAN CAN’T DO EVERYTHING.

A. Satan can’t, but God is all-powerful (Omni-potent).

- 1) He is the creator and sustaining of this universe (Heb. 1:1-3).
- 2) All things hold together because of Him.
- 3) Nothing can resist God for He is in perfect control of all.

B. Even Satan is subject to God.

- 1) He can only do what God allows him to do.
- 2) Permission has to be given before he can do anything (Job 1:12; 2:6).
- 3) In New Testament times:
 - a) Satan and Demons were given power to take over human bodies.
 - b) But Jesus and His disciples could cast them out.
 - c) Thus, making Satan an unwilling participant in showing the superior power of God.

C. Today, God will not allow Satan to tempt us above what we are able to bear.

- 1) “*The Devil made me do it*” is a lie of the Devil!
 - a) It may sound cute, but it is a lie.
 - b) He doesn’t make anyone—he does not have the power to do so. (James 1:12-16).
- 2) God has given us a tool with which to put Satan to flight (Rev. 20:1-3).
 - a) These are not literal chains.
 - b) They are symbolic of the power of the Word of God over Satan.
 - c) It is the Word of God that both binds and restrains Satan.
- 3) Jesus illustrated this in His life during the 40 days of temptation.
 - a) Each time he met Satan’s temptation with “It is written.”
 - b) He had miraculous powers, but did not use them.
 - c) He used only what we have today—the POWERFUL WORD OF GOD!

- d) The Bible properly understand and applied is our safeguard against all of Satan's devices.

CONCLUSION

1. We can, and we must resist Satan!
2. He can only do in our lives what God allows—and what we allow.
3. He can be resisted!
 - a) We must not over-estimate Satan's powers.
 - b) Neither should we under-estimate his powers.
4. One day he will be punished.
5. And all who give in to his temptations will be punished with him (Matt. 25:41, 46).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ **1. 23,000 Jews perished at one time in the wilderness because of Idolatrous worship.**
- ___ **2. Jesus is said to have been the rock from which the Jews drank.**
- ___ **3. The Jews were baptized by God in the Red Sea.**
- ___ **4. We don't have to give in to temptation; we can overcome them with God's help.**
- ___ **5. Satan has great power over mankind in many different ways.**
- ___ **6. Satan knows a lot more than men do.**
- ___ **7. Satan is not everywhere present, but God is.**
- ___ **8. Satan has to get permission from God to do whatever he does.**
- ___ **9. We cannot logical claim that the Devil made me do anything.**
- ___ **10. We have a powerful tool in our hands that can overcome the power of Satan.**

Lesson Five

“The Degrading Effects of Idolatry” (1 Corinthians 10:14-33)

Paul begins verse 14 with “Wherefore on the basis of the previous reasonings and warnings we need to learn the lesson well—to flee from sin!” Paul had been trying to inspire the weak to not be so squeamish about their scruples and to inspire the strong not to be so harsh, but loving. But especially to learn some valuable lessons from Old Testament examples of sinfulness and its consequences.

Idolatry was a grave temptation for God’s people at Corinth. Most had come out of such. However, their relatives, families, friends, neighbors, etc., were all idolatrous. Idolatry appealed to man’s sight, not his faith. It had a lot of alluring activities that appealed to the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17). The temptation was constantly to get them to compromise. These verses (14-33) help to show the degrading effects of Idolatry.

DISCUSSION

I. THE TABLE OF THE LORD VERSUS THE TABLE OF DEMONS (10:14-22)

A. He gives a warning to flee Idolatry.

- 1) The dread of Idolatry and its degrading effects demands this strong warning.
- 2) Idolatry was the sin of sins!
- 3) Corinth was among the worse cities to exalt the allurements & splendor of Idolatry.
- 4) Bodily indulgences of all kinds were prevalent in their worship.
- 5) God’s people are warned to flee such.
- 6) Such actions are degrading to human beings.

B. Paul now appeals to their ability to reason.

- 1) You pass judgment on what I say.
- 2) Now see if what I say doesn’t make sense to you.

C. He begins by discussing the unifying effect of the Lord’s Supper.

- 1) The bread & cup are representatives of the body & blood of Christ.
- 2) When we partake, we are in communion with Christ’s body and blood.
- 3) It is a joint participation in, a sharing in, or a holding of things in common.
- 4) When the Lord’s Supper is correctly taken:
 - a) We come into a close fellowship and communion with Christ.
 - b) We share in His spirit of self-sacrifice and love.
 - c) We share in the benefits of His death for us.
- 5) We also have closeness with one another as well.
 - a) We all eat in common of one bread.
 - b) We all partake of a common redeemer’s death.
- 6) He illustrates his point by the Old Testament Priest and Altar.
 - a) They would offer part of the sacrifice in the fire and eat part of it.
 - b) They became partakers of the altar—in its benefits.
 - c) They also identified with Jehovah and His Altar.
 - d) It was closeness, communion, or fellowship with Jehovah.

D. The same principle is true of Idol worship.

- 1) Even though an Idol is nothing—of no value or importance in itself;
- 2) Yet, that is not all that is involved.
- 3) When Gentiles sacrifice to Idols, there is meaning to them.
 - a) They actually sacrifice to “devils (demons).”
 - b) Spirits that are superior to man.
 - c) At times, to inferior deities (gods).
 - d) Idol worship was connected with evil spirits.
- 4) This is God’s “unveiling of Idolatry!”
 - a) Deut. 32:17
 - b) Idolatry is the symbol of worship to a false god (demon).
 - c) It is not the worship of the true God, but of Satan himself.
 - d) An Idol is a mask—behind it is a demon.
 - e) Idol worship is degrading spiritually & physically.
 - f) Idol worship is treachery to Christ & God the Father.
- 5) Paul next states: ***“I would not that you should have fellowship with demons.”***
 - a) He has made his point well.
 - b) The Christian fellowships with Christ, as he partakes of Christ’s Altar.
 - c) The Jewish people fellowshiped with God in partaking of His Altar.
 - d) The Gentiles fellowshiped with Demons in partaking of their Altars.

E. He now pushes home his conclusion.

- 1) He has show a contrast of two tables or two altars.
 - a) The Table or Altar of the Lord.
 - b) The Table or Altar of demons.
- 2) The Table of the Lord identifies me with the Lord.
- 3) The Table of demons identifies me with demons.
- 4) Which shall it be?
 - a) Can’t have it both ways.
 - b) Cannot serve two masters.
 - c) We must take a stand!
- 5) To be identified with Table of demons provokes the Lord to Jealousy (Deut. 32:21).
- 6) Are we strong enough to stand against the anger of the Lord?

II. HE APPEALS FOR THEM TO EXERCISE THEIR LIBERTY IN CHRIST WISELY (10:23-33).**A. The principle restated.**

- 1) Paul has before shown that liberty in Christ is modified by something:
 - a) Sometimes it is not expedient.
 - b) Sometimes it may not be unto edification.
- 2) Some things are “lawful” (allowable) to be done, but:
 - a) They may not be the wisest thing to do for the good of others.
 - b) A consideration of others must be at the root of what the Christian does.

B. The principle rephrased.

- 1) *“Let no man, then, set his own advantage as his objective, but rather let each one seek the good of others.”*

- 2) Phil. 2:4—“**Stop looking after your own interests only; but practice looking out for the interests of others too.**”
- 3) Selfishness is at the root of all sin.
- 4) Unselfishness is to be like God...like Christ who gave Himself for us.
- 5) Thus, the rule of life and conduct would be: “**Be concerned for the good of others, not just what you wish.**”

C. He illustrates his point.

- 1) To the weak he is saying:
 - a) Stop worrying about every piece of meat you eat.
 - b) If you buy in the market, there is no way to know for sure if it has been offered to idols (unless told).
 - c) Don't trouble your conscience by constant investigation.
 - d) Don't be over-scrupulous in your efforts.
 - e) To do so robs you of what God has provided for us to enjoy.
- 2) The Lord has given all things for us to enjoy (1 Tim. 4:4).
- 3) Over-scrupulousness will result in not being able to enjoy what He has give us.

