

FIRST CORINTHIANS

Relationship to the Biblical Story

Paul had come and had explained to these formerly pagans that Christ had come, died for their sins, been resurrected and had ushered in a new age, one where there was forgiveness of all sin and freedom from the Law. Now they were equipped with full knowledge (of the Christ). These Corinthians had made the same error that many make today in their theology. They had misunderstood the age and the delay of the implementation of the kingdom. Thus they thought that since the age of the Law was gone, and they were in a new age, thus they were enjoying the rewards of the kingdom now. Since Paul had explained that they were free from the Law (of the Jews) and everything was done, forgiveness of sins, new life, they thought that they were enjoying the kingdom now in this body. Thus, they denied the future earthly kingdom in a resurrected body, saying that everything was given to them by God . . . now! This is the kingdom, and they were enjoying its benefits . . . freedom from authority, law . . . and they were rewarded with riches, honor . . . and if they were not rewarded with these items, then they were not spiritual.

So while Paul was there, he had given them his revelation of this new age, and then having left them to themselves (very little was written, the Old Testament, if available, was likely only what was remembered by the Jews in the assembly), they began to reason from what they knew of Paul's speeches. As new believers are wont to do, they heard the parts they liked and forgot the parts that didn't. The new life and new age became everything. Freedom from the penalty of sin and forgiveness of sin issue became freedom from sin's effects (license), and so they could sin without penalty, while the unbeliever outside the church, not being forgiven, would be penalized for it. Since Paul had declared that all was clean, they were free to engage in any activity they wanted. It was clear to them that what separated them from the pagans, who were doing the same sensuous things, was their superior knowledge. In other words, the benefit of being a believer was that they could enjoy the same sensuous things of this world, but without penalty. Thus they were proud of the incest allowed in the church (5:1ff.). They had separated themselves from those outside who were immoral (and unforgiven), but they themselves were allowed to go to prostitutes, to release spouses from the bonds and authority of marriage, and negate the creation revealed order of the sexes in the church due to the removal of authority for personal freedom. But the knowledge that they espoused was not that of revelation, but that of human reason. Thus they admired human courts and sent brotherly arguments to the judges. Since they felt they were in the kingdom they felt they were rewarded for spirituality with the speaking and charismatic gifts, and they judged Paul as weak since his eloquence was lacking.

The basis of their error was that they thought the superior knowledge they were given was superior human wisdom. Yet Paul makes clear in 1 Corinthians 1 that the best of human wisdom is foolishness to God. And the simplest of Godly wisdom is foolishness to man. Thus, the point is that God's wisdom and man's wisdom are two totally different categories. You can't reason from man's wisdom to God, nor vice-versa. Man's wisdom is based on

human elevation . . . coveting. It can do nothing else. God's wisdom is based on His desires, His character, His glory. Man cannot achieve it without God giving it to him.

Situation

There was clearly a problem in Corinth. There were divisions between the people, and those divisions were based on misunderstandings of Paul's teaching that actually had been turned to criticize Paul.

The errors in teaching are focused in several areas.

Eschatology: The Kingdom is now; reward is now, not in a later life (denial of the later life in bodily resurrection on this earth).

The Corinthians felt that they were in the final age, an age of reward in the bodies they were occupying. This is clear from the following verses.

4:5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of *men's* hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

4:8 You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and *I* would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you.

10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

15:12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

Note also that the explanation of Chapters 3—4 are an explanation of how the reward is after the Lord comes and now is an age of suffering (i.e., Paul's life). Note also that the explanation of the resurrection in Chapter 15 is in reaction to the theology that is preached in Corinth that there is no resurrection ("how do some of you say . . .").

Since they felt they were in the kingdom reward period of time, they felt that the gifts that were given them separated them for public acknowledgement of their reward, and established the ruling order in the church. The order of the gifts was that the most visible and appealing, even supernaturally obvious, were the greater gifts. Thus gift of tongues was the greatest since very frequently only the speaker knew what he was saying, and he spoke to God in an unknown language, therefore edifying himself, and thus seemingly important. Healings were also important since that again was much beyond the mundane. When it came to the performance of the word, those who were eloquent and entertaining were the greatest while the behind the scenes gifts were considered less. Since Paul was an apostle, his was

that of revelation, but since he was not eloquent or a great human reasoner (i.e., “knowledge”), he was considered the lowest on the list of rewards and the least spiritual.

They had been told that they were rich in speech and knowledge. But Paul explains these are simply for the age of delay, not the kingdom marked by the return of the Lord.

1:5-7 that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, 6 even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Based on these gifts (thought to be rewards), there were divisions among them.

1;11 For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. 1:12 Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."

They were boasting of their elevation in the church.

1:29 that no man should boast before God

But their evaluations were not a testimony to their spirituality but to their fleshly nature that responded to human wisdom.

3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly

3:3 For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? 4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men?

3:18 If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age,

3:21 So then let no one boast in men.

4:3 But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you

4:6-8 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn not to exceed what is written, in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other. 7 For who regards you as superior? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? 8 You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have

become kings without us; and I would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you.

4:19 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant, but their power.

9:3 My defense to those who examine me is this

11:17-18 But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. 18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part, I believe it. 19 For there must also be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you.

The Gift Issue

Paul uses the words “speech” and “knowledge” in 1:5. The key words he uses later are “words of *wisdom*”. Thus the problem was the evaluation by human reasoning as presented by men, particularly in secular wisdom and ability to communicate popularly. Apollos was a great reasoner and speaker. Paul was clearly not, letting the substance of his words speak for him.

Gifts indicate spirituality:

Gifts were rewards that allowed one rule over others in the church. These gifts, particularly of knowledge (all knowledge) and speech (eloquence and/or reasoning), were allocated to some who were admired for their superior human knowledge (though it was contradictory to revelation).

The use of the word *logos* occurs about 8 times in chapters 1--4, and never occurs again until chapter 12. It is used in Chapter 1 along with ‘wisdom’ and ‘knowledge’.

12:8 is the only place where all three are used in the same sentence.

