

## Introduction to 1 Corinthians

### Corinth the City

The City of Corinth had fallen to the Romans and had virtually been demolished in 146 BC but had later been rebuilt and established as a Roman colony by Julius Caesar in 44 BC.

The city is situated on an isthmus commanding the north-south land route between the two halves of Achaia. Five miles to the east was the harbour of Cenchræa facing towards Ephesus and the Roman province of Asia; a mile and a half to the north lay the harbour of Lechaëum facing west towards Italy. An ancient roadway had been laid across the isthmus at its narrowest point allowing transportation of cargo and even light ships. Corinth was therefore an important centre of trade: it was both wealthy and cosmopolitan. Murphy-O'Connor says, "Corinth had more business than it could comfortably handle. The immense volume of trade was augmented by huge numbers of travellers. Profit came easily to those prepared to work hard, and cut-throat competition ensured that only the committed survived." Travellers included the crowds who came to the biennial Isthmian Games.

Corinth provided ready opportunities for the skilful entrepreneur to become wealthy. Social stratification was therefore complex with the competing claims of the nouveau riche and the noble born. Witherington comments, "In Paul's time many in Corinth were already suffering from a self-made-person-escapes-humble-origins syndrome." Self-promotion and patronage were important elements of public life: "Corinth was a city where public boasting and self-promotion had become an art-form. The Corinthian people thus lived with an honour-shame cultural orientation, where public recognition was often more important than facts... In such a culture a person's sense of worth is based on recognition by others of one's accomplishments."<sup>1</sup> Thistleton concludes, "Corinthian culture has much in common with the social constructivism, competitive pragmatism, and radical pluralism which characterises so-called postmodernity as a popular mood."

All of this shaped the role of rhetoric at Corinth. Thistleton comments, quoting Pogoloff, "The pragmatic criterion of becoming a winner in the marketplace, sometimes with a sacrifice of personal integrity, made its impact on Corinthian rhetoric. 'Declaration increasingly became the major opportunity for oratorical displays... In the classroom the competition might be over theory. But in declamations ... the contrast was ... between rival performers. The drive for adulation, we learn from Seneca the Elder, often overcame the more basic goals of rhetoric.' Seneca observes that too many times the aim was 'to win approval for yourself rather than for the case.' ... The casualty is truth; the focus is 'the speaker,' as in the case of the twenty-first century chat-show host or participant in the mass media."

### The founding of the Church

Paul must have been attracted to Corinth as a strategic centre for mission. The city had a sizeable Jewish community, swollen by the edict of Claudius which had driven many from Rome. The travellers and visitors for the games would also have meant that there was considerable demand for Paul's trade as a tentmaker.

"Paul made a firm decision (1:18) not to aspire to the status of a professional rhetorician, newly arrived to market the gospel as a consumer commodity designed to please the hearers and to win their approval... He would earn his keep as a tentmaker and proclaim the cross of Christ." (Thistleton). He began his ministry in the synagogue where he reasoned with both Jews and Greeks, testifying that Jesus was the Christ. However, he soon met the customary opposition from the Jews. In response, Paul shook out his clothes and set up camp next door in the house of the newly converted Titius Justus. Here Paul continued to teach this infant church which now included Crispus and his family – Crispus had formerly been leader of the synagogue.

Paul remained in Corinth for some 18 months. Paul and the Corinthian church continued to face opposition but Paul received encouragement through a vision in which the Lord told him, "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city" (Acts 18:9,10).

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<sup>1</sup> Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995.

After 18 months the Jews sought to have Paul convicted of some crime and so dragged Paul before Gallio the proconsul of Achaia. They claimed that Paul was "persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law" (Acts 18:13). But Gallio refused to get involved in a religious dispute between Jewish factions – for that's how he perceived it.

When Paul left Corinth, "He left behind him a thriving church, throbbing with vitality and full of gifts and services (1:4-8; 12:1-14:40). The problems which would emerge would be those of life, not of decline." (Thistleton).

From Corinth Paul sailed to Ephesus where he stayed for a short while before continuing on his way to Caesarea and Jerusalem. Priscilla and Aquilla left Corinth with Paul but remained at Ephesus.

While Paul was away, a Jew from Alexandria named Apollos came to Ephesus. He was a powerful preacher and had a fine knowledge of the Scriptures. He was a believer and seemed to possess a clear understanding of the gospel except that "he knew only the baptism of John." Priscilla and Aquilla took him under their wing and "explained to him the way of God more accurately." After continuing to minister for a while at Ephesus, Apollos wanted to go off to Achaia. The church at Ephesus sent him off with their blessing and with letters of commendation to the churches. In Achaia, and particularly in Corinth, Apollos' ministry proved the source of great encouragement, "For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ" (Acts 18:28).

## Problems at Corinth

Drane writes, "The letters to Corinth ... confront us with one of the most complicated historical puzzles of the entire New Testament... We depend entirely on the vague hints and allusions which Paul made as he wrote." However, there is general agreement that Paul's dealings with the church at Corinth during this time can be summarised in six stages:

- i) Paul received news concerning the church at Corinth in response to which he wrote the letter referred to in 1 Cor 5:11. Some believe this letter is preserved but displaced in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1.
- ii) Members of Chloe's household brought reports of divisions in the church at Corinth, divisions which included challenges to Paul's authority. These reports were later confirmed by Stephanus and two others (1 Cor 16:17) who brought with them a letter from the church asking a series of questions. 1 Corinthians is Paul's response to these divisions and to the Corinthians' questions.
- iii) Paul learned from Timothy that his letter was having no effect and so made a brief and painful visit to Corinth (2 Cor 2:1; 12:14; 13:1).
- iv) After his return from Corinth Paul sent Titus with a much stronger letter written "out of much affliction and anguish of heart" (2 Cor 2:4). Some think this is preserved and displaced in 2 Cor 10-13.
- v) Paul left for Macedonia having been driven out of Ephesus (Acts 20:1). In Macedonia he met Titus who brought news of a change of attitude in the Corinthian church. He also carried an invitation for Paul to go to Corinth (2 Cor 7:5-16).
- vi) Paul sent a letter to Corinth with Titus; this is at least the first nine chapters of what we know as 2 Corinthians.

Some scholars think that 2 Corinthians 10-13 was actually written at a date later than 2 Cor 1-9.

## 1 Corinthians

The church at Corinth was made up of people from a variety of social backgrounds. Theissen says, "The Corinthian congregation is marked by internal stratification. The Majority of members, who come from the lower classes, stand in contrast to a few influential members who come from the upper classes."<sup>2</sup> Among the latter would seem to be Stephanus Gaius and Crispus, the last of whom had previously enjoyed a prominent office in the synagogue.

In his book, *An Introduction to the Sociology of the New Testament*<sup>3</sup> Derek Tidball describes how these social divisions gave rise to the variety of controversies at Corinth. He writes, "Many of the problems at Corinth can be understood in the light of the fact that people from different social classes still found it difficult to relate to each other even after their conversion to Christianity. They would be aware that,

<sup>2</sup> G. Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1982. See also RJ Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, Exeter, Paternoster, 1980

<sup>3</sup> Exteter, Paternoster, 1983.

as far as God was concerned such distinctions were no longer of any importance (1 Cor 7:22; Col 3:4) and yet in reality mutual acceptance still had to be learned through hard experience... In this socially heterogeneous church the leadership fell upon those who were middle class and elitist. They were the natural leaders, not only because of their social and educational skills, but because of their having the property in which to host the meetings of the church. Paul accepts their right to lead and supports them... He is not happy, however, about certain attitudes they adopt or actions to which they are party. Much of 1 Corinthians is a pointed address to them, encouraging them to overcome their deficiencies and forsake their worldly pretensions; however understandable these conceits may have been from a human standpoint. These activist leaders at Corinth needed to be wary lest they run the church as they would an ordinary business and lest the working class people did not receive the standing in the church that God intended them to have."

Paul's letter addresses a series of issues, some raised by the news conveyed to him, others in the letter requesting his advice and direction. Thistleton says that "issues of 'knowledge,' the ministry, ethical laxity, advantages sought at law, marriage and celibacy, meat associated with pagan temples or worship, dress codes in public worship, the divisions at the Lord's Supper, misperceptions of the significance of what counts as 'spiritual' in the context of 'gifts' and Christ's Lordship, and perhaps a premature anticipation of eschatological 'glory' all relate to the differing outlooks (some of them manipulative) on the part of specific groups." But he is also keen to emphasise that Paul's response is not fragmentary: "The unifying theme of the epistle is a re-proclamation of the different value system of grace, gifts, the cross, and the resurrection as divine verdict, criterion, and status bestowal within the new framework of respect and love for the less esteemed 'other.' Glorifying in the Lord and receiving status derived from identification with the crucified Christ (1:30-31) lead to a new value system demonstrable in a wide array of life issues. These range from attitudes towards 'the less esteemed' in civil actions (6:1-11) to eating meat in the precincts of temples or bought at market (8:1-11:1); or from dress-codes in public worship (11:2-16) or mutual respect for differing gifts (chs 12-13) to the 'ranking' and use of prophetic discourse and glossolalia (ch 14)."

## Works frequently referenced in these notes on 1 Corinthians

John Drane	<i>Paul</i> , Lion Publishing, Berkhamstead, 1976
Leon Morris	<i>The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians</i> , Tyndale New Testament Commentary, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ed., IVP, Leicester, 1985
Anthony C Thistleton	<i>The First Epistle to the Corinthians</i> , The New International Greek Testament Commentary, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2000

### 1 Corinthians 1:1

Παῦλος κλητὸς ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ καὶ Σωσθένης ὁ ἀδελφός

κλητος, η, ον called, invited

There is a parallel between Paul *called* to be an apostle and the Corinthians *called* to be a holy people (v.2). All Christians are called.

ἀπόστολος Thistleton argues that apostleship entails witness to Christ in both an 'objective' and 'subjective' sense. Apostleship involved witnessing to the events of Christ's death and resurrection, but also entailed "a practical experience of sharing in the weakness of the cross of Christ and in the transforming power of Christ's resurrection... Apostleship thereby entails 'the establishment of the kerygma (1 Cor 1:21) and indeed the proclamation of the kerygma,' in both word and lifestyle." Thistleton

θελημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

Cf. Gal 1:1. "What a believing Christian is called to be depends not on what people might judge for themselves to be 'fulfilling' or self-affirming but on the loving and purposive will of God. Thus the pattern of Christ and the cross ('not my will but yours') reflects the sovereign centrality of the will of God for all life and every lifestyle." Thistleton.

It is unclear whether this Sosthenes is the same as the leader of the synagogue mentioned in Acts 18:15-17 – it was a common Greek name in the first century. Commenting on Paul's mention of a fellow-worker Thistleton says, "Paul does not perceive himself as commissioned to lead or to minister as an isolated individual, without collaboration with co-workers. The role of co-workers emerges clearly in 1 Cor 16:13-20." Sosthenes may have been Paul's amanuensis.

**1 Corinthians 1:2**

τῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, τῇ οὔσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις, σὺν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ αὐτῶν καὶ ἡμῶν·

ἐκκλησια, ας f assembly, congregation, church

The basic meaning is 'assembly'.

του θεου The church does not belong to any local leader but to God.

Some ancient texts read τῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, τῇ οὔσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ. Some favour this as the more difficult reading but the UBS committee rejected it as *too* difficult and Thistleton argues that it represents an early corruption in the Western text.

οὔσῃ verb, present part, f dat s εἰμι

Bengel speaks of the "paradox" of a church which is simultaneously 'of God' and, of all places, at *Corinth*.

ἡγιασμένοις Verb, perf pass ptc, m & n dat pl  
ἁγιαζω sanctify, make holy, set apart as sacred to God

Cf. 1 Cor 6:11. Set apart to be God's (people) by virtue of union with Christ.

ἅγιος, α, ον holy, set apart to/by God

Called to live out what they are – they have not yet arrived.

ἐπικαλεω call, name; midd call upon, appeal to

The Corinthians are part of a wider family and cannot behave as if they were a law to themselves.

ὄνομα, τος n name, person, authority

Cf. Joel 3:5. "It signifies an act of appeal and request which is simultaneously an act of commitment and trust on the part of the worshiper... To call on the name of the Lord, partly in Joel, but more fully here, means not to invoke some shadowy, unknown, deity, but to commit oneself in trust to the one whose nature and character have been disclosed as worthy of this trust." Thistleton

τοπος, ου m place

αὐτῶν καὶ ἡμῶν qualify Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ and not τοπῳ as some suppose. "Jesus Christ is not the exclusive 'Lord' who serves only the interests of some specific group. He may indeed include them within wider Lordship, but he remains 'both their Lord and ours.'" Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:3**

χαρίς ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

χαρις, ιος f grace, unmerited favour

Paul transforms the conventional greeting χαρειν (cf. Acts 15:23; Jas 1:1) into the Christian greeting and prayer χαρις ὑμῖν.

εἰρηνῆ, ης f peace

Not so much an inner sense of peace as a relationship of peace with God.

πατηρ, πατρος m father

For Paul, 'Father' is "the distinctively Christian way of referring to and addressing God." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:4**

Εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ δοθείσῃ ὑμῖν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,

εὐχαριστεω thank, give thanks

The present tense has continuous force.

μου is included by κ<sup>a</sup> A C G P Ψ etc. while omitted by κ\* B eth Ephraem. The omission is followed by RSV, NJB, NIV, Barrett and Fee while Metzger argues strongly for its retention.

παντοτε always

I.e. 'at every opportunity,' or 'as a regular habit' cf. 15:58.

ἐπι introduces the cause.

δοθείσῃ Verb, aor pass ptc, f dat s διδομι give

Every spiritual benefit the Corinthians possess they have received *in Christ*.

"There are ten references to Christ in the first ten verses. Only overfamiliarity with biblical texts can obscure the remarkable nature of this repetition." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:5**

ὅτι ἐν παντὶ ἐπλουτίσθητε ἐν αὐτῷ, ἐν παντὶ λόγῳ καὶ πάσῃ γνώσει,

παντι here probably 'every kind ... all sorts'

πλουτιζω enrich, make rich

γνωσις, εως f knowledge, understanding

Paul's words reflect the two gifts the Corinthians prized most, word (prophecy) and knowledge. Despite the abuses at Corinth, Paul speaks of word and knowledge (understanding) as genuine and precious gifts from God.

**1 Corinthians 1:6**

καθὼς τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐβεβαιώθη ἐν ὑμῖν,

μαρτυριον, ου n testimony, witness  
βεβαιω confirm, verify, strengthen

The word preached to them had become a living reality in their lives. "In multi-cultural, pluralist Corinth, each new experience of God and each new convert confirms as valid this witness to Christ. Calvin observes, 'God set his seal to the truth of His Gospel among the Corinthians.'" Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:7**

ὥστε ὑμᾶς μὴ ὑστερεῖσθαι ἐν μηδενὶ χαρίσματι, ἀπεκδεχομένους τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ·

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
ὑστερεω lack, have need of; pass be lacking; midd be in want

'You fall short in no gift.'

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing; no; χαρισμα, τος n gift (from God)

"This word is used (i) of Salvation (Rom 5:15), (ii) of God's good gifts in general (Rom. 11:29), and (iii) of special equipment of the Spirit, for example, speaking with tongues (1 Cor. 12:4ff). Here the thought is the wide one (ii). God has enriched their lives and they lack no spiritual gift." Morris

"Gift, for Paul, draws attention to the free, generous, giving of the Giver." Thistleton

ἀποδεχομαι wait expectantly, welcome

Cf. 16:22 'Our Lord, come.'

ἀποκαλυψις, εως f revelation

Implies public and cosmic disclosure.

"The connection of thought may be that the present foretaste of the Spirit turns our thoughts to the fuller experience of the last great day (cf. Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:13f)." Morris  
It also reminds the Corinthians that they have not yet arrived. GE Ladd views the double eschatology of 'now' and 'not yet' as a unifying or common theme in all NT writings.

**1 Corinthians 1:8**

ὅς καὶ βεβαιώσει ὑμᾶς ἕως τέλους ἀνεγκλήτους ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

It is unclear whether ὅς refers to God or Christ. "Linguistic arguments favour *Christ*; theological arguments favour *God*... The Greek leaves the matter open. This need not trouble us since Paul's language here concerns the promises of God-in-Christ." Thistleton

βεβαιω see v.6.

ἕως prep with gen to, until, as far as  
τέλος, ους n end, conclusion  
ἀνεγκλητος, ον beyond reproach, without fault

I.e. in that final day, when God pronounces his verdict on them, they will be declared blameless. "The main point is that as night dissolves into day (Rom 13:2) the hidden will become publicly visible and all that is wrong or that disrupts intimacy with God will be set right. It is unfortunate that the very clarity of this theme in Romans has tended to distract attention from its prominence in our epistle. The verdictive character of justification by grace is underlined by the role of definitive judgment on the day of the Lord in the OT, apocalyptic, and the NT." Thistleton

Χριστου is omitted by p<sup>46</sup> B. It would seem to be an early accidental omission.

**1 Corinthians 1:9**

πιστὸς ὁ θεὸς δι' οὗ ἐκλήθητε εἰς κοινωνίαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

πιστος, η, ον faithful, trustworthy

The faithful God who called them (and us), will complete the work that he has begun. "Whatever God begins, he will carry through to completion." Calvin

κοινωνια, ας f fellowship, sharing in

Implies communal participation – "being stakeholders in a sonship derived from the sonship of Christ. Just as the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:13) means participating in the sharing out of the Spirit (which then secondarily gives rise to a fellowship experience within a community), so the fellowship of his Son (1 Cor 1:9) means communal participation in the sonship of Jesus Christ. Godet rightly speaks of 'participation in the life of Christ.'... The link with unity in 1:10-17 (cf. chs. 12-14) and with the cross in 1:18-25 seems thus to be established. 'The Corinthians are called to realise the fellowship into which they have been called by God.'" Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:10-4:21**

This constitutes an identifiable section concerning Causes and Cures of Splits within the Community.

**1 Corinthians 1:10**

Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες, καὶ μὴ ἦ ἐν ὑμῖν σχίσματα, ἥτε δὲ κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῖ καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ.

παρακαλεῶ exhort, encourage, urge

Thistleton argues (at length) that the sense here is 'I ask' or 'I request.' It is a request which draws its force from Paul's relationship with them – not from rhetorical device.

ἀδελφοί is an inclusive term, including the women in the community. It reminds the Corinthians that they belong to one family.

ὄνομα, τος n name, person, authority

The addition of 'in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ' directs the Corinthians to the authority for such a request.

ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες An appeal or request for them to make up their differences.

ἦ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι  
σχίσματα Noun, nom & acc pl σχισμα, τος n  
division, split, opposing group

Paul is seeking to deal with a power struggle, not a theological controversy, though this struggle reflects also "a diversity of spiritualities based on individualism, on loyalty to specific groups or factions as 'spiritual' groups within the one church." Thistleton

κατηρτισμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl  
καταρτιζῶ mend, restore, make complete

καταρτιζῶ A Greek verb used of restoring anything to its rightful condition – such as mending fishing nets.

νοῖ Noun, dat s νοῦς, νοός, νοί, νοῦν m  
mind, thought, understanding

Thistleton suggests that "mind-set in the present context draws out the meaning of outlook, stance, orientation, or attitude, without entirely losing the dimension of rational judgment which is nearly always implicit."

γνώμη, ης f purpose, intent, decision

Thistleton suggests that the term here means 'consent'. "Paul tells Philemon that he does not wish to keep the services of Onesimus 'without your consent' (χωρίς δε της σης γνωμης, Philem 14). In this sense 'agreement' entails not uniformity but voluntary constraints of one's 'rights' (cf. on 6:12, below) for the good of the whole. Paul expounds this as a key theme in 8:1-9:27.

**1 Corinthians 1:11**

ἐδηλώθη γάρ μοι περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί μου, ὑπὸ τῶν Χλόης ὅτι ἔριδες ἐν ὑμῖν εἰσιν.

ἐδηλώθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s δηλωῶ  
make clear, indicate, inform

ὑπο τῶν Χλόης 'by Chloe's people.' Thistleton suggests more likely to be business associates, business agents or slaves of Chloe rather than members of her family.

ἐριδες Noun, nom pl ἐρίς, ἰδος f strife, rivalry

**1 Corinthians 1:12**

λέγω δὲ τοῦτο ὅτι ἕκαστος ὑμῶν λέγει· Ἐγὼ μὲν εἶμι Παύλου, Ἐγὼ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ, Ἐγὼ δὲ Κηφᾶ, Ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ.

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every  
Κηφας, α m Cephas (Aramaic equivalent of Πέτρος, rock).

"The mood of staking personal loyalty to some group which finds its focus in one of the leaders with whom it has become closely associated may be conveyed by rendering 'I am for Paul' 'I am for Apollos' ... But 'I belong to Paul' ... 'I belong to Apollos' must [also] be considered." Thistleton

Thistleton includes a lengthy discussion on the four 'so called groups' of 1:12.

Apollos was a skilled orator and may unwittingly have lent his name to an overemphasis on rhetoric and 'wisdom' at Corinth. "The lesson for leaders is that too high a personal profile, which substitutes too much personal history and personal style for gospel content, can sidetrack 'followers' into 'taking sides,' even if this was far from the original intention."

The Paul group "almost certainly had as their nucleus Paul's first converts at Corinth." They probably viewed themselves as "maintaining faithfully the old, duly authorised, ways, in contrast to newer trends which emerged with the more recent church members or visiting leaders." This 'group' may also have included some who claimed to follow Paul in resisting patronage.

The Peter group: It is uncertain whether Peter visited Corinth. Barrett thinks that he did and that the Peter party included those who had been converted under his ministry.

The 'Christ' group: Bruce and Barrett think these may have been ultra-spiritual pneumatics who declared they needed no human leader since, unlike others, they had direct communion with Christ. From a similar perspective Chrysostom writes, "Even those who said they were of Christ were at fault because they were implicitly denying this to others and making Christ the head of a faction rather than the head of the whole." Thistleton thinks that this may be correct, but, on the other hand, Paul may here be speaking of *himself* when saying 'I am of Christ'. He may be using rhetorical irony leading naturally into v.13 'Is Christ apportioned out?' and ultimately to 'you all are Christ's' (3:23).

### 1 Corinthians 1:13

μεμέρισται ὁ Χριστός; μὴ Παῦλος ἐσταυρώθη ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, ἢ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα Παύλου ἐβαπτίσθητε;

μεμέρισται Verb, perf pass indic, 3s μερίζω divide, assign, apportion

The picture behind this question is that of the church as a body, all members having a part in the one Christ – Christ has not been divided or fragmented.

σταυρωω crucify

μὴ Παῦλος ἐσταυρώθη a question expecting a negative answer, 'Surely Paul was not crucified...'

ὄνομα, τος η name, title, person, authority, reputation

Schnackenburg paraphrases the verse, "Christ is undivided... Christ alone died for you... You belong to Christ alone... You were baptised in the name of Christ (and in the name of no other)."

### 1 Corinthians 1:14

εὐχαριστῶ ὅτι οὐδένα ὑμῶν ἐβάπτισα εἰ μὴ Κρίσπον καὶ Γάϊον,

εὐχαριστεω thank, give thanks

It is difficult to decide whether the omission of τῷ θεῷ from κ\* B and a few versions represents the original.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

Crispus is almost certainly the Jewish synagogue ruler mentioned in Acts 18:8.

It seems that some were boastful concerning who had baptised them and felt that this gave them a particular connection with the baptiser. The following verse underlines the fact that it is not the one performing the baptism who is significant but the name into which a person is baptised.

### 1 Corinthians 1:15

ἵνα μή τις εἴπῃ ὅτι εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα ἐβαπτίσθητε·

ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my, mine ὄνομα see v.10

### 1 Corinthians 1:16

ἐβάπτισα δὲ καὶ τὸν Στεφανᾶ οἶκον· λοιπὸν οὐκ οἶδα εἴ τινα ἄλλον ἐβάπτισα.

ἐβάπτισα δὲ καὶ 'On second thoughts, I also baptised...'

"Lightfoot and Findlay consider the delightful possibility that in mid-dictation Paul's flow was interrupted by a tactful reminder from his amanuensis, who might just possibly have been either Stephanus himself or one of his household. 1 Cor 16:17 confirms that Stephanus was present with Paul when the letter was being written."

οἶκος, ον m home, household, family λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other: (το) λοιπον adv. finally, in addition οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

'I do not recall'

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

### 1 Corinthians 1:17

οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλὲν με Χριστὸς βαπτίζειν ἀλλὰ εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου, ἵνα μὴ κενωθῇ ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

ἀπέστειλὲν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

ἀποστελλω send, send out

εὐαγγελίζω act. and midd proclaim the good news

σοφια, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence

"In its context at Corinth, both βαπτίζειν and ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου are aspects of potential ministry which, given the Corinthians' own presuppositions about both, call attention to the agency and status of the minister, and together these stand in contrast to εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, which from any viewpoint calls attention to the gospel (εὐαγγελιον)." Thistleton Thistleton suggests that in context, οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου means 'not by manipulative rhetoric.'

κενωθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s κενωω

deprive of power, empty of meaning

σταυρος, ον m cross

"If everything rests on human cleverness, sophistication, or achievement, the cross of Christ no longer functions as that which subverts and cuts across all human distinctions of race, class, gender and status to make room for divine grace alone as sheer unconditional gift... Second, rhetoric alone may win the emotions and even the mind and perhaps the will, but the human self is more than all of these modes of being. Today we may speak of a 'psychological' conversion which may result causally from manipulative factors without touching the self's spiritual depths in an authentic turning not simply toward a new set of beliefs and lifestyle, but to God. This constitutes an authentic recognition of Christ's Lordship through the work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:3). Overreliance on clever rhetoric may in this sense provide an inauthentic shortcut to transformation by the cross of Christ, which becomes nullified as a means of restoring a relationship with God himself." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5

This section is entitled by Thistleton, "The Contrast between Human Wisdom and the Transformational Power of the Cross as God's Wisdom." C Blomberg says, "1:18-2:5 explains ... how genuine, full-orbed Christianity stands opposed to the foundational values of a fallen, sinful world but provides the necessary antidote to the self-centred functionalism of the Corinthians." And Thistleton, quoting Martyn, remarks concerning the pride some of the Corinthians place in 'spiritual knowledge', "The 'spiritual elite' monopolise and pre-empt the hitherto Pauline contrast between 'secular' or *ordinary* (ψυχικός or κατά σάρκα) knowledge and *spiritual* (πνευματικός or κατά πνεύμα) knowledge. But amidst the continuing struggles and realities of Christian experience *before* the eschaton (cf. 1:26-31; 2:1-5; 4:8-13) in Paul's judgment in the context of this letter 'the implied opposite of knowing κατά σάρκα is not knowing κατά πνεύμα, but rather knowing κατά σταυρον. He who recognises his life to be God's *gift* at the *junction of the ages* recognises also that until he is completely and exclusively in the new age, his knowing κατά πνεύμα can only be in the form of knowing κατά σταυρον.' ... The cross projects a new world which Paul defines in terms of 'having the mind of Christ' (2:16)."

### 1 Corinthians 1:18

Ὁ λόγος γὰρ ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῖς μὲν ἀπολλυμένοις μωρία ἐστίν, τοῖς δὲ σωζομένοις ἡμῖν δύναμις θεοῦ ἐστίν.

λογος here is parallel with κηρυγματος in v.21. The meaning is 'proclamation'. "The phrase serves, in effect, as Paul's definition of the gospel." Thistleton

σταυρος, ου m cross  
ἀπολλυμι destroy, kill, lose; mid be lost,  
perish, die

"Those on their way to destruction."

μωρια, ας f foolishness

Thistleton suggests 'wisdom' and 'folly' were theological slogans or catchwords at Corinth. "Hence Paul transposes the wisdom-folly contrast into that between what is humanly self-defeating, stultifying, and foolish on one side and what becomes effective, operative, powerful and transformative by divine agency. Paul uses this rhetorical technique of transposition or 'code-switching' elsewhere."

σωζω save, rescue, heal

The present participles express a continuing process. "The temptation to assume that Christians have already 'arrived' nourishes a mood of self-congratulation which is entirely at odds with the proclamation of the cross: a Christ wounded, humiliated, and done-to-death." Thistleton

δυναμις θεου ἐστίν "The cross, then, constitutes the point at which, and/or the means through which, God's presence and promise becomes operative as that which actualises and transforms. It differs from human weakness and folly not in degree but in kind. For as we noted in our reading of v.17, a merely rhetorical or psychological exercise in communicating some belief system remains empty if it fails to engage with the cross precisely as a saving proclamation, but reflects some degree of human achievement in gaining and communicating 'wisdom.' Such play with words may seem to be wise and sophisticated, but only to those who are on their way to ruin. Those who are on our way to salvation perceive it as sheer folly." Thistleton  
And Bonhoeffer writes that wisdom or grace without the cross is what is "sold on the market like a cheapjack's wares." "Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner ... forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline ... the world goes on in the same old way ... grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ."

**1 Corinthians 1:19**

γέγραπται γάρ· Ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν,  
καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν ἀθετήσω.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

Isa 29:14 LXX

ἀπολῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s ἀπολλυμι  
destroy

σοφία, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence  
σοφος, ης, ον wise, experienced

In the context of the original quotation,  
particularly the wisdom of the learned and  
politically dominant classes.

συνεσις, εως f understanding, insight  
συνετος, ης, ον intelligent, possessing  
understanding

"Properly, the former denotes mental  
excellence in general, the latter the intelligent  
critical discerning of ... things." Morris  
Thistleton thinks 'shrewd' for συνετος conveys  
the required sense of "street-wise political life  
skills."

ἀθετεω reject, set aside, refuse

**1 Corinthians 1:20**

ποῦ σοφός; ποῦ γραμματεὺς; ποῦ συζητητὴς  
τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου; οὐχὶ ἐμῶρανεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν  
σοφίαν τοῦ κόσμου;

που σοθος i.e. 'where does that now place the  
sage?'

γραμματευς, εως m scribe, expert in  
Jewish law, scholar

The expert, the person of letters, the  
professional.

συζητητης, ους m skilful debater, reasoner

The scholar, debater.

αἰῶνος Noun, gen s αἰων, αἰωνος m age,  
world order

The use of αἰων indicates the passing nature of  
this world – 'this current world order.' "The  
world is but a passing show and its wisdom  
passes with it." Morris

οὐχι (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no; used in  
questions expecting an affirmative answer.

μωραίνω make foolish, make tasteless

'Has not God made a fool of this world's  
wisdom.' The cross provides a radically new  
frame of reference for Christian understanding.

**1 Corinthians 1:21**

ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔγνω ὁ  
κόσμος διὰ τῆς σοφίας τὸν θεόν, εὐδόκησεν ὁ  
θεὸς διὰ τῆς μωρίας τοῦ κηρύγματος σῶσαι  
τοὺς πιστεύοντας.

ἐπειδη since, because, for

ἔγνω Verb, aor act indic, 3 s γινωσκω

εὐδοκεω be pleased, take pleasure in

"By God's design human wisdom did not lead  
to the saving experience of God." Collins.  
The wisdom of this world order is "fallible,  
temporary, short-term, and self-absorbed."  
Thistleton.

For Paul's own commentary on the first half of  
this verse cf. Rom 1:18-3:20.

μωρία, ας f see v.18

κηρυγμα, τος n what is preached,  
message, proclamation

This word denotes not the act of preaching or  
the method of communicating the Gospel but  
the content of the message. "It has nothing to  
do with whether the mode of communication is  
in a pulpit rather than a variety of modes which  
may or may not include lectures, dialogue,  
disputation, or living the gospel out... God's  
self-disclosure, however, is, as Barth points  
out, not simply about God, but 'the Word of  
God is itself the act of God,' an 'address' which  
presupposes God's own presence." Thistleton

πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)

**1 Corinthians 1:22**

ἐπειδὴ καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι σημεῖα αἰτοῦσιν καὶ  
Ἕλληνες σοφίαν ζητοῦσιν·

Ἰουδαίος, ας, ον a Jew, Jewish, Judean

σημειον, ους n miraculous sign, sign

αἰτεω ask, request, demand

Ἕλλην, ηνος m a Greek, non-Jew

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

Highlights a difference between the two  
cultures: the Jewish, with its focus on the  
concrete – what can be seen and touched; the  
Greek with its love of speculative philosophy.  
"The respective role of signs and wisdom in  
relation to Jews and Gentiles is not accidental.  
Jews already had access to 'wisdom' in the  
scriptures, but required signs to locate their  
situation within the promised purposes of  
salvation history. In one sense they were right.  
For the resurrection of Christ constitutes the  
sign that the cosmic turning point has arrived  
and casts essential light on the christological  
and cosmic significance of Jesus of Nazareth.  
Paul expounds God's power as an  
'eschatological motif.' On the other hand, the  
Gentile 'Greeks' go on seeking what will bring  
success in politics, the courtroom, philosophy,  
or in everyday affairs of trade, love, or the  
household: what will bring 'mastery' of life and  
especially the approval or admiration of  
patrons, masters and their own peer group."  
Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:23**

ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμένον,  
 Ἰουδαίους μὲν σκάνδαλον ἔθνεσιν δὲ μωρίαν,  
 κηρυσσω preach, proclaim  
 ἐσταυρωμενον perf pass ptc. σταυρωω  
 crucify

The perfect implies that Christ "continues in the character of the crucified one. The crucifixion is permanent in its efficacy and effects." Morris

σκανδαλον, ου n that which causes sin/  
 offence, obstacle

"It was an affront to those who ask for signs since the disgraceful and humiliating execution of a Jewish teacher by the occupying power hardly seemed to constitute a sign of God's saving action." Thistleton  
 Cf Matt 16:23 – Peter's suggestion that Jesus should avoid the cross is itself a σκανδαλον to Jesus.

ἔθνεσιν Noun, dat pl ἔθνος, ους n nation,  
 people; τα ἔ. Gentiles  
 μωρια, ας f see v.18

"It was folly, i.e., the very reverse of a 'mastery' of life that brings success, honour, and esteem, for the figure whom Paul proclaimed passively accepted the kind of suffering and death which shouted failure, dishonour, and shame." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:24**

αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς κλητοῖς, Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ  
 Ἑλλήσιν, Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ  
 σοφίαν.

κλητος, η, ον called, invited

The emphasis is on what *God* has done.

τε enclitic particle and, and so; τε και  
 and also

**1 Corinthians 1:25**

ὅτι τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ θεοῦ σοφώτερον τῶν  
 ἀνθρώπων ἐστίν, καὶ τὸ ἀσθενὲς τοῦ θεοῦ  
 ἰσχυρότερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

μωρος, α, ον foolish; το μ. foolishness

το μωρον perhaps a particular object is in view  
 – the cross as perceived by the world as 'a  
 foolish thing.'

σοφωτερος, α, ον wiser – comparative from  
 σοφος

ἀσθενης, ες sick, weak, helpless

The cross, if proclaimed to be the place of  
*God's* action seems to be a demonstration of  
 his weakness, even defeat.

ισχυροτερος, α, ον stronger – comparative  
 from ισχυρος

"Paul's marvellously succinct rhetorical parallelism both recapitulates vv.18-24 (first paragraph or section of 1:18-2:5) and points forward to the next sections (1:26-31 and 2:1-5)." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:26**

Βλέπετε γὰρ τὴν κλησιν ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι οὐ  
 πολλοὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ σάρκα, οὐ πολλοὶ δυνατοί,  
 οὐ πολλοὶ εὐγενεῖς:

βλεπω see, look at

κλησις, εως f call, calling

I.e. the circumstances and background against which you were called, cf. v.24. Robertson and Plummer paraphrase, "Summon before your mind's eye what took place then; note the ranks from which one by one you were summoned into the society of God's people; very few came from the educated, influential, or well-connected class."

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου  
 much, many

σοφος, η, ον see v.19

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature

κατα σαρκα 'as the world counts cleverness.'

δυνατος, η, ον powerful, able, influential  
 εὐγενης, ες of high or noble birth, of high  
 social status

"The things which elevate men in the world, knowledge, influence, rank, are not the things that lead to God and salvation." Hodge  
 There *were* people of considerable socio-economic status within the church at Corinth but they were a minority. Paul's point is that they are one people, the poor no less than the influential, and that God's calling was not influenced by issues of social status and power – neither then should be relationships within the church. "Christian 'status' depends on the gift of grace and divine verdict, not upon compensatory self-esteem or self-promotion as 'wise' or 'spiritual' people." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 1:27**

ἀλλὰ τὰ μωρὰ τοῦ κόσμου ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός,  
 ἵνα κατασχύνῃ τοὺς σοφοὺς, καὶ τὰ ἀσθενῆ  
 τοῦ κόσμου ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός, ἵνα κατασχύνῃ  
 τὰ ἰσχυρά,

μωρος, α, ον foolish

"The neuter concentrates attention of the quality of foolishness possessed by these people rather than on themselves as individuals." Morris. It is not that they *are* fools, but that they lack the supposed sophistication which was prized by the Greeks. There is a proper simplicity to faith.

ἐξελέξατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s  
 ἐκλεγομαι choose, select  
 καταισχυνω put to shame, humiliate

"God is no human construct, called in to legitimate human power interests, but the very reverse. His love for the nobodies and the nothings discounted as nonentities and as insignificant in the value system of the world puts the world to shame by its reversal of judgment." Thistleton

ἀσθενῆ Adjective, n nom & acc pl ἀσθενής,  
 ες see v. 25

ισχυρος, α, ον strong, mighty, powerful

### 1 Corinthians 1:28

καὶ τὰ ἀγενῆ τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὰ ἐξουθενημένα  
 ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός, τὰ μὴ ὄντα, ἵνα τὰ ὄντα  
 καταργήσῃ.

ἀγενῆ Adjective, n nom/acc pl ἀγενής, ες  
 low born, insignificant, inferior

ἀγενής is the direct antithesis of εὐγενής of  
 v.26.

ἐξουθενημένα Verb, perf pass ptc, n nom/acc  
 pl ἐξουθενεω despise, treat with  
 contempt

τὰ μὴ ὄντα 'the nothings' "God's activity in  
 men is creative. He takes that which is nothing  
 at all and makes of it what he pleases." Morris

καταργεω render ineffective, cancel, do  
 away with

'bring to nothing'

### 1 Corinthians 1:29

ὅπως μὴ καυχῆσθαι πᾶσα σὰρξ ἐνώπιον τοῦ  
 θεοῦ.