D. He again illustrates his point.

- 1) If you are invited to a man's home and he places meat before you—eat it.
 - a) Don't ask questions.
 - b) Enjoy what is provided.
 - c) This is only social fellowship—not communion with demons.
- 2) But, if you are specifically told: “This has been offered to an idol.”.....then:
 - a) Don't eat for conscience sake.
 - b) Not yours, but theirs.
 - c) If this person sees you eat such meat, knowing it has been offered to an idol:
 - His conscience would be offended.
 - For his spiritual welfare, don't eat.
 - To that person, it would be like giving sanction to idol worship.
- 3) So, don't eat—no matter how desirable it may be.
 - a) Because a conscience is sacred.
 - b) It is far more valuable than meats & drinks.
 - c) And, you don't want to be identified with Idol worship.
- 4) Even though you could eat it in full-conscience—don't eat!
 - a) Because of what it does to others.
 - b) If I am judged by another as doing wrong—that does not make me wrong necessarily.
 - c) I stand or fall before my own Master.
 - d) But I forego my liberty in order not to offend another.
- 5) Paul now emphasizes:
 - a) If I give thanks for what I eat, why condemn me?
 - b) I have done no wrong by eating such meat.
 - c) So, don't be so meticulous & bigoted & exaggerate things out of proportion.

E. He concludes with three great concepts.

- 1) All acts are to be for the glory of God.

- a) It is not for my own self-glorification, but God's glory.
 - b) The strong are thus warned against egotistical self-righteousness.
 - c) The weak are warned against over-scrupulous conscience which is an ego problem.
- 2) Give no occasion of offense to anyone.
- a) Not to the Jews, Nor Gentiles, Nor to a brother in Christ.
 - b) Especially is this true in unimportant or indifferent matters.
- 3) The reason for all this discussion—concern for souls!
- a) All sympathy, tolerance, or forbearance has one goal—saving souls!
 - b) Our willingness to adapt our lives to anyone or any circumstances is to save souls!

CONCLUSION

1. These concepts and principles are the backbone of Christian living.
 - a) They show great love and concern for others about us.
 - b) They show concern for the saving of souls.
 - c) The Christian spirit is an unselfish spirit.
2. Christ's great unselfishness is our example to follow.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ 1. Idolatry was evidently a strong temptation for Christians in Corinth.
- ___ 2. The allurements and splendor of Idolatry made it much more challenging to resist.
- ___ 3. When we partake of the Lord's Supper, we do so in fellowship with Christ and one another.
- ___ 4. When one partakes of the Table of Idols, he does so in fellowship with demons.
- ___ 5. The Old Testament taught that Idol Worship was the worship of demons.
- ___ 6. Selfishness is at the root of all sin.
- ___ 7. The weak need to stop being so scrupulous.
- ___ 8. The strong need to stop being so self-righteous.
- ___ 9. When someone points out to you that the meat had been offered to Idols, it is still okay to eat of it.
- ___ 10. Our primary desire should be to glorify God in all we do.

Lesson Seven

“Problems connected with the Lord’s Supper”**(1 Corinthians 11:17-34)**

The church at Corinth had quite a few varied problems that needed to be dealt with by an Apostle. We also get the benefit of these letters as well because God is able to reveal His Will to us and at the same time deal with things that were posing problems in the Corinthian church. Some of the problems were:

- 1) They were exalting men above that which was written;
- 2) They were allowing open immorality to go unchecked in their midst;
- 3) Brother was taking brother to Law-courts of the land;
- 4) They had misunderstandings about what to do when married to an unbeliever;
- 5) The weak were trying to bind their opinions on the strong;
- 6) The strong were going to do what they wanted to—even if it hurt others spiritually.
- 7) Some did not appreciate Paul’s Apostleship and his work among them;
- 8) They had problems with associating with idolatrous worship;
- 9) They had women who were praying and prophesying with their heads uncovered;
- 10) etc.—more to come in our study.

The next item that Paul dealt with was problems connected with the Lord’s Supper.

DISCUSSION**I. PAUL COULD NOT PRAISE THEM ABOUT THIS CONDITION (11:17-19)*****A. What he did praise them for—keeping the basic teachings.***

- 1) Not everything was wrong at Corinth...doing many things right.
- 2) But they needed to re-examine how they were dealing with the Lord’s Supper.
- 3) He could not praise them for how they were doing some things.

B. There was a lack of unity and harmony over the Lord’s Supper.

- 1) When they assembled, it was causing more disharmony—especially around the partaking of the Lord’s Supper.
- 2) Assembling in one place does not guarantee unity of heart and mind.
- 3) Since you have dissensions among you—you need re-examine yourselves.

C. Paul’s letter would show who was approved by God.

- 1) Those who are genuine and sincere in their desire to please God may be shown.
- 2) To come to know who really wants to follow Christ and loves His church.

II. THE PROBLEM STATED (11:20-22)***A. Their assembling was tearing them down, not building them up.***

- 1) The Lord’s Supper is supposed to be a unifying act of worship to God.
- 2) But they had destroyed such by the way they were acting.
- 3) They had made a gluttonous feast out of it—made it a feasting time, not a worship time.

B. Even worse were their attitudes toward one another in connection with it.

- 1) The poor were despised and neglected—they didn’t get to enjoy the food.
- 2) The rich ate before the poor could get there—cared less.
- 3) The feast was carried to excess—gluttony & drunkenness.

- 4) Pride raised its ugly head—showed arrogance, conceit, despising the poor.
 - a) At the Lord's Table—all are equal!
 - b) The Supper should cause us to despise ourselves for our sins, not others.
- 5) Selfishness was there:
 - a) It was not a communion together with Christ—the unselfish One.
 - b) But it was self-seeking—“first-come, first served.”—all for self.
- 6) Division was evident:
 - a) Oneness comes from caring—concern for one another.
 - b) The Lord's Supper should be the one bread for the one people.
- 7) Gluttony ruled the day:
 - a) They ate greedily—waiting for no one.
 - b) Excess became evident in food and drink.
- 8) Irreverence in their approach was evident:
 - a) Instead of thinking about the loving, unselfish sacrifice of Christ;
 - b) They were thinking about their own bellies, not caring about others.

C. His rebuke!

- 1) Don't you have houses to eat your common meals in?
- 2) You need to keep separate your worship assembly & your sharing of meals together.
- 3) Otherwise, your misconduct will bring shame upon God's people.
- 4) your actions also bring shame upon these that have not.
- 5) You will not be praised by me in such actions.

III. THE ORIGINAL INTENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (11:23-26)

A. Paul's information is a Revelation from the Lord.

- 1) What Paul was writing was not his own ideas, but the Lord's.
- 2) It was not even handed down to him by other Apostles or brethren.
- 3) This information is of divine origin.

B. Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper.

- 1) It was done on the night of His betrayal at the Passover observance with the Apostles.
- 2) Jesus stated that the bread represented his body that was hung on the cross.
- 3) That the fruit of the vine represented his blood that was shed for our forgiveness.
- 4) These are to be taken in remembrance of His death for us & its benefit.
- 5) It is a memorial of Jesus' death.
- 6) It is a communion with Christ and one another.

C. Obedience was expected.

- 1) “This do in remember of Me.”
- 2) No excuses are to be offered, but obedience.
- 3) “As often as you eat and drink of it—do it in remember of Me.”
- 4) How often?