12:8 For to one is given the word of *wisdom* through the Spirit, and to another the *word of knowledge* according to the same Spirit;

12:8 ὃ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος δίδεται *λόγος σοφίας*, ἄλλω δὲ *λόγος γνώσεως* κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα,

“Wisdom of God” is interchanged with “the power of God” (1:24, 2:4, 2:5). That is the “power” that they are all looking for is the “wisdom” of God, which is in the revelation of God through the apostles. It is content, not speech and communication. Thus a “word of wisdom” (i.e., ‘speech of wisdom’) is a speech that relates to the power of God through something related to the revelation of God. A “word of knowledge” would be a similar thing, it would relate to the speaking of knowledge by the apostles. Since “speech” only

occurs in 1--4, and then again (other than 12:8) in 14 and 15, this “speech” or *logos* was a speaking gift, the ability to impart *gnosis* (i.e., “knowledge”). The problem was that people were imparting human knowledge, yet professing to speak God’s word). The emphasis had been made on their reasoning powers and on their communication skills rather than on content. Paul thus is arguing that their evaluation of him (which was low due to his delivery and reasoning skills) was worthless since that type of evaluation might work well in the world, but not in the church where revelation is absolutely important. Thus the most important thing is *revelation* and the knowledge of that content. For it is the knowledge of that content that delivers. It is the knowledge of reality, the knowledge that Christ will resurrect men from the dead that gives us the motivation (power) to live differently.

The “Power” Issue

The point of “power” is that it is in the word, and the word tells of Christ. Thus the power that will deliver them into the kingdom is God’s, but it is related to them through knowing the truth of the revelation (the Word). Their human reasoning did not reflect God nor the truth, thus there was no power in it. But there was power in Pauls’ words since it revealed the truth of God. But the word itself reflects a power now (ability to act based on true knowledge) which will be realized visibly later in the kingdom (resurrection). Thus the power is now in hope, but ultimately will be realized when God places believers back on this earth with His Son.

- 1:18 For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- 1:24: but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- 2:4-5: And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.
- 4:19-20: But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant, but their power. 20 For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power.
- 5:4: In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus,
- 6:14: Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.
- 15:24: then *comes* the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.
- 15:43: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;
- 15:56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;

Having established then the fact that the revelation that was important was the revelation of the apostles (and the O.T. as testified in chapter 4), Paul seeks to regulate it in chapters 12-14. Thus when one gets up to speak a word of knowledge (word regarding

understanding of apostolic revelation, i.e., clarity, exposition, etc.) he should consider its importance to the body.

They had not elevated apostolic *speech* as the greatest since they had felt that the most appealing was the best. This person had been elevated to *rule* because they were saying that they were kings or rulers based on their gifts. The arrogance of the gifts of speaking and reasoning became very evident.

When Paul says that he will not evaluate their words, but their power, what he is alluding to is the power of the Spirit, which is how he is able, as an apostle, to give revelation. If these men do not have the words of his revelation, but have the reasoning words of worldly wisdom, and have become arrogant on that basis, then he will chastise them. They are not responding to the Spirit which speaks in him.

The people had evaluated one another simply on their worldly ability to evaluate their presentation and their arguments. They had been given the basics of the gospel by Paul and Apollos, but had soon turned to the eloquence of their own teachers. They had also now judged not only Paul and Apollos based on their eloquence, but Jesus also, putting Him in the same category, not only of Paul and Apollos, but of themselves. The issue is revelation. They felt they were able to speak greatly. Since this was a new age of revelation, they thought their thinking was equal to (or better than) apostolic revelation and Jesus' revelation.

Paul, however, is arguing with them that they have missed the categories. First of all, Jesus had the revelation of God, and Paul, submissive to Jesus had the same revelation. Eloquence and argument does not matter, it is the content that matters. Their gifts were arrogantly elevating them, as they argue that there is no resurrection, that this is their reward, based on their own abilities. But Paul says this is not it, that the revelation will be come full and visible when Jesus comes and then there will be no need for apostolic revelation, since the "perfect" will come. Then they will be judged based on their words of wisdom (worldly) and Paul will also be judged by his message.

Problem

Paul is being judged as one who is not spiritually gifted based on his obvious lack of reward and thus not one who is to be listened to, nor supported in his ministry to the Jerusalem church.

Theological: This is based on a theological premise that the kingdom reward is present now and is seen in the obvious spiritual gifting to those who are spiritual and to thus to be elevated in the church.

Solution

Paul, as an apostle, will educate the Corinthians to the revelation as opposed to their secular pagan reasoning which they are calling spiritual.

Theological: The present age is not the kingdom but an age of sacrificial work for the cause of Christ and His church wherein the gifts are given apart from one's righteous behavior for the sake of the church age during the Times of the Gentiles and the future eschatological age of the kingdom where the reward will be presented based on sacrificial, humble, service to Christ (and His church).

Basic Argument

The Apostolic Gift of Revelation vs. the Secular Human Wisdom

- 1 Based on human wisdom, the Corinthians are evaluating their teachers and dividing up the congregation based on the most visually appealing gifts. Paul points out that the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man are not at all the same and what is foolishness to God is wisdom of man, and vice-versa.
- 2 Paul, an apostle does not have the impressive gifts of speech and (human) wisdom, and thus has been judged as lower spiritually. However, his apostolic gift is of revelation, the very character of God which is for those who are spiritual (believers) and cannot be discerned by the unbelievers as they only perceive human wisdom.
- 3—4 The apostolic gift of revelation qualifies Paul to build the foundation of the church, which others will build upon. If anyone builds based on human wisdom (self-glorifying) they will lose reward with God in the eschaton, and will be judged presently with discipline and physical destruction. Paul's reward is in the eschaton at Christ's return and in the delay his purpose is to edify the body through sacrificial suffering.

Freedom from the Law: To glorify God or self? (5—10): The antagonist teachers have taken Paul's revelation of freedom from the Law (penalty of sin) and viewed it through their human wisdom and come to the conclusion that they are in the period of kingdom reward, which is to enjoy self-indulgence in the sensuous without authority or law.

- 5—6 Antagonist: Freedom from the penalty of the Law and means that sensuality may be enjoyed: A man having an incestuous relationship is being honored in the assembly due to his ability to live out this freedom in a unique manner.

Paul: As the apostle to be regarded (revelation), Paul determines that revelation requires the judgment of the incestuous one. This man is under judgment of God, not blessing. The Corinthians are to judge on the basis of revelation and understand that

their lives are to live out God's desires, which include one man / one woman marriage, excluding sensuality with others.

- 7 Antagonist: Freedom from the authority of human bonds: Those who are married are free to divorce, slaves are free to reject their masters, and marriage (a bond) is not required any longer since they are in the kingdom age.