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἄν) that, in order that  
 καυχαομαι boast, boast about

"The Corinthian people lived with an honour-shame orientation, where public recognition was often more important than facts, and where the worst thing that could happen was for one's reputation to be publicly tarnished. In such a culture a personal sense of worth is based on recognition by others of one's accomplishments, hence the self-promoting." Witherington

σὰρξ, σαρκος f see v.26

ἐνώπιον prep with gen before, in the  
 presence of

Thistleton, quoting Martin, says, "These two dimensions together [divine election and the cross] give v.29 its full force: glorying is inappropriate in God's presence because whatever provides grounds for such glorying has come from God as his gift. Hence v.30 begins ἐξ αὐτοῦ ... (It is from him that ...). 'Paul disrupts the intuitive status expectations of his audience by invoking a belief he knows they share: the belief that in Christ, who was crucified, they have a common source of salvation and a common paradigm of leadership.'"

### 1 Corinthians 1:30

ἐξ αὐτοῦ δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς  
 ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε  
 καὶ ἁγιασμός καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις,

ἐξ αὐτοῦ "The saved are *of him*, ἐξ giving the  
 idea of source. Their new life derives from  
 God." Morris

'It is as a gift from him that you are in Christ Jesus.' A double emphasis on the act of God and their status deriving solely from being 'in Christ.' 'In Christ' must be understood in terms of "objective status and corporate solidarity... Its content now manifests itself in sharing the gifts of righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Thistleton

ἐγενήθη Verb, aor indic, 3 s γινομαι  
 σοφία, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence

"The wisdom of God is embodied in Christ, who offered himself that men might be saved. He is the real wisdom, let the philosophers argue as they will." Morris

δικαιοσύνη, ης f righteousness, what God  
 requires

τε see v.25

ἁγιασμος, ου m sanctification, holiness  
 ἀπολυτρωσις, εως f redemption,  
 deliverance, setting free

= 'purchased from one owner to another by  
 means of a costly transaction.'

"The four qualities, then, belong together, and both characterise Christ and are imparted by Christ. Just as Barth insists rightly that what real humanity consists in appears only in the perfect 'real man' Jesus Christ, so here Paul redefines what real wisdom consists in, namely (in Moltmann's language), The Way of Jesus Christ, as exhibited and made effective in God's own action in Christ on the cross. As against the obsession with status seeking and success at Corinth, wisdom is redefined and explicated as receiving the gifts of righteousness, sanctification and redemption freely bestowed through Christ and derivative from him. It is only that for Christian believers. Hence to glory in their new found status as righteous, holy and redeemed is to glory in the Lord, and in no other person, no other thing. These other things are 'nothings' not merely in a social sense, but, in isolation from God, also in an ontological sense. Thus Barrett comments, 'Not only do your sources of supply – wisdom, strength, and so forth – come from God: your very being comes from him.'" Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 1:31

ἵνα καθὼς γέγραπται· Ὁ καυχώμενος ἐν κυρίῳ  
καυχάσθω.

Cf. Jer 9:22-23.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω  
καυχομαι see v.29

### 1 Corinthians 2:1

Κἀγὼ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἦλθον οὐ  
καθ' ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας καταγγέλλων  
ὑμῖν τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ θεοῦ.

κἀγω a compound word = και ἐγω

The emphatic κἀγω indicates that Paul himself exemplified the principle which he had been expounding – in contrast with the manner in which the sophists introduced themselves at Corinth.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι  
ὑπεροχη, ης f position of authority; καθ ὑ.  
λόγου with high sounding words  
σοφια, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence

'High sounding rhetoric or a display of cleverness' The words may include the ironic suggestion that such cleverness may result in what is above people's heads. Paul renounces preaching for effect.

καταγγέλλω proclaim, make known,  
preach

"Preaching the word is not delivering edifying discourses, beautifully put together. It is bearing witness to what God has done in Christ for man's salvation." Morris

'Preaching' here does not imply a particular form (cf 11:26; Acts 13:5; Rom 1:8 for the diverse ways in which the term is used). It is probable that the context for Paul's communication of the message at Corinth was not some public building but the household or private home. "But the proclamation remains 'public' in the sense that it does not communicate esoteric teaching to some inner group of initiates, but an announcement of events and state of affairs to all who would hear. In this sense the gospel is universal. The central content concerns a declaration of God's deeds in Christ." Thistleton

μυστηριον, ου η secret, mystery (of something formerly unknown but now revealed)

The weight of textual evidence is fairly evenly divided between μυστηριον and μαρτυριον. Metzger says, "From an exegetical point of view the reading μαρτυριον του θεου though well supported, is inferior to μυστηριον, which has more limited but early support. The reading μαρτυριον seems to be a recollection of 1:6, whereas μυστηριον here prepares for its usage in v.7." This argument is rejected by Fee who asks why any scribe would substitute the less expected *witness* for the more familiar *mystery*. Thistleton says, "No one can exclude either possibility, but ... we lean towards *mystery*."

### 1 Corinthians 2:2

οὐ γὰρ ἔκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν  
Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον·

κρινω judge, pass judgement on  
εἰδέναι perf act infin οἶδα (verb perf in form  
but with present meaning) know,  
understand

Thistleton takes issue with most translations which link οὐ with εἰδέναι or with τι. He considers that οὐ belongs with ἐκρίνα and implies that Paul *had not* come with a plan to use the methods outlined above. The only plan he had come with was to proclaim the crucified Christ.

ἐσταυρωμενον see 1:23

There is no implied contrast with Paul's experience in Athens. On the contrary, Paul refers to his settled method, whether in Galatia, Athens or Corinth.

**1 Corinthians 2:3**

καὶ ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ καὶ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ  
πολλῶ ἐγενόμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς,

ἀσθενεια, ας f weakness, illness  
φοβος, ου m fear  
τρομος, ου m trembling

Maybe stressing that Paul saw himself as one standing *before God* with fearful sense of responsibility to deliver God's message. Though "No doubt, if we draw on the narratives in Acts, the temporary absence of Paul's co-workers Silas and Timothy (Acts 17:15; 18:5) added a psychological dimension of loneliness or isolation which exacerbated Paul's fear and trembling (cf. the absence of Titus in 2 Cor 2:13)." Thistleton

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου  
much, many

"Paul is precisely not a visiting orator come to entertain the crowds as an audience-pleasing performer." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 2:4**

καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν  
πειθοῖ σοφίας ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ  
δυνάμεως,

κηρυγμα, τος η what is preached,  
message, proclamation  
πειθοις Adjective, m dat pl πειθος, η, ου  
persuasive, skillful

It is difficult to decide between the variant readings (eleven in all) here. In particular between the reading ἐν πειθοι σοφίας 'with the persuasiveness of wisdom' (πειθοι being the dative singular) and ἐν πειθοις σοφίας λογοις 'in persuasive wise words.' In the end "the result makes little serious difference for the thrust of the verse." Thistleton

ἀποδειξις, εως f proof, demonstration

ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως 'brought home powerfully by the Spirit.' "Paul relies on the power of the Holy Spirit at work in convincing hearts and minds of the truth of ὁ λόγος καὶ τὸ κήρυγμα μου." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 2:5**

ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾗ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων  
ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ.

ἦ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι  
δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

"A faith based on human argument would be built on sand' (Godet). This does not mean that argument or persuasion can play no role; it means that something more is involved that speaks to the heart as well as to the mind and creates a new reality (δυναμις θεου) for the believer." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 2:6-16**

Paul is taking up catchwords that were being bandied about at Corinth and is seeking to redefine them and reclaim them for the gospel. This is certainly the case with σοφία and may also be true of τελειος and πνευματικος (v.11).

**1 Corinthians 2:6**

Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, σοφίαν  
δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου οὐδὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων  
τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου τῶν καταργουμένων·

"In the tradition of Proverbs this [wisdom] denotes habits of judgment applicable to life. It concerns the formation of a Christian mind, which issues in a right action... Paul associates the use of the term at Corinth with what amounts to a self-centred, at times childish, attempt to manipulate things to one's own advantage. True wisdom from God, however, is sought by those who are sufficiently adult (τελειος) to exercise it responsibly for the good of all." Thistleton

λαλεω speak, talk

τελειος, α, ον complete, perfect, mature

"Paul recognises that not all Christians have full understanding. There are 'babes' among them (3:1), but the wisdom of which he speaks is appreciated by those who are mature in faith. To them he can impart 'all the counsel of God' (Acts 20:27)." Morris

Thistleton thinks τελειος is used by Paul to mean those who are 'spiritual adults' as opposed to those who behave as spiritual children. "Spiritual adulthood entails perceiving that wisdom comes from God as a gift in Christ (1:30) which enables the self to live responsibly and wisely for others and for the good of the whole community."

αἰων, αἰωνος m age, world order, eternity  
οὐδε neither, nor

ἀρχων, οντος m ruler, official, authority

Thistleton includes an extended discussion of the various views of τῶν ἀρχοντων. He first considers the following three:

- i) Demonic powers;
- ii) Earthly political rulers;
- iii) Rulers as angelic custodians of nations – both supernatural and political.

He favours a fourth interpretation, namely:  
iv) Rulers of this world order as socio-political powers in a structural collectivity that transcends given human individuals.

In developing this view in contrast with the others he says, "Of the three interpretations considered above, the second has most to commend it, but the resonances of the third cannot simply be swept aside as irrelevant. Paul stands closer to Jewish apocalyptic than to Western individualism... Humankind is more than a collection of individual entities or agents, but a corporeity within which evil and evil forces become endemic and structural. Moreover, Jesus Christ, for Paul, was not crucified simply by Pilate or Herod or individual leaders, but as a cosmic event on which God addressed all forces of evil from which liberation could subsequently come (Rom 8:38-39)."

καταργεω render ineffective, cancel, do away with

### 1 Corinthians 2:7

ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ, τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην, ἣν προώρισεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων εἰς δόξαν ἡμῶν.

λαλεω speak, talk  
μυστηριον see v.1

"It does not signify a puzzle which man finds difficult to solve. It signifies a secret which man is wholly unable to penetrate. But it is a secret which God has now revealed." Morris  
God's wisdom is Christ crucified (vv. 7b & 8). It stands apart from all human wisdom and is unattainable by unassisted human reason.

ἀποκεκρυμμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s  
ἀποκρυπτω hide, keep secret  
προορίζω foreordain, decide from the beginning, decide beforehand

"... It stresses the plan of God and the sovereignty of God." Morris

δόξα, ἡς f glory

δόξα may be another one of the Corinthian catchphrases. Paul links δόξα with the cross. The glory of God is manifest "in his free, sovereign, choice (προωρισεν, he marked out beforehand) to give himself in mercy and love in the revealed mystery of the cross of the Christ. But this 'being for others' (Bonhoeffer, Jungel) results in believers sharing in the having-died-with and being-raised-with Christ, as sharing in the radiance of his self-giving." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 2:8

ἦν οὐδείς τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἔγνωκεν, εἰ γὰρ ἔγνωσαν, οὐκ ἂν τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης ἐσταύρωσαν.

οὐδείς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing  
ἀρχῶν see v.5  
ἔγνωσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl γινωσκω

ἂν particle indicating contingency  
σταυροω crucify

The proper background to an understanding of this verse is Jewish apocalyptic with its contrast between this age and the age to come. The 'Lord of glory' is an apocalyptic figure who has brought in the age to come, the age of glory, by his death. "The cross is a triumph which manifests Jesus as Lord of glory, for through the cross he absorbed and draws out the sting of death and of the powers (1 Cor 15:55). The Son is glorified, Stauffer urges, 'on Good Friday itself.'" Thistleton. Cf. Col 2:15.

### 1 Corinthians 2:9

ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται· Ἄ ὀφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν καὶ οὐς οὐκ ἤκουσεν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη, ὅσα ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.

The syntax of this verse is difficult, lacking a main verb. Frid suggests that ἀλλὰ introduces a contrast with the ignorance of the powers and introduces an implied contrast, 'but we know.' Thistleton prefers to understand the second ἂ as functionally equivalent to ὅσα 'such great things.' I.e. 'Things which eye has not seen, ear has not heard and no heart imagined, such great things has God prepared for those who love him.'

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

The quotation is probably a "rather free citation of Is 64:4 with reminiscences of other scriptural passages." Morris. Cf. Is 65:17 also Jer 3:16.

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὄραω trans see, observe, perceive, recognise; intrans make sure, see to  
οὐς, ὠτος n ear, hearing  
ἀνέβη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀναβαινω  
ἔτοιμαζω prepare, make ready

### 1 Corinthians 2:10-16

"'Verses 10-16 ... make up his [Paul's] first sustained reflection on the Spirit,' (Collins) especially as the source of revelation. This section sets a framework for later reflection on the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12-14 as well as in the resurrection chapter (15:42-57; cf. 15:12-28, 38-41). In all these passages the work of the Spirit remains inseparable from the work of God as revealed in Christ. By contrast, a wedge was driven by some at Corinth between 'spirituality' and Christ crucified." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 2:10**

ἡμῖν γὰρ ἀπεκάλυπεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα πάντα ἐραυνᾷ, καὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ.

The ἡμῖν is emphatic – perhaps an intended contrast with claims by "some inner esoteric circle of a privileged category within the church." Thistleton

ἀποκαλύπτω reveal, disclose  
ἐραυναω search, examine, try to find out

"The ... activity ascribed to God's Spirit by means of the verb ἐραυναω (third present indicative ἐραυνᾷ, the Alexandrian spelling of the classical ἐρευναω, ἐρευνᾷ) does not mean searching to discover here, but the activity of exploring God's purposes thoroughly in order to reveal them." Thistleton

βαθος, οὗς ἡ depth, greatness

The depths of God's own self – his mind, purpose and plan. 'God's inmost heart.'

**1 Corinthians 2:11**

τίς γὰρ οἶδεν ἀνθρώπων τὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ; οὕτως καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐδεὶς ἔγνωκεν εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ.

οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

ἀνθρώπων must be construed with τίς 'who among human persons...'

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing  
ἔγνωκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s γινώσκω

Thistleton argues that Paul is here not talking about components of a person (body, spirit etc.) – this does not fit the analogy with God. "The spirit is within not in the sense of location, but in the sense of partly hidden stances of which an outsider or another human person may be unaware unless the person concerned chooses to reveal them by word, gesture or action. The point of analogy does not turn on human spirit within/ divine spirit within, but on the possession of an exclusive initiative to reveal one's thoughts, counsels, stance, attitudes, intentions, or whatever else is 'within' in the sense of hidden from the public domain, not in the sense of location... The logic of Paul's thought is that if, by analogy, one person cannot know the least accessible aspects of another human being unless that person is willing to place them in the public domain, even so we cannot expect that God's own thoughts, God's own purposes, God's own qualities, or God's own self could be open to scrutiny unless his Spirit makes them accessible by an act of unveiling them."

**1 Corinthians 2:12**

ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου ἐλάβομεν ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν·

ἐλάβομεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl λαμβανω

'spirit of the world' – spirit of worldly wisdom that Paul was dealing with above.

"This is the essential difference between the Stoa and Paul. The former thinks of an innate and inborn divine nature; the latter, of a divine, supernatural equipment given... He who possesses the Spirit of God can really and truly know God." Weiss, cited by Thistleton. Weiss thinks that the phrase πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου should be read against this background and that it means 'world spirit' – the world conceived as an organic whole, animated by a rational force called 'spirit.'

Theissen, again, cited by Thistleton, "perceives a parallel between the rulers of this present world order (2:6) and the spirit of the world (2:12). Both stand in contrast to the tradition of the wisdom of God as that which escapes the powerful, the influential, and the experts of the world order who shape the world to be what it is: 'wisdom is withdrawn from the "wise and understanding" (Matt 11:25), from the "educated, powerful and well-born" (1 Cor 1:26)... It is scarcely a coincidence that wisdom and anti-wisdom are confronted ... in the epistle of James. The community ... behind James also counts itself among the poor (James 2:5-7); in 3:15-17 it also opposes ... "wisdom which is earthly, unspiritual, devilish ... where jealousy and selfish ambition exist ... disorder ... But the wisdom from above is first pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason..."

εἰδῶμεν Verb, perf act subj, 1 pl οἶδα

χαρισθέντα Verb, aor pass ptc, n nom/acc pl  
χαρίζομαι grant, give, give freely

The Spirit has been given us to enable us to know and understand and enter into all that God has given us through Christ and the cross. This, adjusting slightly the words of Hering, is 'the great charter for Christian theology.'

**1 Corinthians 2:13**

ἃ καὶ λαλοῦμεν οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος, πνευματικοῖς πνευματικᾶ συγκρίνοντες.

λαλεω speak, talk

διδάκτος, ἡ, ον taught, imparted

ἀνθρωπίνος, ἡ, ον human, characteristic of mankind

σοφία, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence

Not learned philosophical discourse.

πνευματικός, ἡ, ον spiritual, pertaining to the spirit

συγκρίνοντες Verb, pres act ptc, m nom pl  
συγκρινῶ compare, interpret, explain

What is the gender of πνευματικοί? It could be neuter, 'explaining spiritual things by spiritual means', or masculine, 'explaining spiritual things to spiritual people.'

Robertson and Plummer list the following alternatives:

- i) Taking πνευματικοί as neuter:
  - a. Combining spiritual things (words) with spiritual things (subject matter)
  - b. Interpreting (explaining) spiritual things by spiritual things, meaning:
    - (i) Interpreting OT types by NT themes
    - (ii) Interpreting spiritual truths by spiritual language
    - (iii) Interpreting spiritual truths by spiritual faculties.
- ii) Taking πνευματικοί as masculine:
  - a. Suiting (matching, fitting) spiritual matters to spiritual hearers
  - b. Interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual hearers.

The NIV translates it as, "expressing spiritual things in spiritual words."

Thistleton says that πνευματικός must be understood as meaning 'of the Spirit (of God)' and not as the more bland 'spiritual'. He translates the phrase 'interpreting things of the Spirit to people of the Spirit' and says, "Paul not only interprets whatever the Holy Spirit of God has revealed to those in whose lives the Spirit is co-working in applying the revelation; Paul also matches 'what they are ready to take,' or 'words which they can hear without misconstrual' to their state of readiness."

### 1 Corinthians 2:14

Ψυχικός δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ, μωρία γὰρ αὐτῷ ἐστίν, καὶ οὐ δύναται γινῶναι, ὅτι πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται·

ψυχικός, η, ον natural, physical, unspiritual

The contrast is with πνευματικός. The meaning is therefore 'the natural person', i.e. the person without the Spirit, the person with merely human capabilities – 'the person who lives on an entirely human level.'

μωρία, ας f foolishness

Cf. 1:23.

γινῶναι "(second aorist infinitive active) is used as an ingressive aorist to mean to get to know, to acquire a knowledge of." Thistleton

πνευματικῶς spiritually, by means of the Spirit

ἀνακρίνω examine, judge, evaluate

### 1 Corinthians 2:15

ὁ δὲ πνευματικὸς ἀνακρίνει τὰ πάντα, αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται.

πνευματικός see v.13

οὐδεις, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν see v.11

Thistleton thinks v.15 may be Paul repeating a quotation or catchphrase from a group at Corinth, "although this by no means implies that Paul necessarily dissents from it, provided that it is contextualised within his wider theology of the Holy Spirit and the Christian life... As 'spiritual people,' many at Corinth saw themselves 'judging everything' but as 'being judged by no one.'... The phrase αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται would thus be understood differently by Paul than some at Corinth. In the view of some at Corinth, it would signify a certain immunity or invulnerability from correction and critique. For Paul, however, it signifies at the very least that there are depths and dimensions to life in the Spirit which the person who lives on an entirely human level (v.14) simply cannot fathom. Aspects of Christian existence remain an enigma, unless others share the same insight of the Spirit of God."

### 1 Corinthians 2:16

τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου, ὃς συμβιβάσει αὐτόν; ἡμεῖς δὲ νοῦν Χριστοῦ ἔχομεν.

Cf. Is 40:13.

ἔγνω Verb, aor act indic, 3 s γινωσκῶ  
νοῦς, νοος, νοι, νοῦν m mind, thought,  
purpose

συμβιβάζω advise, instruct

The indwelling Spirit makes Christ known. Cf. Rom 8:9. On the 'mind of Christ' cf. Phil 2:5. It is to possess the 'mode of thought' or 'mind set' displayed in Christ crucified. This is what it means to know God, to be 'spiritual.'

### 1 Corinthians 3:1

Κἀγώ, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἠδυνήθην λαλῆσαι ὑμῖν ὡς πνευματικοῖς ἀλλ' ὡς σαρκίνοις, ὡς νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ.

ἠδυνήθην Verb, aor pass dep indic, 1 s  
δυναμαι

λαλεῶ speak, talk

πνευματικός see v.13

"For Paul the test of whether people are truly 'of the Spirit' is whether the Spirit has formed within them the mind-set of Christ (2:16)." Thistleton

σαρκίνος, η, ον fleshly, belonging to this world

'people moved by entirely human drives' Thistleton

νηπιος, α, ον baby, infant, child

Thistleton argues that Paul is here not speaking of them as 'babes in Christ' needing to go on and grow but as those who, though in Christ, are behaving in a childish manner. He cites Francis "We shall argue that Paul is rebuking his readers not because they are babes still, and have not progressed further, but because they were in fact being childish, a condition contrary to being spiritual." Thistleton comments, "If this argument fits Paul's thought, as we believe that it does, the practical point for believers today is not so much a call to maturity (although this may well be an implicate of these verses), but a warning that the self-centred competitive naiveté which characterises young children who have not yet learned to respect the interests of the Other will lead to misjudgements about the quality and required methods of Christian proclamation and teaching. A 'childish' mind-set may, e.g., place undue value on the style of a chat-show host, or alternatively the pseudo-learning of a long display of rhetorical theatricals, above gospel content. To be spiritually minded is to bring different criteria to the role and style of preachers and teachers."

### 1 Corinthians 3:2

γάλα ὑμᾶς ἐπότισα, οὐ βρῶμα, οὐπω γὰρ ἐδύνασθε. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἔτι νῦν δύνασθε,

γάλα, γαλακτος n milk  
ποτιζω give to drink  
βρωμα, τος n food, solid food  
οὐπω not yet

Refers back to Paul's earliest arrival and proclamation – as in 2:1-5.

οὐδε neither, nor  
ἔτι still, yet, moreover

"They ought to have made progress by this time. It was all very well for the Corinthians to have been in the position of *babes* when they actually were *babes*, but they should have outgrown that stage long ago." Morris. Thistleton, following Hooker and Fee, argues that the emphasis is not on a need for change in direction but change in perspective. Paul has come under accusation by some that his preaching is mere milk and water stuff compared with the rhetoric of others or the rhetoric they seek. Paul's point is that this is precisely what they need for their nurture.

### 1 Corinthians 3:3

ἔτι γὰρ σαρκικοί ἐστε. ὅπου γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν ζήλος καὶ ἔρις, οὐχὶ σαρκικοί ἐστε καὶ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε;

σαρκικος, η, ον belonging to this world

"The -νος termination [v.13] signifies 'made of ...'; thus in 2 Cor 3:3 tablets 'made of stone', λιθινος, are contrasted with those 'made of flesh', σαρκινος. The -ικος ending rather means 'characterised by...'; we see it in ψυχικος of the 'natural' man and πνευματικος of the 'spiritual' man in 2:14f. The difference between σαρκινος and σαρκικος is like that between 'fleshy' and 'fleshly'. σαρκινος is the more thoroughgoing word, but there is no blame attaching to it as applied to those who are young in the faith. But σαρκικος, 'characterised by the flesh', when used of those who have been Christians for years, is blameworthy. The mature believer is πνευματικος, characterised by spirit'. To be characterised instead by flesh, as the Corinthians were, is the very opposite of what a Christian should be. 'Flesh', of course, as often in Paul, is used in an ethical and moral sense. It indicates the lower aspects of man's nature, as in Rom. 13:14; Gal. 5:13; Eph 2:3, etc." Morris

"What is at issue is the anomaly of Christians who are nominally or in principle focused on Christ but in practice and in stance still focused on the interests of the self." Thistleton

όπου adv. where, whereas, while  
ζήλος, ου m, and ους n zeal, jealousy  
έρις, ιδος f strife, rivalry

"Although the reading ἐρις καὶ διχοστασιαι has early and diversified attestation, the absence of καὶ διχοστασιαι from some early witnesses led the committee to suspect the intrusion of a Western gloss, derived perhaps from the list of vices in Gen 5:20. There being no sufficient reason to account for the omission, if the words were present originally, the shorter reading is to be preferred." Metzger

οὐχι (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.  
περιπατεω walk, walk about, live

'Behaving like any merely human person'

### 1 Corinthians 3:4

ὅταν γὰρ λέγη τις· Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου, ἕτερος δέ· Ἐγὼ Ἀπολλῶ, οὐκ ἄνθρωποι ἐστε;

όταν when, whenever, as often as  
έτερος, α, ον other, another, different

'Are you not all too human?' REB.

"Christ and the Spirit have become decisive determinants for their lives, and yet they continue as if they had no horizon beyond the merely human. The anomaly is huge, and the addressees must now be disabused of some of the fallacious presuppositions about 'Paul,' 'Apollos,' and supposed routes to esteem and prestige on which their incongruous stance rests." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 3:5

Τί οὖν ἐστὶν Ἀπολλῶς; τί δέ ἐστιν Παῦλος; διάκονοι δι' ὧν ἐπιστεύσατε, καὶ ἐκάστῳ ὡς ὁ κύριος ἔδωκεν.

"Instead of τὶ the TR following p<sup>46</sup> C D F G and most minuscules, reads τὶς in both instances. The masculine, however, appears to be a secondary accommodation to suit the personal names; moreover, the implication of the neuter τὶ in v.7 is decisive for τὶ in v.5 (since the answer is 'Nothing' the question can scarcely have been 'Who?')." Metzger  
"Paul asks: Now what does all this Apollos-language and Paul language amount to? What is Apollos or Paul? What is their role?"  
Thistleton

διάκονος, οὐ m & f servant, minister  
πιστεῦω believe (in), have faith (in)  
ἐκάστος, ἡ, οὐ each, every

"Paul ... uses each (ἐκάστος) not to argue for an individualistic concept of ministry, but in fact the reverse. Apollos and Paul each perform assigned roles within a corporate ministry." Thistleton then cites Clark who writes, "The task oriented perception of leadership is clearly to be contrasted with the way in which the Corinthians had been viewing their leadership figures. The discussion in both 1 Cor 1:10-17 and 3:1-4 shows how the Corinthians were focusing their attention on the personalities of the apostles, and taking pride in them as men. Paul, rather, concentrates on the particular task each leader is accomplishing."

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s διδωμι give

Rupert Davies says that chapters 3 & 4 "Save us from too high a doctrine of the Ministry – from supposing that the Minister is the person who makes the Church... They save us also from too low a doctrine of the Ministry. Ministers are not just full-time servants of the Church ... Ministers are God's agents."

### 1 Corinthians 3:6

ἐγὼ ἐφύτευσα, Ἀπολλῶς ἐπότισεν, ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς ἡύξανεν·

"The image of the people of God as a field draws on a well-known tradition concerning Israel, perhaps deriving initially from Israel as God's vineyard (Isa 5:7; Ezek 36:9)."  
Thistleton

φυτεύω plant  
ποτίζω give to drink, water  
αύξανω and αύξω intrans grow, spread,  
increase, reach full growth; trans  
make grow, increase

God is the creator of life, and the efficacy of any ministry is dependent on him.  
The imperfect, in contrast with the aorists which precede it, indicates a continuing work. The servants of the word come and go but the work of God through them and in those who hear them continues unbroken.

### 1 Corinthians 3:7

ὥστε οὔτε ὁ φυτεύων ἐστὶν τι οὔτε ὁ ποτίζων, ἀλλ' ὁ αύξάνων θεός.

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
οὔτε not, nor (οὔτε ... οὔτε neither ... nor)

### 1 Corinthians 3:8

ὁ φυτεύων δὲ καὶ ὁ ποτίζων ἓν εἰσιν, ἕκαστος δὲ τὸν ἴδιον μισθὸν λήμψεται κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον,

Paul and Apollos were *one* in the sense that they were engaged in the one work of God – allies not rivals. "Whereas the Corinthian addressees place each minister in a different category and stand back to evaluate them, Paul places all those who share authentic ministry as God's channels in one category." Thistleton. However, each of them had their own God-given responsibility. Here is a model of shared ministry.

ἐκάστος, ἡ, οὐ each, every  
ἴδιος, α, οὐ one's own  
μισθός, οὐ m pay, wages, reward

"The most appropriate explanation [of μισθος] is to be found in 3:13-14, and more especially in 4:3-5. There Paul insists that assessments of one's own work are pointless and misleading before all the data are open to view and God has pronounced his definitive verdict at the last day. The reward for those who have then been raised into a mode of existence characterised by the Christ-like transformation brought about fully by the Holy Spirit ( 1 Cor 15:44-49) will be to discover that work done in one's life has remained a condition of some established effect in the new world order of 'what abides' as the fruit of the Spirit or as the work of God's kingdom (1 Cor 13:8-13). This will be κατά τον ίδιον κοπον, in accordance with their own labour, i.e., bear some relation to its nature, authenticity, motivation, and quality." Thistleton. Cf. 1 Cor 9:24,25; Phil 3:14.

λήμψεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s  
λαμβάνω  
κοπος, ου m work, labour trouble

Emphasises that each labours *for God* and is responsible *to God* – rather than simply to the community.

### 1 Corinthians 3:9

θεοῦ γάρ ἐσμεν συνεργοί· θεοῦ γεώργιον, θεοῦ οἰκοδομή ἐστε.

συνεργος, ου m fellow-worker

Could mean fellow workers *with God*, or fellow workers *together* in service of God. Thistleton thinks the latter is intended here since Paul is "concerned about defending the relationship of apostles *to one another*."

γεωργιον, ου n field, (cultivated) land, act of cultivation

Thistleton breaks the verse here, treating 9c as the commencement of another section, "The Image of the Building and the Testing of the Builders' Work (3:9c-15)"

οικοδομη, ης f building, process of building, encouragement

"... Thus Paul may mean that the Corinthians are the field, the building, in which God is at work. Or he may mean that they are God's work in cultivation and building." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 3:10

Κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι ὡς σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων θεμέλιον ἔθηκα, ἄλλος δὲ ἐποικοδομεῖ. ἕκαστος δὲ βλέπew πῶς ἐποικοδομεῖ·

Paul and Apollos are now pictured as co-workers in a building enterprise.

χαρις, ιτος f grace, unmerited favour

'According to the gracious privilege which God gave to me.'

δοθεῖσάν Verb, aor pass ptc, f acc s δίδωμι  
give

σοφος, η, ον wise, experienced

ἀρχιτεκτων, ονος m expert builder, master builder

Thistleton suggests that the picture is taken from that of a building contract in which, "because of his professional skill one person usually assumed a particular co-ordinating role, maintaining an overview of the work, but not as paymaster." So Paul is pictured as such a 'prime contractor' who used other members of his team to do various parts of the work.

θεμελιος, ου m (also θεμελιον, ου n)  
foundation, foundation stone

"This foundational work of Paul is explicated in 1 Cor 2:2, where the content of foundational proclamation is the apostolic message of a Christ crucified, without the addition of various human opinions and evaluations. Its christological and Christocentric character is what makes it the solid foundation without which the building would not stand, and certainly would not stand as *that* building." Thistleton

ἔθηκα Perf act indic, 1 s τιθημι place, set, appoint

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

ἐποικοδομεω build on, build up

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

βλεπω see, look, be able to see, beware of  
πως interrog. particle how? in what way?

### 1 Corinthians 3:11

θεμέλιον γὰρ ἄλλον οὐδεὶς δύναται θεῖναι παρὰ τὸν κείμενον, ὃς ἐστὶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός·

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing;  
οὐδεν not at all

παρα preposition with acc beside, by, rather than, contrary to

κειμαι lie, be laid, store up, be stored up

"Any other foundation would not merely make the building precarious; it would cease to exist *as that building*." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 3:12

εἰ δὲ τις ἐποικοδομεῖ ἐπὶ τὸν θεμέλιον χρυσόν, ἄργυρον, λίθους τιμίους, ξύλα, χόρτον, καλάμην,

The addition of τουτου after θεμελιον in many MSS would appear to be a clarifying insertion.

χρυσος, ου m gold, gold coin, gold image

ἄργυρος, ου m silver, silver coin, money

λιθος, ου m stone

τιμιος, α, ον precious, valuable, held in honour

These "may be precious stones in our sense of the term, used for ornamentation, or they may be costly building materials, like marble." Morris.

There may be an allusion here to Solomon's temple – anticipating the analogy of vv 16,17. However, the addition of hay and straw (thatch) suggests a more general building analogy.

ξύλον, ου η wood, tree, cross, stocks  
χορτος, ου η grass, vegetation, shoot  
καλαμη, ης f straw, stubble

### 1 Corinthians 3:13

ἐκάστου τὸ ἔργον φανερόν γενήσεται, ἢ γὰρ ἡμέρα δηλώσει· ὅτι ἐν πυρὶ ἀποκαλύπτεται, καὶ ἐκάστου τὸ ἔργον ὁποῖόν ἐστιν τὸ πῦρ αὐτὸ δοκιμάσει.

ἐκαστος see v.10

φανερως, α, ον known, evident, plain, visible

δηλωω make clear, indicate, inform

"Paul expresses his concern as missionary-pastor that all ministerial or church work should be founded on the reality of a Christ crucified and should endure. The 'testing by fire' connected with the last judgment simply underlines the subsidiary but important point which Paul elaborates in 4:4 and 5, that such is the opaqueness and duplicity of the human heart that even the builders of authentic work will not know definitively 'how they build' until God's own definitive verdict declares this and it becomes publicly visible at the last judgment. Still more to the point, one cannot judge the quality of the work of another builder: others are 'either doing that which will last or that which will perish,' and only time and the day of judgment will determine this. It is telling that even work which someone genuinely builds on the foundation may still turn out to be of no permanent value. Cox surmises that elements of self-interest or building for applause or self-gain can turn even the Christian's building 'upon Christ' into hay or straw. Such building would not be Christ-like." Thistleton

πυρ, ος η fire

ἀποκαλύπτω reveal, disclose

ὁποιος, α, ον correlative pronoun of what sort, such as

δοκιμαζω test, examine, approve, prove, discern

### 1 Corinthians 3:14

εἴ τις τὸ ἔργον μενεῖ ὁ ἐποικοδόμησεν, μισθὸν λήμψεται·

μενεῖ Verb, pres & fut act indic, 3 s μενω

remain, stay, abide

ἐποικοδόμησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

ἐποικοδομεω

On μισθος see v.8.

λήμψεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s

λαμβάνω

### 1 Corinthians 3:15

εἴ τις τὸ ἔργον κατακαήσεται, ζημιωθήσεται, αὐτὸς δὲ σωθήσεται, οὕτως δὲ ὡς διὰ πυρός.

κατακαήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s

κατακαίω burn, burn up, consume

ζημιωω pass only lose, suffer loss

σωζω save, rescue, heal

"The distinction is not between the lost and the saved, but among the saved between those who have built well and those who have built poorly. *He shall suffer loss* means that he will lose his *reward*, like a workman fined of his wages for poor workmanship." Morris Compare 1 Thess. 2:19,20 and Phil4:1. Is the reward of the careful workman the enduring fruit of his labour? (Cf. comments on μισθος in v.8.)

For οὕτως δὲ ὡς διὰ πυρός cf. Amos 4:11, 'a brand plucked from the burning.'

### 1 Corinthians 3:16

Οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ναὸς θεοῦ ἐστε καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν;

οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

οὐκ οἴδατε suggests Paul's amazed and troubled response to the reports he has received.

ναος, ου η temple, sanctuary, inner part of Jewish Temple

οικεω intrans live, dwell; trans live in

The verb and pronoun are plural while ναος is singular. It is the church, the company of God's people, who are here spoken of as the dwelling place of God by his Spirit (though cf. 6:19 for the same picture applied to the individual). Appreciation of this is vital to a right understanding of the following verse.

### 1 Corinthians 3:17

εἴ τις τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ φθειρεῖ, φθερεῖ τοῦτον ὁ θεός· ὁ γὰρ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιός ἐστιν, οἷτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς.

φθειρω corrupt, ruin, destroy

φθερεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s φθειρω  
corrupt, ruin, destroy  
ὅστις, ἡτις, ὅτι who, whoever, anyone,

"To engage in divisions is to 'destroy' the divine society, and consequently to invite God to 'destroy' the sinner." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 3:18-4:5

Thistleton, following Carson (*The Cross and the Christian Ministry*) says that this section is addressing false conceptions of ministry. "Self deception about the status of the self as already mature or fully spiritual may lead to further deception about a lack of need for ministry. Hence it is possible to cheat oneself out of the full range of ministerial resources and support which God has provided."

### 1 Corinthians 3:18

Μηδεὶς ἑαυτὸν ἐξαπατάτω· εἴ τις δοκεῖ σοφὸς εἶναι ἐν ὑμῖν ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, μωρὸς γενέσθω, ἵνα γένηται σοφός,

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing  
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον reflexive pronoun,  
himself, herself, itself

ἐξαπαταω deceive, lead astray

δοκεω think, suppose

σοφος see v.10

εἶναι Verb, pres infin ειμι

αιων, αιωνος m age, world order, eternity

μωρος, α, ον foolish; το μ. foolishness

γενέσθω Verb, aor imperat, 3 s γινομαι

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

"If anyone is to have real spiritual insight he must become what the world calls 'a fool'. The true wisdom is found in renouncing 'the wisdom of this world' ... The worldly wise, whom the Corinthians held in such high esteem, are totally unable to penetrate the divine mysteries. These are open to the humblest man of faith but are for ever hid from the wise of this world." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 3:19

ἢ γὰρ σοφία τοῦ κόσμου τούτου μωρία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ ἐστίν· γέγραπται γάρ· Ὁ δρασσόμενος τοὺς σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ πανουργίᾳ αὐτῶν·

σοφια, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence

μωρια, ας f foolishness

Compare 1:20

παρα preposition with dat with, in the presence of

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

Cf. Job 5:13. This appears to be the only citation of Job in the NT. The wording here differs from the LXX, suggesting that Paul is familiar with and producing his own translation from the Hebrew.