D. The great value of recorded examples in the New Testament is to show us how to carry out a command.

- 1) The early church partook on the 1st day of the week (Acts 29:7).

- 2) That is the only example that we have!
- 3) Also, what Paul is discussing here is about the Lord's Day assembly (1 Cor. 16:1-2), which would indicate also that it was to be done on the 1st day of the week.

E. How long to be done?

- 1) Till He comes back again!
- 2) It was a way to keep the Lord's death before the eyes of His people and the world until his return.
- 3) This infers the resurrection, which gives us hope of everlasting life.

IV. WARNING (11:27-30)

A. How to eat of the Lord's Supper.

- 1) Worthily—remembering His death.
- 2) They were partaking unworthily—wrong spirit and wrong manner.
- 3) We must not partake in a careless, irreverent, and unconcerned manner.
- 4) To do so, makes us guilty of the body and blood of Jesus (Heb. 10:29).

B. It is a time of examination.

- 1) Not to examine others, but self!
- 2) Be sure I have the right attitude and actions.
- 3) Eat & drink only after contemplation of the right things.
- 4) Partake soberly, humbly, and with due reverence.

C. A lack of discernment leads to damnation!

- 1) By not partaking properly—I bring God's judgment upon me.
- 2) Many at Corinth were guilty and were weak and sickly spiritually.
- 3) Some are actually dead spiritually!

V. HE CALLS FOR SELF-JUDGMENT & GIVES FINAL INSTRUCTIONS (11:31-32)

A. Self-Judgment is called for.

- 1) If we will be careful of our actions, we would not be under threat of God's judgment.
- 2) If we will judge ourselves, we would not need judgment of others.
- 3) If we will deal with ourselves, there is no reason for God to deal with us.
- 4) But when the Lord judges us, it is His way of chastening us.
- 5) By taking heed to God's judgment, through Paul, they would save themselves from the final judgment.

B. Final instructions:

- 1) When you come together—wait for one another to eat the Lord's Supper.
- 2) Show your love for each other—be unified and in harmony on these things.
- 3) If you are hungry, eat your meal before you come for worship.
- 4) The Lord's Supper is not a common meal, but a memorial service to God.

CONCLUSION

1. Because of these instructions above:
 - a) We keep our worship activities & eating as separate activities.
 - b) This way, we are not tempted to abuse the Lord's Supper and bring God's judgment.
2. It will make our worship more meaningful and beneficial.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. Paul could praise them for some things, but not all things.**
- 2. Paul was convinced that there was dissension and disunity among them over this matter of the Lord's Supper.**
- 3. Their coming together in an assembly was not profiting them as it should have.**
- 4. Pride, selfishness, gluttony, and irreverence was being shown in their assemblies.**
- 5. Paul emphasized that what he was writing about was given to him by revelation.**
- 6. We are not told how often to partake of the Lord's Supper in the Scriptures.**
- 7. The Lord's Supper is connected with his death, but also is resurrection and 2nd coming.**
- 8. To partake unworthily will result in God's judgment upon our actions.**
- 9. The Lord's Supper does have something to do with our salvation eternally.**
- 10. Self-examination is a necessity in order to partake of the Lord's Supper correctly.**

Lesson Eight

“Gifts to Profit the Church”

(1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 28-30)

Through the centuries there have been efforts by a few small groups to claim that the miraculous gifts found in the early church are still intended for God’s people through the centuries. The latest efforts and trying to revive a belief in such began with a group in the Methodist Church in the early 1900s. They pulled away and formed the “Pentecostal Movement.” This began to spill over into the Protestant and Catholic churches and a new term was coined to identify these people—they were “Charismatic!” This term comes from a Greek word that is generally translated “Grace” or “a gift of grace.” If someone has “Charisma,” he is especially endowed with an appeal to people. In certain contexts, it takes on the emphasis of a gift or gifts given to people.

1 Corinthians 12, however, uses a different term at first--“Spiritual.” The word “gifts” is not in the original Greek text, but it is understood that that is what is being discussed; so, the KJV adds the one but in italics. The word “Spiritual” is a translating of “Pneumatikon.” Verse four does use the word for gifts (Charismaton) as Paul continues the discussion of the subject. Romans 1:11 combines both words in reference to the same concept. Paul, in this chapter, is discussing the various miraculous gifts given by the Holy Spirit to the church members for the use in building up and edifying the church.

DISCUSSION**I. THE TRUE VERSUS THE FALSE (12:1-3)*****A. Paul intended to give them the true knowledge about Gifts.***

- 1) It was important for them to understand clearly about miraculous gifts.
- 2) It is still important that we have a correct understanding of such or else we will be deceived into believing that which is false.

B. When they were unbelievers:

- 1) They followed after “dumb Idols.”
- 2) Idols could not speak—they had no power—they were dead.
- 3) The people were misled by the Idolatrous Priests.
- 4) There was no revelation of God’s Spirit given through them!

C. The Spirit of God only upholds the True God, not false gods!

- 1) One inspired by the Spirit does not cast aspersion upon the Nature of Jesus.
- 2) One inspired by the Spirit calls Jesus “Lord”—not “accursed!”
- 3) For one to deny Jesus’ Deity or Humanity shows they have a false spirit (1 Jn. 4:1-3).
- 4) If you had gifts of the Spirit:
 - a) They would not dishonor Christ;
 - b) Rather, they would honor Him as Lord!

II. THE DIVERSITY OF GOD’S GIFTS (12:4-7)***A. Not everyone was given the same gift.***

- 1) Differing gifts does not mean different Spirits!

- 2) Various gifts were given by the same Spirit of God.
- 3) They should not murmur over which gift the Spirit had given them.

B. How to apply Gifts—put them into use.

- 1) Gifts were used for different purposes:
 - a) Some were to inform, correct misunderstandings, etc.
 - b) Some were to help people to believe in the messengers.
 - c) Some were to build up the church.
- 2) Some gifts were more effective & obvious than others.
- 3) They should not be jealous of various gifts given.
- 4) It is the same Lord who is the head of the church who gave them.
- 5) All gifts were to be used to bring glory to God—not man!
- 6) For God is the source of all gifts (Jas. 1:17).

C. The manifestation of the gifts.

- 1) Acts 8:18-20—The gifts given by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles became evident to those around them.
- 2) Temptation to pride becomes more obvious—they were not for display to cause people to glory in the person—self-elevation.

III. LISTING OF GIFTS (12:8-11)

A. 9 specific gifts are listed here:

- 1) Word of Wisdom:
 - a) 1 Cor. 1:24—God’s Wisdom—the Gospel.
 - b) Revelation of God’s mystery to man through inspired men.
 - c) Possible—They were given insight which came to a person miraculously.
- 2) Word of Knowledge:
 - a) Given an understanding of God’s truths.
 - b) The ability to know without study.
 - c) Ability to impart the knowledge of truth to others.
- 3) Faith:
 - a) Wonder working faith—ability to perform all kinds of miracles.
 - b) Faith that removes mountains (Matt. 17:19-20).
 - c) The special ability to trust in God???
- 4) Gifts of healing:
 - a) Supernatural power over natural laws.
 - b) To speed up the process of restoring health & order to people lives.
- 5) Working of Miracles
 - a) Wonders & mighty powers...over nature.
 - b) Ability to perform signs & wonders to attest to God’s power in their life that gives credibility to their message as being from God.
- 6) Prophecy
 - a) Not only inspired preaching of God’s truth, but the ability to exhort & edify the church.
 - b) Those through whom God revealed His Will.
 - c) In some instances—those who could foresee future events.