Paul: Paul exemplifies the proper relationship to marriage as he foregoes it for the sake of the gospel, and exhorts others to forsake all for the sake of the gospel.

- 8—10 Antagonist: Freedom to do all things due to the superior knowledge that the gospel brings: Freedom is superior knowledge and thus one may eat meat sacrificed to idols, or do anything since he has been set free.

Paul: Paul establishes that the point of the gospel is for the edification of the body and thus any act that influences a brother for evil is against the body and thus Christ and will come under judgment.

Gifts: Rewards for Self or Edify the Body (11—14)

- 11 Antagonist: The gifts determine status in the church and free women from the authoritarian order of male/female.

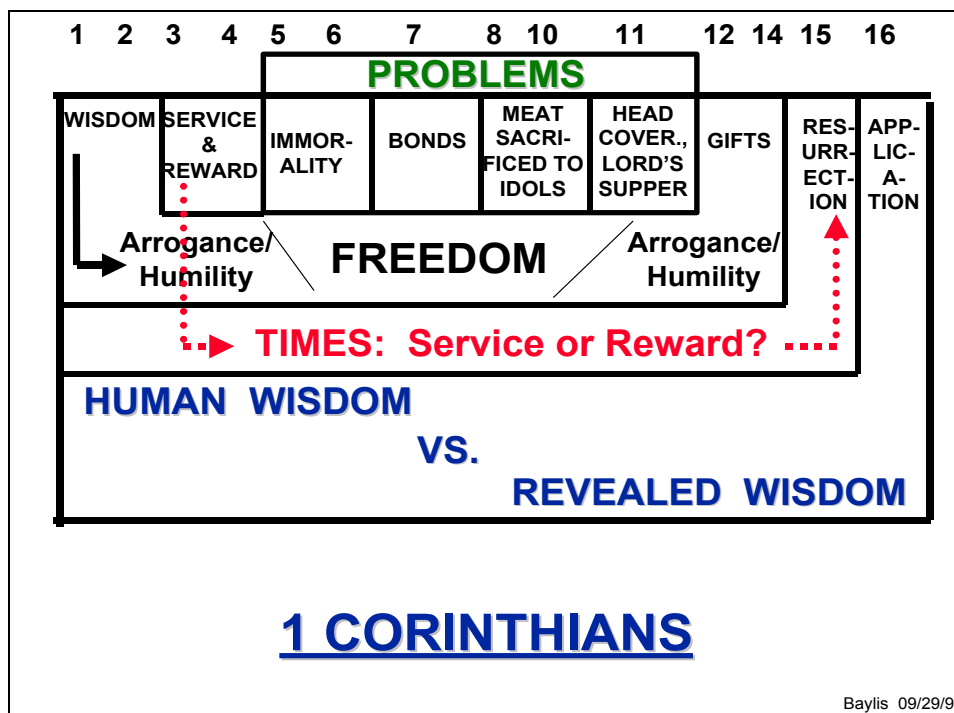
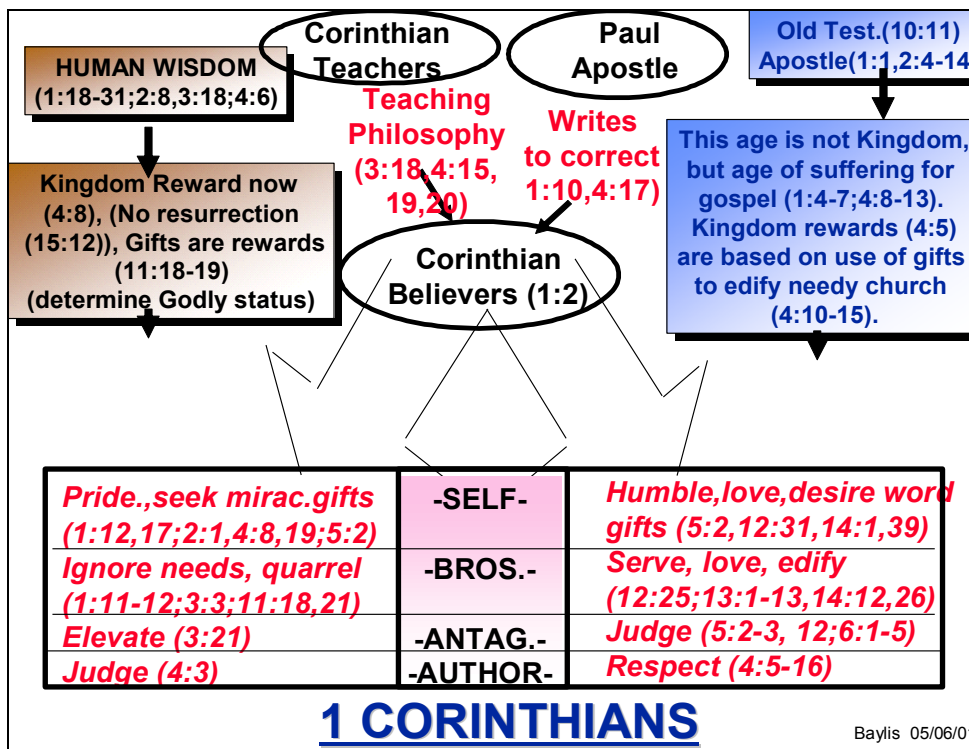
Paul: Paul establishes that the gifts do not determine status, but revelation determines the authority structure. Thus, those abusing the Lord's supper by elevating the gifted will be judged with physical destruction.

- 12-14 Paul: The gifts are given to edify the church. The apostolic (and revelatory) gifts are the greatest, while those contributing to the understanding of the revelation, but still edify the body, are the least. Gifts are to be effected based on edifying the body and in the order of contributing to the revelation.

Understanding the Church's Place in the Biblical Story (15—16)

- 15 Paul: Man's Adamic body is not the ultimate and thus not the body in which he is in the kingdom. The bodily resurrection of Christ as the first, indicates the bodily resurrection of the believers to enjoy the kingdom where death is overcome.

- 16 Paul's project of aiding (sacrificial giving to) the Jerusalem church is to be honored and thus they should participate in it.