δρασσομαι catch, trap

πανουργια, ας f craftiness, cunning

### 1 Corinthians 3:20

καὶ πάλιν· Κύριος γινώσκει τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς τῶν σοφῶν ὅτι εἰσὶν μάταιοι.

Cf. Ps 94:11 (LXX 93:11). In citing Scripture Paul demonstrates that what he is saying is not merely personal opinion.

παλιν again, once more

διαλογισμος, ου m thought, opinion,  
reasoning, dispute

ματαιος, α, ον worthless, futile, useless

### 1 Corinthians 3:21

ὥστε μηδεὶς καυχᾶσθω ἐν ἀνθρώποις· πάντα γὰρ ὑμῶν ἐστίν,

ὥστε so that, with the result that

Here in the sense of 'so then'.

μηδεις see v.18

καυχαομαι boast, boast about

Cf. the positive corollary in 1:31. "Paul says that if Christians are to take pride in anything, in the sense of glorying in it, this is not to be in any feature of the church or its leaders, but in God as revealed in Christ, and in God alone. Paul's most personal, self-involving declaration rings out in Gal 6:14: ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ" Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 3:22

εἴτε Παῦλος εἴτε Ἀπολλῶς εἴτε Κηφᾶς εἴτε κόσμος εἴτε ζωὴ εἴτε θάνατος εἴτε ἐνεστῶτα εἴτε μέλλοντα, πάντα ὑμῶν,

"Paul turns the thoughts of the Corinthians away from the wisdom of men which had meant so much to them, to the far greater treasures that they really possessed in Christ." Morris

εἴτε if, whether

Κηφας, α m Cephas (Aramaic equivalent of Πέτρος, rock).

It may be that some at Corinth were claiming a particular teacher as their own – 'he is our man'. Paul turns their catchphrase around and declares that all Christian ministry is Christian ministry *for them*. "Each minister is perceived as part of a comprehensive range of gifts and resources, all lavished upon them as a corporeity or plurality to be used without picking and choosing the gifts." Thistleton

θανατος, ου m death

"Paul's saying 'to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain' (Phil 1:21) gives us the clue to his reference to *life* and *death*. Life in Christ is the only life, and the Christian possesses this. To the unbeliever, *death* is the end of all things. But Christ has overcome death and for the Christian it is not disaster, but 'gain'." Morris

ἐνεστώτα Verb, perf act ptc, n nom/acc pl  
ἐνιστημι be present

None of these things is a 'threat' to Christians, cf. Rom 8:38,39. The Christian need not fear any of these 'powers'.

### 1 Corinthians 3:23

ὁμοίως δὲ Χριστοῦ, Χριστός δὲ θεοῦ.

"The ending of God underlines the ultimacy of the divine verdict for all and on all, while Paul, Apollos, Cephas, death, the world ... remain instruments for the fulfilment of the purposes of God, of which Christians are sharers and inheritors with Christ." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 4:1

Οὕτως ἡμᾶς λογιζέσθω ἄνθρωπος ὡς ὑπηρετάς Χριστοῦ καὶ οἰκονόμους μυστηρίων θεοῦ.

λογίζομαι reckon, calculate, suppose  
ὑπηρετης, ου m assistant, servant  
οικονομος, ου m steward, manager

One responsible for managing a household or estate.

μυστηριον, ου n secret, mystery (see 2:7)

### 1 Corinthians 4:2

ὥδε λοιπὸν ζητεῖται ἐν τοῖς οἰκονόμοις ἵνα πιστός τις εὐρεθῇ.

ὥδε adv here, under these circumstances  
λοιπος, η, ου rest, remaining, other

ὥδε λοιπον moreover, in this connection

ζητεω seek, search for, look for  
οικονομος, ου m steward, manager  
πιστος, η, ου faithful, trustworthy, reliable  
εὐρεθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s εὐρισκω

"Ministers need to ask the question whether they will be found honest, faithful, reliable, or trustworthy. Paul is about to disclaim the capacity to know fully the secrets even of his own heart. He simply leaves with God in trust how trustworthy his work will be found to have been in the judgment of God." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 4:3

ἐμοὶ δὲ εἰς ἐλάχιστόν ἐστιν, ἵνα ὑφ' ὑμῶν ἀνακριθῶ ἢ ὑπὸ ἀνθρωπίνης ἡμέρας· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἐμαυτὸν ἀνακρίνω·

ἐμοὶ Pronoun, dat s ἐγὼ

Here in the sense of 'as free as I am concerned,' or 'as I look at my own case.'

ἐλάχιστος, η, ου (superl of μικρος) least, smallest, insignificant

'It counts for little,' 'it is of no importance to me.'

ἀνακριθῶ Verb, aor pass subj, 1 s ἀνακρίνω  
examine, judge, evaluate  
ἀνθρωπινος, η, ου human, characteristic of mankind

ἀνθρωπίνης ἡμέρας a peculiar phrase which seems to mean 'human judgement'. Morris suggests that it may be by analogy with the Day of Judgement – God's day.

οὐδὲ neither, nor

ἐμαυτὸν Pronoun, acc s ἐμαυτου, ης  
reflexive pronoun (not used in nom)  
myself, my own

"The Christian is to be judged by his Master. His own views on himself are as irrelevant as those of anyone else. This needs emphasis in a day when many are tempted to be introspective. Often they think that they themselves know just what their spiritual state is and just what their service for God has effected. The result may depress unduly or exalt above measure. But it is not our task to pass such judgements. We should get on with the job of serving the Lord. This does not mean that there is no place for times of heart-searching and rigid self-scrutiny with a view to more whole-hearted and more efficient service. It is an attempt to anticipate the judgement of the Lord that Paul is condemning." Morris. Paul "leaves his successes and failures with God. What has been done is done, and God alone knows and can disclose the worth of it. It must simply be left with God while the servant of God goes on to the next task, at the same moment 'judging nothing before the time' (4:5) and 'knowing that your labour is not in vain (κενος, empty, null) in the Lord (15:58)." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 4:4**

ἐμοὶ δὲ εἰς ἐλάχιστόν ἐστιν, ἵνα ὑφ' ὑμῶν ἀνακριθῶ ἢ ὑπὸ ἀνθρωπίνης ἡμέρας· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἐμαυτὸν ἀνακρίνω·

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing  
συνοῖδα (verb perf in form but pres in meaning) be aware of

Cognate of συνειδήσις 'conscience,' hence the NIV translates, 'I have nothing on my conscience.'

δεδικαίωμαι Verb, perf pass indic, 1 s  
δικαίω justify, acquit

"Paul is saying that he is not aware of any great matter in which he has failed in his stewardship. But he does not rest his confidence in that... Paul's acquittal does not stem from his own estimate of his work. The assessment is made by the Lord." Morris.  
"Hence Paul trustfully leaves everything in the hands of God who alone has competency to judge in an absolute, irrevocable sense. Neither other people's verdicts nor one's own self-awareness can penetrate unconscious motives and stance: everything, these included, are left with God." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 4:5**

ὥστε μὴ πρὸ καιροῦ τι κρίνετε, ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ ὁ κύριος, ὃς καὶ φωτίσει τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ σκότους καὶ φανερώσει τὰς βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν, καὶ τότε ὁ ἔπαινος γενήσεται ἐκάστῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ.

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
καιρος, ου m time, appointed time  
ἕως conj until, while  
ἂν particle indicating contingency

ἕως ἂν "indicates that the fact of the coming of the Lord is certain, but the time is unknown."  
Morris

φωτιζω shine on, bring to light, reveal  
κρυπτος, η, ον hidden, secret, private  
σκοτος, ους n darkness, evil  
φανερωω reveal, make evident  
βουλη, ης f purpose, intention, plan  
τοτε then, at that time  
ἔπαινος, ου m praise, commendation  
ἐκαστος, η, ον each, every

**1 Corinthians 4:6**

Ταῦτα δέ, ἀδελφοί, μετεσημάτισα εἰς ἐμαυτὸν καὶ Ἀπολλῶν δι' ὑμᾶς, ἵνα ἐν ἡμῖν μάθητε τό· Μὴ ὑπὲρ ἃ γέγραπται, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐνὸς φυσιοῦσθε κατὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου.

μετεσημάτισα Verb, aor act indic, 1 s  
μετασηματιζω transform, apply

Paul is saying that he has used Apollos and himself as illustrations to draw out lessons which the Corinthians are to apply to themselves.

Chrysostom argued that Paul's meaning is that he transferred the things he wished to say to himself and Apollos while in reality they apply to the false teachers in Corinth who have inflated egos.

μάθητε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl μανθανω  
learn, find out

ἵνα ἐν ἡμῖν μάθητε 'that you may learn through our case'

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

It would seem from the way the phrase 'not beyond what is written' is introduced (namely with the definitive article, το) that it may have been a familiar phrase (of Paul), known to the Corinthians. It expresses his concern for himself and for them to live by the Scriptures and not add their own fancies.

A number of commentators (e.g. Hooker and Fee) think Paul is referring to the specific Scriptures he has already quoted (e.g. 1:29, 31; 1:19; 3:19-20). "Paul warns the addressees that if they seek to go beyond what is written, the misguided attempt to 'add to' the gospel of the cross by self-styled wisdom, rhetorical status-seeking, or self-styled 'spirituality,' the result will be an inflation of mere wind that will lead to taking sides, self-affirmation, and pitting one group or its leaders against another."

Thistleton

φυσιοω cause conceit/arrogance; pass be  
conceited/arrogant

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

The thought here is of arrogant claims made for one teacher over against another.

**1 Corinthians 4:7**

τίς γάρ σε διακρίνει; τί δὲ ἔχεις ὃ οὐκ ἔλαβες; εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔλαβες, τί καυχᾶσαι ὡς μὴ λαβών;

σε Pronoun, acc s συ  
διακρινω judge, evaluate, discern, make a distinction between

The sense here is either:

- i) 'Who makes you differ one from another?', expecting the answer 'God' – any distinctions are distinctions of grace and therefore no ground for boasting; or,
- ii) 'Who sees anything different in you?' i.e. no one has anything superior that marks out one from another.

καυχᾶσαι Verb, pres midd/pass dep indic, irreg 2 s  
καυχομαι boast, boast about

"They owe everything to the grace of God."  
Morris

**1 Corinthians 4:8**

Ἦδη κεκορεσμένοι ἐστέ, ἤδη ἐπλουτήσατε, χωρὶς ἡμῶν ἐβασιλεύσατε· καὶ ὄφελόν γε ἐβασιλεύσατε, ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑμῖν συμβασιλεύσωμεν.

Thistleton draws attention to the melting pot of religious ideas and sects in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Graeco-Roman world, religious ideas which clearly had an impact on the life of the Early Church. "Nock observes that among Hellenistic-oriental cults notions of conversion in the first century could be extravagant: a convert could be overwhelmed by a new sense of power, liberation and status: 'Many of the converts, convinced that they were on a new plane of life, felt that they could do anything: they were kings (1 Cor 4:8), they were in the Spirit, they were ... emancipated ... They were altogether superior to the unchanged men around them.' In yet another context, to be rich and to reign represent catchwords of the Stoics. As Moffatt acutely observes: 'Paul ... pours out his soul... The nearest approach to this caustic description of religious self-satisfaction lies in the prophet John's word to the Christian church at Laodicea (Rev 3:17): "You declare, I am rich, I am well off, I lack nothing." ... "Rich" and "reigning" were catchwords of the Stoics ever since Diogenes, whose tomb was shown at Corinth, had taught a Stoic to maintain, "I alone am rich, I alone reign as king" in the world.'"

ἤδη adv now, already  
κεκορεσμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl  
κορεννυμι fill; pass be full, have  
enough

"Normally meaning satiated, fed-to-the-full, glutton, applying to the 'bloated' self-important 'people of the Spirit' the farmyard metaphor of overfed animals." Thistleton

πλουτεω be rich, grow rich  
χωρὶς prep with gen without, apart from  
βασιλευω rule, reign  
ὄφελόν would that, I wish that  
γε enclitic particle adding emphasis to the word with which it is associated  
συμβασιλεύσωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl  
συμβασιλευω reign with

"The Corinthians are behaving as if the age to come were already consummated, as if the saints had already taken over the kingdom (Dan 7:18); for them there is no 'not yet' to qualify the 'already' of realised eschatology." Barrett

**1 Corinthians 4:9**

δοκῶ γάρ, ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀποστόλους ἐσχάτους ἀπέδειξεν ὡς ἐπιθανατίους, ὅτι θέατρον ἐγενήθημεν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις.

δοκεω think, suppose; intrans be  
recognised, have reputation

'It seems to me.'

ἐσχατος, η, ον adj last, final  
ἀπέδειξεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s  
ἀποδεικνυμι set forth  
ἐπιθανατιος, ον sentenced to death

'Doomed to die.'

θεατρον, ον n theatre, spectacle

"The imagery is derived from the arena, as Moffatt's rendering brings out, 'God means us apostles to come in at the very end, like doomed gladiators in the arena!'" Morris. Thistleton, quoting Deluz, says, "Paul perceives his apostolic labours as a cosmic spectacle, which, if they are evaluated by Corinthian criteria, seem to be a spectacle of struggle, failure, and disgrace. The apostles 'seem to be of no more importance than the gladiators who shed their blood in the arena to provide an amusing public spectacle... surely the Corinthians should be ashamed to lounge in the best seats and just applaud or even boo!'" However, for Paul's balancing views concerning the real element of triumph that characterises the Christian life cf. Col 2:15; 2 Cor 2:14.

**1 Corinthians 4:10**

ἡμεῖς μωροὶ διὰ Χριστόν, ὑμεῖς δὲ φρόνιμοι ἐν Χριστῷ· ἡμεῖς ἀσθενεῖς, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἰσχυροὶ· ὑμεῖς ἐνδοξοὶ, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄτιμοι.

μωρος, α, ον foolish; το μ. foolishness

Cf. 1:25.

φρονιμος, ον wise, sensible  
ἀσθενεῖς Adjective, m nom pl ἀσθενης, ες  
sick, weak, helpless  
ἰσχυρος, α, ον strong, mighty, powerful  
ἐνδοξος, ον glorious, splendid  
ἀτιμος, ον unhonoured, dishonoured,  
despised

**1 Corinthians 4:11**

ἄχρι τῆς ἄρτι ὥρας καὶ πεινώμεν καὶ διψῶμεν καὶ γυμνιτεύομεν καὶ κολαφίζόμεθα καὶ ἀστατοῦμεν

ἄχρι (and ἀχρις) prep with gen until, as far as

ἄρτι now, at the present  
πεινωω be hungry  
διψαω be thirsty, thirst for

γυμνιτεω be dressed in rags  
κολαφιζω beat, strike, harass

May refer to beatings at the hands of the mob or by the authorities or to various harassments physical or spiritual (cf. 2 Cor 12:7).

ἀστατεω be homeless, wander from place to place

Cf. Jesus' words in Mat 8:28; Lk 9:58.

### 1 Corinthians 4:12

καὶ κοπιῶμεν ἐργαζόμενοι ταῖς ἰδίαις χερσίν·  
λοιδορούμενοι εὐλογοῦμεν, διωκόμενοι  
ἀνεχόμεθα,

κοπιαω work, work hard, labour  
χειρ, χειρος f hand

"This is all the more significant in that the Greeks despised all manual labour, thinking of it as fit only for slaves." Morris Thistleton, quoting Hock, says, "Workshops, such as that in which Paul would have plied his trade, "were often noisy, dirty and amounted to 'exhausting toil' (1 Thess 2:9; 1 Cor 4:12).' This is why, Hock proposes, the Corinthians were so upset that Paul did not wish them to provide financial support as his patrons, thereby bestowing upon him a superior social status as a professional rhetorician."

λοιδορεω curse, speak evil of, insult  
διωκω persecute, seek after, pursue,  
follow

ἀνεχομαι endure, be patient with

### 1 Corinthians 4:13

δυσφημούμενοι παρακαλοῦμεν· ὡς  
περικαθάρματα τοῦ κόσμου ἐγενήθημεν,  
πάντων περίφημα ἕως ἄρτι.

δυσφημεω slander, speak ill of  
παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

"In the face of those who slander him or speak ill of him behind his back, Paul appeals to them, but probably face to face, i.e., clarifies misunderstanding with moral courage and sensitive listening." Thistleton

περικαθαρμα, τος n refuse, rubbish

Thistleton says that the meaning is 'scum', filthy residue which clings to the surface of a vessel.

περιψημα, τος n scum, dirt

That which has to be scraped off (e.g. from the shoe).

ἕως until

### 1 Corinthians 4:14

Οὐκ ἐντρέπων ὑμᾶς γράφω ταῦτα, ἀλλ' ὡς  
τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ νουθετῶν·

ἐντρεπω make ashamed

Thistleton thinks the participle is the more plausible reading. Paul's irony above was meant to shock them into a realistic view of things, it was not intended to engender low self-esteem.

ἀγαπητος, η, ον beloved

Part of the role of a parent towards a child is the discipline that proceeds from love.

νουθετεω instruct, teach, warn

### 1 Corinthians 4:15

ἐὰν γὰρ μυρίους παιδαγωγούς ἔχητε ἐν  
Χριστῷ, ἀλλ' οὐ πολλοὺς πατέρας, ἐν γὰρ  
Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς  
ἐγέννησα.

μυριοι, αι, α ten thousand

'even if you have countless thousands of instructors...'

παιδαγωγος, ου m instructor, teacher

The παιδαγωγος did not belong to the family, nor did the children under his care belong to him – though he was responsible for their correction and training. Paul's relationship with the Corinthians is closer than that: they are his children, for he has been instrumental in giving them life through the Gospel.

γενναω be father of, bear, give birth to;  
pass be born, cause

### 1 Corinthians 4:16

παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε.

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge  
μιμητης, ου m imitator

I.e., 'by your conduct, prove your parentage.'

### 1 Corinthians 4:17

διὰ τοῦτο ἔπεμψα ὑμῖν Τιμόθεον, ὃς ἐστίν μου  
τέκνον ἀγαπητὸν καὶ πιστὸν ἐν κυρίῳ, ὃς ὑμᾶς  
ἀναμνήσει τὰς ὁδοὺς μου τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ  
Ἰησοῦ, καθὼς πανταχοῦ ἐν πάσῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ  
διδάσκω.

πεμπω send

Barrett thinks that Paul had sent Timothy on to several destinations with the hope, but not the certainty, that these would allow time for him to include Corinth.

πιστος, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, reliable

I.e. Timothy himself exemplifies what the Corinthians are called to be.

ἀναμνήσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s

ἀναμνησκω remind, bring to mind

Here, bring to mind not only through his teaching but also by his person, conduct and example.

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

The Christian life is spoken of as a 'way', or 'ways', i.e. manner of life or pattern of life, and is characterised as 'the ways that are in Christ'.

πανταχου everywhere  
διδασκω teach

Paul requires no more from the Corinthians than from any other community of the people of God.

### 1 Corinthians 4:18

ὡς μὴ ἐρχομένου δέ μου πρὸς ὑμᾶς  
ἐφυσιώθησάν τινες·

ἐφυσιωθησάν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl  
φυσιω cause conceit/arrogance; pass  
be conceited/arrogant

Some, supposing Paul would not come himself, have become inflated with self-importance.

### 1 Corinthians 4:19

ἐλεύσομαι δὲ ταχέως πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἐὰν ὁ κύριος  
θελήσῃ, καὶ γνῶσομαι οὐ τὸν λόγον τῶν  
πεφυσιωμένων ἀλλὰ τὴν δύναμιν,

ἐλεύσομαι Verb, fut midd dep indic, 1 s  
έρχομαι  
ταχέως adv. (formed from ταχυς) quickly, at  
once, soon  
θελήσῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s θελω wish,  
will  
πεφυσιωμένων Verb, perf pass ptc, gen pl  
φυσιω cause conceit/arrogance

"It is not a question of whether Paul's Corinthian opponents could speak well, but of whether the power of God was manifest in them." Morris  
"When Paul arrives, some may find that their public esteem corresponds with that of burst balloons." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 4:20

οὐ γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἐν  
δυνάμει.

δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

### 1 Corinthians 4:21

τί θέλετε; ἐν ῥάβδῳ ἔλθω πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἢ ἐν  
ἀγάπῃ πνεύματι τε πραΰτητος;

ῥαβδος, ου f stick, rod, sceptre

The rod of correction.

ἔλθω a deliberative subjunctive, 'am I to come'  
τε enclitic particle and, and so

πνευματι τε πραυτητος 'and (also) in a spirit of gentleness'.

πραυτης, ητος f gentleness, humility

'or in love which shows itself in a gentle spirit.' Thistleton makes the point that the rod of correction, rightly used, is also an expression of love. The question therefore is 'Which expression would you prefer?'

### Chapters 5 & 6

"Chapters 5 and 6 expound what for Paul constitute clear-cut moral and ethical issues. In this respect this main block stands in contrast to the material in 7:1-11:1, which no less concerns matters of ethics, but in the latter case 'grey areas' where much depends on situations and circumstances." Thistleton.

On the contemporary relevance of these chapters Thistleton writes, "The issue of community boundaries and of the dialectic between 'mixed' church and church discipline as a condition for the corporate identity of the church as Christ's body remains as relevant today as ever it was, as can also be perceived in the history of interpretation. How do they retain a corporate identity as God's holy temple (3:16) and Christ's body (12:27) without manifesting an exclusiveness not characteristic of Christ's own identity?"

### 1 Corinthians 5:1

Ὅλως ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία, καὶ τοιαύτη  
πορνεία ἥτις οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ὡστε  
γυναῖκά τινα τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχειν.

ὄλως adv actually

The passive ἀκούεται suggests continuing oral report.

πορνεία, ας f sexual immorality  
τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον pronoun and adj. such,  
of such kind, similar, like  
ὅστις, ἡτις, ὅ τι who, which  
οὐδὲ neither, nor, not even  
ἔθνεσιν Noun, dat pl ἔθνος, ους n nation,  
people; τα ἑ. Gentiles

Requires the addition of an implied verb e.g. 'such as is *not tolerated* even among the Gentiles'

ὡστε so that, with the result that

"His father's wife probably does not mean 'his mother', else Paul would have said so. But whether it means that the offender had seduced his step-mother, or that she was divorced from his father, or that the father had died leaving a widow, is not clear. What is quite clear is that an illicit union of a particularly unsavoury kind had been contracted." Morris

Chow and Clark (cited by Thistleton) suggest that the culprit was a significant patron of the church at Corinth and that this *marriage* secured access to family assets from which the Corinthians had enjoyed benefit – maybe even property in which the church met.

ἔχειν denotes a continuing relationship

### 1 Corinthians 5:2

καὶ ὑμεῖς πεφυσιωμένοι ἐστέ, καὶ οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἐπενθήσατε, ἵνα ἀρθῆ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο ποιήσας;

πεφυσιωμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl  
φυσιω see 4:18

"A significant body of opinion in Corinth (cf. 6:12ff.) thought that this was rather a fine assertion of Christian liberty, of emancipation from Jewish Law and Gentile convention alike." Bruce

Paul therefore addresses two problems:

- The immoral act of the person concerned;
- The corporate sin of the church in accepting and tolerating this situation.

οὐχὶ (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.

μᾶλλον adv rather, instead

πενθεω mourn, be sad, grieve over

"The first aorist indicative ἐπενθησατε is likely to carry the nuance of a past act (ingressive) of entering into a state of mourning." Thistleton

ἀρθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s αἰρω take,  
take away, set aside

Thistleton suggests "a formal state of mourning would stamp the life and worship of the church objectively and publicly in a way which would thereby make it intolerable for the offender to remain, and would then in all probability have made his own choice to leave (or to change his lifestyle). He would know that he had blighted the church's life."

μεσος, η, ον middle

πράξας Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s πρασσω  
practice, do

Most minuscules read ποιήσας rather than πράξας. Regarding the balance of probabilities Thistleton concludes "the issue is finely balanced and of little material substance."

### 1 Corinthians 5:3

Ἐγὼ μὲν γάρ, ἀπὸν τῷ σώματι παρὼν δὲ τῷ πνεύματι, ἤδη κέκρικα ὡς παρὼν τὸν οὕτως τοῦτο κατεργασάμενον

ἐγὼ μὲν an emphatic contrast with καὶ ὑμεῖς of v.2.

ἀπὼν Verb, pres ptc, m nom s ἀπειμι be  
away, be absent

σῶμα, τος n body

παρῶν Verb, pres ptc, m nom s παρειμι be  
present

Thistleton follows Fee in suggesting that the reference is to the Holy Spirit. "Paul does not express a mind-body contrast as such, but uses τῷ πνεύματι to refer primarily to the Holy Spirit, even if there is a secondary allusion to πνεῦμα as the human self in its capacity to be open to the Spirit. It is in the power of the Holy Spirit that Paul is present, as one who integrally forms part of the one holy temple at Corinth which is threatened with defilement and destruction ... but is sanctified by the common bond of the Spirit, who indwells the corporate body."

ἤδη adv now, already

ὡς παρῶν 'as one who is present' Fee

κέκρικα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s κρινω  
judge, pass judgement on, condemn

"The perfect indicative active κέκρικα I pronounce judgement, implies that Paul has already (ἤδη) reached a settled public verdict, as part of the community, upon the man (τοῦ with the participle) who has perpetrated such an act." Thistleton

κατεργασάμενον Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m  
acc s κατεργαζομαι do, bring about

### 1 Corinthians 5:4

ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ, συναχθέντων ὑμῶν καὶ τοῦ ἐμοῦ πνεύματος σὺν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ,

ὄνομα, τος n name, person, authority

'In the name of the Lord Jesus' probably belongs with the later verb παραδουναί (v.5) rather than with συναχθέντων. It may be that it qualifies both in the sense that it is the name of the Lord Jesus that gives authority to the assembly and its decisions/actions.

συναχθέντων Verb, aor pass ptc, gen pl  
συναγω gather, gather together

δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

'with the power of the Lord Jesus' probably belongs with συναχθέντων. "The apostle is there in spirit and the Lord Jesus is there in power." Morris – Though note the comment of Thistleton on the previous verse.

### 1 Corinthians 5:5

παραδουναί τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῆ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου.

παραδουναί Verb, aor act infin παραδιδωμι  
hand over, deliver up

τοιοῦτος see v.1

"The idea underlying this is that outside the Church is the sphere of Satan (Eph 2:12; Col 1:13; 1 Jn 5:19). To be expelled from the Church of Christ is to be delivered over into that region where Satan holds sway." Morris

ὄλεθρος, ον m destruction, ruin  
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature

"What is to be destroyed is arguably not primarily the physical body of the offender (although this may or may not be secondarily entailed) but the 'fleshly' *stance of self-sufficiency* of which Paul accuses *primarily the community* but surely *also the man*... If consigning to Satan means excluding him from the community, this spells the end of self-congratulation about their association with such a distinguished patron; while for the offender himself sudden removal from a platform of adulation to total isolation from the community would have a sobering if not devastating effect." Thistleton

σωθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s σωζω save

Thistleton argues that "the salvific purposes embrace both the community and the man." He continues, "I concede that this makes the translation of το πνευμα difficult... After some deliberation I have left the word as it stands: in order that the spirit may be saved leaves open, as the Greek does, whether Paul means the *stance of the man, the man under the mode of his openness to God, the stance of the church, the animating principle of the church* (which would not be characteristic of Paul, but no writer need always use terms 'characteristically'), or simply *that mode of being of the community and the man which is purged of its fleshly, self-sufficient complacency*. Cambier sees πνευμα as characterising 'the whole person' here. Only the exegetical context can determine the semantic boundaries and reference of πνευμα here."

The idea of a curse judgement (possibly ending in death as in the case of Ananias and Saphira) is to be rejected.

### 1 Corinthians 5:6

Οὐ καλὸν τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν. οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι μικρὰ ζύμη ὅλον τὸ φύραμα ζυμοῖ;

καύχημα, τος n boasting, pride

'Your self-satisfaction is ill-placed.'

οὐκ οἶδατε seems here to introduce a well-known proverb or metaphor (cf. Gal 5:9).

ζυμη, ης f yeast

Mitton makes much of the distinction between leaven and yeast – leaven is a bit of the old batch kept back and added to the new.

Thistleton, citing Mitton's work says, "Sometimes leaven is used as a symbol of dynamic vitality and as a source of unstoppable effects disproportionate to its size (e.g. Matt 13:33); sometimes it signifies the consequences of these qualities when it has become tainted. Paul sees the disastrous consequences of letting the church become distorted and misshaped by a tainting element which permeates the whole, and calls for a reshaping based solely on the 'new,' unleavened bread of the Passover, namely; the body of Christ which absorbed sin and perished on the cross, to be raised as a new bodily reality the likeness of which gave identity and shape to the church. Hence Mitton concludes, any 'infected' piece no longer has any influence on the new batch, and through death and resurrection with Christ 'the new quality of life awakened in the heart of the new believer' prevails."

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

φύραμα, τος n lump

ζυμοω cause to rise, 'leaven'

"Paul calls attention to the unstoppable, spreading, disastrous influence on the nature and identity of the whole community which is out of all proportion to what those who were self-satisfied evidently imagined could spring from a 'little' case of one immoral relationship, even if one of an utterly outrageous nature." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

"These two verses are full of fundamental theology, which provides the basis for ecclesiology and ethics." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 5:7

ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην, ἵνα ἦτε νέον φύραμα, καθὼς ἐστε ἄζυμοι. καὶ γὰρ τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός·

ἐκκαθάρατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl

ἐκκαθαίρω clean out, make clean

παλαιος, α, ον old, former

νεος, α, ον new, fresh, young

ἄζυμος, ον without yeast

This is their true identity. They are to be what they are by putting away that which they are not.

πάσχα n Passover, Passover meal, Passover lamb

ἐτύθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s θυω slaughter, sacrifice, kill

"The Christian church is not just the old society patched up. It is radically new ... Christ has put away sin by his death. He has made them to be unleavened." Morris

The new life is founded on Christ as "the passover lamb... the symbol of the Messiah who was sacrificed as the unblemished lamb. The leaven which is removed from all of the houses during the night of Nisan 13/14 is the symbol of the evil and wickedness which characterise the old world. The unleavened bread is interpreted eschatologically ... as the purity and truth which characterise the new world (1 Cor 5:8), and as new dough they symbolise the redeemed community (1 Cor 5:7a)." Jeremias

"In Jewish traditions, partly through an interpretative reading of Zeph 1:12, the purging of the house of all leaven was understood as a symbol of moral purification, with candles to look into corners. By analogy, the church is to clean out what defiles its identity and purity. Especially in view of the first person plural in v.8, Chrysostom and many others interpret the old leaven as applying more broadly than to the offender alone, although certainly including the offender." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 5:8

ὥστε ἑορτάζωμεν, μὴ ἐν ζύμῃ παλαιᾷ μηδὲ ἐν ζύμῃ κακίας καὶ πονηρίας, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀζύμοις εἰλικρινείας καὶ ἀληθείας.

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
ἑορτάζω observe a festival

The present tense implies that the Christian life is like a continuing festival – continually living out the reality of having a part in Christ's death and risen life. "Our passover feast is not for a week, but for a lifetime." Godet  
Though some suggest that Paul may have been writing at passover time.

παλαιός, α, ον old, former  
μηδε negative particle nor, and not, not even

κακία, ας evil, wickedness  
πονηρία, ας f evil, wickedness, evil intention

'Not with the leaven that ferments wickedness and evil' (Thistleton)

εἰλικρινεία, ας f sincerity

'transparency of motive', hence, 'purity.'

ἀληθεία, ας f truth, reality

### 1 Corinthians 5:9

Ἐγραψα ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ μὴ συναμιγνυσθαι πόρνοις,  
ἐπιστολή, ης f letter

"Some have understood 'I wrote' as an epistolary aorist, in which case it would refer to the letter now being written. But there seems little in favour of this, and it is better to see a reference to an earlier letter, now lost." Morris

συναμιγνυμι associate with, have dealings with  
πορνος, ου m man who practices sexual immorality

### 1 Corinthians 5:10

οὐ πάντως τοῖς πόρνοις τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἢ τοῖς πλεονέκταις καὶ ἄρπαξιν ἢ εἰδωλολάτραις, ἐπεὶ ὀφείλετε ἄρα ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἐξελεθεῖν.

παντως by all means, in all circumstances

Is the sense of οὐ πάντως here 'not altogether', 'not entirely' or 'not at all' (NIV)? Thistleton thinks the latter, translating the phrase 'in no way does this refer to people in secular society who ...'

πλεονεκτής, ου m one who greedy or covetous

The vices Paul lists correspond with the characteristics of Corinthian society. "Many at Corinth were obsessed with the *ambition to achieve*, i.e., to *gain more* social status, power, or wealth." Thistleton

ἄρπαξιν Adjective, dat pl ἄρπαξ, αγος grasping, greedy

Perhaps particularly 'swindler' or one who practices extortion. "Someone who kicks others down the ladder in order to advance upwards." Thistleton

εἰδωλολατρής, ου m idolater

Cf. 8:1-11:1 where Paul addresses the issue of idolatry at Corinth.

ἐπει since, because, for  
ὀφείλω owe, ought, must

Rosner argues that Paul is making use of Deuteronomic material (cf. Deut 22:21; 17:3,7; 24:27). The list of vices is to be interpreted in terms of Deuteronomic covenant identity and covenant obligation.

### 1 Corinthians 5:11

νῦν δὲ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν μὴ συναμιγνυσθαι ἐάν τις ἀδελφὸς ὀνομαζόμενος ἢ πόρνος ἢ πλεονέκτης ἢ εἰδωλολάτρης ἢ λοιδόρος ἢ μέθυσος ἢ ἄρπαξ, τῷ τοιούτῳ μηδὲ συνεσθίειν.

νυν δε ἔγραψα This is more likely to be an epistolary aorist (so Thistleton), but even here Morris argues for a simple past tense saying, "The sense will be, 'But now (you see) I wrote ...'" Morris

ἐάν if, even if, though  
ὀνομαζω name, call; pass be known

ἤ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι  
λοιδοροῦ, ου m slanderer

"Here he refers to people who cannot open their mouths without putting others down in a way which causes hurt and implies a scornful, superior attitude on the part of the speaker. This can become a habitual style of communication which betrays self-importance and insensitivity, and escalates pain into grievance and a legitimate desire to withdraw from verbal communication on the part of the person to whom the abuse is directed." Thistleton

μεθυσος, ου m drunkard

"λοιδοροῦ and μεθυσος, drunkard, occur in Deut 19:19 and 20:20-21, where they characterise people who excluded themselves from the covenant community as the holy people of God. Both on theological grounds of the corporate identity of the community and on pastoral grounds of what might cause the community to disintegrate, Paul draws a boundary which defines these qualities as belonging to 'outsiders,' not to Christians, at least as habitual characterisations of their conduct. Drunkenness not only repels others from the company of the drunkard; in turn it may lead to verbal and even to physical abuse. It excludes the possibility of respect and concern for the welfare of others while it holds sway. But ἀγαπή, respect, regard, love, for others is a hallmark of Christian identity. What is said about drunkenness in the literature of first-century Judaism places more emphasis on the unacceptable behaviour to which it gives rise than to the consumption of alcohol in itself." Thistleton

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτων such, of such kind

"These vices are ... listed as *characteristics*, or *continuous practices*, as against lapses from which the offender subsequently turns away." Thistleton

μηδε negative particle nor, not even  
συνεσθιω eat with

"The detailed application of this injunction is not easy. But the principle is plain. There is to be no close fellowship with anyone who claims to be a Christian, but whose life belies his profession." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 5:12

τί γάρ μοι τοὺς ἔξω κρίνειν; οὐχὶ τοὺς ἔσω ὑμεῖς κρίνετε,

τι γαρ μοι 'what business of mine is it'

ἔξω out, outside; ὁ ἔξω outsider,  
unbeliever

κρίνω here in the sense not of make moralistic judgements (which Paul clearly did) but 'formulate a verdict'.

οὐχὶ (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.  
ἔσω inside, within; ὁ ἔσω one inside the church, believer

"The disclaimer about outsiders makes sense only as a way of understanding the importance of responsible household rules for those inside. Once this has been established, Paul adds that if people wonder about those outside, outsiders do not escape responsibility for their lifestyles; they have God as their judge, but it is not for the church to try to impose its corporate house rules upon them. This does not imply that the church should keep silent about what God has ordained for the welfare of humanity. But it places its imposition of 'rules of conduct' for the internal affairs of the church and the external affairs of the world on a different footing. Against the laissez-faire, consumerist culture of today, Paul asserts that to become part of the Christian community is explicitly to place oneself under the discipline of a Christian lifestyle." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 5:13

τοὺς δὲ ἔξω ὁ θεὸς κρίνει; ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν.

κρίνει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s κρίνω  
ἐξάρατε Verb, aor imperat, 2 pl ἐξαιρω  
remove, drive out

πονηροῦ, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

Cf. Deut 17:7. They are to safeguard the identity and purity of the covenant community.

### 1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Thistleton cites studies which have drawn attention to the importance of reckoning with the background at Corinth for a proper understanding of this section. Thistleton entitles 6:1-11 *Legal Action by the Socially Influential as an Abuse of Power* and says, "Mitchell argues that 'higher status people were taking lower status people to court, where the latter were at a disadvantage.' Thereby a concern for the unity of the congregation was sacrificed to the use of social networks of power and patronage outside the congregation. To succeed at law a person usually needed the right contacts and direct or indirect influence." Again, the focus is upon the distinctive standards and behaviour which are to mark the people of God living under the cross in contrast with the standards of society 'outside.'

**1 Corinthians 6:1**

Τολμᾶ τις ὑμῶν πρᾶγμα ἔχων πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον κρίνεσθαι ἐπὶ τῶν ἀδίκων, καὶ οὐχὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀγίων;

τολμᾶ Verb, pres act indic, 3 s τολμᾶω  
dare, be brave

"The question carries the force of an exclamatory expression of censure: *How dare you!*" Thistleton

πρᾶγμα, τος n matter, thing, event, deed  
ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

"Christian identity is bound up with attitude towards *the other*." Thistleton

κρίνεσθαι Verb, pres pass infin κρίνω  
ἀδικος, ον unjust, an unbeliever

"The *unjust* (or 'unrighteous': in Greek one word does duty for both ideas) does not necessarily indicate that the courts at Corinth were corrupt, it is a term applied to all outside the church." Morris

Though Thistleton cites studies which lead him to conclude "It is safe to conclude that the use of Roman provincial courts for minor cases and a near certainty of questionable justice are virtually synonymous." They were places where money and status spoke more loudly than justice.