- 7) Discerning of Spirits
 - a) Ability to discriminate between a true & false prophet.
 - b) 1 Jn. 4:1; 1 Cor. 14:37
- 8) Divers kinds of tongues
 - a) Ability to speak a language that they had not studied.
 - b) Acts 2:7-8
- 9) Interpretation of tongues
 - a) To interpret or translate from one language to another.
 - b) John 1:38

A. All are given by the same Spirit.

- 1) Emphasis upon the unity & harmony of the Spirit in giving gifts.
- 2) The Spirit determines who gets what gift.
- 3) So, don't murmur or put-down your gift—to do so cast reflection upon God!

IV. REEMPHASIS UPON GOD'S GIFTS TO MAN (12:28-30)

A. God appointed certain special people in the church.

- 1) 1st—Apostles
 - a) They are the basic source of inspired truth.
 - b) They had all the gifts of the Spirit.
 - c) They were the only ones who could pass them on—sign of being an Apostle.
- 2) 2nd—Prophets
 - a) Eph. 3:5
 - b) They were also revealers of Truth, but not the same stature as the Apostles.
 - c) They exhorted and encouraged the church.
- 3) 3rd—Teachers
 - a) Eph. 4:3
 - b) Taught truth to church—possibly revealed by inspiration??
 - c) Special ability as a teacher given to them.
 - d) Word of Wisdom & Word of knowledge could fit with all three.

B. Special gifts given to these above.

- 1) Miracles—Wonders, powers, signs.
- 2) Healing—Accelerate healing processes.
- 3) Helps—Special gifted people that can help church function well.
- 4) Governments—Wise counsel, leadership, organizers (Elders, Deacons)
- 5) Diversities of tongues—Ability to speak in a different language.
- 6) Interpretation of Tongues—To translate from one language to another.

C. Special point that Paul is making:

- 1) All do not have the same gift.
- 2) Not all church members had a gift.
- 3) Each gifted person was to fill their place in the church for the church's good.

CONCLUSION

1. In comparing these two passages with Rom. 12:6-8 and Eph. 4:11....the following things seem to be evident:

- a) Certain specially endowed persons were placed in each church to help it out during its infancy and until the Word of Truth was completely given.
 - b) Once they had served their purpose—no successors.
 - c) Also, special gifts were given to these people to be used for the good of the church.
 - d) They could be misused.
 - e) Thus, the reason for these three chapters (12, 13, 14).
2. We do not believe that any of these specially endowed persons or gifts are with us today.
 3. It is God who gave miraculous gifts for the early church...and it is still God who endows people with special talents & abilities to be used for good and to His glory.

1 Cor. 12:8-10	1 Cor. 12:28-30	Rom. 12:6-8	Eph. 4:11
1.	Apostles		Apostles
2. Prophecy	Prophets	Prophecy	Prophets
3.	Teachers	Teaching	Teachers
4.		Exhortation	Evangelists
5.	Governments	Rule	Pastors
6. Discerning of Spirits	Helps	Ministering Giving Show Mercy	
7. Miracles	Miracles		
8. Healing	Healing		
9. Tongues	Tongues		
10. Interpretation	Interpretation		
11. Word of Wisdom			
12. Word of Knowledge			
13. Faith			

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. Chapter 12 is definitely discussing “Miraculous Gifts.”**
- 2. The Spirit of God only upholds the True God, not false gods!**
- 3. A person in the church was only given one “miraculous gift.”**
- 4. Every person in the church was given a “miraculous gift.”**
- 5. There were outward manifestations of these miraculous gifts.**
- 6. Gifts of healing were to be used to heal all Christians.**
- 7. “Tongues” has reference to a special language all of its own—not known to man, only to God.**
- 8. Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers were special gifted people placed in the church by God.**
- 9. There are more than 9 gifts mentioned when we compared all four accounts.**
- 10. These gifts ceased by the end of the first century.**

Lesson Nine

“One Body, Many Members”

(1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

The first part of chapter 12 discusses the various miraculous gifts given by the Spirit of God. They are not all the same gift, but differing gifts and they have their differing operations. But, they all come from the same Spirit, Lord, God.

He now turns and talks about the make-up of the one body that has many members. He stresses the harmonious operations of the human body and makes the application to Christ's spiritual body. What makes these concepts so understandable is the use Paul makes of describing the various functions of the member of a human body.

DISCUSSION

I. THE HUMAN BODY ILLUSTRATES THE CHURCH (12:12-13)

A. The human body has many parts, organs, members.

- 1) Yet, it is still one body, a functioning organism that works in unity & harmony.
- 2) So God has designed for the body of Christ, the church!
 - a) This figure is used often to illustrate the functioning of the church.
 - b) Christ is the head of the one body, the church that is in submission to His headship (Eph. 5:23-25).

B. The oneness stressed by the work of the Holy Spirit.

- 1) It is by or in One Spirit that all are led to be baptized into the One Body of Christ.
 - a) The One Spirit gave the One message from the One God.
 - b) Men & women are to believe & obey the teaching of the One Spirit.
 - c) Upon being baptized, they are added to the church, the One Body.
- 2) All continue to drink from the same course—the Spirit of God—His Word.

II. THE BODY IS NOT ONE MEMBER, BUT MANY (12:14-20)

A. No one member makes up the body.

- 1) Just the hand does not make up a body, it is just one member of the body.
- 2) Even though the foot is not a hand, is it not just as much a part of the body?
- 3) Or, isn't the ear just as much a part of the body as the eye?

B. In the same way, the church is not just one person.

- 1) The church is also made up of many members (persons).
- 2) All are vital or important to the functioning of the body of Christ.
 - a) If the whole body were just an eye, where is the hearing?
 - b) If the whole body were just an ear, where is the smelling?
- 3) It takes all of the members of the body to make up a smooth, functioning body.
- 4) It is God who designed the function that way.
 - a) It was not an haphazard creation of mankind.
 - b) He had a plan for every member of the body to have a function.
 - c) We need to appreciate what God has done.

C. Each member of the body has its separate & important function in the body of Christ.

- 1) All are obviously not the same—they can have different functions.
- 2) But God has brought each member into the church to carry out their responsibilities.
- 3) So, the church does not revolve around one member, but around Christ.
- 4) The interest of one member must not over-shadow the good of the body.
- 5) When all work together as a functioning body—great good is done.

III. EVERY MEMBER NEEDED (12:21-24)

A. One member cannot say to another: “We don’t need you.”

- 1) The eye cannot say this to the hand.
- 2) The head cannot say this to the foot.
- 3) All are important to a proper functioning of the human body.

B. This is also true in the church.

- 1) We are not the head—Christ is!
- 2) We do not over-exalt ourselves and put down others.
- 3) To do so is to dispute the wisdom of God.
- 4) For God placed him in the church.
- 5) In fact:
 - a) The feebler, weaker, or more delicate members may seem to be unneeded; but, in reality, the more they are necessary.
 - b) We actually spend more time on them, dressing them up and putting more effort out of them.
 - c) Instead of despising them, we bestow more honors upon them.

C. In the church:

- 1) Those who seem to be weaker, we need to spend more labor on.
- 2) We are not to despise them, nor look upon them with contempt.
- 3) *“Those who society cast out and look down upon, the church takes and honors among itself”*
- 4) James 2:5-6

IV. GOD HAS MADE THE BODY SPECIAL LIKE HE HAS THE CHURCH (12:25-27)

A. God designed the body for it to fulfill its purpose.

- 1) He made those parts of the body that are more uncomely.
- 2) He has purposely given more honor to the part that lacked.
- 3) But he has designed it to function smoothly—no schism, clashes, divisions, or discord—but to work in harmony.
- 4) And so it is with the church.
- 5) He wants the members to have the same care one for another.
- 6) In Acts 6, the Grecian widows were being neglected.
 - a) Something needed to be done so the church could function smoothly.
 - b) They appointed seven men to take charge and fill the need, which was done.