History of Paul and the Corinthian Church¹

<u>WHERE</u>	<u>WHO/WHAT</u>	<u>SCRIPTUR E</u>
Corinth	Paul teaches for 1-1/2 years	Acts 18:11ff.
	Apollos continues on after Paul's departure for Ephesus	Acts 18:27ff.
Ephesus	Paul leaves Corinth with Priscilla and Aquilla and settles in Ephesus	Acts 18:18-19
	Apollos rejoins Paul at Ephesus	1 Cor. 16:12
	Paul sends letter to Corinth condemning fornicators within the church, Announces plans to visit Corinth Begins collection for poor.	1Cor 5:9 2Cor. 1:5,16
	Bad news brought to Paul from Corinth by members of Chloe's household	1Cor. 1:11
	Timothy started from Ephesus for Corinth and reached Macedonia	1Cor. 4:17 1Cor. 16:10 Acts 19:22 1Cor.1
	Letter from Corinthians brought to Paul by Fortunatus, Stephanus and Achnicus.	1Cor. 7:1 1Cor. 16:17
	Paul wrote 1 Corinthians sent by Titus. Collection for poor now organized. Titus returned to Ephesus	1Cor. 16:1 2Cor. 8:6,12:1
	(Timothy arrived at Corinth). Difficulties arose in the Corinthian Church. Paul's apostolic authority questioned and some defied Paul. (Timothy left, being unable to deal with crisis).	2Cor. 10:7,10 11:23, 12:16-17
Corinth	Paul heard of situation (from Timothy) and paid a short visit to Corinth, during which time some in the church grossly insulted him.	2Cor.2:1,12:14 13:1 2Cor 2:5-8, 7:12
Ephesus	Paul sent a letter to Corinth by Titus	2 Cor. 2:3,9
Corinth	Titus instructed them (urging the collection for Jerusalem) and returned to Paul through Macedonia on way to Troas	2Cor. 2:12-13 7:5-6

¹ This historical chronology is from Dr. Stanley Toussaint, Notes from 2 Corinthians. He references Plummer as his source for these. This chart, however, has been modified in

Troas, Macedonia	Paul left Ephesus for Troas, then went to Macedonia since he was anxious to get the report from Titus sooner	2Cor. 2:12-13
	Paul met Titus in Macedonia and received an encouraging report as to the outcome in Corinth	2Cor. 7:5-16
	Wrote 2 Corinthians and sent it from Macedonia by Titus and two brethren	2Cor.7:16-24
Corinth	Paul went to Corinth and spent 3 months there and wrote Romans	Acts 19-20

COMMENTARY

I. Introduction: Paul identifies self as an apostle, establishes the Corinthians as believers, and establishes their theological basis. (1:1-9)

A. Author: Paul establishes himself as the apostle (1:1).

1:1 Paul, called as an apostle² of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

B. Readers: Establishes the church at Corinth as believers in Christ. (1:2).

2 to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

C. Theological Status: The Corinthians have been equipped with understanding of the revelation of God and the gifts to impart that revelation to the church until the ultimate revelation of God at Jesus' Coming. (1:3-9).

3 Grace³ to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 4 I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in everything you were enriched⁴ in Him, in all speech⁵ and all knowledge,⁶ 6 even as the

² Declaring himself an apostle here is very important, for the Corinthians were comparing Paul's delivery of revelation to other's abilities to communicate and Paul was losing. Thus, Paul's argument will be that the word of an apostle is much more valuable than a pleasing delivery by anyone. The first four chapters will establish Paul's apostolic credentials. He will include Apollos in the argument to show that Apollos' himself did not desire to elevate himself in the sight of the Corinthians.

³ "Grace" here and in v. 4 indicate that everything they had was given to them by Christ. Thus there was nothing to boast about.

⁴ "Enriched" is used here and in 4:8 "you have become rich". Being enriched was something that these people were claiming was a rightful claim to those who were elevated.

⁵ The word here for "speech" (*logos*) is part of their problem. It occurs frequently through chapter 4 where the issue is clearly the communication abilities. Paul, of course, does not have them as he testifies in chapter 2 while the opponents do (they support Apollos). The word will occur again beginning in chapter 12 where the speech gifts come into question.

⁶ It appears here that the words for 'enriched in all speech and knowledge' indicates their problem. The speech (literally: *logou*) is offered by the Corinthians as that which gives them better status (chapters 1--2). Knowledge is the overall problem as can be seen also from chapters 1--2. The word is intense in the early chapters and then disappears until the later ones where the delivery of knowledge (apostolic or Old Testament) is considered.

testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift, ⁷ awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

- II. Problem: Divisions in the church based on an errant understanding of the gifts of speech and knowledge. (1:10-4:21).
- A. The problem defined: Divisions (based on the wisdom of men), when they should be unified based on the cross of Christ. (1:10-17).
 - B. Worldly reasoning is foolishness and leads to boasting of the one reasoning while revelation (both content and means) leads to boasting about God (1:18-31).
 - C. Paul and Apollos as examples. (2:1-4:6).
 - 1. The apostolic message. (2:1-16).
 - a. Paul's revelatory message to them was not based in the things that the world values (presentation and human reasoning), so that their faith would rest, not on worldly wisdom, but on the power of God to reveal the truth. (2:1-5).
 - b. Paul has revealed truths about God, which cannot be known without revelation confirmed by the Spirit. Without the Spirit, pagan man cannot understand. (2:6-16).
 - 2. Judgment is not by worldly standards but by God at His coming (3:1-4:6).
 - a. They are not spiritual men for they are divided based on fleshly wisdom, thinking that different gifts give status, while gifts actually are given so that man may serve the gospel. (3:1-9).
 - b. Each man's work will be judged by God at His revelation (Second Coming of Christ). If it is valid, it will be rewarded, if invalid, his work will be lost. (3:10-15).

⁷ The 'enrichment in speech and knowledge' is clear, Paul says, by the fact that they have all the gifts.

⁸ Again, here Paul uses the term revelation as being the fullness of seeing Jesus Christ. In the mean time the revelation that Paul gives must suffice. Thus, when the perfect is come in chapter 13 refers to the fullness of seeing Jesus. This is the eschatological issue here. The people were fighting over the ability to reveal God in the assembly.

⁹ Here Paul stresses that they are in a time of delay, "waiting for ... the Lord". This indicates that there also was a problem in the question of whether they were to enjoy the fulfillment of their gifts. It appears that there was an eschatological understanding about the period of delay, perhaps even similar to the post-millennial view of today.