οὐχὶ (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.

**1 Corinthians 6:2**

ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ ἅγιοι τὸν κόσμον κρινοῦσιν; καὶ εἰ ἐν ὑμῖν κρίνεται ὁ κόσμος, ἀνάξιοι ἔστε κριτηρίων ἐλαχίστων;

κρινοῦσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl κρίνω

Cf. Dan 7:22; Matt 19:28. This judgement is as aspect of the Christian being *in Christ*. He will judge and his act of judgement will also be ours. "It is more than likely that the saying 'the saints will judge the world' represented a self-congratulatory catchphrase along with the language about being filled to satisfaction, being enriched, and reigning as kings (4:8)... Paul's argument would retain its full force logically if served as a strictly *ad hominem* argument, with the sense: you think that you are worthy (ἀξιοί) to judge the Roman Gentiles on the last day, do you? So why are you not competent or worthy (ἀνάξιοι) to arbitrate concerning some very little, everyday matter?" Thistleton

ἀνάξιος, ον unworthy, incompetent, unfit  
κριτήριον, ον n court, legal case

"It denotes properly the instrument or means of judging, the rules by which one judges. It comes to signify the place of judging, and perhaps the panel of judges (Jas 2:6). The sense 'tribunal', 'court of justice' is common in the papyri. Here the sense will be, 'are you unworthy to judge in the least important courts?' " Morris

Thistleton says that the meaning is courts that have jurisdiction over the petty details of everyday life, hence "The Corinthian Christians, Paul urges, should hold a tribunal ... themselves... The tribunal ... may consist not of a series of legal pronouncements by fellow Christians, but of a gathering of appropriate people within the church to attempt mediation, based on a renunciation of avarice and even, if necessary, of 'rights' (as Paul does in 9:3-12, 'we have not claimed this "right", ' v.12)."

ἐλαχιστος, η, ον (superl of μικρος) least, smallest, insignificant

**1 Corinthians 6:3**

οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ἀγγέλους κρινοῦμεν, μήτιγε βιωτικά;

Cf. Matt 25:41. "Godet reminds us that in the climax to this epistle Paul declares that Christ will finally destroy *πασαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πασαν ἐξουσίαν* (15:24). Christ alone will be sovereign and will yield his kingship to God (v.24a), and arguably (see above on v.2) the corporeity of believers characterised by being-in-Christ in this derivative sense share in Christ's acts and declarative speech-acts. That the setting-to-rights of all things includes the non-human creation as well as the world is, as Erasmus comments, a less presumptuous assumption that to assume the opposite." Thistleton

μήτιγε how much more

βιωτικός, η, ον pertaining to everyday life

**1 Corinthians 6:4**

βιωτικά μὲν οὖν κριτήρια εἰάν ἔχητε, τοὺς ἐξουθενημένους ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, τοὺτους καθίζετε;

εἰάν if, even if

"The if construction (εἰάν with the subjunctive; contrast εἰ with the indicative in v.2) carries the delicate implication that such lawsuits should not arise." Morris

ἐξουθενεω despise, treat with contempt  
ἐκκλησία, ας f congregation, church  
καθίζω trans cause to sit, set, set up

Is this a question (NRSV, REB, NJB, NAS) or an imperative (NIV, AV)? If understood as an imperative, Paul is saying that those 'despised' in the church, those of least repute, are sufficient to act as judges. If, as perhaps more likely, it is a question, he is asking why worldly judges, those whose wisdom and understanding is despised in the church, are accepted as their judges: "Men who are absolutely nothing in the church – is it *they* whom you make your judges?" Weymouth

### 1 Corinthians 6:5

πρὸς ἐντροπὴν ὑμῶν λέγω. οὕτως οὐκ ἔνι ἐν ὑμῖν οὐδεὶς σοφὸς ὃς δυνήσεται διακρῖναι ἀνά μέσον τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ,

ἐντροπή, ης f shame

οὕτως 'has it come to this'

ἐνι there is (equivalent to ἐνεστιν)  
οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing;  
οὐδεν not at all

σοφος, η, ον wise, experienced

Paul is using irony in the light of the claim by many at Corinth to be 'wise.'

δυνήσεται fut midd dep indic, 3 s δυναμαι  
διακρῖναι Verb, aor act infin διακρινω  
judge, evaluate, discern

The aorist implies 'giving a decision' rather than 'conduct a trial'

ἀνα prep used distributively with acc. each, each one; ἀνα μεσον among, between  
μεσος, η, ον middle

### 1 Corinthians 6:6

ἀλλὰ ἀδελφὸς μετὰ ἀδελφοῦ κρίνεται, καὶ τοῦτο ἐπὶ ἀπίστον;

κρινω judge, pass judgement on  
ἀπιστος, ον unfaithful, unbelieving

The shame is twofold; firstly that brother should go to law against brother, and then that that they should do this before unbelievers.

### 1 Corinthians 6:7

ἤδη μὲν οὖν ὅλως ἥττημα ὑμῖν ἐστιν ὅτι κρίματα ἔχετε μεθ' ἑαυτῶν· διὰ τί οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἀδικεῖσθε; διὰ τί οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἀποστερεῖσθε;

ἤδη adv now, already

Suggests that a Christian 'court' of arbitration is only a concession. Cf. Matt 18:15-17. "To move beyond the first stage of person-to-person dialogue is already ἥττημα, a moral failure." Thistleton

ὅλως adv at all; actually  
ἥττημα, τος n defeat, failure

Only here and Rom 11:12. "To go to law with a brother is already to incur defeat, whatever the result of the legal process." Morris

κριμα, τος n judgement, condemnation

οὐχι see v.1

μαλλον adv more; rather, instead

ἀδικεω wrong, treat unjustly, harm

Be deprived of rights.

ἀποστερεω defraud, rob, steal

Compare Matthew 5:39,40. "Is Paul's expectation fair or reasonable? It is no more 'fair' and 'reasonable' than the divine grace which has eclipsed justice in Christ's giving up of his person and his 'rights' on the cross, indicating in turn God's surrender of his 'right' to pronounce a negative verdict on humankind without transcending justice in costly, generous mercy." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 6:8

ἀλλὰ ὑμεῖς ἀδικεῖτε καὶ ἀποστερεῖτε, καὶ τοῦτο ἀδελφοῦς.

ἀδικεῖτε 'you deprive people of justice.'

καὶ τοῦτο ἀδελφους 'and believers at that.'

### 1 Corinthians 6:9

Ἦ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ἄδικοι θεοῦ βασιλείαν οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν; μὴ πλανᾶσθε· οὔτε πόρνοι οὔτε εἰδωλόατραι οὔτε μοιχοὶ οὔτε μαλακοὶ οὔτε ἄρσενοκοῖται

ἀδικος, ον unrighteous, sinful

In light of the immediately preceding verses the word here may mean 'unjust', but it more probably has the general meaning of 'those who do evil,' the general term then being followed by a list of examples.

κληρονομεω gain possession of, inherit

"He is not describing the qualifications required for an entrance examination; he is comparing habituated actions, which by definition can find no place in God's reign for the welfare of all, all those qualities in accordance with which Christian believers need to be transformed if they belong authentically to God's new creation in Christ. Everything which persistently opposes what it is to be Christlike must undergo change if those who practice such things wish to call themselves Christians and to look forward to resurrection with Christ... In principle the old practices lie behind them, belonging to their past. They must (logical must) remove these anomalies to prove the authenticity of their calling as holy people who belong to God (1:2-3)." Thistleton

πλαναω lead astray, mislead, deceive

Cf. Gal 6:7.

οὔτε not, nor (οὔτε ... οὔτε neither ... nor)

Thistleton argues that Paul's lists (cf. 5:9-11) have their roots not in Stoicism but in the Jewish Wisdom tradition which highlights the contrast of lifestyle between the covenant community of God's people and pagan society. "C.H.Dodd argued convincingly in his *Gospel and Law* (1951) that the basis of Paul's ethics is to be 'sharply distinguished from that of contemporary Greek moralists, who from the time of Aristotle have set out to provide a self-contained and self-justifying system of ethics.'" Hence, while reflecting the OT, these lists are not Jewish but are specifically Christian in that they are rooted in the Gospel. "The basis for these specific, individual issues is not Stoic or Jewish ethics, but Christian identity as temples of the Holy Spirit (6:19) redeemed at cost to belong to Christ as his (6:20)." Thistleton.

Such lists reflect the catechetical teaching given in the NT church (see Selwyn's second essay appended to his commentary on *1 Peter*), hence the appeal, 'do you not know.' Nevertheless, the evils Paul highlights here are not general but reflect specific problems at Corinth which needed to be addressed. "This theme is expounded in a masterly way by Kenneth Bailey... He points out that the ten 'vices' listed in 6:9-10, five allude to sexual issues, which directly relate to 5:1-13 and 6:12-20; while a further five relate to issues of greed and grasping, eating and being drunk, which are taken up explicitly in 11:17-34. In Bailey's incisive study the specific significance of Paul's 'list' for issues at Corinth become undeniable." Thistleton

πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked  
 ειδωλολατρης, ου m idolater  
 μοιχος, ου m adulterer  
 μαλακος, η, ον soft, effeminate,  
 homosexual

Thistleton, citing Scrogs, says "While *μαλκος* may mean *unmanly* in general terms, more characteristically it is used of 'the youth who consciously imitated feminine styles and ways' This all too readily slips into 'passive homosexual activity' whether for pleasure or for pay." Barrett says, "the passive ... partner ... in male homosexual relations."

ἀρσενικοιτης, ου m practicing  
 homosexual

There is a vast literature concerning the meaning of *ἀρσενικοιται*, in particular whether the reference is to homosexuals or to (male) prostitutes (see the discussion and bibliography in Thistleton).

**1 Corinthians 6:10**

οὔτε κλέπται οὔτε πλεονέκται, οὐ μέθυσοι, οὐ  
 λοιδοροὶ, οὐχ ἄρπαγες βασιλείαν θεοῦ  
 κληρονομήσουσιν.

κλεπτης, ου m thief  
 πλεονεκτης, ου m one who is grasping or  
 greedy, one who is covetous  
 μεθυσος, ου m drunkard  
 λοιδορος, ου m slanderer  
 ἄρπαξ, αγωγς grasping, greedy

The sins listed are all violations of the moral law of God, as exemplified in the 10 commandments. Those characterised by these sins are excluded from the kingdom of God.

"Some writers believe that Paul simply took over conventions from Hellenistic Judaism, while others see him as returning to the OT as a source of distinctive ethic for a distinctive people. A more substantial problem arises from whether undue attention to the Levitical and Deuteronomic codes would signify a 'Judaising' obsession with law as against gospel... What is clear from the connection between 1 Cor 6:9 and Rom 1:26-29 and their OT backgrounds is Paul's endorsement of the view that idolatry, i.e., placing human autonomy to construct one's values above covenant commitments to God, leads to a collapse of moral values in a kind of domino effect." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 6:11**

καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε· ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ  
 ἠγάσθητε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι  
 τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ  
 θεοῦ ἡμῶν.

ἦτε The imperfect signifies what they 'used to be'.

ἀπελούσασθε Verb, aor midd dep, 2 pl  
 ἀπολουομαι cleanse oneself, wash  
 away (sin)

"The aorist focuses on the *event* of coming to faith. Traditionally these have been called 'baptismal' aorists, especially since the notion of *having one's sins washed away* fits a baptismal context in conjunction with the (probably) punctiliar aorist of event. But Dunn rightly insists that we should interpret 'baptismal' in the broadest terms as the way of describing the spiritual event of which baptism constitutes the sign, whether or not it coincides chronologically... The washing clean is not just the forgiveness for which the believer asks day-by-day renewal. It is a wiping clean of the slate once-for-all which is associated (as here) with justification by grace... a once-for-all event which corresponds to the once-for-all sufficiency of Christ's deed of salvation." Thistleton

ἀγιαζω sanctify, make holy, purify

"Paul now uses ἡγιασθητε and ἐδικαιωθητε to signify the once-for-all events when in Christ the readers were set apart as holy and put right in your standing." Thistleton

δικαιῶ justify, acquit, declare & treat as righteous

"The aorist passive ἐδικαιωθητε without doubt has its full meaning of justification by grace: *you were put in a right relation with God, you were put right in your standing.* Far from appealing to supposedly narrow imagery of forensic acquittal or of so-called legal fiction, at Corinth the theology combines both the gift character of Corinthian concerns about *status* and *self-worth* (they are *accepted* and given a status of privilege bestowed by grace) and the dual frame of reference which Paul earlier applied to ministry as both high-status (necessary to God's purposes of growth) and low status (servants, 3:5-6: τι οὖν ἐστιν Ἀπολλῶς; τι δε ἐστιν Παυλος; διακονοι ... ὁ θεος ἠὲ ξανεν'). In close parallel, the Corinthians are indeed '*semper iustus, semper peccator.*' ... In the context of union with Christ the passive voice 'Christ was raised' (ἐγηγεταί, 15:4,14) constitutes an essential part of the logic of divine gift which embraces resurrection and justification equally, as by grace alone, without human contribution. In 6:11 the theme of newness of life is thus expressed in the three aorists ἀπελουσασθε ... ἡγιασθητε ... ἐδικαιωθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. This applies with particular poignancy to the addressees at Corinth. As we have noted, many were obsessed with problems arising from the thirst for *status, acceptance, and self esteem.* Paul declares: *You are accepted! You belong! You have privileged status! But all this comes from God as his free, sovereign, gift.*" Thistleton

ὄνομα, τὸς ἢ name, title, person, authority, reputation

There are three variants relating to Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

- i) The shortest is Ἰησοῦ alone (A, D<sup>C</sup>, 88, Harclean Syriac Lectionaries)
- ii) The longest is ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (B, C<sup>vid</sup>, 33, Origen<sup>lat</sup>, Athanasius).
- iii) Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (p<sup>11 vid</sup>, κ, D, maj or Ireneus, Tertullian and Cyprian).

The weight of support is for this last reading, though Metzger favours the shortest reading.

### 1 Corinthians 6:12

Πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν· ἀλλ' οὐ πάντα συμφέρει.  
πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγὼ  
ἔξουσιασθήσομαι ὑπὸ τινος.

ἔξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is lawful

Morris suggests from the way the phrase '*all things are lawful to me*' is introduced that it may have been used by the Corinthians to excuse their own sinful conduct. And Thistleton says, "There can be no question that the initial clause of v.12 represents a quotation used as a maxim by some or by many at Corinth... it is part of the Corinthian theology that Christian believers have been granted liberty from the law." It may be a phrase they had gained from Paul but were now using improperly for their own ends. Paul accepts the principle, but shows that other principles also are important and must govern the application of their 'slogan'.

συμφερω usually impersonal it is better, it is profitable, it is useful

"Paul ... transposes debates about 'liberty' and 'what is permissible' into the different key of 'what is helpful... part of the grammar of union with Christ is to share Christ's concern for the well-being of the other, and to let go of his or her own freedoms in order to liberate the other. The 'mind of Christ' (2:16) has to be relearned and rediscovered at Corinth, not least as a basis for ethics and lifestyle." Thistleton

ἔξουσιασθήσομαι Verb, fut pass indic, 1 s  
ἔξουσιαζω have power over

Thistleton seeks to capture Paul's wordplay here by translating the phrase "Liberty to do anything' – but I will not let anything take liberties with me."

**1 Corinthians 6:13**

τὰ βρώματα τῆ κοιλίας, καὶ ἡ κοιλία τοῖς βρώμασιν· ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ ταύτην καὶ ταῦτα καταργήσει. τὸ δὲ σῶμα οὐ τῆ πορνείᾳ ἀλλὰ τῷ κυρίῳ, καὶ ὁ κύριος τῷ σώματι·

Thistleton says, "As numerous modern writers agree, including Collins and Murphy-O'Conner, Paul now quotes another Corinthian slogan. The purpose of the slogan was to articulate a sense of distance between deeds done in the physical body, especially matters relating to food, sex, or property, and the supposedly 'spiritual' level of life, which some would like to think operates on a 'higher' plane which can be isolated from the 'lower.'" He then argues that the quotation runs on to καταργήσει and means "all this is transitory and without permanent significance for people of the Spirit such as us."

βρωμα, τος n food, solid food

κοιλια, ας f stomach, womb

καταργεω render ineffective, do away with

σωμα, τος n body

το δε σωμα is the beginning of Paul's rejoinder.

πορνεια, ας f sexual immorality

"Libertines had ... used the fact that food did not raise a moral issue to support their contention that sexual conduct also had no moral significance. Paul grants that both food and the stomach belong to the transient physical sphere ... But ... the body [σωμα] is not something transient, but will be raised from the dead." Craig.

"In the bodily obedience of the Christian ... the lordship of Christ finds visible expression, and only when this visible expression takes personal shape in us does the whole thing become credible as Gospel message."

Kasemann

**1 Corinthians 6:14**

ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ τὸν κύριον ἡγειρεν καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐξεγερεῖ διὰ τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ.

ἐγειρω raise

ἐξεγερεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἐξεγειρω  
raise, bring to power

**1 Corinthians 6:15**

οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν μέλη Χριστοῦ ἐστίν; ἄρα οὖν τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποιήσω πόρνης μέλη; μὴ γένοιτο.

μέλη Noun, nom/acc pl μελος, ους n  
member, bodily part

ἄρα Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s αἰρω take,  
take up, take away

πορνη, ης f prostitute

γένειτο Verb, aor opt, 3s γινομαι

'Perish the thought.' "The Christian cannot claim the privilege of being *redeemed* or purchased (6:20) as one who *belongs* to Christ and simultaneously take away (take back) the limbs and organs which have been grafted onto Christ for un-Christlike purposes that wrench them apart again." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 6:16**

ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ὁ κολλώμενος τῇ πόρνη ἐν σῶμά ἐστιν; Ἔσονται γάρ, φησίν, οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν.

κολλαομαι unite oneself with

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἰμι

φησίν Verb, pres act indic, 3 s φημι say

δύο gen & acc δύο two

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body,  
human nature

Gen 2:24.

**1 Corinthians 6:17**

ὁ δὲ κολλώμενος τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν πνευμᾷ ἐστιν.

"The believer is one with his Lord. He has 'the mind of Christ' (2:16). He will react the way the Lord would react." Morris

"Paul is probably referring to the work of the Spirit, whereby through the 'one Spirit' the believer's 'spirit' has been joined indissolubly with Christ." Fee

"In Paul's own thought, the twin thoughts add up to this: the whole man, body and spirit, belongs to the Lord. Therefore illicit union with a harlot, although it is 'merely' physical, as the Corinthians would say, effects a oneness of physical relationship which contradicts the Lord's claim over the body." Gundry

"This lack of 'devotion' to Christ (2 Cor 11:3) contradicts the 'marriage pledge' or 'betrothal' (ἀρμολογια, 11:2, only here in the NT, meaning *to fit together, to join, to give in marriage*)." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 6:18**

φεύγετε τὴν πορνείαν· πᾶν ἁμάρτημα ὃ ἐὰν ποιήσῃ ἄνθρωπος ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος ἐστίν, ὁ δὲ πορνεύων εἰς τὸ ἴδιον σῶμα ἁμαρτάνει.

φευγω flee, run away from, avoid

"The present imperative indicates habitual action, 'Make it your habit to flee.' That is the only way to treat it... The Christian must not temporize with it, but flee the very thought." Morris

Rosner suggests that 'flee' is a possible allusion to Joseph's flight from Potiphar's wife.

πορνεια, ας f see v.15

ἁμαρτημα, τος n sin, sinful deed

ἐὰν if, even if, though; ὃ ἐὰν whatever

ἔκτος prep with gen outside, outside of,  
except

πορνεύω commit sexual immorality

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own

ἁμαρτανῶ sin, commit sin

Thistleton writes, "Meyer ... proposed that whereas drunkenness, greed, an even suicide use means external to the body for the purpose of self-gratification or desire, only sexual acts are entirely and exclusively initiated by, and carried out by means of, the body." Thistleton then argues that Paul, far from having a negative view of sexual relations, is highlighting their unique nature. "In the context equally of union with Christ and of physical union the issue becomes one of fully 'giving' oneself to the one to whom one belongs. In the context of marriage Paul can perceive this intimacy of self-giving as making 'holy' (7:14) or 'as in the Lord' (7:39). This achieves an even clearer profile if Klein is right to perceive a possible background to 6:18-20 in the covenantal relationship which is presupposed in Hos 3:1-3."

### 1 Corinthians 6:19

ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐστίν, οὗ ἔχετε ἀπὸ θεοῦ; καὶ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἑαυτῶν,

Note the singular σῶμα, though the sense may be distributive. "The corporate aspect of the community as the Spirit's temple in 3:16 receives a more individual application here, which arises in the context of the personal lifestyle at issue in this chapter." Thistleton

ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary

"The universal presence of images of the deities in Greco-Roman temples would have made the principle more vivid to first-century readers. The image of the god or goddess usually dominated the temple either by size or by number (or both), and Paul declares that the very person of the Holy Spirit of God, by parity of reasoning, stands to the totality of the bodily, everyday life of the believer (σῶμα) in the same relation of influence and moulding of identity as the images of deities in pagan temples." Thistleton

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον reflexive pronoun,  
himself, herself, itself

### 1 Corinthians 6:20

ἠγοράσθητε γὰρ τιμῆς· δοξάσατε δὴ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν.

ἠγοράσθητε Verb, aor pass indic, 2 pl  
ἀγοράζω buy, redeem

The aorist points to a decisive action in the past. "The imagery of the purchased slave underpins the point that Christian believers belong to a new master, or owner, to whom they must give account for everything."

Thistleton

τιμη, ης f honour, respect, price

δοξάζω praise, honour, glorify, exalt

δη indeed, then, therefore, now

### 1 Corinthians 7:1ff

"The tone of 7:1-11:1 differs strikingly from that of 5:1-6:20" Thistleton. Paul now responds to a number of questions raised by the Corinthians, questions to which a clear black and white answer cannot be given. "The key point in this major block is Paul's pastoral sensitivity to grey areas of difficulty." One of the subjects concerning which the Corinthians had written to Paul was marriage (7:1-40).

Deming and others draw attention to the Stoic-Cynic debates concerning marriage which may have affected the Corinthians. In particular, Epictetus advocated marriage for the ordinary person but for the Cynic, devoted to philosophical reflection, it is best to remain single. The Cynic can marry only under special circumstances.

"... the situation must be borne in mind. There was a widespread admiration for ascetic practices, including celibacy. Some, at least, of the Corinthians shared in this. Paul makes every concession to this point of view. He agrees that celibacy is 'good' and he points to some of its advantages. But he regards marriage as normal." Morris  
Margaret Mitchell suggests that Paul is addressing the potential divisiveness of a two-tier morality in which the spiritual 'elite' claim a 'higher' lifestyle. Paul insists that holiness of life should embrace and be lived out within the context of normal social relations (cf. 1 Thess 4:3-5).

### 1 Corinthians 7:1

Περὶ δὲ ὧν ἐγράψατε, καλὸν ἀνθρώπου  
γυναικὸς μὴ ἅπτεσθαι·

γυνη, αικος f woman, wife

ἅπτεσθαι Verb, pres midd infin ἅπτω light,  
ignite; midd. take hold of, touch

Thistleton argues that καλὸν ἀνθρώπων γυναικὸς μὴ ἄπτεσθαι is a statement by the Corinthians, which Paul now quotes at the beginning of his response. It is difficult to determine whether the question related to the beginnings of such a relationship – whether a person should get married – or to conduct within an existing relationship – abstinence from sexual relations within marriage.

### 1 Corinthians 7:2

διὰ δὲ τὰς πορνείας ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα ἔχέτω, καὶ ἕκαστη τὸν ἴδιον ἄνδρα ἔχέτω.

Thistleton suggests that δε is adversative, 'On the contrary.' Paul expresses his *disagreement* with the proposition quoted in v.1.

πορνεία, ας f sexual immorality

'Rather, in the face of so much immorality...' (REB). Paul advocates a lifestyle in stark contrast with the general immorality of society, immorality which has infected the church.

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every  
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

ἔχέτω the present tense implies 'keep' as well as 'have'.

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own  
ἄνδρα Noun, acc s ἄνηρ, ἄνδρος m man,  
husband

"Against this background Paul advocates 'a full conjugal life' (Rosner) against the background of Gen 2:18 and the Decalogue." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 7:3

τῇ γυναικί ὁ ἄνηρ τὴν ὀφειλὴν ἀποδιδότω, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ τῷ ἀνδρί.

ὀφειλή, ης f debt, what is due

Applies to every aspect of the marital relationship.

ἀποδιδῶμι give, pay, fulfil

"The present imperative, *render*, indicates the habitual duty" Morris.

"The present may imply that the ascetics were not in the majority at Corinth: the believers are to continue the established practice (rather than to return to it, as aorist would imply). On the other hand, the present may simply denote habitual practice." Thistleton

ὁμοίως likewise, in the same way

Note the emphasis on mutuality.

### 1 Corinthians 7:4

ἡ γυνὴ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει ἀλλὰ ὁ ἄνηρ· ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ὁ ἄνηρ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει ἀλλὰ ἡ γυνή.

σῶμα, τος n body  
ἐξουσιάζω have power over

'The wife's body does not belong to her alone, but also to the husband...' (NIV)

### 1 Corinthians 7:5

μὴ ἀποστερεῖτε ἀλλήλους, εἰ μήτι ἂν ἐκ συμφώνου πρὸς καιρὸν ἵνα σχολάσητε τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἦτε, ἵνα μὴ πειράζη ὑμᾶς ὁ Σατανᾶς διὰ τὴν ἀκρασίαν ὑμῶν.

ἀποστερεῶ defraud, rob, steal  
ἀλλήλων, οἰς, οὖς one another

'... of marital dues/rights'. "Marital dues brings out what is implicit but not explicit in the Greek. Although the context makes it clear that physical intimacy is the primary issue, mutual support and companionship cannot be excluded." Thistleton

ἂν particle indicating contingency

"The concession for 'special circumstances' is expressed hesitantly as εἰ μήτι ἂν." Thistleton

συμφωνον, ου n mutual consent  
καιρος, ου m time, season  
σχολάζω spend time in, devote self to

A number of later MSS add 'fasting'

πάλιν again, once more

πειράζω test, tempt

ἀκρασία, ας f lack of self-control

"If the καιρος in which the couple cease intimacy is too prolonged, Satan will cash in on it to transform a time of prayer into one of negative trials or harmful fantasy. When voluntary consent begins to degenerate into frustration and the boundaries of self-control begin to collapse into ἀκρασία, the whole experience becomes counterproductive: *the goal would be nullified if Satan went on putting you through trials beyond your self-control*. Paul speaks here more as a pastor and counsellor rather than as a Christian moralist." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 7:6

τοῦτο δὲ λέγω κατὰ συγγνώμην, οὐ κατ' ἐπιταγήν.

συγγνώμη, ης f concession  
ἐπιταγή, ης f command, order, authority

Morris sees this as referring not just to v.5 but to verses 2-5. "Paul has laid down duties for all who are married, but he does not lay it down as a duty that all should be married."

"Witherington, Wolff, Schrage, and many others refer the concession to the clause at the end of v.5 only: the couple may abstain from intimacy for a specific time if both of them find this helpful, but this is purely their own decision, and Paul lays down no rule or command about this matter. This interpretation is entirely convincing (*pace* Winter) and leaves no apparent linguistic or exegetical difficulty. This explanation also coheres with Paul's affirmation of a full marriage relationship, against the Roman background in which marriages were often mere instruments of convenience, and could be annulled simply with the words *tuas res tibi habeto* ('take your things and go'). Against such a background, Weiss sees apostolic injunctions, which Witherington convincingly perceives as about mutuality and reciprocal dues. In *this* context, the concession applies only to the special circumstances of v.5b." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 7:7

θέλω δὲ πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἶναι ὡς καὶ ἐμαυτὸν· ἀλλὰ ἕκαστος ἴδιον ἔχει χάρισμα ἐκ θεοῦ, ὁ μὲν οὕτως, ὁ δὲ οὕτως.

θέλω wish, will  
εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἰμι  
ἐμαυτοῦ, ἡς reflexive pro. myself, my own

Many suggest that Paul may have been widowed.  
"Deming perceives this expression of preference as 'diplomatic' support for, and self-identification with, those who raised the issue at Corinth 'enabling Paul to identify with the Corinthians and advise them. A similar manner of persuasion may be found elsewhere in Paul, namely 1 Cor 14... Paul expresses both his empathy and his reservations by stating in 14:5, "I want you all to speak in tongues – but rather that you may prophesy" (θέλω δε παντας ... μαλλον δε ...), and in 14:18-19, "I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all, *but ...*" (Deming's italics)." Thistleton

ἕκαστος, ἡ, ον see v.2  
χάρισμα, τος n gift (from God)

"Each has *his proper gift from God*. The question of marriage cannot be decided by applying one law to all. Each must consider what is God's will for him. And marriage, just as much as celibacy, is a gift of God." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 7:8

Λέγω δὲ τοῖς ἀγάμοις καὶ ταῖς χήραις, καλὸν αὐτοῖς εἶναι μείνωσιν ὡς καὶ ἐγώ·

ἀγαμος, ου f & m unmarried, single

The masculine here is probably gender inclusive, though some (e.g. Fee) think that the reference is to widowers, complemented then by χηραις. Thistleton thinks this suggestion carries extra weight in light of the pressure on men and women to remarry speedily. He cites an article by Aline Rousselle to the effect that in Roman society "a widow was expected to remarry within a year, and a divorcee within six months."

Kistemaker, however, says, "the unmarried are a class of people that includes widowers and both men and women who are single, separated or divorced."

χήρα, ας f widow  
εἰν if, even if, though  
μείνωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl μείνω trans remain, stay  
καὶ ἐγώ from καὶ ἐγώ and I, but I, I also

### 1 Corinthians 7:9

εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἐγκρατεύονται, γαμησάτωσαν, κρεῖττον γὰρ ἐστὶν γαμῆσαι ἢ πυροῦσθαι.  
ἐγκρατεῦμαι exercise self-control

Thistleton suggests that the picture is of "a couple for whom mutual love has become so powerful that it becomes a distraction from 'everything for the sake of the gospel.'" He thinks that the phrase here means 'If they do not have power over their passions.'

γαμεῶ marry  
κρεῖττον and κρεῖσσον adv. better  
πυροῦσθαι Verb, pres midd/pass dep infin  
πυροῦμαι burn, be inflamed with desire

"Paul does not regard the suppression of sexual desires as itself meritorious, as some later writers have held." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 7:10

Τοῖς δὲ γεγαμηκόσιν παραγγέλλω, οὐκ ἐγὼ ἀλλὰ ὁ κύριος, γυναῖκα ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς μὴ χωρισθῆναι

γεγαμηκόσιν Verb, perf act ptc, 3 pl γαμεῶ

The perfect denotes the married state consequent upon the act of marrying.  
"The case envisaged is that of marriage where both partners are Christians." Morris

παραγγέλλω command, instruct  
χωρίζω separate; pass. separate oneself, leave

Cf. Mk 10:11-12.

### 1 Corinthians 7:11

– εἰ δὲ καὶ χωρισθῆ, μενέτω ἄγαμος ἢ τῷ ἀνδρὶ καταλλαγῆτω – καὶ ἄνδρα γυναῖκα μὴ ἀφιέναι.

μένω see v.8

ἀγαμος, ου f & m see v.8  
καταλλαγήτω Verb, aor pass imperat, 3 s  
καταλασσω reconcile  
ἀφιέναι Verb, pres act infin ἀφιμι leave,  
forsake, divorce.

Some have suggested that at Corinth there were those who wanted to pursue an ascetic marriage and who wanted to separate so as to avoid the temptation to intimacy. Whatever the situation, Paul is seeking to reinforce the distinctively Christian view of marriage against the background of permissive Roman society.

### 1 Corinthians 7:12

Τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς λέγω ἐγώ, οὐχ ὁ κύριος· εἴ τις ἀδελφὸς γυναῖκα ἔχει ἄπιστον, καὶ αὕτη συνευδοκεῖ οἰκεῖν μετ' αὐτοῦ, μὴ ἀφιέτω αὐτήν·

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining

By 'the rest' Morris understands "those not bound by the ties of Christian marriage."

λέγω ἐγώ, οὐχ ὁ κύριος i.e. Paul is no longer citing direct sayings of Jesus. This does mean that he believes that what he says carries any lesser authority.

ἄπιστος, ον unfaithful, unbelieving  
συνευδοκεω be willing, agree to

Implies mutual consent.

οικεω intrans live, dwell; trans live in

### 1 Corinthians 7:13

καὶ γυνὴ εἴ τις ἔχει ἄνδρα ἄπιστον, καὶ οὗτος συνευδοκεῖ οἰκεῖν μετ' αὐτῆς, μὴ ἀφιέτω τὸν ἄνδρα.

### 1 Corinthians 7:14

ἡγίασται γὰρ ὁ ἀνὴρ ὁ ἄπιστος ἐν τῇ γυναίκί, καὶ ἡγίασται ἡ γυνὴ ἢ ἄπιστος ἐν τῷ ἀδελφῷ· ἐπεὶ ἄρα τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν ἀκάθαρτά ἐστιν, νῦν δὲ ἅγια ἐστιν.

ἡγίασται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἁγιαζω  
sanctify, make holy  
ἐπει since, because, for  
τεκνον, ου n child; pl descendants  
ἀκαθαρτος, ον unclean

The nature of the 'holiness' of the unbelieving partner and of the children is unclear. Paedobaptists, such as Morris, argue that the child of a believing parent is to be regarded as a Christian until they reach the age of discretion. This is difficult to sustain since the same can hardly be applied to the unbelieving partner. Paul is answering questions from the Corinthians, so that his meaning, though obscure to us, was plain to them.

It is probably best to understand Paul's words against the background of the concern by some Corinthians to live 'holy' lives. Since they were Christians they should have no fellowship with non-Christians (cf. for instance, 6:12-20). What then of unbelieving spouse or children? Should they be put away for the sake of holiness? In affirming their holiness Paul is not saying that they too are Christians but that the Christian's relationship with them is acceptable to God – holy in the sense of sanctioned by God for the sake of the believing partner. "The godliness of the one does more to 'sanctify' the marriage than the ungodliness of the other to make it unclean. Accordingly a believer can live with an unbeliever [not in the contracting of marriages but in maintaining those already entered into] with a clear conscience." Calvin  
Thistleton says, "If the spouse falls under the influence of the Christian partner's faith, lifestyle, prayer, and living out of the gospel, how much more shall the children?" He believes 'holy' here to mean 'separate' and adds, "Even if only one parent is Christian the children will be marked by an element of shaping and 'difference' from a wholly pagan environment."

### 1 Corinthians 7:15

εἰ δὲ ὁ ἄπιστος χωρίζεται, χωριζέσθω· οὐ δεδούλωται ὁ ἀδελφὸς ἢ ἡ ἀδελφὴ ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις, ἐν δὲ εἰρήνῃ κέκληκεν ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός.

χωριζέσθω Verb, pres pass imperat, 3 s  
χωρίζω see v.10.

δεδούλωται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s  
δουλωω enslave, make (someone) a slave

"But does the referential denotation mean: not ... in slavery to remain with the former spouse, or not in bondage to the marriage tie which would prevent freedom to remarry?"  
Thistleton.

FF Bruce considers that Paul defines abandonment in these verses as "a state of what amounted to widowhood." He adds: "Presumably remarriage would not be completely excluded for the believer."

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind  
εἰρηνη, ης f peace

### 1 Corinthians 7:16

τί γὰρ οἶδας, γύναι, εἰ τὸν ἄνδρα σώσεις; ἢ τί οἶδας, ἄνερ, εἰ τὴν γυναῖκα σώσεις;

σωζω save, rescue, heal  
ἄνερ Noun, voc s ἄνηρ

"Exactly opposite conclusions have been drawn as to the force of this. Some feel that it means that marriage should be retained as long as possible in the hope of conversion... To others Paul's meaning is that marriage is not to be regarded simply as an instrument of evangelism. To cling to a marriage which the heathen is determined to end would lead to nothing but frustration and tension... On the whole the latter seems more likely to be right than the former." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 7:17-24

Thistleton entitles this section *Divine Calling or Improved Status?* He says that Paul's response to the concerns at Corinth establishes "the principle that *neither freedom in the new creation nor obedient response to the divine call can be compromised by the constraints of a person's circumstantial situation or status in everyday life.* A Christian does not have to seek 'the right situation' in order to enjoy Christian freedom or to serve God's call effectively."

### 1 Corinthians 7:17

Εἰ μὴ ἐκάστω ὡς ἐμέρισεν ὁ κύριος, ἕκαστον ὡς κέκληκεν ὁ θεός, οὕτως περιπατεῖτω· καὶ οὕτως ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις πάσαις διατάσσομαι.

The εἰ μὴ (literally, 'except') introduces a contrast with what precedes it. Paul has spoken previously of the Christian's freedom – pursuing what makes for peace. He now introduces a contrasting theme, the need to be content with the situation in which God has placed you.

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every  
μερίζω divide, assign, apportion  
περιπατεῖω walk, walk about, live

"The Pauline logic seems to be that the **call** of the gospel (in the primary sense) can subsume within it a transposition and sublation of earthly circumstances which make a situation capable of becoming one in which the *call to service* can become (or remain) operative."

Thistleton

ἐκκλησία, ας f congregation, church  
διατάσσω command, give instructions

Paul is not treating the Corinthians as a special case or laying down for them what he does not lay down for others.

### 1 Corinthians 7:18

περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη; μὴ ἐπισπάσθω· ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ κέκληται τις; μὴ περιτεμνέσθω.

περιτετμημένος perf pass ptc, m nom s  
περιτεμνω circumcise

ἐπισπασμαι remove marks of circumcision  
ἀκροβυστία, ας f uncircumcision, non-Jews  
κέκληται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s καλεω

The new creation enables us to live renewed lives no matter what our situation. In general, the Christian does not have to seek to change their situation in order to be a 'better' Christian or to serve the Lord more fully.