B. The church is to have mutual feelings for one another.

- 1) If one suffers, all suffer.

- 2) If one is honored, all are honored.
- 3) We weep with those who weep and rejoice with those that rejoice.
- 4) Illustration:
 - a) If a thorn goes into the foot, the whole body feels it.
 - b) If the head is garland, the whole man is glorified.
- 5) We do not stand alone—we help each other.

C. Each congregation is a small replica of the whole, universal church of Christ.

- 1) Christ is the head.
- 2) All are subject to him as members of His body.
- 3) All are important to Christ as a part of His body.
- 4) All have their function or responsibilities to fulfill.

CONCLUSION

1. The church should function the same way a human body function.
 - a) With each member realizing its important to the whole.
 - b) Everyone fulfilling their individual responsibilities to keep the body functioning.
2. Also, we must realize:
 - a) That all members are important;
 - b) All do not have the same responsibilities;
 - c) Some members function will be more obvious than others.
3. The church is not for the good of just one person, but for the good of all.
4. There is no place for party strife, hatred, envy, or jealousy.
5. We need to strive to live up to this ideal situation!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ 1. Using the human body helps to vividly show the need for unity and harmony.
- ___ 2. Christ is the only head of His church, but men may be the head of their church.
- ___ 3. Everyone has to be baptized by the Holy Spirit to be in the church.
- ___ 4. There are times when we must say to a member, you are not needed here.
- ___ 5. The church is not made up of just one member, but many.
- ___ 6. The interest of one member must not over-shadow the good of the body.
- ___ 7. The well-being of each member affects the whole body.
- ___ 8. The more feeble or weak a member is, the more labor that needs to be bestowed.
- ___ 9. Each member should have the same care for all other members.
- ___ 10. Each congregation is a small replica of the whole or universal church of Christ.

Lesson Ten

“That Which is Greater Than Gifts”

(1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13)

After listing the various miraculous gifts and how the members should function in the use of those gifts for the good of the church, he gives an admonition: **“But earnestly desire the best gifts!”** Desire them not for your own aggrandizement, but for the good of the body of Christ. But he also adds another concept: **“And yet, I show you a more excellent way.”** There is something that is more critical to the proper functioning of the body than the gifts. It is love—love for God and our fellow-man. And in particular, love for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

It is obvious that the church at Corinth was well-endowed with miraculous gifts, but was having all kinds of problems of dissension and disharmony. They were exalting men above what they should have—showing carnality, envy, jealousy in the midst. All kinds of other problems had entered into their midst. What was wrong? They lacked one of the greatest ingredients that God has clearly shown to man—LOVE! Love was obviously not being shown among them as it should have been. The purpose of chapter eleven is to fully illustrate this concept.

DISCUSSION**I. LOVE IS GREATER BECAUSE IT ENHANCES THE USE OF MIRACULOUS GIFTS (13:1-3)*****A. Love and Tongues.***

- 1) Okay, so you have the gift of tongues.
- 2) Even if you could speak the most eloquent language of men and Angels.....
- 3) Even if you had the most supreme power of utterance....
- 4) Without love to guide the proper use of the gift:
 - a) It is worthless to accomplish God’s purposes.
 - b) The use of the gift will be like a discordant gong or a clanging cymbal.
- 5) Love enhances the use of the gift.
- 6) Love gives it proper guidance and use to accomplish good.

B. Love and Other miraculous gifts.

- 1) Okay, so you have any one of the following miraculous gifts:
 - a) Prophecy—one who speaks for God—a great privilege.
 - b) Understand all mysteries—speaks the secrets of God now being revealed.
 - c) All knowledge—insight into deeper meaning of Scripture.
 - d) All faith (Mountain removing kind—miracles, powers, signs).
- 2) But without love, I am nothing!
- 3) Matthew 7:21-23:
 - a) They didn’t love God—because they didn’t do what he said to do!
 - b) This rebukes the intellectual & spiritual pride of many Christians.
 - c) Love enhances the gifts—makes proper use of them to help others.

C. Love and sacrifice.

- 1) And...even if you were to show great acts like:
 - a) Giving away a lot of money to the poor;

- b) Or, giving my body up to be burned as a martyr;
- 2) Without love, it will profit me nothing.
 - a) There will be no reward for such.
 - b) There is nothing in the act that avails.
 - c) It is the spirit behind the act that is critical.
- 3) Love enhances my gift of money or myself to others—makes such profitable.

II. LOVE IS INTRINSICALLY GREATER THAN MIRACULOUS GIFTS (13:4-7).

- A. Suffers love**—patient, passive under duress, endures evils.
- B. Is kind**—Active, does good to others, confers blessings.
- C. Envious not**—no malice, grudge, or jealousy.
- D. Vaunts not itself**—not boastful, does not show off, and does not put one's self forward.
- E. Is not puffed up**—not proud or arrogant.
- F. Does not behave itself unseemly**—Not rude, but courteous, considerate of others, noble manners.
- G. Seeks not her own**—not self-seeking, not selfish.
- H. Not easily provoked**—not easily angered, not a chip on his shoulder.
- I. Thinks no evil**—does not keep a record of wrongs done them.
- J. Rejoices not in iniquity**—Does not delight in evil, or when one falls prey to evil.
- K. Rejoices in the truth**—accepts and is happy over truth in one's life.
- L. Bears all things**—Endures all kinds of things, wrongs, tribulations.
- M. Believes all things**—believes the best about people or the situations of life.
- N. Hopes all things**—not a pessimist, but an optimists.
- O. Endures all things**—longsuffering—70 X 7.
(This is a good picture of the life of Christ!)

III. LOVE IS GREATER BECAUSE IT WILL LAST FOREVER (13:8-13)

- A. Gifts will not last long.**
 - 1) Love will last, never fail, not stop or vanish away.
 - 2) But gifts will fail, cease, and vanish away when they have served their purpose.
 - a) They revealed the message of God to men.
 - b) They were to confirm the message spoken from God. (Mk. 16:15-20; Heb. 2:2-4)
 - 3) When the last book of the New Testament was written down and confirmed, then the miracles would cease.
 - a) The partial is completed!
 - b) God's final revelation to man is complete.
 - 4) Illustrated:
 - a) It is like a child that grows up—puts away childish things.
 - b) It is like looking into a cloudy glass as opposed to seeing in a clear one.
- B. Additional proofs that the gifts would cease.**
 - 1) How given?
 - a) Only through the laying on of the hands of the Apostles (Acts 8:14-19).
 - b) Paul said it was the sign of an Apostle—only they could do it (2 Cor. 12:12-13).

c) When all Apostles were dead—no more gifts!

C. Love is even greater than Faith and Hope.

- 1) Both Faith and Hope are fundamental to Christianity.
- 2) But love is even more so.
- 3) Without love, even Faith and Hope have no real meaning.
- 4) Faith and Hope will cease also in the Judgment.
- 5) Love will continue on throughout eternity.

CONCLUSION

1. We could have a church full of very talented and able people.
2. But if love is not in their lives, it would be nothing.
3. One of the greatest passages in the New Testament and often one of the most neglected.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. While miraculous gifts were extraordinary, there is something greater than them.**
- 2. The gift of tongues was worthless unless used in love to accomplish good.**
- 3. Martyrdom without love accomplishes nothing.**
- 4. Love is courteous and considerate of others.**
- 5. Love rejoices in truth, but not in error.**
- 6. The description of love is a good picture of Christ Himself.**
- 7. The miraculous gifts were to cease when they had accomplished their purpose.**
- 8. Only the Apostles could pass on the gifts to members of the church.**
- 9. Love is even greater than Faith & Truth.**
- 10. Love will continue throughout eternity.**

Lesson Eleven

“Regulations of Miraculous Gifts” (1 Corinthians 14:1-40)

Chapter 12 gives a listing of the gifts, chapter 13 shows that these gifts must be used out of love for God and others, and chapter 14 gives some special insights on how these gifts were to be used in their assemblies. Paul begins the chapter by encouraging them to follow after love as they seek to possess and use these miraculous gifts to the glory of God.