- c. Paul exhorts them as a temple of God that they be not divided and destroy the church, or they will be destroyed (physical judgment). (3:16-17).
- d. Let no man think himself wise (wisdom of world) but become foolish (in eyes of worldly wisdom) that God may use him. (3:18-23).
- e. Paul explains that they should quit judging him on worldly wisdom, for the Lord will judge the motives when He comes. (4:1-5).
- f. Apostolic illustration: The Corinthian teachers elevated themselves and were being rewarded. Paul, an apostle, is not rewarded as he has become the scum of the world as a servant. (4:6-13).

D. Conclusion to the problem: Paul loves them, but their arrogance will be corrected when he comes unless they repent. (4:14-21).

III. Specific applications of the problem of secular wisdom, which needs to be corrected (5--14).

[Note: The whole section from 5:1—11 deal with church (or God) discipline of those introducing self-righteousness into the assembly. This “church” discipline has its foundations (in the New Testament) in Matthew 18 where discipline is instructed for any contradictory teaching other than imputed righteousness (God glorifying), as opposed to self-righteousness (man glorifying). The penalties before God are extremely severe. Thus it is recommended to review Matthew 18 in the Matthew notes to understand the basis for Paul’s teaching in these chapters. However, the ultimate foundation is the Pentateuch which prescribed penalties for Israel when they introduced other gods, which were gods of their imagination and self-glorifying.]

- A. **Specific Error #1:** Inappropriate human wisdom judgment from Biblical revelation: Freedom from sin (or the Law) does not mean freedom from God’s desires (and the effects of sin on God’s purposes)? (5:1-6:20).
 - 1. The necessity of judgment of brothers in sin must take place on those in the assembly who are introducing self-righteousness as righteous. (5:1--6:11).
 - a. Problem: Misunderstanding of Biblical knowledge, pride in keeping an immoral person in the assembly. They must evict him. (5:1-13).
 - 1) They have failed to assess Biblical revelation properly and have become proud of their sin (5:1-5).

5:1 It is actually reported that there is immorality¹⁰ among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife. 2 And you have become arrogant, and have not mourned instead, in order that the one who had done this deed might be removed from your midst. 3 For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present. 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his¹¹ flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

- 2) Proper Biblical judgment would have understood that sin's effects will pollute the body (5:6-8).
- 3) The Corinthians are to judge believers in the church and exercise separation (discipline) but while they judge outsiders they cannot separate from (exercise discipline on) them (5:9-13).

Their actions toward the immoral person within the assembly (5:1) was due to a misunderstanding of Paul's lost letter (or even his teaching). They felt that this immoral person was correct, even exemplary (notice that they are boasting about it (5:2,6) and feel this coordinates with the teaching of Paul.

They had taken Paul's exhortation to separate out the immoral believers to mean separation from immoral unbelievers. Thus they were embracing immoral believers and separating from immoral unbelievers. This doctrine, by deduction, continued their misunderstanding of 'freedom from sin' to mean that Christ had taken the penalty of sin, and reconciled them to God. Thus they were not only free to sin, but they could sin without penalty, while the unbelievers went to hell for the same sin. Therefore they did not judge the sin of insiders, but in fact, elevated them for their 'freedom'. The conclusion is that they felt that the kingdom (which they felt they were in) reward was the enjoyment of the sensuous (and immoral) without penalty.

¹⁰ The word here "*porneia*" is the same word used in Matthew 5 ("except for fornication").

¹¹ The pronoun "his" is not in the Greek here or in the next clause.

5:9 I wrote you in my letter¹² not to associate with immoral people; 10 I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters; for then you would have to go out of the world.¹³ 11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler-- not even to eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? 13 But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.

- b. However, regarding the judgment of insiders, they are not to be immoral for this is the characteristic of those unbelievers who do not inherit the kingdom of God. (6:1-11).
3. The explanation of the forgiveness of sins and immorality. (6:12-20).
- a. One who is washed has all things lawful for him, but not all things are profitable. (6:12-14).
 - b. Since our bodies are members of Christ (one flesh) they do not belong in union with a harlot. (6:15-20).
- B. **Specific Error #2:** Inappropriate judgment from Biblical revelation: Freedom from bondage does not mean freedom from God's desired authority structure. (7:1-40).

Other than slavery, Paul only deals with marriage in this section. Primarily he urges men and women not to marry since that would diversify their dedication to the Lord. However, if one does marry, that is well within the will and purpose of God (but notes that earthly enjoyments are not the purpose of God, but the glorification of God). He will first deal with the unmarried and widows.¹⁴ They should only be married if driven by unavoidable lustful

¹² This is a previous letter to what is called 1 Corinthians. It is lost. Although some claim it has been inserted in 2 Corinthians 6:14—7:1 this section, in reality, cannot be contextually separated out (as if from another letter) from the message of 2 Corinthians and is simply the literary style known as *inclusio* or bookends.

¹³ They thought they should avoid the unsaved, so when Paul called them to separate themselves from unbelievers' practices, they thought he meant to separate themselves from unbelievers, not their practices, for they felt they had in practicing these immoral things, they had 'freedom from sin'.

¹⁴ Note that he deals with only the unmarried and widows (widows are not considered "unmarried"), which would indicate he is not including "divorced", else they would all be declared unmarried.

distraction of the opposite sex. The partnership is never dissolvable, however, if an unbeliever should leave (since they don't listen to the revelation) the believer should recognize there is nothing they can do since the unbeliever does not listen to revelation.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In the following context of marriage, it must be recognized that Paul in all cases counsels reconciliation as a must. To remarry after a divorce restricts the ability to reconcile to one's vow and thus one has taken a second vow, which goes against the very character of God that He desires to be represented in marriage.

1. Paul indicates that one of the purposes of marriage is the avoiding of immorality and thus a married person is not free to withhold physical fulfillment from their partner (7:1-7).

Paul's concern here is that the revelation shows that all should be sacrificed for the cause of the kingdom. So while marriage is 'good' (i.e., God ordained through revelation), it is going away in the kingdom and is thus of temporal significance.¹⁵ So his preference is that is the marriage diverts one from wholehearted movement to the kingdom, that they avoid it. However, the natural desire of a man for a woman is great, and it would not be good for kingdom theology to have a God-given desire and not fulfill it in the way that God designed it, that is, marriage. Therefore the physical desires need to be taken care of by the wife and by the husband. Notice however, that it is again, self-sacrificing love, since they are to respond based on the other's needs not on their own.