### 1 Corinthians 7:19

ἡ περιτομὴ οὐδὲν ἐστίν, καὶ ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδὲν ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ.

περιτομή, ης f circumcision, those circumcised, Jews  
οὐδὲν Adjective, n nom & acc s οὐδεις, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing

'Is neither here nor there'

ἀλλὰ 'but what matters is.'

τήρησις, εως f keeping, obeying  
ἐντολή, ης f command, order, instruction

Compare Gal. 5:6. What is important is faith which, marked by love for God, motivates a person to live in a manner pleasing to him.

### 1 Corinthians 7:20

ἕκαστος ἐν τῇ κλήσει ἧ ἐκλήθη ἐν ταύτῃ μενέτω.

ἕκαστος, η, ον see v.17  
κλήσις, εως f call, calling  
μενω trans remain, stay, abide

"In this context Paul refers to the respective situations of being married, being celibate, being a widow or widower, being separated, being a Jew or a Gentile, and being a slave, freedperson, or freeborn." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 7:21

Δοῦλος ἐκλήθη; μὴ σοι μελέτω· ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, μᾶλλον χρῆσαι.

μελει impersonal verb it is of concern, it matters; μη σοι μελετω let it not be of concern to you

μὴ σοι μελέτω 'let it not worry you,' or, in modern parlance, 'forget it.'

ἐλευθερος, α, ον free, free person  
μαλλον adv rather, instead  
χρῆσαι Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 2 s  
χραομαι use, make use of

Paul's words can be understood in one of two very different ways:

i) εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι is understood to mean, *if you can gain free status*, and μᾶλλον χρῆσαι as *use the opportunity [for freedom] instead* (so AV, RV, NIV);

ii) εἰ καὶ δύνασαι is taken to mean, *even if a chance of freedom arises*, and μᾶλλον χρῆσαι as *rather, use your position as a slave* i.e. for faithful Christian living (so NRSV).

Thistleton takes a mediating position (so also Barrett), arguing that the first half of the phrase relates to hopes *for the future* and the second half to *how one should live now*. He translates it as, "Even if there is a possibility that you might come to be free, rather, start to make positive use of the present." He concludes, "Hope for freedom must not be a distraction; one can use positively one's present situation. But if, after putting it in perspective and 'waiting,' freedom comes, then that now becomes the situation to use. Paul does not bind his readers to remain in slavery; but neither does he want them unsettled by fantasizing about discipleship as a freedperson." I.e. the Christian is to live to Christ *now* rather than being enslaved to hopes of a change of situation.

### 1 Corinthians 7:22

ὁ γὰρ ἐν κυρίῳ κληθεὶς δοῦλος ἀπελεύθερος κυρίου ἐστίν· ὁμοίως ὁ ἐλεύθερος κληθεὶς δοῦλος ἐστὶν Χριστοῦ.

κληθεὶς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s καλεῶ ἀπελευθεροῦ, ου m freedman

Cf. Gal 4:31; 5:1.

"The slave's real status is not defined by current legal status, but neither is it defined as simply an improved individual condition: freedom. The slave's real status is determined by his or her placement in a different household entirely: the household of Christ. The slave is a freedperson of the Lord and shares in the benefit, status and obligations that relationship brings." Fee and Schrage

ὁμοίως likewise, in the same way

### 1 Corinthians 7:23

τιμῆς ἠγοράσθητε· μὴ γίνεσθε δοῦλοι ἀνθρώπων.

τιμη, ης f honour, respect, price ἠγοράσθητε Verb, aor pass indic, 2 pl ἀγοραζῶ buy, redeem

Cf. 6:20.

Thistleton argues that v 23a belongs with v.22. "The Christian belongs to Christ, not to himself or herself. This is status and honour, for the slave represents his or her Lord; and it is freedom, for the believer is placed thereby in the hands of the Lord for his care, his decisions, his directions, his responsibility."

V 23b – Winter suggests this is addressed to, "Christian free men willing to sell themselves into slavery for social and financial benefit." Thistleton comments, "Paul is concerned with both situations and attitude; the public world and personal stance. Believers are not to return to the bondage of an honour-shame culture where everything revolves round what status is achieved in human eyes. But with chs. 1-4, this is the 'wisdom' only of the world which is folly with God." (See also the extended note in Thistleton's commentary *ad loc* on *Slavery in the Graeco-Roman World of the First Century*)

### 1 Corinthians 7:24

ἕκαστος ἐν ᾧ ἐκλήθη, ἀδελφοί, ἐν τούτῳ μενέτω παρὰ θεῶ.

παρὰ preposition with dat with, in the presence of

"Conversion is not the signal for a man to leave his occupation (unless it is one plainly incompatible with Christianity) and seek some other. All of life is God's. We should serve God where we are until he calls us elsewhere." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 7:25

Περὶ δὲ τῶν παρθένων ἐπιταγὴν κυρίου οὐκ ἔχω, γνώμην δὲ δίδωμι ὡς ἠλεημένος ὑπὸ κυρίου πιστὸς εἶναι.

περὶ δε indicates that Paul is turning to another subject about which the Corinthians had written to him.

παρθενοσ, ου f virgin, unmarried girl

Is the term here used exclusively of married *women* or is it gender exclusive? Thistleton thinks that Paul is addressing the issue of those not yet married, though with particular attention to unmarried *women*. Many understand the term here to refer to those *engaged* to be married. It may also include those who were attracted to a form of 'spiritual,' celibate marriage.

ἐπιταγη, ης f command, order, authority

Cf. 7:10,12.

γνώμη, ης f intent, decision

ἠλεημένος Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom s ἔλεαω and ἔλεεω be merciful, show kindness; pass. receive mercy

πιστοσ, η, ου faithful, trustworthy, believing

Here, 'trustworthy.'

**1 Corinthians 7:26**

νομίζω οὖν τοῦτο καλὸν ὑπάρχειν διὰ τὴν ἐνεστώσαν ἀνάγκην, ὅτι καλὸν ἀνθρώπων τὸ οὕτως εἶναι.

νομίζω think, suppose

ὑπάρχω be (equivalent to εἶμι)

ἐνεστώσαν Verb, perf act ptc, f acc s

ἐνιστημι be present

ἀνάγκη, ἡς f necessity, distress

"The word conveys the notion of *necessity*, *hardship*, or especially of *external circumstances which bring severe constraints or severe pressures*." Thistleton  
It is not clear what 'distress' the Corinthians were facing but it seems to have been one that demanded special instructions concerning appropriate conduct. Schweitzer argued that the perspective is here thoroughly eschatological. He argues that Paul's call to celibacy is part of "the comradeship of the Elect with the Messiah in His struggle against evil powers." It is demanded in the face of trials which form part of sharing in the messianic sufferings which bring in the Kingdom of God. Winter, on the other hand, suggests that the 'distress' mentioned was that consequent upon the famine of AD51. Bruce, while acknowledging the eschatological perspective, argues that the present age is marked by increasing tribulation which heralds the end of the age, "of which signs [such as the 'distress' at Corinth] are already manifesting themselves."

Thistleton comments, "The most problematic question is how to retain a dimension of eschatology while making room for such concrete instantiations as persecution, famine, or some unnamed source of distress. Luther argues, e.g., that Christians at all times labour under the possibility of persecution, danger of losing one's possessions, friends, or home, or the general costliness of faithfulness to the gospel. Paul's main ground for advice not to marry, Luther insists, is the involvement of one's family in all this (although later he further concedes the point about divided interests). In v.29 Luther translates the eschatology of the shortened time into existential address to 'all Christians,' who are 'like guests on the earth.'"

Jeremias and Barrett think that the ὅτι recitative reflects a slogan at Corinth that matches the structure of 'it is good ...' in 7:1.

**1 Corinthians 7:27**

δέδεσαι γυναικί; μὴ ζῆτει λύσιν· λέλυσαι ἀπὸ γυναικός; μὴ ζῆτει γυναῖκα·

δέδεσαι Verb, perf pass indic, 2 s δεω bind, tie

ζητεω seek, look for, attempt

Is this addressing the situation of the married or the betrothed? Betrothal would seem to fit better with the context and argument. In that case the following *λέλυσαι* would refer to the dissolution of the betrothal.

λυσις, εως f separation, divorce

λυω loose, release, set free

**1 Corinthians 7:28**

ἐὰν δὲ καὶ γαμήσης, οὐχ ἥμαρτες· καὶ ἐὰν γήμη ἢ παρθένος, οὐχ ἥμαρτεν· θλίψιν δὲ τῆ σαρκὶ ἐξουσιον οἱ τοιοῦτοι, ἐγὼ δὲ ὑμῶν φείδομαι.

"Yet again ... Paul emphasises the difference between what is required of the Christian and areas of freedom where Christians must take responsibility for their own decisions after weighing carefully the factors which others (including Christian teachers or pastors) have brought to their attention in a non-directive manner. It is no less important to note this aspect of Paul's understanding of his own role as pastor and of the adult responsibilities of Christian people to work things out for themselves, than to allude to the rules and traditions which allow no negotiation." Thistleton

ἐὰν if, even if, though

γαμεω marry

ἥμαρτες Verb, aor act indic, 2 s ἁμαρτανω sin, commit sin

γήμη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s γαμεω

γαμη is an older classical form of the later Koine aorist subjunctive γαμηση.

θλίψις, εως f trouble, suffering

Thistleton suggests the meaning may here be pressures, e.g. responsibilities (cf. vv 32-35) and τῆ σαρκὶ may mean 'in everyday life.'

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body

ἐξουσιον Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἐχω

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον such, of such kind

φειδομαι spare, refrain from, keep oneself from doing

**1 Corinthians 7:29**

τοῦτο δὲ φημι, ἀδελφοί, ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος ἐστίν· τὸ λοιπὸν ἵνα καὶ οἱ ἔχοντες γυναῖκας ὡς μὴ ἔχοντες ᾧσιν,

φημι say

May carry the force, 'I mean', or 'I affirm.'

συνεσταλμένος perf pass ptc, m nom s: pass  
grow short (of time)

"Many see a reference to the second advent. This may be right, but, though he often refers to the Lord's return, Paul never elsewhere gives this kind of counsel. Both in his earlier and his later Epistles he uses the second advent to inspire men to blameless conduct (e.g. 1 Thess 5:1-11; Phil 1:9-11). The note of present crisis, so marked here, is absent. It is probably best to see a reference to circumstances at Corinth." Morris

Thistleton says that while Paul "appeals to a *theology* of eschatological imminence, this in no way presupposes a *chronology* of eschatological imminence." He cites the view of Winter that the particular problems at Corinth were the consequence of famine, and adds, "Such concrete circumstances bring home the crumbling insecurity of a world order which stands under the apocalyptic judgment of the cross."

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other: (το)  
λοιπον adv. finally, henceforth, from  
now on

### 1 Corinthians 7:30

καὶ οἱ κλαίοντες ὡς μὴ κλαίοντες, καὶ οἱ  
χαίροντες ὡς μὴ χαίροντες, καὶ οἱ ἀγοράζοντες  
ὡς μὴ κατέχοντες,

κλαίω weep, cry  
ἀγοράζω buy, redeem  
κατέχω hold fast, keep, restrain

### 1 Corinthians 7:31

καὶ οἱ χρώμενοι τὸν κόσμον ὡς μὴ  
καταχρώμενοι· παράγει γὰρ τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ  
κόσμου τούτου.

χραομαι see v.21  
καταχραομαι use, make full use of

"Those who make use of the things of this world should not be engrossed in them." Morris

παραγω pass by, pass away, disappear  
σημα, ατος n outward form, present form

"Paul's point is not the transiency of creation as such [note the τουτου in addition to το σχημα], but the fact that its outward pattern, in social and mercantile institutions, for example, has no permanence." Barrett

### 1 Corinthians 7:32

Θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀμερίμους εἶναι. ὁ ἄγαμος  
μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κυρίου, πῶς ἀρέσῃ τῷ κυρίῳ·

θελῶ wish, will  
ἀμεριμος, ον free from worry or anxiety

This term was used by Stoics to signify indifference to external events. But it also "occurs in the teaching of Jesus as a manifestation of the single-mindedness which trust in God brings about (Matt 6:25, 28; par. Luke 12:22,26; Matt 10:19). Paul uses the word elsewhere both in the sense of a prohibition against anxiety in the light of the peace of God (Phil 4:6) and in the sense of encouraging concern for other people (Phil 2:20). Jesus also refers to the worry or worries of the present world order (του αιωνος, Matt 13:22; Mark 4:19)." Thistleton

Thistleton underlines the difference between the Stoic and Christian conceptions: "Whereas Jesus and Paul advocate freedom from anxiety and preoccupation with the self by placing everything in God's hands, in trust, Seneca argues that it is folly to look to God for 'what you can acquire for yourself.' Lack of anxiety for Seneca becomes a matter of accepting fate: 'in noble virtue the willing soul Fate leads; but the unwilling Fate drags along.' Paul invites, rather, responsible deliberation in trust; how is one to please the Lord?"

ἀγαμος, ον f & m unmarried, single  
μεριμνω be anxious, be concerned about

There is a play here on words. Paul wants them to be without *distracting worries and concerns* so that they can *devote their concern* to the Lord. "Paul plays on the double sense of *anxious ... right concern*." Moffatt

πως how? in what way?

ἀρεσκω please, seek to please

### 1 Corinthians 7:33

ὁ δὲ γαμήσας μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου, πῶς  
ἀρέσῃ τῇ γυναικί,

γαμεω marry

The married man has divided affections. He wants to please the Lord, but he also has responsibilities towards wife (and family) and must concern himself with pleasing her.

### 1 Corinthians 7:34

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.

μεμέρισται Verb, perf pass indic, 3s μερίζω  
divide, assign, apportion

There are differences of punctuation here among the manuscripts (and some minor textual variants). The chief alternatives are:

i) To read μεμερισται with the previous verse (as NIV), and to read the next sentence as beginning και ἡ γυνη ἡ ἀγαμος – 'also the unmarried man ...'

ii) To read και μεμερισται as beginning the sentence in verse 34 and to insert a real or implied pause after γυνη and so read, 'the case of a (married) woman and that of an unmarried or virgin also differ ...' as AV

The textual evidence presents a confusing multiplicity of variants. The UBS text above reflects the reading the Committee considered the least unsatisfactory. It is marked by them as 'D' – great difficulty in arriving at a decision.

Thistleton follows the UBS text in linking και μεμερισται with the previous verse. "The married man finds himself *apportioned* to both his wife and to the Lord; and it is this *parcelling out* of time, attention, energies, and tasks that means he is pulled in two directions."

παρθενος, ου f virgin, unmarried girl

"The distinction between ἡ γυνη ἡ ἀγαμος and ἡ παρθενος has been much discussed. But the difference seems to be fairly clear. The former term denotes (usually) a woman who has been married but is now either widowed, divorced, or in a state of permanent separation. Since the latter subcategory is included, we need not be surprised that Paul does not chose to use χηρα, even if *widows* represents the majority of those included under the broader term." Thistleton

ἦ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

"Clearly a lesser involvement with 'the things of the world' is correlative with being **holy** both in the OT sense of belonging exclusively to God ... and in the sense of devoted attention and service to the Lord." Thistleton

Barrett considers that Paul is here quoting another catchphrase from Corinth, "We must conclude, therefore, that in *that she may be holy both in body and in spirit* we have words quoted from the Corinthian ascetical party. Paul approves the sentiment, though he would not himself confine it to the unmarried."

Others suggest the asymmetry is due to the stigma attached to spinsters in the Greco-Roman world. Paul asserts that such a life is pleasing to God (though not to the exclusion of other forms of life).

σωμα, τος n body

### 1 Corinthians 7:35

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

σύμφορον, ου n good, advantage, profit

'for your help.'

βροχος, ου m restriction lit. noose  
ἐπιβάλω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἐπιβάλλω  
lay (hands) on, throw or place on

"The metaphor is from hunting. Paul is not trying to capture and constrain them." Morris  
"Paul's motivation and concern are neither purely authoritarian nor largely ascetic, but to maximise the freedom and lack of anxiety experienced by the addressees in the Lord's work." Thistleton

εὐσχημων, ου gen ονος respected,  
presentable; το εὐ. good order

Refers to doing everything properly (cf. 14:40).

εὐπαραδρον, ου devotion, constancy  
ἀπερισπαστως without distraction

A word commonly used in Stoic discourse concerning marriage where it is used of the undistracted devotion to study that the unmarried can enjoy. Thistleton comments, "Yarbrough, Wimbush, and Deming all perceive a close affinity between Cynic concerns and those of Paul at this point. This is probably the closest point of affinity in this chapter, with the fundamental difference that (i) Paul speaks of **devotion to the Lord**; and (ii) Christian husband and Christian wife can also encourage and enhance each other's **devotion to the Lord**, even though a balance sheet emerges of 'distractions' generated by family responsibilities."

### 1 Corinthians 7:36

Εἰ δὲ τις ἀσχημονεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν παρθένον αὐτοῦ νομίζει ἐὰν ἦ ὑπέρακμος, και οὕτως ὀφείλει γίνεσθαι, ὃ θέλει ποιεῖτω· οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει· γαμεῖτωσαν.

ἀσχημονεω behave improperly

The interpretation of these verses is difficult. (Hurd describes the verse as "one of the most difficult and controversial in the NT.") Who is being spoken of in this verse and what is his relationship with the virgin mentioned? There are three main views:

a) Older translations and commentators took the view that Paul is probably speaking of a parent/guardian and of his responsibility towards his unmarried daughter or ward.

b) Thistleton comments that "a clear majority of twentieth century scholars interpret v.36 as referring to *engaged couples*."

According to this view the reference is to a man and his fiancée who have initially agreed not to marry.

c) Some suggest that the reference is to spiritual marriages where a couple agree to live together as brother and sister – a union of spirit rather than of body.

After detailed discussion of the options, Thistleton adopts the second, translating the phrase 'If anyone thinks he is not behaving in a proper way toward his betrothed...'

νομίζω think, suppose, assume  
 ὑπερακμος, ον past the best age for marriage, past one's prime (of women)

A woman was considered to be beyond the normal marriageable age by the time she was about 20.

However, it is possible to understand ὑπερακμος to mean beyond intensity of feeling or passion.' It might then be considered to apply to *the man* in this relationship, 'if his passions are strong' (NRSV, REB, Moffatt). Thistleton adopts a modified version of this view 'if it is an undue strain,' i.e. a strain beyond reasonable limit.

ὀφειλω ought, must, be bound or obligated  
 'and it seems the right thing.'

γαμείωσαν Verb, pres act imperat, 3 pl  
 γαμew v.33

"The key phrase, however, is clear in meaning: οὐχ ἁμαρτανει. Paul adopts an *anti-ascetic* stance towards the Corinthian ascetics (or at very least one which Wimbush calls 'worldly' asceticism), but is also concerned pastorally to *release those who wish to marry from any sense of sin, failure, or second-class status*. He refuses to allow the voluntary ascetics to regard themselves as a spiritual elite: God's demands remain diverse for different people in different situations." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 7:37

ὃς 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·

"Now that he has established the genuine freedom of the couple to marry or not to marry, Paul does not wish to press the case for marriage too far. The key issue, he argues, is whether marriage or celibacy is chosen as a result of pressure from other people who try to impose celibacy as a higher kind of spirituality, or whether the person in question is inclined in this direction entirely on grounds of personal conviction, with complete freedom from pressure from outside." Thistleton

ἔστηκεν perf ἴστημι intrans (in 2 aor, pf & pluperf; all midd & pass) stand, stop, stand firm, hold ground.

ἐδραῖος, α, ον firm, steadfast

"The whole phrase invites comparison with Paul's later use of the same idea in Rom 14:5: ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ νοί πληροφορεῖσθω, where the context also concerns the danger of falling prey to the pressure of other people's judgments and pressures." Thistleton

ἀνάγκη, ης f necessity, compulsion

'Not under external necessity' i.e. not because other persons or situations are forcing him.

ἐξουσία, ας f authority, right, power  
 ἰδιος, α, ον one's own

θελημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

"*Power over his own will* means 'the right to give effect to his own purpose' (Parry). Slaves, for example, would not have this right." Morris. Thistleton interprets the phrase to mean that Paul is asserting that, having taken all other factors into account, the man has 'a full right to make his own decisions.'

κρινω judge

τηρεω keep, observe, maintain

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον reflexive pronoun, himself, herself, itself

τηρεῖν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ παρθένον 'to respect her virginity' (REB).

"Over against Niederwimmer's undue emphasis on ascetic themes, others rightly keep in view the spirit of this verse by stressing Paul's constant concern to be pastorally positive and constructive, while also emphasising the importance of determining what is helpful in specific cases and circumstances. Paul counsels not withdrawal from the world but 'revitalising' it." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 7:38**

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

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
γαμίζω give (a bride) in marriage  
κρεῖττον and κρεῖσσον adv. better

"Only in the light of all that has gone before can we assess the respective currencies of καλως the adverb, and κρεῖσσον the comparative adverb. Since he has already explained how much depends on circumstances and personal convictions, he is not damning καλως with faint praise. The use of καλως must also confirm that 7:1 is a quotation καλον ... μη ...). Paul's polemic against asceticism is clear. Nevertheless, his personal inclination is still to encourage those who are content to remain celibate, if this is out of conviction about how they may best serve the Lord, and not because of a Corinthian pressure group. Hence both the married and the celibate are to be encouraged positively; but some extra practical support is given to the celibate." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 7:39**

Γυνὴ δέδεταί ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ζῆ ὁ ἀνὴρ  
αὐτῆς· ἐὰν δὲ κοιμηθῆ ὁ ἀνὴρ, ἐλευθέρᾳ ἐστὶν  
ᾧ θέλει γαμηθῆναι, μόνον ἐν κυρίῳ·

δέδεταί Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s δεω bind,  
tie

The perfect tense implies the continuing effects of the past act of marriage.

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as,  
how much, how far

ζῆ Verb, pres act indic, 3s ζω live, be  
alive

κοιμηθῆ Verb, aor pass dep subj, 3 s  
κοιμασμαι sleep, fall asleep, die

ἐλευθερός, α, ον free, free person

θελω wish, will

γαμεω marry

μόνος, η, ον i) adj only, alone; ii) adv μόνον  
only, alone

Paul's concern is that a person should not be distracted from devotion to the Lord. Hence, if the widow is to marry it should be to one who shares a commitment to Christ.

**1 Corinthians 7:40**

μακαριώτερα δὲ ἐστὶν ἐὰν οὕτως μείνη, κατὰ  
τὴν ἐμὴν γνώμην, δοκῶ δὲ κἀγὼ πνεῦμα θεοῦ  
ἔχειν.

μακαριώτερος, α, ον happier; comparative  
of μακαριος

μενω trans remain, stay, abide;

ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my, mine

γνώμη, ης f purpose, intent, decision

Cf. 7:25 here the sense of 'opinion.'

δοκεω think, suppose

κἀγω a compound word = καὶ ἐγω

'I also think' *not* 'I think that I also ...'

**1 Corinthians 8:1ff**

Thistleton argues that 8:1-11:1 forms a single, coherent section which he entitles, *Questions About Meat Associated With Idols And The Priority Of Love Over 'Rights.'*

**1 Corinthians 8:1**

Περὶ δὲ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων, οἶδαμεν ὅτι πάντες  
γνώσιν ἔχομεν. ἡ γνώσις φυσιοῦ, ἡ δὲ ἀγάπη  
οἰκοδομεῖ.

The opening phrase of this verse indicates that Paul is dealing with another matter which had been raised by the Corinthians in their letter. In this and subsequent verses Paul deals with two subjects: eating meals in idols' temples (part of the social fabric of the day), and eating meat (and other food) that may have been offered to an idol.

"The idol temple seems to have served both as a butchers shop and as a place for sharing a cultic meal." Blue

Murphy-O'Connor observes, "About the only time that meat came on the market was after pagan festivals, and it had been part of the victims sacrificed to the gods." The wealthy could always afford to eat meat, but the poor would have fewer opportunities, many of which would have been handouts after pagan festivities.

εἰδωλοθυτον, ου n meat offered to idols

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

γνώσις, εως f knowledge, understanding

Paul is quoting another Corinthian slogan, perhaps a catchphrase of the 'strong' by which they boasted of their knowledge which allowed them to eat meat offered to idols without qualms since *they knew (didn't all?)* that idols were nothing.

φυσιοω cause conceit/arrogance; pass be  
conceited/arrogant

οικοδομεω build, build up, encourage

"Rather than seeking to demonstrate some individualistic assertion of freedom or even victory, love seeks the welfare of the other. Hence if the 'strong' express love, they will show active concern that 'the weak' are not precipitated into situations of bad conscience, remorse, unease, or stumbling (see προσκομμα in 13:7,9). Rather, the one who loves the other will consider the effect of his or her own attitudes and actions upon 'weaker' brothers and sisters. This is precisely the theology of the church as Christ's 'body' which Paul will expound in 12:21-24." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 8:2

εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἐγνωκέναι τι, οὐπω ἔγνω καθὼς δεῖ γινῶναι·

δοκεω see 7:40

ἐγνωκέναι Verb, perf act infin γινωσκω

"The γινωσις claimed by some or by many at Corinth was a different kind of 'knowledge' from that which Paul understands by the same word." Thistleton

οὐπω not yet

ἔγνω Verb, aor act indic, 3 s γινωσκω

δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must, should, ought

"The use of the perfect infinitive (ἐγνωκέναι) signifies that the Corinthians, or some of them, perceive themselves as having achieved a present state of 'having come to know,' i.e., having achieved knowledge. By contrast the ingressive use of the aorist (ἔγνω) represents Paul's correction: he or she has not yet come to know. The aorist infinitive γινῶναι, which follows καθὼς δεῖ (as it is necessary, or as they ought), expands the contrast." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 8:3

εἰ δέ τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν θεόν, οὗτος ἔγνωσται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

Thistleton comments, "p<sup>46</sup> and Clement of Alexandria omit τον θεον, as well as ὑπ' αὐτου. This makes excellent sense in the context. The verb ἔγνωσται may be construed either as middle (expressing personal interest or the involvement of the subject of the verb in a reflexive sense) or as a passive (known). To retain the ambiguity, we may translate the shorter text: but if anyone loves, he or she has experienced true 'knowing.' Thus N\* and 33 also omit ὑπ' αὐτου. Conzelmann describes this shorter reading as 'a very pregnant text'; Fee observes that 'this shorter text brings Paul's point home so powerfully that it is most likely what he originally wrote'; and Spicq considers it 'very probably authentic.'"

However, the textual evidence for the shorter reading is weak.

ἐγνωσται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γινωσκω

"Love, rather than knowledge, should be the Christian's determining consideration" Morris  
What is of chief importance is not our knowledge but that we are known of God (cp. 2 Tim 2:19; Gal 4:9). "The only perfect knowledge, both loving and practical, is given by God... To be known by God means to belong to him... chosen by God... Could there have been a more sure way of showing that this love is really possible than by showing that God himself truly communicated it?"

Spicq

### 1 Corinthians 8:4

Περὶ τῆς βρώσεως οὗ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ, καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἶς.

βρωσις, εως f food, eating, a meal

εἰδωλοθυτον, ου see v. 1

"A whole variety of situations may be implied by the phrase, ranging from meat purchased at a butcher's shop which originated from a temple as wholesale supplier to attendance at festivals where meat was available to the poorer classes, probably after a pagan 'blessing' or 'dedication,' or eating in a dining room attached to the temple (cf. J. Murphy-O'Connor), to eating on formal civic occasions 'presided over' by one or more pagan deities." Thistleton

Furthermore, "Meat was given away to the poor by the well-to-do on religious holidays in honour of one false god or another." Blasi

In what follows, Paul would appear to be quoting some at Corinth and saying 'we share your knowledge that ...'

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing;

οὐδεν not at all

εἰδωλον, ου n idol

Exegetes and grammarians are divided over whether οὐδὲν εἶδωλον should be construed as attributive ('no idol [exists]') or as predicative ('an idol is nothing...').

### 1 Corinthians 8:5

καὶ γὰρ εἴπερ εἰσὶν λεγόμενοι θεοὶ εἴτε ἐν οὐρανῷ εἴτε ἐπὶ γῆς, ὥσπερ εἰσὶν θεοὶ πολλοὶ καὶ κύριοι πολλοί,

εἴπερ since, if it is true that

εἴτε if, whether

γῆ, γῆς f earth

ὥσπερ as, even as

Thistleton suggests that the first part of the verse is a quotation from the Corinthians and the second part Paul's rejoinder. "The strong at Corinth asserted an ontological and existential monotheism in which the so-called (λεγόμενοι) gods were non-existent nothings. Paul endorses their ontological monotheism. Even if these 'so-called gods' have power over people's lives, they are not gods or God. Only God is God. Nevertheless, the fact that *kyrios*-cults do really exist means that habitual patterns of loyalty and devotion long practiced by new converts before their conversion cannot simply be brushed aside as no longer affecting their lives and attitudes in the present. At an existential and psychological level they still leave their mark... Indeed, this may mean even more. Not only do they retain a subjective influence; they may also constitute objective forces of evil which bring destruction, disintegration and pain. Unless we adopt a partition theory between 8:1-11 and 10:14-22, Paul appears to associate them with demonic forces."

### 1 Corinthians 8:6

ἀλλ' ἡμῖν εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατήρ, ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν, καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ.

Here again we may have a confessional catchphrase from Corinth in which ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα could mean that all things, including the meat offered to supposed idols, is in fact from God and can be received with thanksgiving. On the other hand, Dunn argues that here is Paul developing the OT Shema (Deut 6:4) and adding a Christological dimension. This early creedal formulation stresses not only monotheism but "the unity of creation and salvation, to prevent a spilt in the Corinthians' thinking between their experience of power and their attitude to the material world... The Lord through whom salvation comes is the Lord through whom all things come... Salvation for us means that we live *for* the one God from whom are all things and *through* the one Lord..."

Thistleton says, "The argument of 'the strong' that since idols are nothings and one God alone has being is accepted; but it is not accepted as an argument for lovelessly ignoring the anxieties of 'the weak'. For all things, including Christian experience, take their origin from God as a gift, and since the one God is the goal of our existence, the means by which this comes about is that it is the one Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things come, and he is the means of our existence. Christ-likeness and the shape of the cross mark all that Christian believers are and do. Nevertheless, the argument of 'the weak' that forces of evil still hold sway is equally qualified by the reminder that in common Christian confession all things, even all food, take their origin from God and that we cannot drive a wedge between creation and redemption so as to live in a ghetto, for it is through one Lord Jesus Christ that all things (the world of creation and the blessings of salvation) come."

πατήρ, πατρός n father

The way the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are spoken of together here is a clear indication of the deity of Christ.

### 1 Corinthians 8:7

Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡ γνῶσις· τινὲς δὲ τῇ συνηθείᾳ ἕως ἄρτι τοῦ εἰδώλου ὡς εἰδωλόθυτον ἐσθίουσιν, καὶ ἡ συνείδησις αὐτῶν ἀσθενῆς οὐσα μολύνεται.

γνῶσις, εως f knowledge, understanding  
συνηθεια, ας f custom, practice

A rare word in the NT, occurring only here, 11:16 and in Jn 18:39. Later MSS read συνειδησει which is easily explained as an assimilation to the subsequent use of conscience in the last clause of the verse.

ἕως until, as far as

ἄρτι now, at the present

εἶδωλον, ου n idol

εἰδωλοθυτον, ου n meat offered to idols

"*Habituated* attitudes, stances, and patterns of behaviour (τῇ συνηθείᾳ [cf. συν + ἦθος] or force of habit still persist in conditioning the outlooks and feelings of some (τινες) even now (ἕως ἄρτι, *right up to the present*). Hence they act as an actual εἰδωλοθυτον, i.e., *as if it had been sacrificed to an idol as an actual reality*; even if their head, but not their heart, tells them differently." Thistleton

ἐσθιω and ἐσθω eat, consume

"If the context of the eating happens to be an actual cultic meal to which a wealthy Christian patron has invited his poorer 'client,' then 'the strong' may cause actual damage which genuinely taints, *pollutes, stains, soils* or *defiles* (μολυνω) the 'weaker' brother or sister in Christ." Thistleton

συνειδησις, εως f conscience, awareness  
 ἀσθενης, ες sick, weak, helpless

"Yeo's observations about 'the strong' as those with 'social power, influence, political status and wealth' but also including 'a traditional Roman value ... of ability or competence in a variety of areas' seems to clinch the argument. 'The weak,' conversely, are not only 'of low social standing' but as part of a nondescript 'mass of undifferentiated citizens' crave for identity and for recognition and acceptance by 'the strong.' If 'the strong' set an agenda, 'the weak' may be seduced into doing almost anything to gain what they seek, while compounding their own confusions and inner tensions by feeling the 'wrongness' of it all at the same time. Their integrity has been compromised, polluted, or tainted." Thistleton

μολυνω defile, make unclean

### 1 Corinthians 8:8

βρῶμα δὲ ἡμᾶς οὐ παραστήσει τῷ θεῷ· οὔτε γὰρ ἐὰν φάγωμεν, περισσεύομεν, οὔτε ἐὰν μὴ φάγωμεν, ὑστερούμεθα.

βρωμα, τος n food, solid food  
 παραστήσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s  
 παριστημι present, bring into the presence of

Is the sense 'commend' or 'condemn'? Jeremias and Murphy-O'Connor think the latter is the meaning and Thistleton follows this suggestion, translating the phrase 'food will not bring us into God's judgment.' They think it to be a catchphrase of the 'strong.' The οὔτε introduces Paul's rejoinder. Yeo goes further and suggests that Paul, by adding οὔτε reverses the force of a 'gnostic' campaign motto of the 'strong' ἐὰν μὴ φάγωμεν ὑστερούμεθα, ἐὰν φάγωμεν περισσεύομεν: *their* principle was 'if we do not eat, we fall prey to lack; if we do eat, we abound.'

οὔτε not, nor (οὔτε ... οὔτε neither ... nor)  
 φάγωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ἐσθιω  
 ὑστερεω lack, fall short of; pass be lacking  
 περισσευω excel, have plenty (here perhaps, 'gives us no advantage')

### 1 Corinthians 8:9

βλέπετε δὲ μή πως ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὐτὴ πρόσκομμα γένηται τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν.

βλεπω see, look, beware of

πως i) interrog. particle how? ii) enclitic particle somehow, in some way

ἐξουσία, ας f right, capability, power

ἐξουσία would have been a key word in the vocabulary of the 'strong.'

"Paul reminds them that no Christian is at liberty to assert his 'rights' if that means doing harm to other people, a principle of wide application." Morris

προσκομμα, ατος n that which causes stumbling or offence

"For Paul, the so-called ἐξουσία of the Corinthians is a προσκομμα." Gardner  
 "If this passage says anything at all to the ethical debates of today's world, it addresses not the overworn issue of 'conscience' ... but the impropriety of giving absolute status to 'the right to choose,' whatever the cost for others... This now becomes a warning which addresses an especially sinister aspect of life within certain churches today. Some manipulate their supposed 'gifts' (whether intellectual, structural, or 'spiritual') to assume that they have the right to engage in aggressive conduct which may well cause the less secure (in terms of social class, learning, or supposed inferiority in 'spiritual gifts') to face an unnecessary cause of stumbling." Thistleton

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι  
 ἀσθενεω be sick, be weak

### 1 Corinthians 8:10

ἐὰν γὰρ τις ἴδῃ σὲ τὸν ἔχοντα γινῶσιν ἐν εἰδωλείῳ κατακείμενον, οὐχὶ ἡ συνείδησις αὐτοῦ ἀσθενοῦς ὄντος οἰκοδομηθήσεται εἰς τὸ τὰ εἰδωλόθυτα ἐσθίειν;

ἴδῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ὄραω  
 γνωσις, εως see v.7  
 εἰδωλειον, ου n idol's temple  
 κατακειμαι lie (in bed), recline at table  
 οὐχι not, no; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.  
 συνειδησις, εως see v.7  
 οἰκοδομηθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s  
 οἰκοδομεω build, build up, encourage

An ironic use of οἰκοδομεω.

Not the kind of 'building up' which Paul speaks of in v.1 as the work of love. "Our exegesis has led us to the inescapable conclusion that some of the triumphalist, overconfident 'strong' sought to encourage the less secure to act on their spiritual gift of knowledge as a way of 'building' an emancipated, informed faith that paraded its self-awareness of the nothingness of idols and the neutrality of the meat associated with idol worship. The triumphalists wish to edify the insecure into enjoying what was a right (ἐξουσία); Paul drily observes that this approach 'edifies' them into a return to an improper participation in *cultic* aspects of eating meat sacrificed to idols." Thistleton

εἰδωλοθυτον, ου see v.7

### 1 Corinthians 8:11

ἀπόλλυται γὰρ ὁ ἀσθενῶν ἐν τῇ σῆ γνώσει, ὁ ἀδελφὸς δι' ὃν Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν.

ἀπόλλυται Verb, pres midd indic, 3 s  
ἀπολλυμι destroy, kill, lose; midd be lost, perish, die

Conzelmann translates γὰρ here as 'then, to be sure'. Edwards views this verse as Paul's response to the claims of the strong reflected in v.10 "Built up, did I say? Nay, he is perishing!"

JM Gundry-Volf urges that the verb does not imply eschatological destruction but 'existential destruction with both subjective and objective dimensions.'

ἀσθενῶν Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s,  
ἀσθενεω see v.9  
σος, ση, σου possessive adj. your, yours  
ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνησκω  
die, face death, be mortal

### 1 Corinthians 8:12

οὕτως δὲ ἁμαρτάνοντες εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφούς καὶ τύποντες αὐτῶν τὴν συνείδησιν ἀσθενοῦσαν εἰς Χριστὸν ἁμαρτάνετε.

ἁμαρτανω sin, commit sin  
τυπω beat, strike, wound, injure

Thistleton translates 'inflicting damaging blows on their self-awareness.'

"To sin *against the brethren* means nothing less than to sin *against Christ* (a lesson brought home to Paul long since on the Damascus road, Acts 9:4f)" Morris. Cf. also Gal 4:14.

### 1 Corinthians 8:13

διόπερ εἰ βρῶμα σκανδαλίζει τὸν ἀδελφόν μου, οὐ μὴ φάγω κρέα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἵνα μὴ τὸν ἀδελφόν μου σκανδαλίσω.