DISCUSSION

I. PROPHECY IS PREFERABLE OVER TONGUES (14:1-11)

A. They were to desire the gifts, but especially prophecy.

- 1) Some gifts were more useful and helpful in their assemblies.
- 2) It called for good common sense to know when to use their gifts.
- 3) Prophecy in particular was especially desirable when the church assembled.

B. Reasons why:

- 1) Those who spoke in a tongue:
 - a) If the tongue was unknown to the audience, it was useless.
 - b) No one could understand it, only God.
 - c) You may speak mysteries, secret things, but if not understood, worthless.
 - d) They would remain a secret, or a mystery, unless interpreted.
 - e) If anyone is helped, it may be the person with the gift.
 - Not from what is said;
 - But, from the ability to exercise a miraculous gift.
- 2) When a prophet speaks:
 - a) Men are able to understand.
 - b) Thus, they are edified, built up, exhorted, comforted.
- 3) Tongues can be helpful to the church if translated (interpreted).
 - a) The message must be put in their tongue or language to be understood.
 - b) It no longer remains a mystery, but now is known.
- 4) Edification can take place when:
 - a) There is a revealing, making something known.
 - b) Knowledge is imparted.
 - c) There is teaching or preaching done.

C. Illustrations:

- 1) A musical instrument is worthless in communicating beautiful music if it does not make distinct tonal differences.
- 2) On the battlefield, a trumpet must communicate to the soldiers their orders but distinct tonal differences—otherwise confusion results.
- 3) We, too, must speak words easy to be understood.
- 4) Otherwise, we are like barbarians (foreigners) to one another when we speak.

D. Observations:

- 1) The Christians at Corinth were somewhat carnal-minded.

- 2) They seem to have been fascinated & took great delight in the gift of tongues, even though when they were of no value in their use in the church.
- 3) They valued more what was a show (entertainment) than that which could teach, exhort, comfort, or build up.

II. PURPOSE OF GIFTS STRONGLY EMPHASIZED (14:12-20)

A. The chief purpose for the church was for edification.

- 1) They were encouraged to seek after and use those gifts that did this.
- 2) If they had the gift of tongues:
 - a) They needed to have an interpreter (translator) to convey the message to the church.
 - b) They needed to realize that acceptable worship is more than outward form.
 - c) Worship is inward also—pray & sing with the spirit & understanding.
 - d) Without understanding, it is meaningless activity.
- 3) The only way others who listen can say “amen” is if they understand the message.
 - a) To “amen” something they do not understand is hypocrisy.
 - b) You may pray a good prayer, but if not understood, of what value is it?

B. Paul illustrates his point with his own life.

- 1) He spoke in tongues more than they all (traveled widely—needed such).
- 2) But, he had rather speak 5 words they could understand than 10,000 words they could not understand.
- 3) He admonishes them:
 - a) “Grow up!”
 - b) Be like children when it comes to evil.
 - c) Be like men when it comes to reasoning & understanding truth.
 - d) Show your understanding (your maturity) by how you use these gifts.

III. DIFFERING PURPOSES REQUIRE DIFFERENT USUAGES (14:21-25)

A. Tongues are for getting people’s attention at first.

- 1) Like on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4-8).
 - a) It was a sign that the people recognized the power of God behind it.
 - b) It caused them to be willing to listen to plain teaching later.
- 2) But, tongues can backfire in the wrong situation, if used.
 - a) Suppose that an unbeliever came into your assembly.
 - b) And all he heard was people getting up and speaking in languages he did not understand.
 - c) He would think that you are a bunch of crazy people.

B. But prophecy can be very helpful in that situation.

- 1) If an unbeliever comes into your assembly, he will be impressed.
- 2) He has been taught clearly about himself and his estranged relationship with God.
- 3) He will be told what he must do to get right with God.
- 4) He is convicted and humbles himself before God.
- 5) He gives admission that God is truly in your midst (Heb. 4:12).

IV. TO BE EFFECTIVE, GIFTS MUST BE USED ORDERLY (14:26-33)

A. All of their gifts:

- 1) Were from God and had a value in God's scheme of things.
- 2) But they had to be used correctly.
- 3) They must all be used to edify or build up the church.

B. Special regulations:

1) If you speak in a tongue:

- a) No more than 2 or 3 should speak—and that should be one at a time.
- b) Then, there must be an interpreter (translator).
- c) If there is no interpreter:
 - Keep silence, do not get up and speak in a tongue.
 - Speak only to yourself and God.

2) If you are a prophet:

- a) No more than 2 or 3 should speak—and that should be one at a time.
- b) When someone is speaking and another prophet receives a message:
 - He is to stop talking and sit down.
 - Let the new person speak his message.
- c) Those who hear the message are to judge it, discern its value.
- d) Services must be conducted in such a way so that all may learn and be comforted.

3) The spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet.

- a) This idea of uncontrolled actions in the name of God is wrong.
- b) Such actions destroy the dignity & reverence of the worship of God.
- c) God does not authorize confusion in worship.
- d) He authorizes orderliness & peace.
- e) This is true in all congregations or assemblies of God's people.

V. REGULATIONS UPON WOMEN IN PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES (14:34-35)

A. They are to keep silent.

- 1) They are not permitted to get up like the men and speak in the assembly.
- 2) Even the Law taught this concept that the woman was to be in obedience (Gen. 3:16).

B. If they need better understanding:

- 1) Do not speak out in the assembly.
- 2) Rather, asked their menfolks at home.

C. It is a shame for a woman to speak in the assembly.

VI. GIFTED MEN ARE REQUESTED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THESE ARE THE COMMANDS OF GOD (14:36-40)

A. The word of God did not originate with men.

- 1) It originated with Jesus Christ and His Apostles.
- 2) It came through the Spirit of God.
- 3) They needed to acknowledge this fact.

B. Those who have been given gifts can attest that these are God's commands.

- 1) Some who are ignorant may not want to accept this fact.
- 2) But, nevertheless, it is still the truth.

3) If they want to remain in ignorance, so let it be!

C. Again, he emphasizes:

1) Desire to prophecy.

2) But don't put down speaking in tongues (when interpreted).

3) But, by all means, be sure that all things are done in a decent and orderly way, so that good will come.

CONCLUSION

1. We do not have miraculous gifts today.

2. But we do have the natural gifts that all have to some degree or another.

3. These are to be used in a decent and orderly way to build up the church.

4. These gifts are not for self-aggrandizement.

5. So that also when non-Christians come into your assembly, they can be impressed—not depressed.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

___ 1. God actually encourage His people to want to use these miraculous gifts.

___ 2. Some gifts were more useful in their assembly than others.

___ 3. Edification must take place in the use of any gift.

___ 4. The Corinthians were valuing the gifts more as a show, than edification.

___ 5. If there was no interpreter, the person was speaking only mysteries to them.

___ 6. Tongues can get people's attention if it is their language.

___ 7. God told some men to keep silent in the church just like he did the women.

___ 8. Paul trace the forbiddance of the women speaking in the assembly to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

___ 9. A woman's submissive role is one of culture in reality.

___ 10. Paul told the church to desire prophesy and not put down speaking in tongues.

Lesson Twelve

“The Assurance of the Resurrection”

(1 Corinthians 15:1-58)

Paul now turns to another problem in the midst of the Corinthian church. It is appalling to us that such a problem would exist. But, it was obviously there and had to be dealt with. Some were evidently questioning or denying that Christians would be raised! This doctrine had to come from an outside influence. Paul and the other Apostles and Evangelists among them had not taught such. It had to be a false teacher in their midst. He begins this thoughts with what he had taught among them.