Paul's point here, again, is that in this age of delay, all things should be submitted to the prosperity of the gospel, which will be realized following the resurrection. While there are things that are permissible they may not be the most expedient for the sake of the kingdom. Understanding this principle is the guiding part of the chapter; that is, all things are given up for the sake of the resurrection into the earthly kingdom. All things must be submitted to the focus of the Kingdom. Marriage will go away and thus can only be used during this temporary time on this earth when submitted to the kingdom.

7:1 Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.² But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.³ Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.⁴ The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.⁵ Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control.⁶ But this I say

¹⁵ Marriage is a symbol of the ultimate relationship between Christ and His church as bride. Thus when the kingdom comes, the symbol goes away for the ultimate fulfillment.

by way of concession, not of command.⁷ Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.

2. Unmarried and widows should remain single unless they are tempted sexually, when they should marry as it is better to marry than to burn with lust (i.e., “coveting”). (7:8-9).

While this is a continuation of the former context, Paul’s premise is that one should not marry unless they do not have the ability physically to live unmarried.¹⁶

7:8 But¹⁷ I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I.⁹ But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn.

3. A woman should not leave her husband, and if she does she may only remarry him, a husband likewise. (7:10-11).

Paul now speaks to believers and points out that there is no availability of leaving one’s spouse. Should she leave there is no possibility of remarriage to another.

7:10 But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord,¹⁸ that the wife should not leave her husband¹¹ (but if she does leave, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not send his wife away¹⁹.

¹⁶ Note here that Paul advocates single living, even for widows. Thus, the premise that to restrict marriage from anyone who has been divorced is unreasonable is not in Paul’s theology since he actually advocates it except for physical reasons. Of course, the response would be, what about a divorced person who has physical lust? It is a tangled web. The vow is sacred and simply because one cannot keep from fornication is not reason enough to be married, else every thirteen year old boy would be married early.

¹⁷ The word here translated “but” is a *de* and should likely be translated “then,” which means it could go with the former or the latter context. Since the next verse goes to the married it would be likely to go with the former.

¹⁸ This is not a difference in the authority between what Paul says and what Jesus said. Paul is just differentiating between what Jesus spoke about on earth and what he is now revealing as an apostle. There is no less authority, since both are inspired (and the words of Jesus are all recorded by apostles), but the readers have differentiated between their authorities, and so Paul is itemizing here so they understand he can speak on his own and give the revelation of Jesus.

¹⁹ The statement here is intended to be the reverse of the former. In other words in a patriarchal society the wife would be sent away (Deut. 24:1) or would leave while the husband would stay home.

4. Question: Unequal yoking: To those who have unbelieving husbands or wives who do leave, there is nothing the believer can do, he does not need to continue as a slave to the mate. If they consent to stay, the believer should stay in the union. (7:12-16).
5. One is to remain in the condition that he was called (Jewish, Gentile, slave) (7:17-24).
6. Paul urges virgins (those who have not initiated their contracts of marriage according to Deut. 22) to remain unmarried so that they might be concerned about the things of the Lord. (7:25-35).

Having discussed that the unmarried and widows should remain unmarried unless pressured by lust, Paul returns to them, but only now to the unmarried, not the widows. He urges them to remain as they are. If they have contracted a marriage then they may complete it (consummate it with vows and practice). If they are unbound (not obligated) then they should remain unbound. However, in neither case have they gone against God's will ("sinned").

1Cor. 7:32 But I desire to have you to be free from cares. He who is unmarried (ὁ ἄγαμος) is concerned for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord;

1Cor. 7:33 but he who is married (ὁ δὲ γαμήσας) is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please the wife (τῆ γυναικί). And he is divided.

7. A man has a choice about his virgin daughter (stay single or marry). (7:36-38).

1Cor. 7:34: And he is divided. Now the unmarried woman (ἡ γυνὴ ἢ ἄγαμος) and the virgin (ἡ παρθένος) are concerned of the things of the Lord in order to be holy in the body and in the spirit. Now the married woman (ἡ δὲ γαμήσασα) is concerned of the things of the world, how she may please the husband (τῷ ἀνδρί).

καὶ μεμέρισται. καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἢ ἄγαμος καὶ ἡ παρθένος μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κυρίου, ἵνα ἦ ἁγία καὶ τῷ σώματι καὶ τῷ πνεύματι· ἡ δὲ γαμήσασα μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου, πῶς ἀρέσῃ τῷ ἀνδρί.

1Cor. 7:35: And this I say to you for your benefit, not in order to place a snare on you, but to (give) respect and devoted (service) to the Lord without distraction.

τοῦτο δὲ πρὸς τὸ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν σύμφορον λέγω, οὐχ ἵνα βρόχον ὑμῖν ἐπιβάλω ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ εὐσχημον καὶ εὐπάρεδρον τῷ κυρίῳ ἀπερισπάστως.

1Cor. 7:36 But if any man thinks that he is acting

unbecomingly toward his virgin *daughter*, if she is past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry.

Εἰ δέ τις ἀσχημονεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν παρθένον αὐτοῦ νομίζει, ἐὰν ἢ ὑπέρακμος καὶ οὕτως ὀφείλει γίνεσθαι, ὃ θέλει ποιεῖτω, οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει, γαμείτωσαν.

1Cor. 7:37 But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will, and has decided this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin²⁰ *daughter*, he will do well.

ὅς δὲ ἔστηκεν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἐδραῖος μὴ ἔχων ἀνάγκην, ἐξουσίαν δὲ ἔχει περὶ τοῦ ἰδίου θελήματος καὶ τοῦτο κέκρικεν ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ καρδίᾳ, τηρεῖν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ παρθένον, καλῶς ποιήσει.

1Cor. 7:38 So then both he who gives his own virgin *daughter* in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do better.

ὥστε καὶ ὁ γαμίζων τὴν ἑαυτοῦ παρθένον καλῶς ποιεῖ καὶ ὁ μὴ γαμίζων κρεῖσσον ποιήσει.

8. Summary: A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If he dies, she is free, but Paul urges to stay single. (7:39-40).

C. **Specific Error #3:** Inappropriate human wisdom judgment from Biblical revelation: The gaining of knowledge elevates, but the purpose (message) of knowledge is self-sacrificing love (8:1-11:1a).

1. The definition of the problem. Should believers eat meat sacrificed to idols since they have superior knowledge about it? (8:1-13).
 - a. Things sacrificed to idols are of no account since believers know that they are of no account. (8:1-6).
 - b. While food sacrificed to idols is nothing to one who understands, eating could affect a brother who does not understand. (8:7-13).
2. Paul as example: Apostolic gift greatest but rights are forsaken. (9:1-9:27).