διόπερ emphatic form of διο therefore  
indeed, for this very reason

βρῶμα, τος see v.8

σκανδαλιζω cause (someone) to sin, cause (someone) to give up the faith

φαγω Verb, aor act indic, 1 s ἐσθιω

κρέα Noun, acc pl κρεας, κρεατος and κρεως  
n meat

αἰων, αἰωνος m age, world order, eternity  
σκανδαλίσω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s

"The principle laid down in this chapter is one of great practical importance. It is always easy for the strong Christian to see no harm whatever in actions which would be sin if performed by the weak. While it would not be true to say that the robust Christianity of the New Testament envisages the strong as permanently shackled by the weak, yet the strong must always act towards the weak with consideration and Christian love. In cases like the one here dealt with the strong must adapt their behaviour to the consciences of the weak. No good purpose is served by their asserting what they call their 'rights'. Cf. Paul's general treatment of the subject in Rom 14." Morris

"Chrysostom comments, 'It is foolish in the extreme that we should esteem as so entirely beneath our notice those that Christ so greatly cared for that he should have even chosen to die for them, as not even to abstain from meat on their account.' This comment captures very well the key contrast throughout this chapter between asserting one's own 'right to choose' and reflecting with the motivation of love *for the other* what consequences might be entailed for fellow Christians if self-centred 'autonomy' rules patterns of Christian attitudes and conduct. It has little or nothing to do with whether actions 'offend' other Christians in the modern sense of causing psychological irritation, annoyance, or displeasure at a purely subjective level. It has everything to do with whether such attitudes and actions cause *damage*, or whether they genuinely *build* not just 'knowledge' but Christian character and Christian community." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 9

To bring home what he has said of rights in chapter 8, Paul now speaks of the way in which his own conduct has been determined not by rights but by the demands of the Gospel. Cf. his call to the Corinthians to be imitators of him as he is of Christ, 4:16; 11:1.

**1 Corinthians 9:1**

Οὐκ εἰμι ἐλεύθερος; οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος; οὐχὶ Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἑώρακα; οὐ τὸ ἔργον μου ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ;

"Paul is keen to establish the credentials of true apostleship not because they were held in doubt as such, but because his freely chosen decision to renounce 'rights' which the 'strong' undoubtedly regarded as part of the status and signs of apostleship (forceful, stylish rhetoric and its related 'professional status,' 2:1-5, and financial support from a patron or patrons, 9:1-27) was perceived to imply thereby something deficient about his status in relation to such 'rights'. He defends his apostleship only (a) in order to establish the 'right' which he chooses to renounce, and (b) because the argument which he is about to offer may otherwise cast doubt on the initial premise which is otherwise accepted." Thistleton

ἐλεύθερος, α, ον free, free person

– free with respect to the exercise of rights, cf. v.19.

οὐχὶ see 8:10

οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος "'Apostolic witness' concerns life as well as word. Hence Paul is not simply appealing to 'example' in the rhetorical sense identified by Mitchell, as an instantiation to illustrate or to support an argument. The instantiation of the cruciform, Christlike stance toward others in practical lifestyle constitutes both part of what is to be an apostle and an instantiation of the Christ-centred principle urged in 8:1-13." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 9:2**

εἰ ἄλλοις οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος, ἀλλὰ γε ὑμῖν εἰμι, ἢ γὰρ σφραγίς μου τῆς ἀποστολῆς ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

γε enclitic particle adding emphasis to the word with which it is associated

ἀλλὰ γε 'at any rate'

σφραγίς, ἰδος f seal, mark, proof

"A seal was important in an age when many could not read. A mark stamped on clay or wax, or some similar substance, was first of all a mark of ownership, and then a mark of authentication. All could see the mark and know what it signified. The Corinthians had been won for Christ by Paul, and they were thus the sign that attested his apostleship." Morris

ἀποστολή, ης f apostleship, mission

Wolff observes that if the Corinthians deny Paul's apostleship they deny their own existence.

**1 Corinthians 9:3**

Ἦ ἐμὴ ἀπολογία τοῖς ἐμὲ ἀνακρίνουσίν ἐστιν αὕτη.

ἐμός, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my, mine

ἀπολογία, ας f defence, answer

ἐμὲ Pronoun, acc s ἐγώ

ἀνακρίνω examine, question, judge

Does αὕτη point back to the previous verses or to what follows? The paragraph division in the UBS text divides verse 3 from verse 2. However, Morris argues that this verse belongs with v.2. Robertson and Plummer also argue that the verse goes with what precedes, 'That I have seen the Risen Lord, and that you are such a Church as you are – there you have my defence when people ask me for evidence of my Apostleship.' So also Thistleton.

**1 Corinthians 9:4**

μη̄ οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν φαγεῖν καὶ πίνειν;

ἐξουσία, ας see 8:9

The plural may include Paul's team.

φαγεῖν aor act infin ἐσθίω and ἐσθώ eat

πίνειν aor act infin πίνω drink

Most think, 'at the church's expense' is implied, though Barrett argues that there may also be a reference back to idol food – the subject of the previous chapter.

**1 Corinthians 9:5**

μη̄ οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα περιάγειν, ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ Κηφᾶς;

ἀδελφή, ης f sister, female believer

Here, 'a believing wife.'

γυνή, αικος f woman, wife

περιάγω go around, take along

λοιπός, η, ον rest, remaining, other

'Brothers of the Lord,' particularly perhaps James, cf. Gal 1:19.

Κηφᾶς, α m Cephas (Aramaic equivalent of Πέτρος, rock).

"It is possible that Peter receives explicit mention at the end because it was widely known that he was married (Matt 8:14)." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 9:6**

ἢ μόνος ἐγὼ καὶ Βαρναβᾶς οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν μη̄ ἐργάζεσθαι;

μόνος, η, ον only, alone

"If Acts 13 and 14 provide earlier historical material known among the Pauline communities, the early 'missionary journey' of Paul and Barnabas may have offered a well-known model of missionary-pastors who paid their own way rather than drawing financial support from Antioch or from those to whom they ministered." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 9:7

τίς στρατεύεται ἰδίοις ὀφωνίοις ποτέ; τίς φυτεύει ἀμπελῶνα καὶ τὸν καρπὸν αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐσθίει; τίς ποιμαίνει ποίμνην καὶ ἐκ τοῦ γάλακτος τῆς ποίμνης οὐκ ἐσθίει;

στρατευομαι serve as a soldier  
ἴδιος, α, ον one's own  
ὀφωνιον, ου n pay, wages

Can also mean, 'rations of food', 'provisions.'

φυτευω plant  
ἀμπελων, ωνος m vineyard  
καρπος, ου m fruit, harvest, outcome  
ποιμαινω keep sheep, tend as a shepherd, rule  
ποιμνη, ης f flock  
γάλα, γαλακτος n milk

ἐσθίει here rather than 'drink' since it covers a range of milk-products, e.g. cheese.

### 1 Corinthians 9:8

Μὴ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον ταῦτα λαλῶ ἢ καὶ ὁ νόμος ταῦτα οὐ λέγει;

κατὰ ἄνθρωπον 'on the level of purely human example'.

λαλεω speak, talk

### 1 Corinthians 9:9

ἐν γὰρ τῷ Μωϋσέως νόμῳ γέγραπται· Οὐ κημώσεις βοῦν ἀλοῶντα. μὴ τῶν βοῶν μέλει τῷ θεῷ,

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

Dt 25:4.

κημωω muzzle

Many MSS have the more literary term φιμώσεις rather than κημώσεις

βους, βοος m ox

ἀλοω thresh

μέλει impersonal verb it is of concern, it matters

The implication is not that God does not care for oxen but that if he so cares for oxen is he not all the more concerned for those who labour in the Gospel – 'it is not for oxen *alone* that God is concerned'.

Thistleton cites the work of Richard Hayes who points out that Deut 24 and 25 are concerned with laws which promote dignity and justice *for human beings*. "The unexpected insertion of one verse about threshing coheres most closely with the encouragement of *human sensitivity* and *humane compassion* toward the suffering or defenceless (e.g., the immediately preceding context concerns the plight of widows, orphans and victims of punishment). Paul's question, then, 'Is it perhaps about oxen that God is concerned?' (i.e., oxen *as such*) genuinely conveys the thrust of the context that constrains the force and direction of 25:4, although in this case it is more likely that μη ... θεω is the μη used to express a *hesitant* question ('is it perhaps ...?') rather than the question which invites an emphatically negative answer... To suggest that this is the 'true and primary referent' of Deut 25:4 may perhaps overpress a point which is otherwise helpful. No doubt Paul sees Deuteronomy 25 as being written *more* for humankind than for animals (but not exclusively so)."

### 1 Corinthians 9:10

ἢ δι' ἡμᾶς πάντως λέγει; δι' ἡμᾶς γὰρ ἐγράφη, ὅτι ὀφείλει ἐπ' ἐλπίδι ὁ ἀροτριῶν ἀροτριάν, καὶ ὁ ἀλοῶν ἐπ' ἐλπίδι τοῦ μετέχειν.

παντως by all means, surely, certainly

'Or is he (not) certainly speaking in our interest.'

ὀφειλω owe, ought, must  
ἐλπις, ιδος f hope, what is hoped for  
ἀροτριαω plough  
ἀλοω see v.9

For ploughman and reaper as pictures of the Christian worker, see 3:6

μετεχω share in, eat, belong to

### 1 Corinthians 9:11

εἰ ἡμεῖς ὑμῖν τὰ πνευματικὰ ἐσπείραμεν, μέγα εἰ ἡμεῖς ὑμῶν τὰ σαρκικὰ θερίσομεν;

πνευματικος, η, ον spiritual, pertaining to the spirit

ἐσπειραμεν aor act indic, 1 pl σπειρω sow  
μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

Equivalent to our idiomatic 'is it any big deal'

σαρκικος, η, ον belonging to this world, material

θεριζω reap, harvest

**1 Corinthians 9:12**

εἰ ἄλλοι τῆς ὑμῶν ἐξουσίας μετέχουσιν, οὐ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς;  
Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἐχρησάμεθα τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ ταύτῃ, ἀλλὰ πάντα στέγομεν ἵνα μὴ τινα ἐγκοπὴν δῶμεν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

ἄλλος, ἡ, ο another, other  
ἐξουσία, ας f authority, right, power  
μετεχω see v.10

τῆς ὑμῶν ἐξουσίας μετέχουσιν Fee suggests 'share in rights over you.'

μᾶλλον adv more; rather  
χραομαι use, make use of, make the most of

Refers to Paul's conduct during his 18 months or so at Corinth.

στεγω endure, put up with  
ἐγκοπη, ης f obstacle, hindrance

A word "used of breaking up a road to prevent the enemy's advance. Paul had avoided doing anything that might prevent a clear road for gospel advance." Morris. Cf. Is 40:3-4. "Hock and Chow accurately show that this voluntary constraint on his freedom is bound up with a potentially vulnerable indebtedness to patrons, which could compromise his position as an impartial apostle." Thistleton

δῶμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl δίδωμι give

**1 Corinthians 9:13**

οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ τὰ ἱερά ἐργαζόμενοι τὰ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἐσθίουσιν, οἱ τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ παρεδρεύοντες τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ συμμερίζονται;

"Either Paul was so eager to make the point about voluntary restraint that v.12b interrupts the argument, or more probably he suddenly remembers a still more compelling argument which does not depend upon analogy but on established precedent familiar to the readers, whether drawn from OT or Jewish or Greco-Roman religious practice." Thistleton

ἱερός, α, ον sacred, holy, pertaining to the temple

ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts  
θυσιαστηριον, ου n altar (of incense)  
παρεδρευω serve, wait upon  
συμεριζομαι share with

'Have a share of what is sacrificed.'  
See Lev 7:6, 8-10, 14, 28-36 etc.

**1 Corinthians 9:14**

οὕτως καὶ ὁ κύριος διέταξεν τοῖς τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ καταγγέλλουσιν ἐκ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ζῆν.

διατασσω command, give instructions

καταγγελλω proclaim, make known,  
preach  
ζωω live, be alive

Probably an allusion to Jesus' words recorded in Luke 10:7; Matt 10:10.

**1 Corinthians 9:15**

Ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ κέχρημαι οὐδενὶ τούτων. οὐκ ἔγραψα δὲ ταῦτα ἵνα οὕτως γένηται ἐν ἐμοί, καλὸν γάρ μοι μᾶλλον ἀποθανεῖν ἢ – τὸ καύχημά μου οὐδεὶς κενώσει.

χραομαι use, make use of

The perfect denotes a continuing stance.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing

οὐδενὶ τούτων 'none of these rights' or, in context, 'never ... any of these rights.'

ἔγραψα an epistolary aorist

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

ἐν ἐμοί 'in my case'

μᾶλλον adv more; rather,  
ἀποθησκω die, face death

"*better for me to die than* – The text here is difficult. The best interpretation is that Paul breaks off his sentence and does not complete it. What follows is an explanation. 'No man will make this boast of mine an empty one'." Morris. Thistleton reminds us that Paul is *dictating* the letter. He breaks off speaking due to emotion.

The textual variants would appear to be attempts to alleviate the abruptness of the text.

καυχημα, τος n ground for boasting, object of boasting, boasting, pride

"It may be easy to misunderstand Paul's use of καύχημά μου if we forget that Paul's theme is his *glory in the cross* (1:18-31). His thought revolves around a core contrast between *human boasting* and *glorying in the Lord* (1:30-31). His rejection of dependency on patronage at Corinth reflects, in accordance with Matt 10:5-14 and the part parallel Luke 10:3-9, the apostolic living out of trustful dependence on God's grace alone, in which he is able *freely to give* precisely as his response to his having *freely received*." Thistleton  
"In offering the 'free' gospel 'free of charge' his own ministry becomes a living paradigm of the gospel itself." Fee

κενωω deprive of power, make of no effect, empty of meaning

**1 Corinthians 9:16**

ἐὰν γὰρ εὐαγγελίζωμαι, οὐκ ἔστιν μοι  
καύχημα, ἀνάγκη γάρ μοι ἐπίκειται· οὐαὶ γάρ  
μοί ἐστιν ἐὰν μὴ εὐαγγελίσωμαι.

εὐαγγελίζω act. and midd proclaim the  
good news

ἀνάγκη, ης f necessity, compulsion  
ἐπικειται lie upon, be imposed (of  
regulations)

οὐαὶ interj. woe! how horrible it will be!

"It is agony if Paul tries to escape from the constraints and commission which the love and grace of 'the hound of heaven' presses upon him." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 9:17**

εἰ γὰρ ἐκὼν τοῦτο πράσσω, μισθὸν ἔχω· εἰ δὲ  
ἄκων, οἰκονομίαν πεπίστευμαι.

ἐκων, ουσα, ον of one's own free will

Or here, 'entirely by personal choice.'

πράσσω practice, do

μισθος, ου m pay, wages, reward

ἄκων unwillingly

οἰκονομία, ας f task, responsibility

πεπίστευμαι Verb, perf pass ind, 1s πιστεω  
here = entrust

"There is more than one way of understanding this difficult verse. Paul may mean that the man who preaches with a willing spirit merits his reward, whereas if he is unwilling he is not excused. He must still discharge his stewardship. Or he may be starting from the premise of verse 16 that 'necessity presses upon me'. If he preached of his own free choice he would merit a reward. As it is, it is not his own choice. He must preach. The next verse would then be understood as, 'What reward is possible under these circumstances?' There is nothing of grace in μισθος, reward, which rather signifies 'wages', 'the payment of what is due'. Morris

"The whole argument hinges on sovereign grace, and that it is in *freely giving* in response to God's free gift that *καύχημα*, grounds for taking delight in what one gives, becomes possible *only within a framework where pressure and law do not apply*: free gift in response to free gift. It is in *giving* that the believer *receives*, not some 'external' reward, but through the internal grammar of the blessedness of giving which is the stamp of identification with the cross. Hence, if Paul cannot 'freely' give his apostolic work (since to this he is pressed by God without choice), what is left to give 'freely' is his toil and labour as a leather worker and salesman in the commercial agora. This he gives to relieve others of bearing his costs and more especially avoiding the obligations of patronage which might compromise his voice on behalf of less influential groups within the church." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 9:18**

τίς οὖν μοῦ ἐστιν ὁ μισθός; ἵνα  
εὐαγγελιζόμενος ἀδάπανον θήσω τὸ  
εὐαγγέλιον, εἰς τὸ μὴ καταχρησασθαι τῇ  
ἐξουσίᾳ μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ.

"This verse explicates the point just made above. Only by *gratuitously* proclaiming the gospel *gratis* can Paul go beyond the preaching which God has pressed upon him as an inescapable, non voluntary, task, and thereby go 'the second mile.' To do this, however, he must forego a right, as he pleads with 'the strong' among his readers to do." Thistleton

ἀδάπανος, ον free of charge

θήσω Verb, aor act subj/ fut act indic, 1 s

τιθημι place, set, present

καταχρησασθαι Verb, aor midd dep infin

καταχραομαι use, make full use of

ἐξουσία, ας f right, capability, power

**1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

"These verses form a rhetorical climax to the argument in 9:1-18, and confirm that ch. 9 is no mere digression on the subject of apostleship as such. Whereas vv. 1-18 focus largely on the strategy and personal example of foregoing the 'right' to substance, however, these verses show that standing in solidarity with 'the other,' as against autonomy or self-affirmation, lies at the heart of the gospel. In particular, concern for the diversity of those who are 'the weak' constitutes a profound pastoral and missionary strategy which is not built on pragmatic 'success' but on the nature of the gospel (v. 23) in which Paul has a part." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 9:19**

Ἐλεύθερος γὰρ ὢν ἐκ πάντων πᾶσιν ἑμαυτὸν ἐδούλωσα, ἵνα τοὺς πλείονας κερδήσω·

ἐλεύθερος, α, ον free, free person

Thistleton says, "Any translation needs to signal the emphatic place of the first word in the Greek, the adjective ἐλεύθερος, 'free', not least since this is a catchword in sociopolitical and religious aspirations and concerns about status at Corinth." He offers the translation, 'Free is what I am – no slave to any human person – yet I put myself into slavery to every human person.'

ἑμαυτὸν Pronoun, acc s ἑμαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun myself, my own  
δουλωω enslave, make (someone) a slave  
πλείων, πλείον or πλεον more, most, the many

'as many as possible', 'all the more'

κερδαινω gain, win

**1 Corinthians 9:20**

καὶ ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος, ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κερδήσω· τοῖς ὑπὸ νόμον ὡς ὑπὸ νόμον, μὴ ὢν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμον, ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον κερδήσω·

ἐγενόμην has the force of 'I make myself'

τοῖς ὑπὸ νόμον may widen the scope to include circumcised proselytes.

Thistleton, quoting Hayes, says, The phrases ὡς Ἰουδαῖος and ὡς ὑπὸ νόμον are especially revealing of Paul's theology of the new creation: 'Since Paul was in fact a Jew, this formulation shows how radically he conceives the claim that in Christ he is ... in a position transcending all cultural allegiances.' (cf. Gal 2:15; 3:28; and 1 Cor 12:13)."

Ἰουδαῖος, α, ον a Jew, Jewish, Judean

The phrase μὴ ὢν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμον is omitted from a number of MSS and VSS – probably an accident in transmission.

"Paul conformed to practices which would enable him to approach *them that are under the law* with greater acceptability." Morris. But this is more than an explication of missionary strategy, it is given as an example to the Corinthians of how they should live out the gospel in their relationships with one another. Martin Luther sums it up in his work *Concerning Christian Liberty*: "A Christian man is the most free lord of all, and subject to none; a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to everyone."

**1 Corinthians 9:21**

τοῖς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος, μὴ ὢν ἄνομος θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἔννομος Χριστοῦ, ἵνα κερδάνω τοὺς ἀνόμους·

ἄνομος, ον outside the law, Gentile  
ἐννομος, ον subject to law, legal

Paul views himself as 'not under law' – no longer under the constraints of Torah. But he is not free from obligation to God for he is bound to Christ as Lord. Hayes writes, "Being free from the Law does not mean that Paul runs wild with self-indulgence – a word pointedly spoken to the Corinthians who are proclaiming 'I am free to do anything.' Instead, he lives with a powerful sense of obligation to God, defined now by his relationship to Christ." And Bruce relates this to 11:1 where the example of Christ is seen as paradigmatic for Christian conduct.

**1 Corinthians 9:22**

ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν ἀσθενής, ἵνα τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς κερδήσω· τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα, ἵνα πάντως τινὰς σώσω.

ἀσθενεσιν Adjective, m dat pl ἀσθενης, ες sick, weak, helpless

"These are people who are most probably the vulnerable in sociopolitical terms, forced into dependency on patrons, owners, or employers, which make decisive initiative or boldness a foreign habit of mind. *Paul behaves, and observes a strategy, which takes account of the inhibited, vulnerable, and dependent. In today's terms, he does not proclaim merely a 'success' gospel for extrovert 'winners.'* If these people are too scrupulous in their eagerness 'to do the right thing,' Paul stands with them." Thistleton

ἀσθενεῖς Adjective, m nom pl ἀσθενης κερδαινω see v.19

γένεγονα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s γινομαι παντως by all means, surely, certainly

Here, 'by every possible means.'

σωζω save, rescue, heal

**1 Corinthians 9:23**

πάντα δὲ ποιῶ διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ἵνα συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι.

εὐαγγέλιον, ου n good news, gospel

This is "the singular passion of his life." Fee

συγκοινωνος, ου m sharer, participant

Thistleton, quoting Collins, says, "To stand alongside the Jew, the Gentile, the socially dependent and vulnerable, or to live and act in solidarity with every kind of person in every situation is to have a 'share' in 'the nature of the gospel', i.e. *to instantiate what the gospel is and how it operates*. The use of compounds here (συν-) 'express[es] various forms of solidarity in Christian existence.'"

### 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

The Isthmian games took place every second year just outside of Corinth and may well have occurred during Paul's ministry there. Paul therefore draws upon illustrations with which the Corinthians are familiar. His warning is against self-indulgence.

### 1 Corinthians 9:24

Οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι οἱ ἐν σταδίῳ τρέχοντες πάντες μὲν τρέχουσιν, εἷς δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ βραβεῖον; οὕτως τρέχετε ἵνα καταλάβητε.

σταδιον, ου n arena, stadium

τρεχω run, exert oneself

βραβειον, ου n prize

καταλαμβανω obtain, attain, seize

"An athlete goes through anything, both effort and abstinence, to win, because he or she has an eye on the ultimate goal. Can the Corinthians, then, not exercise due ἐγκρατεια, self-control or *abstinence*, when what is at stake is not a garland made from vegetation, or even the acclaim of the crowd, but 'the brother or sister for whom Christ died' (8:11)?" Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 9:25

πᾶς δὲ ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται, ἐκεῖνοι μὲν οὖν ἵνα φθαρτὸν στέφανον λάβωσιν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄφθαρτον.

ἀγωνίζομαι struggle, fight, compete

ἐγκρατεομαι exercise self-control

'everyone who enters as a combatant exercises self-control in everything.'

ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, he, she, it

φθαρτος, η, ον subject to corruption

στεφανος, ου m wreath, crown, prize

"The tradition of a crown of victory stemming from the Greek city-states should be distinguished from a crown of royalty in the tradition of the monarchies and the kingship of Israel and the kingdom of God or Christ. The widespread NT use of the crown for believers (e.g., 1 Pet 5:4; Jas 1:12; 2 Tim 4:8; Rev 2:10) is more likely to signify the crown of victory than of that of royalty, although sometimes sharing in the reign of Christ is in view."

Thistleton

λάβωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl λαμβανω  
ἀφθαρτος, ον imperishable, immortal

"The strenuous self-denial of the athlete in training for his fleeting reward is a rebuke to all half-hearted Christian service. Notice that the athlete denies himself many lawful pleasures. The Christian must avoid not only definite sins, but anything that hinders his complete effectiveness." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 9:26

ἐγὼ τοίνυν οὕτως τρέχω ὡς οὐκ ἀδήλως, οὕτως πυκτεύω ὡς οὐκ ἀέρα δέρων·

τοίνυν therefore, for that very reason

ἀδήλως aimlessly, without a goal in mind

"Today we might say: I play with my eye on the ball." Thistleton

πυκτεω box, fight

ἀηρ, ερος m air, space

δερω beat, strike, hit

"It is difficult to know whether ἀερα δερων means *shadow boxing* or flinging punches in a genuine fight which find no target... Although the second meaning underlines the fruitlessness of the exercise, it is more likely that Paul wants to expose 'the strong' at Corinth who parade γνωσις rather than ἀγαπη as all to ready 'to go through the motions' of religious profession and routine without real engagement with the daily life-or-death issues arising from love for the other and the need to discipline and constrain their own indulgences and freedoms. To lay primary stress on the first with a nuance suggesting the second is perhaps best achieved by 'one who shadowboxes into empty air.'" Thistleton

"Paul's Christianity is purposeful. He puts everything into direct and forceful Christian endeavour." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 9:27

ἀλλὰ ὑπωπιάζω μου τὸ σῶμα καὶ δουλαγωγῶ, μή πως ἄλλοις κηρύξας αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γένωμαι.

ὑπωπιαζω wear out (somebody), treat with severity, keep under control

σωμα, τος n body

Thistleton thinks that the reference is not so much to his physical body as to his life and offers the translation, 'My day-to-day life as a whole I treat roughly, and make it strictly serve my purposes.' "The whole of everyday life must be held captive to the purpose of the gospel."

δουλαγωγέω bring under control  
 πως i) interrog. particle how? in what way?  
 ii) enclitic particle somehow, in some way  
 ἄλλος, η, ο another, other  
 κηρύξας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s  
 κηρυσσώ preach, proclaim  
 ἄδοκιμος, ον failing to meet the test, disqualified

"Paul's fear was not that he might lose his salvation but that he might lose his crown through failing to satisfy his Lord (cf 3:15)." Morris  
 Thistleton says, "The notion of *that which does not prove itself to be such as it ought* well captures the notion of purpose in relation to calling and verdict. The 'test' reveals failures of an unspecified nature, not utter rejection."

### 1 Corinthians 10:1-6

"Paul ... turns to the history of the people of God recorded in the Scriptures to show that the enjoyment of high privileges does not guarantee entry into final blessing." Morris  
 Thistleton cites Willis who suggests that 10:1-22 addresses the issue of participation in idolatrous cultic events rather than simply the eating of meat offered to idols. Perhaps a minority among the 'strong' had argued that since 'an idol is nothing' so 'it is nothing to us' to participate in idol feasts. Thistleton adds, "This scenario is immensely strengthened by the forceful arguments of N. Walter concerning the presupposition, which could be carried over from a Gentile background. In a syncretistic, pluralistic religious culture, it might be plausible to imagine that all manifestations of 'the sacred' reflected the being of the one God of monotheism. By contrast, Paul insists on the covenantal exclusivism of loyalty to Christ as a definitive revelation of God."

Some suggest that 10:1-13 is a carefully constructed unit that was composed prior to its use in its present context – a homily.

### 1 Corinthians 10:1

Οὐ θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν πάντες ὑπὸ τὴν νεφέλην ἦσαν καὶ πάντες διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης διήλθον,

θέλω wish, will

ἀγνοεῶ not know, be ignorant, fail to understand

πατήρ, πατρός m father

"Whatever the novelties and discontinuities brought about by the new creation in Christ, Israel and the Christian church belong to a single *history* of God's activity and self-disclosure." Thistleton

νεφέλη, ης f cloud  
 θαλάσσα, ης f sea  
 διερχομαι pass through, go through

"Paul now lists the privileges which 'all' enjoyed under Moses. First, they 'all' enjoyed the protection and guidance of 'the cloud,' which represented the presence of God to lead them (Exod 13:21; 14:19-20), and 'all' experienced the redemptive act of God which brought them *out of* bondage in Egypt *through* the Sea of Reeds *by* God's saving action *to* the new state of existence won for God's covenant people." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 10:2

καὶ πάντες εἰς τὸν Μωϋσῆν ἐβαπτίσαντο ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ καὶ ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ,

The MSS evidence concerning the voice of the verb βαπτίζω is divided between the passive (adopted by UBS) and the middle ἐβαπτίσαντο favoured by Metzger and Wikgren. Metzger says, "it is more probable that copyists replaced the middle ἐβαπτίσαντο (which corresponds to Jewish practice, according to which the convert baptised himself) with the passive (which is the usual expression in the case of Christian baptism, e.g. 1:13,15; 12:13 etc.), than vice versa."

"The experience of being guided by the cloud, and of passing through the Red Sea (Ex.14) had the effect of uniting the people to Moses in such a way that they are said to have been *baptised into Moses* ... Just as baptism has as one effect, the bringing of a man under the leadership of Christ, so did the participation in the great events of the Exodus bring the Israelites under the leadership of Moses." Morris. Cf. Ex. 14:31

### 1 Corinthians 10:3

καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν βρῶμα ἔφαγον

πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual here in the sense of supernatural

βρῶμα, τος n food, solid food  
 ἔφαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl ἔσθω and ἔσθω eat, consume

I.e. the manna. Spiritual in the sense of provided by God.

**1 Corinthians 10:4**

καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν ἔπιον πόμα,  
ἔπινον γὰρ ἐκ πνευματικῆς ἀκολουθούσης  
πέτρας, ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ Χριστός·

πινω drink

πομα, τος n drink

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a  
disciple

πετρα, ας f rock, solid rock

"The allusion ... is not a simple one... But Paul understands Christ to have been the source of all the blessings the Israelites received as they journeyed. So he can think of the Rock, Christ, as following them, and continually giving them drink. The reference to spiritual food and drink may well, as Calvin and others have thought, be made in the light of Holy Communion. Israel had her equivalent of both sacraments." Morris

On 'now the rock was Christ', Witherington comments, "'Was' indicates that the divine Christ was really a part of Israel's history, providing them with life-giving water." And Bandstra comments, "Christ himself, the pre-existent Christ, was present with the Israelites in their wilderness journey... [Christ was] as much the source of the spiritual food and drink of the Israelites as he is the one present in the Lord's Supper at Corinth."

**1 Corinthians 10:5**

ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐν τοῖς πλείοσιν αὐτῶν ἠυδόκησεν ὁ  
θεός, κατεστρώθησαν γὰρ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ.

πλειων, πλειον or πλεον more, most, the  
majority, many, a larger number  
εὐδοκεω be pleased, take delight/pleasure  
in

κατεστρώθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl  
καταστρωννυμι strike down, put to  
death

Cf. Num 14:16. "The verb καταστρωννυμι lends a picturesque touch. It really means 'to spread out'. Paul pictures the wilderness strewn with corpses. This is not simply a natural death. It is God's sentence against the rebels." Morris

ἐρημος, ου f deserted place, uninhabited  
region, desert

**1 Corinthians 10:6**

Ταῦτα δὲ τύποι ἡμῶν ἐγενήθησαν, εἰς τὸ μὴ  
εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἐπιθυμητὰς κακῶν, καθὼς κάκεῖνοι  
ἐπεθύμησαν.

τυπος, ου m pattern, example, type

'Formative model' Cf. 1 Thess 1:7

ἐγενήθησαν Verb, aor indic, 3 pl γινομαι  
εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

ἐπιθυμητης, ου m one who desires  
κακος, η, ον evil, bad, wrong, harm

εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἐπιθυμητὰς κακῶν 'with a  
view to our not craving for evil things.'

κάκεῖνος, η, ο contraction of και ἐκεῖνος  
and that one, he also, they also  
ἐπιθυμew long for, desire, lust after

Cf. Num 11:4-34. "Lusting" for the diet of  
Egypt "hints at the attraction of the Corinthian  
idol feasts." Findlay

**1 Corinthians 10:7-13**

Thistleton suggests that the four warning  
examples used by Paul in vv.7-13 highlight sin  
as not mere acts but as misdirected desire  
(ἐπιθυμια).

**1 Corinthians 10:7**

μηδὲ εἰδωλολάτραι γίνεσθε, καθὼς τινες  
αὐτῶν· ὡσπερ γέγραπται· Ἐκάθισεν ὁ λαὸς  
φαγεῖν καὶ πεῖν, καὶ ἀνέστησαν παίζειν.

μηδε nor μηδε ... μηδε neither ... nor  
εἰδωλολατρης, ου m idolater

ὡσπερ as, even as

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

καθίζω intrans sit down, sit

λαος, ου m people, a people

φαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐσθιω and ἐσθω  
eat, consume

πειν Verb, aor act infin πινω drink

ἀνιστημι intrans (in 2 aor & all midd) rise,  
stand up

παίζω dance, play

The Hebrew verb of Ex 32:6 means *to make sport*. "...allowing for a probable triple meaning: (i) 'letting their hair down' in the absence of Moses with nuances of (ii) idolatrous dancing before the golden calf, and (iii) sexual license approaching **orgy** – all in contrast to the theological and ethical restraint and sober *self-control* (cf. 9:24-27) demanded of God's covenant people... If it were not for the probable cultic dimension, we might try to capture the double meaning in modern English by *got up to have a romp* (cf. *romp in the hay*), or (in quotation marks) *got up to have 'fun and games.'*" Thistleton

"The warning against idolatry is very much to the point in view of the troubles at Corinth with which Paul is dealing. He quotes Ex.32:6, where the reference to eating and drinking and playing (i.e. dancing) point to a typical idol festival." Morris

"It is precisely the 'turn on' which idolatrous cultic festivals gave to an over-relaxed, psychotic mind-set that leads Paul to tackle the issue so forcefully. Such 'participation' could damage and destroy all that the Christian community represented." Thistleton.

"N Walter facilitates our understanding of the position of 'the strong.' Not only did they wish to avoid appearing 'narrow,' over-scrupulous, and oversensitive to their families and friends, especially those of influence; they also argued that since 'we all know that God is one' (8:3-6) any manifestation of 'the sacred' or of 'religion' surely reflects the immanent being of the one universal God, who has more than one face. After all, Paul believed that they were not to withdraw from the world. The setting of the private meals causes no problem: the issue concerns ειδωλοθυτον, but an idol 'is nothing.' On the other hand, does participation in pagan cultic practices constitute ειδωλολατρία? For Paul the answer is clear: because he draws on the biblical tradition he believes *both* that idols have no real existence *and* that they represent sinister, demonic powers of evil, not least because gods fashioned by humankind provide religious sanction for all kinds of wishful indulgence. Hence against syncretistic assumptions drawn from the Gentile world, Paul confronts his readers with the scriptural tradition of a covenant loyalty to the God of Israel which is different from Greco-Roman 'religiosity.' The Christian sacraments specifically anchor faith to *Christ*." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 10:8

μηδὲ πορνεύομεν, καθὼς τινες αὐτῶν ἐπόρνευσαν, καὶ ἔπεσαν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ εἴκοσι τρεῖς χιλιάδες.

μηδε see v.7

πορνευω commit sexual immorality

"This is not a new subject, for *fornication* formed part of much idol worship. Sacred prostitutes were found at many shrines, and Corinth had an unenviable notoriety in this respect." Morris

ἔπεσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl πιπτω fall, fall down, fall to one's ruin

εἴκοσι twenty

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

χιλιας, αδος f (group of) a thousand

See Numbers 25:1-9, though Numbers speaks of twenty *four* thousand. There is no satisfactory explanation for the 'missing thousand.' "Most modern commentators contend that Paul is not troubled to provide an exact memory and may well have conflated his thought with a further allusion to Num 26:62." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 10:9

μηδὲ ἐκπειράζωμεν τὸν Χριστόν, καθὼς τινες αὐτῶν ἐπείρασαν, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ὄφρων ἀπόλλυντο.

ἐκπειράζω put to the test, tempt

The present subjunctive perhaps has the force of 'no longer put to the test'

Χριστόν is attested by many MSS, including the earliest, p<sup>46</sup>. However, a number of MSS, including  $\aleph$  and B read κυρίον, reflecting the OT text. It is easier to see how Χριστόν could have been amended to κυρίον than vice versa.

ὄφρις, εως m snake, serpent

ἀπόλλυντο Verb, imperf midd indic, 3 pl

ἀπολλυμι destroy, kill; midd perish, die

'They were perishing' See Numbers 21:5f.

"The presumption is incisively and movingly brought out in Jurgen Moltmann's *Theology of Hope*. Drawing on the work of Walther Zimmerli and Gerhard von Rad on divine promise and hope in the OT, Moltmann insists that for Israel in the wilderness, as for the pilgrim church of Christ, the future is promised but not yet. Hence 'Presumption is the premature self-willed anticipation of what we hope from God; despair is the premature arbitrary anticipation of non-fulfilment.' By contrast to each, Christian faith lays hold on divine promise. In this context (1 Corinthians 8-10) it adopts neither the presumptions of 'the strong' nor the anxious timidity of 'the weak,' but moves forward in both wariness and confidence, with self-discipline and trust. Believers, Moltmann asserts (with Paul), live as the 'exodus church.'" Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 10:10

μηδὲ γογγύζετε, καθάπερ τινες αὐτῶν ἐγόγγυσαν, καὶ ἀπόλοντο ὑπὸ τοῦ ὀλοθρευτοῦ.

γογγύζω grumble, complain, mutter

καθαπερ as, just as

ἀπόλοντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl

ἀπολλυμι

ὀλοθρευτης, ου m destroying angel

Reference is probably to Numbers 16 (though Thistleton thinks that the reference is to Num 14:2-4 – if any *specific* reference is intended).

### 1 Corinthians 10:11

ταῦτα δὲ τυπικῶς συνέβαινεν ἐκεῖνοις, ἐγγράφη δὲ πρὸς νοθεσίαν ἡμῶν, εἰς οὓς τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων κατήντηκεν.