DISCUSSION**I. THE GOSPEL PAUL PREACHED AMONG THEM (15:1-11)*****A. What was that Gospel?***

- 1) Christ died for our sins according to the teaching of Scriptures.
- 2) He was buried.
- 3) He was raised to life on the third day according to Scripture.

B. Basic proof of Christ's resurrection:

- 1) He was seen by Cephas (Simon Peter).
- 2) He was seen of the twelve several times during the 40 days before his ascension.
- 3) He was seen by over 500 brethren at one time.
 - a) The greater part who are still alive.
 - b) And they are still bearing testimony to His resurrection.
- 4) He was seen by James (the Lord's brother).
 - a) Before the resurrection, none of his brothers were believers.
 - b) After the resurrection, they completely changed.
- 5) He was seen by all the Apostles (Thomas being present).
- 6) Last of all, Paul said he was seen of him.

C. The Corinthians' reception of the Gospel:

- 1) They had heard the resurrection of Christ preached.
- 2) They had received it in good faith.
- 3) They even took their stand in it.
- 4) And it will be their means of eternal salvation if they remain in it...or they will have believed in vain.

D. Paul expresses his gratefulness for God's grace shown to him.

- 1) He was an Apostle (born out of due time).
 - a) The other Apostles had been with Jesus during his earthly ministry.
 - b) Paul had not, but he had still been privileged to see the risen Lord.
- 2) He did not deserve to be an Apostle, because he persecuted the church.
 - a) This was one sin he found hard to forgive himself of—even though the Lord had forgiven him.
 - b) He showed deep humility over this matter.
- 3) God's grace had caused him to be what he was.
 - a) This grace was not bestowed in vain upon him either.

- b) He labored more abundantly than they all.
- c) Yet, it was not really Paul, but the Grace of God within him.
- 4) Thus:
 - a) Whether Paul had preached to them or some other Apostle or Evangelists....
 - b) The resurrection had to be preached...and so you believed it!

II. THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISBELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION (15:12-19)

A. If you say that there is no resurrection:

- 1) You are also saying that Christ was not raised.
- 2) To deny the one is to deny the other.
- 3) To deny the resurrection of Christ brings terrible consequences.

B. Consequences of denying Christ's resurrection:

- 1) Paul said his preaching to them was vain—had no real purpose.
- 2) Your faith is in vain in Christ.
 - a) It is misfounded.
 - b) You have faith in a dead Christ, not a risen One.
 - c) But the Bible speaks everywhere of Christ's resurrection.
- 3) The preaching of the Apostles makes them false witnesses of God.
 - a) We teach that Christ was raised, when He evidently was not according to some there.
 - b) Our message is a false message and to be rejected then.
- 4) You are still in your sins.
 - a) Christ came to pay a debt to God (He died for our sins).
 - b) The resurrection was God's proof that the debt had been paid.
 - c) If not raised, there is no proof, you are still in your sins.
 - d) Your faith is in a dead redeemer, no redeemer at all.
- 5) Those who have died, have perished.
 - a) Jesus' promise of mansions and coming again are meaningless.
 - b) Paul's hope for a crown of reward is vain.
 - c) There is no hope offered in reality.
- 6) If you have hope only in this life:
 - a) It is a miserable hope.
 - b) It is a deluded hope.
 - c) We are greatly to be pitied, because we believe in a delusion.

C. The resurrection of Jesus is our basis of faith in our own resurrection. (1 Peter 1:3)

III. MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS ABOUT THE RESURRECTION (15:20-57)

A. It will be a universal (general) resurrection of all men.

- 1) The evidence shows Christ is risen.
- 2) He is only the firstfruits of those that will be raised.
- 3) Through Adam, death came upon all mankind.
- 4) Through Christ, all men will be raised.
- 5) The empty tomb of Jesus is testimony to our resurrection.

B. The sequence of the resurrection.

- 1) He primarily now has Christians in mind (not told much about unsaved).

- 2) Christ was raised first as an assurance of our resurrection to come.
- 3) Those who are Christians will be raised at Christ's second coming.
- 4) This will be the end of all things:
 - a) The Kingdom will be delivered up to God, the Father.
 - b) All rule, authority, and power will be put down.
 - c) All enemies will be put under His feet.
 - d) The last enemy is death, which the resurrection will bring to an end.
- 5) Then Christ will be subject to the Father—so God can be all in all.

C. He shows the inconsistencies in their doctrine & practice.

- 1) He asks them about their practice of baptism.
 - a) Some were possibly practicing baptizing living people for dead ones.
 - b) If the dead are not raised, why worry about the dead?
 - c) Why be baptized for the, if there is no resurrection?
- 2) Also, why put our lives in jeopardy in preaching this Gospel?
 - a) Paul and others were in constant threat of death in preaching.
 - b) Why go through all of that if there is no resurrection?
 - c) Why not just eat & drink, for tomorrow we die, as some advocate.
 - d) Enjoy this life because in death, it is all over.
- 3) So, because of the wrong kind of company you are keeping, don't let their false ideas corrupt you.
 - a) Don't fall prey to the wrong ideas and lose your hope.
 - b) Be awake to righteousness.
 - c) Don't walk in sin and rebellion against God.
 - d) Some of you are weak in knowledge; so, get busy and learn God's truth.

D. The How of the resurrection.

- 1) He uses a common example to prove his point.
 - a) A seed is planted, it dies, and new life comes forth.
 - b) Out of death comes life.
 - c) All seeds are given its own body as God pleases.
 - d) God is able to do this.
- 2) He illustrates with the different kinds of flesh that God has made.
 - a) There is the flesh of men, beasts, fish, and birds.
 - b) God is able to make different kinds of flesh or bodies.
- 3) God has even made different kinds of heavenly bodies:
 - a) There is the glory of the celestial, the terrestrial, the sun, moon and the stars.
 - b) Each has its own glory with its different kind of a body.
- 4) So also is the resurrection from the dead.
 - a) The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.
 - b) It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory.
 - c) It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.
 - d) It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.
- 5) God is very capable of giving us a new kind of body for a new kind of an existence.
 - a) As we have born the image of the earthly.
 - b) So we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

E. An exception to the resurrection.

- 1) Even though all have died since Adam according to God's decree.
- 2) Not all will have died when Jesus returns.
- 3) What will happen to them?
 - a) They will be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye.
 - b) The dead in Christ will be raised with their new spiritual bodies.
- 4) This mortal will put on immortality.

F. Our resurrection is our victory over death.

- 1) The grave is not the end.
- 2) Death will not forever hold us.
- 3) There will be a resurrection of all men.
- 4) Death will then be swallowed up, conquered, and done away with.
- 5) Death will no longer have its victory over us.
- 6) We will be victorious over death through Christ Jesus our Lord.