²⁰ This phrase indicates that this is a father. To make it a prospective husband would have to add a “her” to the passage (e.g., to “keep her a virgin). This is indicating that he is keeping his own virgin in his household to protect her virginity until the man comes (cf. Deut. 22). (See NET notes on 1 Cor. 7:38.) The use of the phrase “keep his virgin” and “give in marriage” is never used for a fiancé and always used for a guardian or father.

- a. An Apostle: Paul claims to be an apostle based on his vision of the resurrected Lord, and on them as the fruit of his apostleship. (8:1-2).
- b. Refused support: Paul defends himself in that he has not taken any material reward for his services though he had a perfect right to so that he might boast in the Lord's gospel. (8:3-18).
- c. Refuses freedom: Paul gives up all rights to be free so that he might win men for the gospel. (8:19-23).
- d. Seeks the future reward: Applying the principle to himself, Paul likens his purpose to a man in a race subjecting himself to all things so that he might run better, lest he also be disciplined for destroying the church for his own benefit. (8:24-27).

Paul's thought here is that if he goes and glorifies himself through selfish living that he would also be disciplined by God, and when the following example is used, it indicates that God might take Paul out of this life.

3. Discipline in the example of the Israelites: All delivered from Egypt, knew the revelation, yet compromised for selfish reasons and judgment came on them. God will help us out of any temptation (to compromise). (10:1-14).

The ability to escape temptation is not, as is generally thought, the ability to avoid sin by simply leaving or abandoning it. This thought, if true, would be characteristic of pagans as well, who also have the ability to reject immoral behavior by leaving (but based on some self-benefit). What Paul is talking about here is the motivation to avoid immorality. And that is the bodily resurrection based on Christ's death and resurrection and the future reward for sacrifice now. Thus, one can avoid all these sensuous things because Christ will reward later based on one's sacrifice for the gospel now (see Chapter 3—4).

4. The revealed meaning of eating food sacrificed to idols. One who eats meat sacrificed to idols becomes a sharer with demons. (10:15-22).
5. The principle: All things are lawful, but ones gift of knowledge must submit to the edification of the body, for the profit of many. (10:23-11:1a).

D. **Specific Error #4:** Inappropriate judgment from Biblical revelation: Greater gifts are not the most impressive gifts and should not determine status in the assembly. (11:1b--14:40).

1. The problem of head coverings: Paul points out that women ought to have their head covered when praying or utilizing gift of prophecy for the purpose of creative order in the assembly. In other words, the fact that a woman has the gift of praying or prophesying does not change the order of authority in the assembly as given by God in Genesis 2 (11:1b-16).

2. The problem of the Lord's supper: Those with greater gifts being elevated (rewarded) above the needy, contradictory to revelation of purpose of Lord's supper (11:17-34).

This action of self-elevation was taking place at the very symbol of Christ's death, which was for the hopeless. Now these were negating, treating as common, the Lord's supper, and would be judged physically for their despising of the table, and thus the self-righteous behavior of themselves above others.

3. The problem of gift priorities:

a. Doctrinal view of gifts. (12:1-13:13).

- 1) Revelation (Spirit) separates from human reasoning testifying that Jesus is Lord. (12:1-3).
- 2) All spiritual gifts reflect God, thus for the common good, since they are sourced in the same Spirit, Lord and God. (12:4-11).
- 3) All spiritual gifts may be different, but all important as they edify one body. (12:12-31).

12:12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now there are many members, but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; 23 and those members of the body, which we deem less honorable, on these we

bestow more abundant honor, and our unseemly members come to have more abundant seemliness, 24 whereas our seemly members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, 25 that there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. 29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? 30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? 31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.

- 4) Though all gifts are important, the content of the revelation, love, overshadows them all. (13:1-13).
- b. The problem of tongues versus prophecy. (14:1-40).
 - 1) Paul tells them that tongues are unfruitful for the edification of the assembly (since they are not understood), and that they should speak so that all may understand. (14:1-19).
 - a) While love is the goal, the means of edifying others is to speak revelation to the brethren rather than tongues which is self-centered.

Love is the purpose of the message of God to the Corinthians that they should minister on that basis. However, tongues are self-centered since they enhance no one but the person speaking. When one speaks in a foreign language it is understandable only by God since those in the assembly do not understand.

14:1 Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you

may prophesy. 2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.

- b) The problem with tongues is that it is self-edification, while speaking with reference to the revelation edifies others and is thus fulfilling the ministry of love.

3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. 4 One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.

- c) While tongues is a gift and it is profitable, it is much less profitable than something that communicates the revelation of God.

5 Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.

- d) The problem with tongues is that they are meaningless unless interpreted, and then only if they give some edifying revelation.

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching? 7 Yet even lifeless things, either flute or harp, in producing a sound, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp? 8 For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? 9 So also you, unless you utter by the tongue speech that is clear, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into

the air. 10 There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning. 11 If then I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be to the one who speaks a barbarian, and the one who speaks will be a barbarian to me. 12 So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification of the church. 13 Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

- e) Tongues is something that is operated apart from the mind (apparently the speaker does not even know what he is saying), so Paul states that he desires to speak with his mind so that all may be edified.

14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 15 What is the outcome then? I shall pray with the spirit and I shall pray with the mind also; I shall sing with the spirit and I shall sing with the mind also. 16 Otherwise if you bless in the spirit only, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? 17 For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. 18 I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all; 19 however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

- 2) Paul explains that if they speak in tongues in the assembly and an unbeliever enters he will think they are mad. They should prophecy since it is understandable instruction. (14:20-25).
- a) The Corinthians are instructed to utilize Scripture as a basis for their perception not their human wisdom (14:20)

14:20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature.

- b) Foreign people speaking to Jews is prophesied in the Old Testament to be a sign to the Jews that they are under domination of the Gentiles and thus a curse indicating to them their disobedience.

Isaiah 28:11²¹ spoke of the coming curse on Israel that a foreign nation would dominate them as warned in Deuteronomy 28. God would speak to them through judgment as they would lose their self-rule, and the rule over nations. Therefore tongues are foreign languages that are meant to indicate to a Jewish unbeliever that he needs to pay attention to the fact that he has lost his dominion and is under a curse.

21 In the Law it is written, "BY MEN OF STRANGE TONGUES AND BY THE LIPS OF STRANGERS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE, AND EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT LISTEN TO ME," says the Lord.