τυπικῶς by way of example, as a warning  
 συμβαίνω happen, come about  
 ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those  
 νοθεσία, ας f instruction, warning  
 τέλος, ος n end, conclusion, termination  
 αἰώνων gen pl αἰών, αἰώνας m age, world  
 order, eternity  
 καταντῶ come, arrive, reach, attain

Hering argues that the meaning is that the two ages, the old age and the New Creation, have here touched each other. The Corinthians live in the intersection of the ages, in the 'already but not yet' of the Christian's existence. For the ethical implications, see JP Sampley's *Walking between the Times: Paul's Moral Reasoning*. "We may transpose Sampley's terminology to match the issues which Paul addresses more closely. The 'not yet' dimension addresses a *Corinthian theology of presumption*, especially on the part of the 'strong': *freedom* is all; God will not allow us to fall; we belong *wholly* to the age of the new creation, no less than our counterparts in Greco-Roman cults who have been redeemed from the world and elevated to a new plane of existence. People who thought that they 'stood' needed to 'take heed lest they fell.' The 'now' dimension addresses a *Corinthian theology of doubt and anxiety*, especially on the part of the 'weak,' for whom the socioeconomic realities of dependency on the powerful (now often powerful in the church) seem not to have changed very much. Life goes on. To both Paul explains that they are incorporated within a cosmic story of grace to Israel and to the church in which God decisively redeems his people but also requires that they journey as pilgrims 'through' but not 'of' the world, with realism about self-discipline and trust in the divine promise... The church, too, has its 'tests' in a pilgrim journey." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 10:12

ὥστε ὁ δοκῶν ἐστάναι βλεπέτω μὴ πέσῃ,

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
 δοκεῶ think, suppose

ἐστάναι Verb, perf act infin ἵστημι and  
 ἵστανω stand, stand firm, hold ground.

I.e. one who thinks that their position is secure.

βλεπῶ see, look, be able to see, beware of

πέση Verb, aor act subj, 3 s πιπῶ see v.8

### 1 Corinthians 10:13

πειρασμὸς ὑμᾶς οὐκ εἴληφεν εἰ μὴ ἄνθρωπος· πιστὸς δὲ ὁ θεός, ὃς οὐκ ἐάσει ὑμᾶς πειρασθῆναι ὑπὲρ ὃ δύνασθε, ἀλλὰ ποιήσει σὺν τῷ πειρασμῷ καὶ τὴν ἔκβασιν τοῦ δύνασθαι ὑπενεγκεῖν.

πειρασμος, ου m trial, test, temptation

Thistleton thinks that in context the meaning is 'trial' rather than 'temptation', though he stresses that the two are not wholly distinct.

εἴληφεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s λαμβανῶ

here in sense of take hold of

ἄνθρωπος, η, ον human, characteristic of mankind

The 'cravings' which they experience are part and parcel of being human. "God's people are still frail and *all-too-human*, as over against the unrealism of 'enthusiasm' and an overrealised eschatology (see under τα τέλη τῶν αἰώνων in v.11). They are still 'on the journey' of everyday life, with its vulnerability and need for discipline (cf. 1:7-9; 1:18, etc)." Thistleton

πιστός, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, reliable

ἐάω allow, permit, leave, let go

πειρασθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin πειραζῶ

test, tempt

ἐκβασίς, εως f way out

"Israel or Christian believers can never claim that they could not help themselves in the face of pressure to abandon covenant faithfulness, for God will ensure, as part of his own covenant faithfulness, that he will not simply leave them to face impossible odds. His grace provides ever new opportunities for human faithfulness. Yet Paul will not allow this faithfulness to be manipulated by human presumption. The believer must respond not by expecting all 'temptation' to be removed, but by taking the 'exit path' which God provides, marks, and renders the believer *able* (δύνασθε) to use." Thistleton

ὑπενεγκεῖν Verb, aor act infin ὑποφέρω

endure, bear up under

"Verse 13 is neither simply an 'encouragement' nor a further warning. It serves both ends, but also functions as a reminder of God's covenant faithfulness to his people even when they were being tempted to break that covenant ... God's faithfulness helps them 'bear up under' (ὑποφέρω) the temptation." Gardner. Cf. 1:8,9a.

**1 Corinthians 10:14**

Διόπερ, ἀγαπητοί μου, φεύγετε ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας.

διόπερ emphatic form of διο therefore  
indeed, for this very reason  
ἀγαπητος, η, ον beloved  
φευγω flee, run away from, avoid

Present imperative implies continuous action. The verb used implies, "be rid of this sin with all speed." Chrysostom  
"The preposition ἀπο before the articular phrase conveys a metaphor of location and active flight which picks up the preceding allusion to ἐκβασις in v.13. The 'way out' (v.13) conjures up the image of an army caught (εἰληφεν) in a defile and urged to flee at all speed through a mountain pass." Thistleton  
εἰδωλολατρία, ας f idol worship, idolatry

**1 Corinthians 10:15**

ὡς φρονίμοις λέγω· κρίνατε ὑμεῖς ὁ φημι.

φρονιμος, ον wise, sensible

Paul appeals to their 'common sense.'

κρινω judge, pass judgement on  
φημι say

**1 Corinthians 10:16**

τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστίν;

"We argue that, as in the case of 'apostleship,' to *participate*, or to *have a share in*, 'the body' and 'blood of Christ' is neither merely a self-referring allusion to belonging to the church nor an argument which depends on a quasi-physical sacramental theology of the Lord's Supper. Rather, it places at centre stage (i) the commonality (with the concern for 'the other') and (ii) the exclusivity (in the framework of covenant loyalty) of a *cruciform lifestyle* which witnesses to *identification with Christ in ... [his] dying for 'others' and being raised by God*. Hence Paul sets up a dialectic between sharing in the 'blood' or constituting 'one loaf' (10:16,17) and receiving a 'cup' of *thanksgiving* or 'a cup for which God be blessed' which together mark the 'offering to God' not of the Lord's Supper as such but of the *life and lifestyle* which expresses its Christomorphic, Christocentric orientation in such a way that 'you cannot take part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons' (10:21, NIV). William Lane declares that 'covenant is the key to Paul's conflict with Corinth.'" Thistleton

ποτηριον, ου n cup  
εὐλογία, ας f blessing, praise

"Coheres precisely with the context of the Passover meal as the framework for the interpretation of the Lord's Supper." Thistleton  
Most commentators associate this with the third cup of the Passover meal, though some think the reference is to the fourth.

εὐλογεω speak well of, bless  
οὐχι not, no; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.  
κοινωνια, ας f fellowship, sharing in, participation

Barrett says that the meaning cannot be conveyed in a single English word, it requires 'common participation.'  
"Communal participation in the body and blood of Christ entails manifesting publicly the sacrificial lifestyle of Christ, as seen in his blood (i.e. his death) and body (i.e., self-giving public life." Thistleton

αἷμα, ατος f blood

Meyer suggests "Paul names the cup first ... because he means to speak at more length about the bread." As Thistleton adds, "The sequence here simply serves his flow of expression."

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food  
κλαω break (only of bread)  
σωμα, τος n body

The 'broken bread' signifies 'the body of Christ as he abandoned it to the cross.' Wolff.

**1 Corinthians 10:17**

ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος, ἐν σῶμα οἱ πολλοὶ ἐσμεν, οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν.

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου much, many

'many as we are, we are one body.'

μετεχω share in, eat, belong to

**1 Corinthians 10:18**

βλέπετε τὸν Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα· οὐχὶ οἱ ἐσθίοντες τὰς θυσίας κοινωνοὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου εἰσίν;

βλεπω see, look

'Consider'

Some consider that the reference is still to the incident of the golden calf (so Hayes) but others (Hering, Barrett) think that there is no *specific* reference intended here.

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature  
ἐσθιω and ἐσθω eat, consume  
θυσια, ας f sacrifice, victim  
κοινωνος, ου m partner, sharer  
θυσιαστηριον, ου n altar

Cf. Heb 3:14.

**1 Corinthians 10:19**

τί οὖν φημι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτον τί ἐστίν, ἢ ὅτι εἰδωλόν τί ἐστίν;

φημι say, affirm, declare  
εἰδωλοθυτον, ου n meat offered to idols

The last clause of v.19, ἢ ὅτι εἰδωλόν τί ἐστίν is omitted from p<sup>46</sup> κ\* C\* and 33. Metzger thinks the omission is accidental through homoeoteleuton.

ἢ οἱ  
εἰδωλον, ου n idol

"In modern conceptual terms Paul means that neither εἰδωλοθυτον nor εἰδωλον possesses *ontological existence* or *metaphysical reality*. In modern and postmodern parlance they constitute *social constructs*." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 10:20**

ἀλλ' ὅτι ἃ θύουσιν, δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῶν θύουσιν, οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι.

θωω slaughter, sacrifice, kill  
δαιμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit, god  
θελω wish, will

"He will not dispute the contention of the Corinthians that an idol is not a god at all. But he will not agree that therefore idols can safely be treated as nothing more than so many blocks of wood and stone. The *devils* make use of men's readiness to worship idols. Thus when men sacrifice to idols, it cannot be said that they are engaging in some neutral activity that has no meaning. They are in fact sacrificing to evil spirits, like the people spoken of in Deut 32:17. To share food is to establish fellowship. Thus they are entering into *fellowship* with *devils*. Paul does not wish this to happen to his Corinthian friends." Morris  
Godet writes, "Jupiter, Apollo, Venus, certainly are not real beings; but Satan is something. Behind all that mythological phantasmagoria there lie concealed malignant powers, which, without being divinities, are nevertheless very real, and very active, and which have succeeded in fascinating the human imagination and in turning aside the religious sentiment of the heathen nations to beings of fancy... The words of the apostle do not imply the idea that every false god worshipped by the heathen corresponds to a particular demon; they signify merely that heathen religions emanate from those malignant spirits, and that consequently the man who takes part in such worship puts himself under their influence."

"Christ by his victory on the cross has disabled these demonic forces and liberated his people from their influence, but his people might foolishly put themselves in situations where this influence was still potent." Bruce

**1 Corinthians 10:21**

οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν καὶ ποτήριον δαιμονίων· οὐ δύνασθε τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν καὶ τραπέζης δαιμονίων.

ποτηριον see v.16  
πινω drink  
τραπεζα, ης f table, food, meal

Cf. Mal 1:7,12.

μετεχω see v.17

"The use of οὐ δυνασθε conveys (i) a *logical* cannot (the two possibilities logically exclude each other); (ii) an *empirical* cannot (something will be destroyed if you try to do both); and (iii) an *institutional* cannot (Christians cannot, and still be *counted* as 'Christian').

"The parallelism between ποτηριον κυριου πινειν and τραπεζης κυριου μετεχειν is instructive. We noted above the emphasis of Cullmann and Robinson on 'sharing Christ's cup' (in Mark 10:38,39) as communal participation in the 'cup' of *his baptism as Messiah* into suffering, death and resurrection. It is *impossible* (in all three senses) to participate in Christ, his redemptive act of self-giving in suffering and death, his resurrection mode of existence through the Holy Spirit (15:44; cf. Rom 8:11), and his love for others, and simultaneously to participate in the seductive, assertive, manipulative powers of evil which inspire idolatry by substituting themselves in the place of God... 'The pattern of the Messianic life is one of suffering and glory' [Thornton] Those who share τραπεζης δαιμονιων manifest the opposite principle: not the giving of the self for the benefit of 'the weak' (as is the issue in 8:12,13) but self-edification, self-fulfilment, or self-enjoyment (cf. Deuteronomy 32) at the expense of others, even if something else is put into the place of that which belongs to God alone (εἰδωλον, cf. V.19)." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 10:22**

ἢ παραζηλοῦμεν τὸν κύριον; μὴ ἰσχυρότεροι αὐτοῦ ἔσμεν;

"A κοινωνία in the blood and body of Christ may mean a sharing in the results of Christ's sacrificial death... What the Corinthians had not realised through arrogance and complacency was the fact that the cup also committed them to covenant judgment when they sinned." Gardner

ἢ οἱ

παραζηλω make jealous

ἰσχυρότερος, α, ον stronger - comparative from ἰσχυρός

"The last clause is solemn, but it adds a touch of irony if *'the strong'* so press their self-confidence as to imply that they are 'stronger' (ἰσχυρότεροι) than God... The disloyalty and absurdity of this triumphalist, self-centred theology is exposed.

**1 Corinthians 10:23**

Πάντα ἔξεστιν· ἀλλ' οὐ πάντα συμφέρει.  
Ἐπίπαντα ἔξεστιν· ἀλλ' οὐ πάντα οἰκοδομεῖ.

ἔξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is lawful, it is proper

Cf. 6:12. Paul is here probably quoting a Corinthian slogan.

συμφερω impersonal verb it is better, it is profitable, it is useful  
οἰκοδομεω build, build up, encourage

**1 Corinthians 10:24**

μηδεὶς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ζητεῖτω ἀλλὰ τὸ τοῦ ἑτέρου.

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing  
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον reflexive pronoun, himself, herself, itself

ζητεω seek, search for

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

This is part of following Christ (cf. Matt 22:37-40; Rom 14:7; 15:2; Gal 6:2; Phil 2:1-4,5-7).

**1 Corinthians 10:25**

πᾶν τὸ ἐν μακέλλῳ πωλούμενον ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν,

μακελλον, ον n meat market

"In a city such as Corinth scarcely any other meat would be for sale except that supplied from the Temple." Murphy-O'Connor

πωλεω sell, barter

ἀνακρινω examine, question, judge

συνείδησις, εως f conscience

**1 Corinthians 10:26**

τοῦ κυρίου γὰρ ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς.

γη, γης f earth

πληρωμα, τος n fulness, completeness

Cf. Ps 24:1.

**1 Corinthians 10:27**

εἴ τις καλεῖ ὑμᾶς τῶν ἀπίστων καὶ θέλετε πορεύεσθαι, πᾶν τὸ παρατιθέμενον ὑμῖν ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν·

Paul seems to have in mind particularly the situation where several Christians may be present at a meal.

ἀπιστος, ον unfaithful, unbelieving

θελω wish, will

πορευομαι go, proceed

παρατιθημι place before, put before

"In this verse the fundamental principle is affirmed of living in gospel *freedom unless either* (i) covenant disloyalty to God *or* (ii) damage to a fellow believer is entailed thereby." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 10:28**

ἐὰν δὲ τις ὑμῖν εἴπη· Τοῦτο ἱερόθυτόν ἐστιν, μὴ ἐσθίετε δι' ἐκεῖνον τὸν μνηύσαντα καὶ τὴν συνείδησιν·

ἱεροθυτος, ον offered in sacrifice

ἐσθίετε the imperfect carries the force 'make a practice of not eating it.'

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, he, she, it

μηνεω make known, inform, report

Later MSS insert here a repetition of the quotation from Ps 24:1 given in v.26.

**1 Corinthians 10:29**

συνείδησιν δὲ λέγω οὐχὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ ἑτέρου· ἵνατί γὰρ ἡ ἐλευθερία μου κρίνεται ὑπὸ ἄλλης συνειδήσεως;

οὐχι (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no

ἑαυτος see v.24

ἕτερος see v.24

ἵνατι why? for what reason?

ἐλευθερια, ας f freedom, liberty

κρινω judge, pass judgement on,

condemn

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

The latter part of the verse may seem paradoxical. It is helpfully translated by Godet, "For what advantage can there be in my liberty being condemned ..."

"Paul gives serious warning that if we use our freedom just as we like, and thereby cause offence to our neighbours, the result will be ... that this matchless gift of God will be condemned ... ruining our freedom by making wrong use of it." Calvin

### 1 Corinthians 10:30

εἰ ἐγὼ χάριτι μετέχω, τί βλασφημοῦμαι ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐγὼ εὐχαριστῶ;

χάριτι Noun, dat s χάρις, ιτος f grace, unmerited favour

Thistleton says that the meaning here is 'with thanksgiving.'

μετέχω share in, eat, belong to  
βλασφημεῶ speak against, slander, insult  
εὐχαριστέω thank, give thanks

"This passage has profound implications for the very nature of freedom, debated by Augustine and Pelagius, by Luther and Erasmus, and by people in every generation. Yet by the same token it speaks eloquently to issues as practical as the purchase of large properties, expensive possessions, the use of alcohol in specific situations, and so forth. At one level the Christian is free: it is not other people's judgments, as such, which should determine one's own. On the other hand, always to ask about the impact or effect of these things on the self-awareness (confidence, vulnerability, insecurity, negative reaction) of *the other* must play a part in the believer's decision about how the *freedom* which God has granted is to be *constructively used*." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 10:31

Ἐἴτε οὖν ἐσθίετε εἴτε πίνετε εἴτε τι ποιεῖτε, πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ ποιεῖτε.

εἴτε if, whether

πινῶ drink

δοξα, ης f glory

"The Christian is not concerned with the assertion of his rights, but with the glory of God. Eating, drinking, or anything else, must be subordinated to this major consideration." Morris

Thistleton points out that in John's gospel the glory of God is seen most clearly in the death of Jesus (Jn 13:31-32; 17:4). Living for God's glory hence demands a cruciform life.

### 1 Corinthians 10:32

ἀπρόσκοποι καὶ Ἰουδαίοις γίνεσθε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ,

ἀπρόσκοπος, ον blameless, faultless, inoffensive

'never be a cause of offence,' 'do not cause to stumble' Cf. 8:13.

Ἰουδαίος, α, ον a Jew, Jewish, Judean  
Ἕλλην, ηνος m a Greek, non-Jew

### 1 Corinthians 10:33

καθὼς κἀγὼ πάντα πᾶσιν ἀρέσκω, μὴ ζητῶν τὸ ἔμμαντοῦ σύμφορον ἀλλὰ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν, ἵνα σωθῶσιν.

κἀγὼ a compound word = καὶ ἐγὼ  
ἀρέσκω please, seek to please

The sense here may be 'accommodate.'  
Thistleton translates, 'I on my part strive to take account of all the interests of everyone.'

ζητέω seek, search for, look for  
ἐμμαντοῦ, ης reflexive pronoun (not used in nom) myself, my own  
σύμφορον, ον n good, advantage, profit  
πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου much, many  
σωθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl σωζῶ  
save, rescue, heal

### 1 Corinthians 11:1

μιμηταὶ μου γίνεσθε, καθὼς κἀγὼ Χριστοῦ.

μιμητης, ου m imitator

κἀγὼ see 10:33

The imitation exhorted is of conduct spoken of in v.33 above, namely living for others rather than oneself in order that others might be saved. This is what characterised the life of Christ – see Mk 10:45

### 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Paul is concerned that some Corinthian women are acting as if every distinction between male and female were abrogated for the Christian, and hence the cultural expressions of those distinctions were unimportant. Paul makes it clear that they are wrong. "It is no part of the life of the Christian needlessly to flout conventions." Morris

There is a continuity of concern here with the previous chapters. The issues are still those of 'rights' and the nature of the Christian life as a life lived 'for others.' Thistleton entitles the chapter (or 11:2-34 to be more precise) *Mutuality and Respect: Men and Women at Worship in Public, and Rich and Poor at the Lord's Supper*.

On the complexities of the background to this section, the following extracts from Thistleton may be helpful. "Aline Rouselle's essay 'Body Politics in Ancient Rome' (1992) assumes great importance for the issue of *head coverings, veils, or 'hoods'* (cf. *Κατα κεφαλῆς ἔχων*, v.4; *ἀκατακαλυπτῶ*, v.5; *κατακυλυπτεταλ* v.6; cf. Latin [Jerome] by contrast, *nudo capite*). Augustus reformed family law in ways which affected the status of women some three times between 18 BC and AD 9 (*lex Julia de adulteriis; lex Julia de fundo dotali*, et al.) Horace (d. 8 BC) tells us, on one side, that certain *male* attire or hair-styles were deemed effeminate and overtly sexual, while appropriate head coverings for respectable Roman *women* served as a protection of their dignity and status as *women not to be 'propositioned.'* A Rouselle and Dale Martin both urge that in the case of respected and respectable 'one sees only the face': 'respectable women did nothing to draw attention to themselves ... A veil or hood constituted a warning: it signified that the wearer was a respectable woman and that no man dare approach without risking ... penalties. A woman who went out ... unveiled forfeited the protection of Roman law against possible attackers who were entitled to plead extenuating circumstances.' 'The laws of Augustus to which we have alluded also modified the system of guardianship (*tutela*) of women inherited from the closing years of the Republic. A guardian could authorise (cf. *ἐξουσιαζω*) a woman's actions, but after the laws approved by Augustus a woman had the right (*ἐξουσια*) to take legal action against a guardian whose refusal to give authorisation was deemed to be unreasonable. Under Claudius guardianship of freeborn women was abolished, although not for freedwomen.' 'Judith Gundry-Volf ... argues that neither merely 'egalitarian' nor merely 'hierarchical' interpretations do justice to the complexity of the theological issues for Paul. Paul superimposes three 'maps' of gender relationships which *together* provide a dialectic between mutuality and 'order' or gender differentiation by placing *the whole* within the three 'frames' of the order of creation, society and culture, and gospel eschatology."

"A genuine breakthrough is offered (a) by Gundry-Volf's proposal about the need for a wholeness of understanding of Paul's dialectic in the light of three theological superimposed maps; (b) the careful dating of the conventions of what clothing generates signals of respect for Christian women as human persons, not as sexual objects, in public; (c) the interplay between multivalent meanings of *κεφαλή* and their interactive metaphorical applications; and (d) our own further suggestion that the theme of self-discipline, restraint, and respect for 'the other,' already prominent in 8:1-11:1, remains central to 11:2-14:40." "Phil 2:6-11, as pre-Pauline material which Paul endorses, portrays a voluntary renunciation of 'rights' (in this context, genuinely a right). The God-Christ relation has *nothing to do with self-glory* or with affirmation of the self at the expense of the other (cf. The ethical context of Phil 2:6-11; it is *not an involuntary or imposed 'subordination,' but an example of shared love*). This shared love controls the use of freedom, and thereby brings 'glory' to the other by assuming distinctive roles for a common purpose. This is the context that gives currency to the widespread comment that 'the relationship between man and woman is thus in some sense paralleled by that between God and Christ.'" "Murphy-O'Connor ... convincingly argues that 'men figure equally prominently in this section ... The problem ... involved both sexes.' Paul's concern is not with subordination but with gender distinction. He expresses no less disquiet (probably indeed more) about men whose style is effeminate with possible hints of a quasi-homosexual blurring of male gender than about women who likewise reject the use of signals of respectable and respected gender distinctiveness." "C.R. Hallipike and Edmund Leach ... provide cultural data which associates long hair with undisciplined sexuality, the shaven head with celibacy or 'sexlessness,' and short hair with 'restricted sexuality'."

### 1 Corinthians 11:2

Ἐπαινῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς ὅτι πάντα μου μὲμνησθε καὶ καθὼς παρέδωκα ὑμῖν τὰς παραδόσεις κατέχετε.

ἐπαινέω commend, praise

The Western text inserts ἀδελφοί after ὑμᾶς – an obvious interpolation.

μὲμνησθε Verb, perf pass indic, 2 pl  
 μμνησκομαι remember, call to mind  
 παραδίδωμι hand or give over, deliver up  
 παραδοσις, εως f tradition

κατεχω hold fast, keep, restrain

Thistleton cites the suggestion of Hayes that "In their letter to Paul the Corinthian Christians express their intention to follow Paul's instructions about the participation of women in the worship, but seek his further advice about an unexpected complication concerning dress (see introduction to 11:2-16). Paul always stands warmly alongside those who admit to perplexity or seek advice. It is when they claim no need of advice, or act unilaterally with complacency rather than consultation, that he becomes sharply polemical." Thistleton adds, "*Many commentators believe that the tradition for which Paul commends the readers is the eschatological inclusion of men and women as active participants in prayer and prophetic speech, in contrast to the issue of clothing, which Paul believes must still generate signals of gender distinctiveness on the basis of the order of creation, which still holds sway even in the gospel era.*"

### 1 Corinthians 11:3

θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι ὅτι παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἡ κεφαλὴ ὁ Χριστὸς ἐστίν, κεφαλὴ δὲ γυναικὸς ὁ ἀνὴρ, κεφαλὴ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ θεός.

θέλω wish, will

εἰδέναι Verb, perf act infin οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

ἀνὴρ, ἀνδρὸς m man, husband

"A few commentators defend *husband*, but the overwhelming majority of writers convincingly argue that the issue concerns gender relations as a whole, not simply those within the more restricted family circle." Thistleton

κεφαλῆ, ἡς f head

Thistleton presents a lengthy collation of the debate concerning the meaning of κεφαλῆ.

There are three basic views:

- i) Head as source of authority;
- ii) origin – as in the 'head' of a river;
- iii) An expression of pre-eminence, being foremost.

Thistleton favours the third while recognising with Collins that "Paul deliberately uses a *polymorphous concept*, through a word that has *multiple meanings*."

### 1 Corinthians 11:4

πᾶς ἀνὴρ προσευχόμενος ἢ προφητεύων κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ·

προσευχομαι pray

προφητεύω "denotes the public proclamation of gospel truth as applied pastorally and contextually to the hearers." Thistleton

ἢ or

κατὰ κεφαλῆς – '(with something) over the head', i.e. 'with the head covered'. Is Paul speaking here of some form of head-gear or of hairstyles? On the one hand Thistleton cites Oster, "Archaeological evidence from Rome itself to the Roman East is unambiguous, Oster urges, in depicting the 'liturgical head covering' of men when they pray or use prophetic speech: 'the practice of men covering their heads in the context of prayer and prophecy was a common pattern of Roman piety and widespread during the late Republic and early Empire. Since Corinth was a Roman colony, there should be little doubt that this aspect of Roman religious practice deserves greater attention by commentators than it has received.'" However, he also gives credence to Murphy-O'Connor saying, "Murphy-O'Connor argues that κατὰ with the genitive more naturally denotes *hair which grows 'down from' the head* than that which covers it in a more *static way*, i.e. *on the head*." Thistleton comments, "We are forced to balance the Roman background forcefully urged by Oster against the ethical-cultural background proposed by Murphy-O'Connor in which he sees resonances of male sexuality or effeminacy, i.e., a homosexual semiotic of the male hair style of long, loose hair, or hair tied into a ponytail... We are forced to conclude that although Jerome Murphy-O'Connor's case is strong, we cannot regard it as conclusive, while lexicography and the Roman background cited by Oster, among others, suggests that 'with his head covered' remains in the end more probable, but not decisively so... The most important point of all, however, can too easily be overlooked. *This recent research proves conclusively that 11:4 does not present a merely hypothetical case... the first concern of 11:2-16 is about men, not about women.*"

καταισχύνω put to shame, humiliate, disgrace

"(i) The Greek refers immediately to the man's physiological 'head' both as an anatomical entity and thence as synecdoche for the whole person. In the first place such a man *devalues himself*, i.e. a head covering like that of the Romans before their gods in public devotion (or just possibly a man whose hair style indicated a loose or self-advertising sexuality) *reduced his 'self respect' ... and shamed his own person*. Since, however, as Moxnes rightly argues, self-respect and personal integrity reflect on other people and especially upon one to whom that person is responsible (employer, patron, slave owner, or God), (ii) this 'shames his head' *also* in the sense of appearing thereby to demean *Christ or God as his Lord and Head...* What remains common to vv. 4-7 is *that which distracts attention from God or Christ in public worship by generating a discordant, semiotic clothing code or hairstyle code which inevitably draws attention to the self in a way which makes the person's 'head' a source of 'shame' for his or her own self-respect, the respect of the congregation, and the honour of the Lord who in public worship should be the central focus of thought and attention*. In this *context of worship* Hays's otherwise trivial analogy of attending a formal dinner wearing a baseball cap carries more force than might at first appear: 'perceived as rude and irreverent ... a breach of etiquette...' in vv. 4-7 it constitutes attention-seeking behaviour which thereby dishonour God and shames the self." Thistleton. James Hurley follows Barrett in arguing that the 'head' refers to Christ.

### 1 Corinthians 11:5

πᾶσα δὲ γυνὴ προσευχομένη ἢ προφητεύουσα ἀκατακαλύπτω τῇ κεφαλῇ κατασχώνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς, ἐν γὰρ ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῇ ἐξυρημένῃ.

ἀκατακαλυπτος, ον uncovered

In a similar way, the latter reference to head in this verse would be to the man or her husband, guardian or family.

"*To employ a dress code which hints at sexual availability while leading worship is unthinkable*. That is not to say, however, that this was the conscious intention of women who attended prophetic speech or prayer at Corinth. It is likely that for them the issue was one of freedom and equality on the basis of the gospel axiom which finds expression in such a passage as Gal 3:28. Sociology of religion confirms the 'order' and 'tradition' often becomes overwhelmed where there is a flood of 'spiritual' or 'charismatic' vitality and dynamism. Hence J Gundry-Volf may plausibly allude to 'the Corinthian pneumatics' praying and prophesying with unfeminine or unmasculine headdress ... in the worship assembly where outsiders might be present and ... thus ... a loss of social acceptability... The pneumatic head-covering practices ignored the social boundaries between male and female and thus brought shame upon themselves and their 'heads.'" In other words, *they confused equality with sameness or lack of gender difference*. Collins writes: 'It is probable that the situation was one that resulted from the attitude 'anything goes' (see 6:12; 10:23)... [but] because God has created the human genders in different ways a distinction is to be maintained when the community assembles for worship.'" Thistleton

ἐξυρημένη Verb, perf pass ptc, f dat s

ξυραομαι shave, have oneself shaved

Don Carson argues that the covering spoken of in these verses is not a veil but the hair. A veil is not mentioned until v.15. In Hebrew and Greek society, women wore their hair uncut but bundled up. If they wore their hair hanging loose it was a sign of moral looseness. If a woman was caught in sexual sin her hair was cut off.

"Hayes paraphrases the reconstructed report sent to Paul: 'some of the women, acting in the freedom and power of the Spirit, have begun to remove their head coverings and loose their hair when they prophesy as a sign of their freedom in Christ.' In other words, they want to give socio-symbolic expression to their freedom and equality; Paul insists that a socio-symbolic expression of gender identity cannot be brushed aside in the name of gospel freedom as no longer relevant (cf. Gal 3:28) since (Paul will argue) even the eschatological freedom of the gospel does not revoke expressions of the divine will established in the order of creation, or even sensitivities of perception within a surrounding culture." Thistleton

The covering of hair (long hair bound up) is a sign of a woman's faithfulness to her husband. If a woman thinks she is free from her husband she can wear her hair down, but this is just the same as if she had her hair shorn.

"The loss of a woman's hair is taken to denote a loss of her *femininity*. By contrast, *covered* hair denotes *self-controlled sexuality*... We conclude that Paul insists on gender *difference* without any necessary inference of gender hierarchy. Fiddes sees the parallels with the order which cites God, Christ, man and woman as primarily one of function and distinctiveness entailing covenant rather than one of hierarchical status." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 11:6

εἰ γὰρ οὐ κατακαλύπτεται γυνή, καὶ κειράσθω·  
εἰ δὲ αἰσχρὸν γυναικὶ τὸ κείρασθαι ἢ  
ζυρᾶσθαι, κατακαλυπτέσθω.

κατακαλυπτομαι cover one's head  
κειρω shear (sheep); midd. cut one's hair,  
have one's hair cut

αἰσχος, α, ον disgraceful, shameful  
ζυραομαι see v.5

### 1 Corinthians 11:7

ἀνὴρ μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ὀφείλει κατακαλύπτεσθαι  
τὴν κεφαλὴν, εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα θεοῦ ὑπάρχων· ἡ  
γυνὴ δὲ δόξα ἀνδρός ἐστιν.

ὀφειλω ought, must  
εικων, ονος f likeness, image  
δοξα, ης f glory

For this use of 'glory' cf 1 Cor 15:40,41 which has to do with God designed place in creation. "Paul probably means that the existence of the one brings honour and praise to the other. By creating man in his own image God set his own glory in man ... [Yet] man by himself is not complete ... without a companion ... one who is like him but different from him; one who is uniquely his own 'glory.' ... Man ... 'glories' in her... Paul's point ... is that in the creation narrative this did not happen the other way round." Fee

Thistleton cites Feuillet saying, "In this sense Paul provides no hint of 'inferiority.' *Because of women, man is all the more man, just as because of men woman is all the more woman, and as humankind woman and man manifest the divine attributes* (e.g., of power and love but not 'stereotypically') *as expressions of God's creative being*. Nevertheless, Feuillet also insists, *there is neither confusion nor precise symmetry*, for 'she is different from him,' as Paul uses Gen 2:18-25 to emphasise: 'that which provides the greatness (*la grandeur*) and dignity of woman is of such a nature as that by which she distinguishes herself from man, that is to say, in her own role which has been specifically assigned by the Creator.' Feuillet concludes that this has nothing whatever to do with any supposed 'antifeminism' in Paul, for this differentiation is defined in terms of greatness and glory, not inferiority."

ὑπαρχω δε (equivalent to εἰμι)

### 1 Corinthians 11:8

οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀνὴρ ἐκ γυναικός, ἀλλὰ γυνὴ ἐξ  
ἀνδρός·

Reference here is to God's act of creation –  
Gen 2:21ff

### 1 Corinthians 11:9

καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐκτίσθη ἀνὴρ διὰ τὴν γυναῖκα,  
ἀλλὰ γυνὴ διὰ τὸν ἄνδρα.

κτιζω create, make

"Judith Gundry-Volf concludes: 'Paul's main point is that man and woman are both the *glory of one another* and therefore both have an obligation not to cause shame to their 'heads' ... since they are the glory of *diferent* persons – man is the glory of God, and the woman is the glory of man – they must use different means to avoid shaming their 'heads.' But Paul appeals to creation to show their obligation to bring glory – each to the particular one whose glory they are by creation – which they do through distinctive masculine and feminine hairstyles [or head coverings]' (her italics)." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 11:10

διὰ τοῦτο ὀφείλει ἡ γυνὴ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ  
τῆς κεφαλῆς διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους.

ὀφειλω see v.7  
ἐξουσια, ας f authority, right, power

"A secondary gloss in certain patristic writers and VSS (but not in major uncials) inserts *καλυμμα*, *hood*, *covering* or *veil*, to explicate the meaning of *ἐξουσία* ... However, this is a witness to the early perceptions of the problematic meaning rather than to a genuine textual variant." Thistleton

This is a difficult verse both in regard to what is intended by *ἐξουσία* which seems a strange word for a mark of subjection, and regarding the reference to angels. Carson suggests that since a woman wearing her hair up signifies her subjection to the man, it signifies also her authority over the rest of the created order along with the man (Gen. 1:27,28). That created order includes the angels who serve her as well as the man (see Heb. 1:14).

Morna Hooker suggests that *authority on her head* denotes her own active authority to use prophetic utterance as an empowered woman. She writes, "The headcovering ... also serves as a sign of the *ἐξουσία* which is given to the woman ... – authority: in prayer and prophecy..."

Thistleton thinks that the meaning is that "a veiled or hooded woman has her own power of protection in public because of what she wears... If a woman exercises 'the control' that exemplifies respectability in Roman society, and retains the semiotic code of gender differentiation in public, 'with the veil on her head she can go anywhere in security and profound respect.' (BAGD) This extends to the act of using prophetic speech in public worship, but (against MD Hooker) is not restricted to being specifically a sign of 'authority' to use prophetic speech as such. The *form* of the semiotic code may be culturally variable, but the need to express some kind of semiotic of gender differentiation belongs to the created order."

On *angels* Thistleton writes, "In NT traditions from Paul to the Revelation of John Christian theology shares the Jewish tradition that Christians worship the transcendent God of heaven in company with the heavenly host. In such a public context of universal cosmic reverence, Paul urges, the axiom 'as in heaven, so on earth' should apply to the recognition of respect, reverence, and order which receives symbolic and semiotic expression in the ways indicated. Paul attacks the notion that individual autonomy (questions about 'my rights,' 'my freedom') genuinely remains unqualified in the presence of the otherness of the other (created gender) and the heavenly hosts who perform their due roles and tasks."

### 1 Corinthians 11:11

πλὴν οὐτε γυνὴ χωρὶς ἀνδρὸς οὐτε ἀνὴρ χωρὶς γυναικὸς ἐν κυρίῳ·

πλὴν but, yet, nevertheless, however  
οὐτε not, nor (οὐτε ... οὐτε neither ... nor)

Perhaps 'neither is the woman anything apart from the man...'

χωρὶς prep with gen without, apart from

"There is a partnership between the sexes, and in the Lord neither exists without the other. The man must not vaunt his position." Morris

The ἐν κυρίῳ Thistleton believes means 'among the Lord's people.' "Paul almost certainly means to say that gender differentiation is decreed in creation, expressed in convention, and not abrogated in the order of the gospel."

### 1 Corinthians 11:12

ὡςπερ γὰρ ἡ γυνὴ ἐκ τοῦ ἀνδρός, οὕτως καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ διὰ τῆς γυναικός· τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ.

ὡςπερ as, even as

### 1 Corinthians 11:13

ἐν ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς κρίνατε· πρέπον ἐστὶν γυναῖκα ἀκατακάλυπτον τῷ θεῷ προσεύχεσθαι;

κρινῶ judge, pass judgement on

Here, 'decide'

πρέπον Verb, pres act ptc, n nom/acc s  
πρεπει impers verb it is fitting/proper;  
πρεπον ἐστιν it is fitting/proper

'it is appropriate'

ἀκατακαλυπτος see v.5

τῷ θεῷ προσεύχεσθαι Thistleton translates, 'conduct prayer' in order to emphasise that the context is that of public worship.

The appeal in verses 13-15 is clearly to cultural norms.

### 1 Corinthians 11:14

οὐδὲ ἡ φύσις αὐτῆ διδάσκει ὑμᾶς ὅτι ἀνὴρ μὲν ἐὰν κομᾷ, ἀτιμία αὐτῷ ἐστίν,

οὐδε neither, nor

φύσις, εως f nature, natural condition

Thistleton translates, 'the very nature of things.'

διδασκῶ teach

κομῶ wear long hair

ἀτιμία, ας f disgrace, shame, dishonour

"Now he means by 'natural' what was accepted by common consent and usage at that time... For long hair was not always regarded as a disgraceful thing in a man." Calvin

**1 Corinthians 11:15**

γυνή δὲ ἐὰν κομᾶ, δόξα αὐτῇ ἐστίν· ὅτι ἡ κόμη ἀντὶ περιβολαίου δέδοται.

δόξα, ης f glory

κομη, ης f hair

ἀντι prep with gen for, in place of  
περιβολαιον, ου n cloak, covering, veil

Carson argues that long hair is given to her in place of a covering/veil. He suggests that some from a hyper-Jewish group were insisting on a woman wearing a full Jewish veil as a sign of her submission. Paul discounts their argument and says that her hair is enough.

The point may be argued as to whether Paul is here saying that no form of covering other than the hair is required. Nevertheless, Carson's conclusion is sound that Paul was concerned to maintain creation structures in the home and in the church. We should also be concerned with this principle without being bound to the particular cultural forms in which it has been expressed in the past.