IV. ADMONITION IN VIEW OF THESE THINGS (15:58)

- A. We need to be steadfast in our beliefs.*
- B. So we won't be moved away from the hope we have in Jesus.*
- c) We need to constantly fill our lives with God's good works.*
- d) We need to realize that our labors will not be in vain in Him.*

CONCLUSION

1. Death can be an entrance to a more beautiful & desirable life for the obedient and faithful.
2. Will you be victorious over death eternally through Christ Jesus?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**True or False**

- ___ 1. We know that the Corinthians were taught about a resurrection from the dead.
- ___ 2. The false ideas that they had must have come from an outside source.
- ___ 3. Paul gives a list of consequences if a person denies the resurrection of Jesus.
- ___ 4. Paul said that his preaching was vain and their faith was vain if Jesus was not raised.
- ___ 5. There is a universal resurrection of all mankind to occur at the end of time.
- ___ 6. Upon Jesus' return, the kingdom will be turned over to God, the Father.
- ___ 7. The last enemy to be destroyed is death—which occurs in the general resurrection.
- ___ 8. Paul warns them of what wrong associations can bring if they are not careful.
- ___ 9. God has made all kinds of different bodies....so, he can do such for us also.
- ___ 10. The Christians victory is not the resurrection, but what he is raised unto.

Lesson Thirteen

“Benevolent Concern for Brethren”**(1 Corinthians 16:1-24)**

Chapter 15 would have been an excellent ending for this letter, but there were some final instructions and greetings that he wanted to pass on to them. This chapter is more of a miscellaneous catch-all to end with.

DISCUSSION**I. BENEVOLENCE FOR THE POOR SAINTS IN JERUSALEM (16:1-4)*****A. How the money was being collected.***

- 1) It was to be laid aside in a common treasury each week on Sunday.
- 2) So that the offering will be prepared ahead of time, and not be a last minute thing when Paul comes to visit them.

B. Reasons for the collection.

- 1) There were many poor saints in Jerusalem for various reasons.
- 2) Paul felt a strong compassion for his people...especially the poor.
- 3) Paul had promised the other Apostles he would remember the poor (Gal. 2:10).
- 4) It was a good way for the Gentile churches to show their gratitude to the Jerusalem church for sending the Gospel to them.

C. The basis of their giving.

- 1) Every one was to give: rich, poor, married, widow, etc.
- 2) It gave every one an opportunity to have a part in what was done.
- 3) Their giving would be determined by their prosperity by God.
 - a) No coercion, force, or dunning.
 - b) It was to be freely given.
 - c) A way to prove they are worthy of such a trust by God.

D. Integrity in handling this money.

- 1) Don't give it to Paul.
- 2) Send it by your messengers whom you choose.
- 3) I will write a letter of introduction to the Apostles for them.
- 4) I am not sure if I will be going when they go, or I might.
- 5) If I go, we will go together.

II. BENEVOLENCE TO BRETHREN WHO SERVE THE CHURCHES (16:5-12)***A. Benevolence to Paul.***

- 1) Paul had originally planned to come to Corinth after passing through Macedonia.
 - a) In fact, he wanted to spend the winter months there with them.
 - b) Then, they could help him on his way afterwards.
- 2) The problems at Corinth had caused him to change his first plans.
 - a) He wanted to sail direct from Ephesus to Corinth.
 - b) But, because of the problems, he decided on a different route in order to give time for his letter to have a good affect.

- 3) The reason why he can't come just now is:
 - a) I want to stay at Ephesus until Pentecost.
 - b) A great & effectual door had opened to him in that city.
 - c) All Asia heard the word through this effort.
 - d) But, there were adversaries also—reason for leaving Ephesus later.
- 4) He went from Ephesus to Macedonia, and then to Corinth.

B. Benevolence to Timothy.

- 1) If Timothy comes:
 - a) Paul had evidently sent Timothy & Erastus on ahead to prepare the way for Paul's later visit.
 - b) He had tried to stop them and sent Titus instead with this letter.
 - c) In case he does come:
 - Try not to cause him to be fearful in your midst.
 - See that he is not treated with dis-respect.
 - Send him on his way to me in peace.
- 2) Paul is not only calling for a benevolent spirit to be shown...
 - a) But, he was showing one towards Timothy & other ministers of the Gospel.
 - b) He had shown this because of their work in the Lord as ministers.

C. Benevolence to Apollos.

- 1) Be understanding of Apollos.
- 2) I tried to persuade him to come to you, but it was not convenient for him.
- 3) He may come later when a good opportunity offers itself.

III. EXHORTATIONS TO BE STRONG AND HAVE A BENEVOLENT, RESPECTFUL ATTITUDE TOWARDS SERVANTS IN THE CHURCH (16:13-18).

A. The need to be strong.

- 1) The church at Corinth had shown a great deal of weakness, immaturity, and carnality.
- 2) They needed these admonitions to be strong.
- 3) Be watchful, vigilance—for advance of evils into one's life.
- 4) Stand fast in the faith—don't vacillate—put roots down deep in Truth.
- 5) Quit you like men—show manliness, courage—be an ideal—be a hero.
- 6) Spiritual battle requires spiritual strength.
- 7) Let all things be done with love.
 - a) Man is going to be active—do things.
 - b) Just be sure love is directing those activities.
 - c) 1 Pet. 4:8

B. Have a Benevolent, respectful attitude towards servants in the church.

- 1) Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaicus may have been the ones who brought the information about the problems at Corinth to Paul.
 - a) They were the first-fruits of Achaia.
 - b) They had addicted themselves to serve the church.
 - c) Their coming had been a great encouragement to Paul.
- 2) Paul encourages the church at Corinth to:

- a) Acknowledge them for what they are—servants who were concerned for others.
- b) Be submissive to their leadership.
- c) Cooperate with them—put yourself under their teaching & leadership.

IV. BENEVOLENT GREETINGS EXPRESSED (16:19-21)

A. From the churches in the Province of Asia.

- 1) Paul wanted them to know that the church had spread all over Asia.
- 2) That they were aware that Paul was writing this letter to them.
- 3) They expressed a desire to send greetings to them.

B. From Priscilla & Aquilla.

- 1) These two were not new to Paul nor the church at Corinth.
- 2) They were there when Paul was first there.
- 3) Paul was in business with them to help support himself & others.
- 4) The church meeting in their home also sends greetings.

C. From all the brethren.

- 1) Christians all over that area send greetings.
- 2) So, you also should express loving, benevolent greetings to one another.
- 3) With a holy kiss—shows that they were at peace, reconciled, and no division.

D. From Paul personally.

- 1) Most of Paul's letters were written by someone else, while he dictated.
- 2) But he tried to sign it at the end with a personal note to the churches.
- 3) It showed care and concern personally for them.

V. FINAL EXHORTATIONS (16:22-24)

A. To love the Lord.

- 1) Greek word "Phileo"—strong, close affection for the Lord.
- 2) Drawn to him because of his great love for us.

B. To appreciate God's grace.

- 1) God wants to shed His grace abundantly upon all His children.
- 2) Paul's expression was a way of helping them appreciate God's grace.

C. Paul's love is with them.

- 1) He had some strong rebukes in this letter.
- 2) But it is sent with love to them.

CONCLUSION

1. Paul had helped to bring many of these Christians into Christ.
2. He had a personal interest in them & their welfare.
3. This letter shows that concern for their being right with God & one another.
4. He was hopeful of their response to this letter.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. The day that the church is to gather money together for the Lord's Work is on the first day of the week.
- 2. The churches among the Gentiles countries were being asked to help the poor saints in Jerusalem and that area.
- 3. Paul was greatly concerned that the money collected be handled so there would be no question or doubt about whole process.
- 4. Paul wanted the church to help Timothy & Erastus if they come by there in their preaching efforts.
- 5. Paul said that he tried to talk Apollos into going to Corinth.

- 6. "Quit you like men" is the old King James Version that means be courageous.

- 7. Paul encouraged the church at Corinth to be submissive to their correct leadership.

- 8. Priscilla & Aquilla sent their greetings by Paul's letter to the church at Corinth.

- 9. Paul usually signed his letters but dictated most of it to a scribe.

- 10. Stephanas, fortunatus, and Achaicus were leaders in the church at Corinth that had evidently informed Paul of the condition of the church at Corinth.