- c) Tongues then are intended as a miraculous sign to Jews, yet it is not beneficial even as an evangelistic tool since it does not convey any revelation to the unbeliever.

22 So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a sign, not to

²¹ The most controversial passage (at least in its application in the NT, 1Cor 14:21) is Isa 28:11. God will speak to Israel with "stammering lips," i.e. in captivity the language of the foreign captors will appear to be unintelligible gibberish. Since Israel had regarded the prophetic word as so much nonsensical talk, God would pay them back in their own currency in Assyria. Such is the import of Hos 7:16. In return for the "rage," i.e. the defiant speeches of Israel's princes who openly disavowed the Lord, God would let the same Egyptians to whom they appealed for help turn on them in derision. One turncoat deserved another! W.C.K. (From TWOT Lexicon “לִּשְׁׁנָה”)

unbelievers, but to those who believe. 23 If therefore the whole church should assemble together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?

- d) Prophecy on the other hand does convey revelation to the unbeliever or one who does not understand gifts, he may be convicted by the revelation, recognizing its truth.

24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; 25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.

- 3) All tongues speaking and prophecy should be made in an orderly fashion, submitting to other prophets for validation (14:26-33).

26 What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and let one interpret; 28 but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God. 29 And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment. 30 But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, let the first keep silent. 31 For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; 32 and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets; 33 for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

- 4) Women are to keep silence in the church and ask their husbands at home. (14:34-36).
 5) They are to pay attention to Paul's apostolic instructions for they are from the Lord. (14:37-38).

- 6) The point is that they should prophesy more than desire to speak in tongues. But all should be done in order. (14:39-40).

IV. The Theological Problem: The Denial of resurrection is not true revelation and belief in it is necessary to validate suffering now. (15:1-58).

- A. The doctrine of resurrection: The gospel includes resurrection according to the scriptures and was verified personally by Paul (qualifying him as an apostle). (15:1-11).
 B. Problem: Denial of resurrection. (15:12-34).

1. Those who state that there is no resurrection are wrong, based on the resurrection of Christ as being a basis for the gospel. (15:12-19).
2. Christ was resurrected that He might conquer death and have all things subjected to Himself, and Himself to God. (15:20-28).
3. Paul points out that suffering here is only on the basis that there is the hope of resurrection. (15:29-34).

C. The how of the resurrection. (15:35-15:57).

1. The answer to the question of how are the dead raised is answered that it must die to become a heavenly body. (15:35-49).
 - a. Paul's theology of resurrection prompts the question of the "how" of the resurrection (15:35).

35 But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?"

- b. Illustration: The seed does not come to its final purpose unless it dies and then comes to life (15:36).

36 You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; 37 and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else.

- c. Paul reverts back to creation (Genesis 1) to show them that each type of God's creation has a different body (15:38).

38 But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. 39 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish.

- d. The heavens were created to show the difference in bodies above and bodies of the earth (15:40).

40 There are also heavenly²² bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

- e. Thus the conclusion is that the heavenly body (sourced from heaven as opposed to sourced from the earth) is what man will become after his death.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

- f. As from Adam all fleshly life came, so from Christ will all spiritual life come (15:45).

45 So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

- g. The Adamic life comes first, then the Christ life, concluding that this life is not the ultimate but is a life of dishonor.

The image that these Corinthians bear in their natural body is that of Adam and is dying. The image that they will bear in the new body is that of Christ.

46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. 47 The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

- h. Conclusion: The body that the Corinthians now possess will not inhabit the Kingdom age, for they must die and be resurrected. (15:50).

²² The term "heavenly" indicates a body that is not from the earth, as Adam's was. It is not that it is not physically seen, but that it is sourced from heaven (from God) and not from the flesh, totally of earth. Note that the "heavenly" is paralleled to "spiritual" and "imperishable", "glory", "power". Note also that the second man (Christ) is used in the same terms. He is from "heaven (15:47). Thus the second body here will be that like Christ's and will be physically seen, but will be a perfect body like His since it was "from heaven".

This conclusion is meant to contradict the errant eschatology that the Corinthians possessed, that they were enjoying the kingdom benefits in the present day. Paul reassures them that they cannot enjoy the kingdom benefits in this body, and they will have to wait until the resurrection, and then the kingdom.

50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

2. This body must change its perishableness to imperishableness at the rapture. (15:50-57).

15:50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. 55 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- D. Exhortation: Suffering not in vain for the sake of the gospel (15:58).

While this age is an age of enduring for the message of the cross, it will be rewarded when the Lord returns.

15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

- V. Closing exhortations. (16:1-24).

- A. Show support for apostle; give to the church at Jerusalem and support his travels (6:1-9).

16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2 On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no

collections be made when I come. 3 And when I arrive, whomever you may approve, I shall send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem; 4 and if it is fitting for me to go also, they will go with me. 5 But I shall come to you after I go through Macedonia, for I am going through Macedonia; 6 and perhaps I shall stay with you, or even spend the winter, that you may send me on my way wherever I may go. 7 For I do not wish to see you now just in passing; for I hope to remain with you for some time, if the Lord permits. 8 But I shall remain in Ephesus until Pentecost; 9 for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

- B. Respect Timothy (sent on Paul's behalf), but Apollos cannot come. (16:10-12).

16:10 Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without cause to be afraid; for he is doing the Lord's work, as I also am. 11 Let no one therefore despise him. But send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me; for I expect him with the brethren. 12 But concerning Apollos our brother, I encouraged him greatly to come to you with the brethren; and it was not at all his desire to come now, but he will come when he has opportunity.

- C. Encouragement to be strong in the faith (revelation), and love. (16:13-14).

16:13 Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. 14 Let all that you do be done in love.

- D. Paul urges them to submit to men who serve Paul. (16:15-18).

16:15 Now I urge you, brethren (you know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves for ministry to the saints), 16 that you also be in subjection to such men and to everyone who helps in the work and labors. 17 And I rejoice over the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus; because they have supplied what was lacking on your part. 18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men.

- E. Greetings and closing remarks. (16:19-24).

16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. 20 All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. 21 The greeting is in my own hand-- Paul. 22 If anyone does not love the Lord, let him

be accursed. Maranatha²³. 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.
24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

²³ The word “Maranatha” means “Our Lord, come!” This would be very related to the message of the whole book that they had missed, that of the resurrection.