**1 Corinthians 11:16**

εἰ δὲ τις δοκεῖ φιλονεικος εἶναι, ἡμεῖς τοιαύτην συνήθειαν οὐκ ἔχομεν, οὐδὲ αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τοῦ θεοῦ.

δοκεω think, suppose

φιλονεικος, ον argumentative

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον such, of such kind,  
similar, like

συνηθεια, ας f custom, practice

οὐδε neither, nor

"Paul has no intention of arguing the matter with any who is given to wordy battles ... In the face of such an attitude Paul points to universal custom. *We have no such custom*, i.e. such as women praying or prophesying with head uncovered." Morris

**1 Corinthians 11:17**

Τοῦτο δὲ παραγγέλλων οὐκ ἐπαινῶ ὅτι οὐκ εἰς τὸ κρεῖσσον ἀλλὰ εἰς τὸ ἥσσον συνέρχεσθε.

παραγγέλλω command, instruct

ἐπαινεω commend, praise

A deliberate contrast with 11:2.

κρεττον and κρεισσον adv. better

ἥσσω, ον gen ονος less; εἰς το ἡ. for the worse

συνερχομαι come together, meet

Implies meeting *as a church*.

"Instead of the Communion being supremely an act of edification, it was having a disruptive effect." Morris.

Such meetings 'do more harm than good.'

**1 Corinthians 11:18**

πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ συνερχομένων ὑμῶν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀκούω σχίσματα ἐν ὑμῖν ὑπάρχειν, καὶ μέρος τι πιστεύω.

ἐκκλησια, ας f congregation, church

σχίσματα Noun, nom & acc pl σχισμα, τος n  
division, opposing group

"There is a fundamental difference between 1:10-12 and the point here... In 1:10-12 the 'splits' seem to reflect tensions between *different ethos of different house groups*. The splits are 'external' to given groups, although internal to the whole church at Corinth. Here, however, *the very house meeting itself reflects 'splits' between the socially advantaged and the socially disadvantaged*. They are 'internal' even within a single gathered meeting."

Thistleton

ὑπαρχω be (equivalent to εἰμι)

μερος, ους n part, piece, in part, partly

πιστευω believe

"He did not accept every tale he heard. On this occasion he recognised that there was some exaggeration in the account that had reached him, but he recognised also an unpleasant amount of truth" Morris

Paul's phrase also reflects pastoral sensitivity. This malpractice may not have affected *all* home meetings, or not all to the same extent.

**1 Corinthians 11:19**

δεῖ γὰρ καὶ αἰρέσεις ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι, ἵνα καὶ οἱ δόκιμοι φανεροὶ γένωνται ἐν ὑμῖν.

δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must  
αἰρεσις, εως f religious party, faction, false teaching

δοκιμος, ον approved, genuine, valued

φανερως, α, ον evident, plain, visible

γένονται Verb, aor pass dep subj, 3 pl

γινομαι

Horsley suggests this verse represents Pauline irony, he is saying "For of course there must be 'discrimination' among you so that it will become clear who among you are 'the distinguished ones.'"

**1 Corinthians 11:20**

συνερχομένων οὖν ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ οὐκ ἔστιν κυριακὸν δεῖπνον φαγεῖν,

κυριακος, η, ον belonging to the Lord

δειπνον, ου n supper, main meal

Whose meal is it? There is a contrast between what they pretended to be celebrating 'the Lord's supper' and the actuality described in the following verse *το ἴδιον δευπνον*. Who is the host? On whom is the focus? To whom does the occasion bring glory?

φαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐσθίω eat

### 1 Corinthians 11:21

ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον δεῖπνον προλαμβάνει ἐν τῷ φαγεῖν, καὶ ὃς μὲν πεινᾷ, ὃς δὲ μεθύει.

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own

προλαμβάνω do (something) ahead of time

Hayes says that the temporal sense is possible but not demanded. Horsley favours understanding the προ- prefix as intensive e.g. 'devours.' Thistleton suggests 'each consumes his own supper at the time of eating.'

πεινάω be hungry

μεθύω be drunk, drink freely

The divisions Paul speaks of were evidently divisions between rich and poor which, far from being overcome when they met together were exacerbated.

There are several suggestions as to what precisely was going on. Some suggest that each brought his own provisions for a common meal but that each ate what he had brought rather than sharing. In consequence, the rich had plenty but the poor went hungry. The poor, who may well have been slaves, would not be free to come before they had completed their day's work, by which time the rich had already feasted.

An alternative suggested by Theissen supposes that the owner of a house would invite all Christians of whatever social class to share in a simple supper of bread and wine. The problem arose because, in addition, the host invited his own social equals to a better meal which took place before the poorer people came along at the end of their day's work.

Archaeological evidence suggests that fine houses had an ornate dining room or triclinium, in which a dozen people could recline on couches to eat a banquet. A scarcely furnished atrium, or sheltered courtyard, would serve as an overflow and could perhaps accommodate thirty or forty at a squeeze.

"The quality of food, drink, service and comfort would be of a higher order in the triclinium, especially if some in the atrium could arrive only after the best of the meal was over." Thistleton.

Whatever the circumstances, a meal designed to express unity was being so abused as to highlight the disunity of this fellowship.

### 1 Corinthians 11:22

μὴ γὰρ οἰκίας οὐκ ἔχετε εἰς τὸ ἐσθίειν καὶ πίνειν; ἢ τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ καταφρονεῖτε, καὶ καταισχύνετε τοὺς μὴ ἔχοντας; τί εἶπω ὑμῖν; ἐπαινέσω ὑμᾶς; ἐν τούτῳ οὐκ ἐπαινῶ.

οἰκία, ας f house, home

ἢ or

καταφρονεῶ despise, treat with contempt

They despise the gathering of the people of God by making it an extension of and reflection of their own social life. Paul seeks to reorder "social relations in the church by restricting the intrusion of household-based power." Barton

καταισχύνω put to shame, humiliate

εἶπω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s λεγῶ

ἐπαινέσω aor act subj, 1 s ἐπαινέω v.17

### 1 Corinthians 11:23

Ἐγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, ὃ καὶ παρέδωκα ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ἣ παρεδίδοτο ἔλαβεν ἄρτον

παρέλαβον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl

παραλαμβάνω take, receive, accept

παραδίδωμι hand or give over, deliver up

"The verbs *received* and *delivered* (παραλαμβάνω and παραδίδωμι) are almost technical terms for receiving and passing on the Christian tradition (cf. Verse 2)." Morris. On this ground (and, having noted that several phrases appear evidently pre-Pauline), most commentators argue that Paul is referring here to a tradition passed on to him within the Christian community but owing its origin to the Lord. Morris disagrees and believes that Paul is speaking here of a direct revelation. Cullmann argues that it is not the events of the Last Supper themselves which constitute Paul's revelation from the Lord but the connection between these and the celebratory meal which Christians were in the habit of taking together.

νύξ, νυκτος f night

Thistleton, citing Eriksson, says, "Here what dominates 11:17-34 is concern for the weak, the other, the despised, as precisely what sharing in Christ's death as the 'handing over' of the self to be used for God's loving work of reconciliation and redemption *includes*... Eriksson's careful argument is too detailed to reproduce here. However, it coheres precisely with these points. He writes: 'What is the behaviour prescribed in the words of institution? The answer ... lies in Paul's use of the tradition in 11:26... Their behaviour at the Lord's Supper celebrations is, or at least should be, a proclaiming of the Lord's death. For Paul this is a logical consequence of the tradition.' This explains precisely why underlying 11:17-34 is a factor which (again) 'the majority of interpreters have tended to overlook,' namely 'the Corinthians' claim that they deserved praise' (i.e., for *observing* the tradition). 'The tradition itself lifts the whole argumentation ... to a higher plane' which concerns what it is to share in the life and death of 'the Lord of the church Himself.'"

ἔλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαμβανω  
ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf

### 1 Corinthians 11:24

καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ εἶπεν· Τοῦτό  
μου ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν· τοῦτο  
ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἑμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.

εὐχαριστεω thank, give thanks  
κλαω break (only of bread)

"*Breaking bread* has the communal sense of sharing in solidarity of objective fellowship (κοινωνία, that in which the participants or shareholders share, not primarily the subjective feeling associated with this), and this aspect finds expression in 1 Cor 10:16 (τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλωμεν; ...) and probably in Acts 2:42, 46, (although the precise meaning of *breaking bread* in Acts 2 should not be presumed without careful inquiry)." Thistleton

After εἶπεν the TR, following most  
minuscules, adds (from Mt 26:26) λαβετε  
φαγετε

σῶμα, τος n body

"Following the benediction, the *karpas* (or hord d'oevre characteristic of the Passover) is dipped in salt water or in vinegar and distributed, associated with the hyssop dipped in the blood of the first Passover sacrifice, with the words of a further benediction, 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Creator of the produce of the earth.' The Haggadah then begins: 'This is the bread of affliction that our forefathers ate in the land of Egypt.'... The 'surprise' (to use Leenhardt's imaginative phrase) is that 'my body' *now replaces the events or objects of redemption from Egypt made participatory and contemporary*. It is the event of Calvary, of the atoning death of Jesus as an event within the public domain, that is now appropriated in 'This is my body for you.'" Thistleton

After ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν a number of MSS add κλωμενον while a number of versions add δεδομενον (cf. Lk 22:19). Metzger comments, "The concise expression τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν is characteristic of Paul's style. Attempts to explicate the meaning of the words resulted in the addition of various participles."

ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my, mine  
ἀναμνησις, εως f reminder, remembrance

"The Passover festival as a reminder of the Exodus from Egypt may be cited as an analogy." Hering  
"Remembrance' of Christ and of Christ's death (i) retains the biblical aspect of a *self-involving remembering in gratitude, worship, trust, acknowledgment, and obedience* ... (ii) it also carries with it the experience of being *'there' in identification with the crucified Christ who is also 'here' in his raised presence*. However, still further, it embraces (iii) a *self-transforming retrieval of the founding event of the personal identity of the believer (as a believer) and the corporate identity of the church (as the Christian church of God) as well as (iv) a looking forward to the new 'possibility' for transformed identity opened up by the eschatological consummation* (v.25). All of this is gathered together in Paul's point that such 'remembrance' constitutes a self-involving *proclamation of Christ's death* through a life and a lifestyle which derives from understanding our identity as Christians in terms of sharing the identity of Christ who is 'for' the 'other.'...

"As CFD Moule observes in his illuminating but often neglected essay 'The Judgment Theme in the Sacraments,' 'In 1 Cor 11:28-32 δοκιμαζειν, κριμα, διακρινειν, κρινειν and κατακρινειν are used in quick succession in a very striking way.' 'Remembering' the Lord's death means 'participation in the Lord's Supper [in which] we ought voluntarily to anticipate the Lord's judgment... If we fail to do so, he will himself judge us, but judge in order to save.' 'Remembering' is appropriating 'this sacramental verdict' in which, through involvement with the atoning death of Christ, believers say 'guilty,' only to share with Christ God's verdict of 'put right!'" Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 11:25

ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον μετὰ τὸ δειπῆσαι, λέγων· Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἔμῳ αἵματι· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὡσάκις ἐὰν πίνητε, εἰς τὴν ἔμην ἀνάμνησιν.

ὡσαυτως adv in the same way, likewise  
ποτηριον, ου n cup

Maybe 'in the same way with reference to the cup', cf. 10:16.

δειπῆσαι Verb, aor act infin δειπνεω eat, dine

καινος, η, ον new

διαθηκη, ης covenant, will, testament

Recalls Ex 24:8, the blood of the Covenant. This new and indissoluble covenant is sealed with the blood of Christ. "Jesus is saying ... that the shedding of his blood is the means of establishing a new covenant. It provides forgiveness of sins and opens the way for the activity of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. The whole Jewish system is replaced by the Christian, and everything centres on the death of the Lord, which establishes the New Covenant." Morris

Thistleton makes the interesting point that "'Covenant' also reflects precisely the major theme which persists from 8:1 to 14:40, namely, that of *constraint*, or the *free choice to forego one's rights*. For God himself limits his own range of actions by free sovereign choice when he determines to act only in accordance with declared promises of grace. On such a basis Christian believers may be confident that they are redeemed and accepted. Hence the unwillingness of many of the 'strong' at Corinth to permit constraints on their own 'rights' for the sake of the weak (cf. 8:7-13; 9:1-12) contradicts not only identification with the Christ who shed his 'blood' for others, but also the very principle of divine 'covenant' in which the faithful God pledges his faithfulness and thereby also constrains his own 'rights' by a voluntary decision of sheer grace."

αιμα, ατος f blood

ὡσακις adv. as often as, whenever

ἐαν here equivalent to ἂν particle indicating contingency and introducing subjunctive  
πινω drink

### 1 Corinthians 11:26

ὡσάκις γὰρ ἐὰν ἐσθίητε τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον καὶ τὸ ποτήριον πίνητε, τὸν θάνατον τοῦ κυρίου καταγγέλλετε, ἄχρι οὗ ἔλθῃ.

ἐσθίω eat

θανατος, ου m death

καταγγελλω proclaim, make known, preach

"It is no accident that καταγγελλετε means 'you are proclaiming' or *you are preaching*. By 'eating this bread' and 'drinking this cup' the whole assembled congregation stands in a witness box and pulpit to proclaim their 'part' (cf. κοινωνια in 10:16, objective sharing with a stake; and μετεχειν in 10:17, being an involved participant; see on communal participation under 10:16 and 17...)." Thistleton

ἄχρι (and ἄχρις) prep with gen until, as far as; ἄχρι οὗ until the point when

"The eschatological tone should not surprise us when in addition to playing a role in the common tradition, eschatology in this epistle serves to remind complacent groups within the congregation at Corinth of their fallibility, vulnerability and status as pilgrims or travellers still *en route* to their final goal (1 Cor 1:7b-9, 18; 3:13-15, 17, 18; 4:5, 8-13; 6:9-14; 8:1-2, 7-13; 9:24-27; 10:1-5, 12; 11:26; 13:8-13)..."

"All the same, Paul means more than this. Just as the full sun outshines any source of illumination otherwise provided in everyday life, so when 'he' (*the Lord*) 'comes,' this reality will eclipse and outshine the pledges and promises that have hitherto pointed to it. In this sense the fellowship *gathered* around 'the table of the Lord' (10:21) provisionally and in partial measure constitutes the pledge and first preliminary foretaste of the 'Supper of the Lamb' of the final consummation to which the Lord's Supper points in promise... The founding event of the cross is constitutive for Christian corporate and individual identity. Self-involvement in the story of the cross shapes the story of the self and the Christian church. However, this is not yet the whole story. The story does not reach its culmination 'until he comes,' and only then will the full meaning of all present moments be disclosed, beyond the need for partial significations." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 11:27

Ὡστε ὃς ἂν ἐσθίῃ τὸν ἄρτον ἢ πίνη τὸ ποτήριον τοῦ κυρίου ἀναξίως, ἔνοχος ἔσται τοῦ σώματος καὶ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ κυρίου.

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
 ἂν particle indicating contingency ὃς ἂν = whoever  
 ἀναξίως adv. in an improper manner

ἀξίως may mean 'fit' as in Luke 12:48, 'I am no longer fit to be called your son.' The adjective ἀξίως denotes 'fitting correspondence' BAGD. "Paul's primary point is that attitude and conduct should *fit* the message and solemnity of what is proclaimed. At Corinth these were too often 'not fitting,' or, in Meyer's accurate words, '*in a way morally out of keeping with the nature* (10:16) *and design of the ordinance* (11:24-25)'" Thistleton

ἐνοχος, ον liable, answerable, guilty  
 αἷμα, ατος see v.25

"The syntax ... implies *not a sacrilege against the elements of the Lord's Supper* but answerability or being 'held accountable' for the sin against Christ of *claiming identification with him* while using the celebration of the meal as *an occasion of social enjoyment and status enhancement without regard to what sharing in what the Lord's Supper proclaims.*" Thistleton  
 "That 'body' is not to be interpreted here as equivalent to *church* is shown by the addition of 'blood.'" Barrett

### 1 Corinthians 11:28

δοκιμαζέτω δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἑαυτὸν, καὶ οὕτως ἐκ τοῦ ἄρτου ἐσθιέτω καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ποτηρίου πινέτω·

δοκιμαζῶ test, examine

I.e. examine their motives and understanding and then come to eat and drink in a fitting manner because they are conscious of what they are doing.

ἑαυτοῦ reflexive pronoun, himself ...

ἐσθιέτω Verb, pres act imperat, 3 pl ἐσθιω

### 1 Corinthians 11:29

ὁ γὰρ ἐσθίων καὶ πίνων κρίμα ἑαυτῷ ἐσθιέει καὶ πίνει μὴ διακρίνων τὸ σῶμα.

This shorter reading is preserved in the oldest and best MSS but supplemented in most. Metzger writes, "The meaning of the shorter text, which is preserved in the best witnesses, was clarified by adding ἀναξίως (from v.27) after πίνων and τοῦ κυρίου after σῶμα. In each instance there appears to be no good reason to account for the omission if the words had been present originally."

κρίμα, τος n judgement, condemnation

"The cross stands as an anticipation of God's final, definitive judgment which takes the form of a double verdict 'guilty' and 'justified' (1 Cor 1:30-31)." Thistleton. Hence, to participate in these pointers to the cross without discernment of all that such participation implies is to bring oneself into the context of judgment without that identification with the Christ who alone can save.

διακρίνω judge, evaluate, discern

The phrase 'not discerning the body' is difficult and the subject of many interpretations. In light of the abuses at Corinth, it is perhaps best to understand the reference to be to discerning the body of Christ, namely the church. (Certainly not to discerning the sacramental presence of the body and the blood of Christ in the elements!). So Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, says, "Although this has been generally interpreted as a reference to Christ's crucified body, the community itself is almost certainly in view as well, if not exclusively. By means of it [this phrase], the need for the members of the community to recognise their unity by 'receiving' one another (this is preferable to the RSV's 'waiting' for one another) is stressed (v.33). The fact that there are many members of the community should not lead to the assertion of individualistic attitudes, nor to the formation of cliques within it, but instead to a continuing affirmation of its solidarity."

Thistleton follows Barrett, Marshall, Wolff and Schrage in suggesting "the issue is understanding the entailments of 'sharing as participants in the death of Jesus "for you" (Wolff)... I.e., be mindful of the uniqueness of Christ, who is *separated* from others in the sense of giving himself for others in sheer grace. The Lord's Supper, by underlining participation in, and identification with, the cruciform Christ, thereby generates the social transformation, which is Paul's *second concern*."

The Lord's Supper was intended to express unity not only with Christ but also one with another (see 10:17). Yet they had made it an expression of their divisions (see vv 18-21). Hence, in this meal where the body of the Lord is commemorated in the bread they failed to discern the living reality of the body of Christ of which they were severally a part (see v.33).

### 1 Corinthians 11:30

διὰ τοῦτο ἐν ὑμῖν πολλοὶ ἀσθενεῖς καὶ ἄρρωστοὶ καὶ κοιμῶνται ἱκανοί.

πολὺς, πολλή, πολὺ much, many  
ἀσθενεῖς Adjective, m nom pl ἀσθενής, ἐς  
sick, weak  
ἄρρωστος, ον sick, ill  
κοιμαομαι sleep, fall asleep, die  
ἱκανός, η, ον sufficient, large, much

What should have been for their blessing and strengthening had become a confirmation of judgment (cf. v.29).

### 1 Corinthians 11:31

εἰ δὲ ἑαυτοὺς διεκρίνομεν, οὐκ ἂν ἐκρινόμεθα·  
διακρινῶ v.29

"We should make a practice (such is the force of the imperfect tense) of 'distinguishing ourselves' ... i.e. distinguishing between what we are and what we ought to be." Morris Thistleton says, "What is required is 'recognising' *our portion in the cruciform Christ 'for us,*' i.e., 'recognising' our status and obligations as 'Christian believers,' or, to replicate v.29, 'recognising what characterises us as Christian believers.' This is to *discern* our *distinctiveness*, not as individuals, but as *the having-died-and-being-raised-one-body-of-Christ*." And quoting Moule he continues, "Rightly appropriated divine grace, expressed through 'the sacramental verdict,' invites and promotes 'entry beyond judgment into the life of the age to come.'"

ἂν particle indicating contingency

Thistleton says, "Fee's view that the issue turns on 'self-examination' (vv. 28,31) not only deprives δοκιμαζῶ and διακρινῶ of their proper force as embracing specific effects as well as processes but also substitutes a psychologism for a more robust theological conception of a genuine appropriation of grace anchored in identification with the crucified Christ. Paul's concern anticipates Bonhoeffer's declarations about 'cheap grace.' Cheap grace is 'the preaching of forgiveness without repentance... Communion without confession, grace without discipleship... Christianity without Christ.' By contrast, a costly but authentic appropriation of grace entails 'taking up the cross ... sharing Christ's crucifixion ... the cup of suffering.' This is why identification with Christ and the cross in the Lord's Supper is at the same time a dialectical passing through judgment as 'guilty' and 'accepted' or 'rightwised,' as 1:18-25, 30-31 paves the way for the Corinthians to perceive."

And, quoting Pannenberg, he continues, "If 'to belong to Jesus Christ means to participate in his giving of himself to God and his kingdom ... in fellowship with all who are related in this way to the same Lord,' then 'in right receiving' (11:27) .. 'we judge ourselves *aright*' (my italics) '[and] will not be judged (at the last judgment, v.31).' For we 'pass on ourselves God's verdict.'"

### 1 Corinthians 11:32

κρινόμενοι δὲ ὑπὸ κυρίου παιδεύομεθα, ἵνα μὴ σὺν τῷ κόσμῳ κατακριθῶμεν.

παιδεύω train, teach, discipline

These troubles are tokens of God's Fatherly love for them.

κατακριθῶμεν Verb, aor pass subj, 1 pl  
κατακρινῶ condemn

### 1 Corinthians 11:33

Ὡστε, ἀδελφοί μου, συνεργόμενοι εἰς τὸ φαγεῖν ἀλλήλους ἐκδέχεσθε.

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
συνερχομαι v.17  
ἀλλήλων, οἱς, οὐς reciprocal pronoun one  
another  
ἐκδεχομαι wait for

Cf. Rom 15:7.

### 1 Corinthians 11:34

εἰ τις πεινᾷ, ἐν οἴκῳ ἐσθιέτω, ἵνα μὴ εἰς κρίμα συνέρχησθε. Τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ ὡς ἂν ἔλθω διατάξομαι.

πεινῶ be hungry  
ἐσθιέτω Verb, pres act imperat, 3 pl ἐσθίω

"If the well-to-do take their more elaborate meals in their own private houses (ἐν οἴκῳ, at home, as NJB, NRSV), the poor and disadvantaged will not be shamed as they are in the case of current practices." Thistleton

κριμα, τος v.29

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other

ὡς ἂν when, whenever

An indefinite form which implies that Paul did not know when he would be able to visit them.

ἔλθω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἔρχομαι

διατάξομαι Verb, fut midd dep indic, 1 s

διατασσω command, instruct

### 1 Corinthians 12:1-3

Thistleton stresses that chs 12-14 must be viewed as part of the continuing argument over the difference between status-seeking and the cruciform life. "The way in which some ranked their self-perceived 'spirituality' or giftedness by the Holy Spirit so as to encourage superior status enhancement which resulted in the attitude 'I have no need of you' (12:21-26) provides a close parallel to the status enjoyment of those who enjoyed the more comfortable location and better table fare than the latecomers at the Lord's Supper (11:21-22; see above)... The problem of rich and poor, of influential and deprived, however, offers less subtle opportunities for status enhancement and self-deception than issues of 'spirituality.' Here the temptation to glory in being 'one of us' (i.e., those people who are 'spiritual') takes a more insidious and ultimately more disastrously damaging form. For it engenders a self-glorying at variance with the reality of divine grace and the transformative proclamation of the cross (1:18-2:5, esp. 1:10,31)."

On verses 1-3 Thistleton provides the following quotes from Mitchell and Eriksson to support his heading for these verses: "Paul relativises all claims to greater or less spiritual attainment because of ecstatic gifts by saying that *every Christian is indeed a spiritual person*, because every Christian who makes the common acclamation Κύριος Ἰησοῦς (cf. 8:6) shows that he or she is possessed by the Holy Spirit" Mitchell

"First, Paul treats the finite question of the pneumatics' spiritual status by redefining all baptised Christians as spiritual. Then he continues with the second finite question, the spiritual gifts, by elaborating the charismatic giftedness of all." Eriksson

### 1 Corinthians 12:1

Περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν, ἀδελφοί, οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν.

περὶ δὲ cf. 7:1,25.

πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual, pertaining to the spirit

πνευματικῶν is of indeterminate gender and hence could be 'spiritual men' or 'spiritual things' i.e. gifts. The latter is probably intended. "But if both the writer and the readers well knew that the Greek ending included *both* genders (i.e., excluded neither), why should the meaning be construed in either-or terms at all?" Thistleton

θέλω wish, will

ἀγνοεῶ not know, be ignorant, fail to understand

### 1 Corinthians 12:2

οἴδατε ὅτι ὅτε ἔθνη ἦτε πρὸς τὰ εἰδῶλα τὰ ἄφωνα ὡς ἂν ἤγεσθε ἀπαγόμενοι.

"... this verse in Greek is ungrammatical. Two possibilities have been suggested with some plausibility. The one is Hort's suggestion that for ὅτε we should read ποτε, when the sense would be, 'You know that formerly you were Gentiles, carried away ...' The other is that we supply another *ye were* (ἦτε) with the participle ἀπαγόμενοι, *carried away*... This would yield 'You know when you were Gentiles, you were carried away...'" Morris

οἶδα know, understand

ὅτε conj when, at which time

ἔθνη Noun, nom & acc pl ἔθνος, οὐς n nation, people; τὰ ἔ. Gentiles

εἰδῶλον, ον n idol

ἄφωνος, ον dumb, silent

It is difficult to be certain of the import of the reference to idols as *dumb*. Clearly there is an allusion to the OT contrast between lifeless and dumb idols and the living God. There may also be the implication that the ecstatic religion "that characterised many of the Corinthians prior to their conversion was an attempt to make up for the silence of their gods... With Christ as their Lord they have no need to construct some 'spirituality' as if God were silent. Their varied experiences of the different gifts which God actively apportions out (12:4-11) rest upon his choice and initiative, not upon their own self-generated choices and motivations." Thistleton

ἤγεσθε Verb, imperf pass indic, 2 pl ἄγω

ἀπαγω lead away by force, lead astray

"Even as ye were led is probably 'how ye were led whenever the occasion happened' (Edwards). The construction is unusual (Moulton says that it is one of only three places in the New Testament where the old iterative use of *ἄν* survives), and serves to underline the plight of the heathen." Morris. Paige suggests that *ἀπαγω* is used here in a physical sense of being 'carried along' in the festal processions to the idols.

### 1 Corinthians 12:3

διὸ γνωρίζω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν λέγει· Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς, καὶ οὐδεὶς δύναται εἰπεῖν· Κύριος Ἰησοῦς εἰ μὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.

διὸ therefore, for this reason  
γνωρίζω make known, disclose, know

"It appears that Paul is taking up the claim of those who style themselves as οἱ πνευματικοὶ to have *γνωσις*." Thistleton

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing  
λαλεῶ speak, talk  
ἀναθεμα, τὸς n cursed, under God's curse

"Paul means that it is not a human discovery that *Jesus is the Lord*. It is a discovery that can be made only when the Spirit works in a man's heart." Morris

Hence this fundamental confession of the Christian marks each Christian as one possessed of the Spirit and demands that each person possessed of the Spirit remains Christocentric.

Cullmann suggests that 'Jesus is cursed' is related to demands in time of persecution to own 'Caesar is Lord' and to curse or disown Christ. Dunn, however, suggests that during Christian worship at Corinth "some members had cried out under inspiration 'Jesus be cursed.'" Dunn links this with quasi-gnostic devaluation of the earthly Jesus (cf. 1 Jn 4:2). Hering argues that the utterance is that of a charismatic "possessed only by an evil spirit," a suggestion which Fee finds attractive. Many others, such as Aune, Bruce and Kistemaker think the phrase is used here hypothetically by Paul rather than referring to an actual incident. Whatever may be said on 'Jesus is cursed' the thrust of Paul's argument is clear, the confession that 'Jesus is Lord' "is no mere 'floating' fragment of descriptive statement or abstract proposition, but is a *spoken act of personal devotion and commitment which is part and parcel of a Christ-centred worship and lifestyle*." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 12:4

Διαίρεσεις δὲ χαρισμάτων εἰσὶν, τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα·

διαίρεσις, εὼς f variety, difference

Thistleton says, 'different apportionings.'

χαρισμα, τὸς n gift (from God)

Paul stresses that spiritual gifts are *gifts* which cannot be the source of pride but only of thankfulness.

### 1 Corinthians 12:5

καὶ διαίρεσεις διακονιῶν εἰσιν, καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς κύριος·

διακονία, ας f ministry, service

"The thought of service might be that of service rendered to Christ [cf. 3:5]. But since in the previous and following section it is the action of the divine within the believer that is described, we should probably understand this verse of the service that the indwelling Christ enables His people to render, or perhaps of the service to which he calls them." Morris.

"In 12:4-11 Paul continually stresses unity in diversity in order to overcome divisiveness owing to different valuations being assigned to different gifts." Martin

### 1 Corinthians 12:6

καὶ διαίρεσεις ἐνεργημάτων εἰσὶν, ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θεός, ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν.

Note that vv 4-6 are implicitly Trinitarian. "In 12:4-6 ... we encounter the only place in Paul's writings where *πνεῦμα*, *Χριστός*, and *θεός* occur in consecutive and closely parallel statements." Richardson

ἐνεργημα, τὸς n working, activity  
ἐνεργεῶ work, be at work (in)

*πᾶσιν* could be neuter, 'in all things', or masc, 'in all men'. The latter is more probable in context. "Paul completes the argument that *different gifts* imply no ranking of 'having the Spirit' in greater or lesser degree, since 'the same Spirit' is active in all according to God's own purposes which determine their 'apportioning.' Similarly, 'different ways of serving,' if they are genuine, all honour 'the same Lord.' Finally, *whatever* 'activates effects' '*activity*' (the usual meaning of *ἐνεργημα*, according to BAGD; cf. Collins, *activities*) of a spiritual nature which constitutes a work of 'the same God who brings about everything in everyone.'" Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 12:7**

ἐκάστῳ δὲ δίδεται ἡ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον.

ἐκαστος, η, ον each, every

"probably indicates that the gifts of the Spirit are not reserved for a few outstanding men. Some gift is given to each." Morris

δίδωμι give

φανέρωσις, εως f bringing to light, disclosure

"It is not clear whether we should understand *the manifestation of the Spirit* meaning 'that which the Spirit makes manifest', or 'that which makes the Spirit manifest'. Either way the thought is of the spiritual gifts, and of the exercise of the spiritual gifts as something public and open, which others than their possessors perceive." Morris.

Thistleton says, 'public manifestation.'

συμφερον, ου n good, advantage, benefit

"Spiritual gifts are ... for the edification of the whole body of believers." Morris.

"The Spirit produces visible effects for the profit of all, not for self-glorification."

Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 12:8**

ᾧ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος δίδεται λόγος σοφίας, ἄλλῳ δὲ λόγος γνώσεως κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα,

For other lists of 'gifts' in Paul, cf. 12:27-28; Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:11.

σοφια, ας f wisdom, insight

A catchword or slogan at Corinth (cf. 1:17,19, 20,21,22,24,30; 2:1,4,5,6,7,13; 3:19). "The background which controls the exegesis, therefore, derives from the contrast between the pretentiousness and competitive status-seeking of human wisdom (1:17-22; 2:1-5; 3:19) and the gift of divine wisdom (1:24-31; 2:6-13). Since the emphasis in 12:8 falls entirely on gift, clearly *divine wisdom* as a gift of the Spirit lies in view here." Thistleton. Thistleton argues that the phrase means an 'intelligent utterance of God's wisdom,' particularly relating to "God's plan of salvation" (cf. 2 Cor 1:12). Quoting other commentators he writes, "From 1 Cor 1-3 it is almost certain that Paul identified the wisdom from God with God's saving deed in the crucified Christ, particularly in the proclamation of the saving event.' [Schatzmann] It relates primarily to 'the revelation of God in the cross.' [Schrage]"

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

γνώσις, εως f knowledge, understanding

Another catchphrase at Corinth (cf. 1:5; 8:1,7, 10,11). Banks thinks this to be the gift of "understanding the Old Testament, Christian tradition, and the capacity to expound them correctly." Others think a word of practical application. Whatever this might be it is given for the 'common good' and therefore is not a coded message for individuals.

**1 Corinthians 12:9**

ἐτέρῳ πίστις ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ πνεύματι, ἄλλῳ χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ πνεύματι, ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

"Paul proceeds to speak of things like healing and the working of miracles, so that probably he has in mind a special faith which is associated with miraculous operations (cf 13:2 ...)" Morris. "A special endowment of faith for a special service (cf. 13:2b)." Bruce

χαρισμα, τος n gift (from God)

ιαμα, τος n healing

The plural implies 'various kinds of healings.'

Thistleton provides a helpful discussion of the (sometimes contentious) issues relating to the gift of healing and its relationship to faith. In particular, if faith and healing are here to be related, is it the faith of the healer or the one needing healing that is being spoken of? He makes the point that nothing can be 'claimed' by faith unless it is specifically promised and that God does not promise healing of every sickness *now*.

**1 Corinthians 12:10**

ἄλλῳ ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων, ἄλλῳ προφητεία, ἄλλῳ διακρίσεις πνευμάτων, ἐτέρῳ γένη γλωσσῶν, ἄλλῳ ἐρμηνεῖα γλωσσῶν·

ἐνεργημα see v.6

Calvin thinks that Elymas being struck blind (Acts 13:11) is an example of the kind of miracles spoken of here. Theilike suggests that the *powers* mentioned here are evil powers and that the sense is 'authority over the powers.' Thistleton suggests that the phrase may not imply solely *miraculous* acts; he suggests the translation 'deeds of power.'

προφητεια, ας f prophecy, the gift of prophecy

Thistleton supplies discussion and bibliography on the subject of prophecy in the NT. Hill, he says, suggests "that the prophet is a Spirit-endowed person 'whose preaching contains admonition and comfort, the call for repentance and promise' and who also counsels, as a pastor, and 'blames and praises. That, we submit, may be legitimately called a ministry of pastoral teaching and instruction ... Christian prophets exercised a teaching ministry in the church which included pastoral preaching."

Having considered the various arguments, Thistleton draws some "interim conclusions prior to the note at 14:3." He says, "Prophecy is for *edification and encouragement and does not necessarily exclude teaching and doctrine* (14:3,31). It depends on revelation, and is sometimes closely related to prayer (11:4-5). The allusion to the cessation of prophecy in 13:10 refers only to the Lord's return. If we were tempted to complain that the definitions of NT prophecy by David Hill, Gillespie, Aune, Muller, or Friedrich were too broad, Grudem concludes with an even broader comment: 'Paul defines the function of prophecy very broadly in 1 Cor 14:3; its functions could include any kind of speech activity which would be helpful to the hearers.' 'The NT does not lead us to expect to find any distinctive speech forms for prophecy.'...

"We have no reason to doubt the conclusion of Hill, Muller, Gillespie, and Friedrich that 'prophecy,' as a gift of the Holy Spirit, combines pastoral insight into the needs of persons, communities and situations with the ability to address these with a God-given utterance or longer discourse (whether unprompted or prepared with judgment, decision and rational reflection) leading to challenge or comfort, judgment, or consolation, but ultimately building up the addressees. On the basis of 12:10 (in isolation from 14:1-25; see under 14:3) more cannot be said with certainty. While the speaker believes that such utterances or discourses come from the Holy Spirit, mistakes can be made, and since believers, including ministers or prophets, remain humanly fallible, claims to 'prophecy' must be weighed and tested. It would go beyond the limits of exegesis to assume that the gift of 'prophecy' belongs any more *permanently* to some specific individual as an 'office' than the gifts of 'faith' or 'kinds of healings.' The epistle remains silent on this matter. Equally, it offers no evidence that 'prophecy' ceases before the return of Christ at the eschaton (see on 13:10). Finally, as J. Panagopoulos insists, prophecy is not a function to be isolated from tradition, from its OT background, and from the function of announcing and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. Nothing links it with 'trivial' messages to individuals."

διακρίσις, εως f ability to discriminate

Cf. 1 Thess 5:19-21; 1 Jn 4:1-6. Drawing on the work of Jewett and Hoyle, Thistleton suggests, "The gifts of 'discernment' or *discrimination* include (a) a *critical capacity to discern the genuine transcendent activity of the Spirit* from merely human attempts to replicate it; and (b) a *pastoral discernment of the varied ways in which the Spirit of God is working*, in such a way as to distinguish various consequences and patterns." He cites Dunn regarding the three basic criteria for judging spiritual gifts, "does it exalt Jesus? (1 Cor 12:3)... Does it manifest love? (1 Cor 13:4-7)... Does it build up? (1 Cor 14)."

γένη Noun, nom/acc pl γένος, ους n family, race, kind, sort

Thistleton lays stress on the 'different kinds' and says that it is wrong to seek to limit 'tongues' to one specific, tightly defined phenomenon. "A cluster of generic characteristics mark off 'tongues' from 'prophecy': in one context, the contrast between articulate speech and unintelligible sounds (14:2b, 5, 7-9, 11,19); in another context the contrast between being addressed to God and being addressed to other human persons (14:2a; 14:15); in yet another context the distinction between communicative discourse in the ordinary public domain and something so exalted as to be associated with angelic utterance (13:1); in one more context capable of making some believers feel like exiles and strangers 'not at home' in the community of believers (14:23a) and repellent to unbelievers (14:23b); in other situations that which benefits the tongue-speaker and for which he or she can give thanks (14:4a, 5a, 18). Any generalising definition will founder on semantic contrasts which constitute counterexamples. On the other hand, one or more of the above characteristics or family traits give adequate grounds for the use of 'tongues', provided that they are 'given' by the Holy Spirit and not self-induced."

γλωσσα, ης f tongue, language, utterance

Thistleton provides a lengthy summary and critique of the various views concerning 'tongues.' Citing a parallel with Rom 8:26 he favours the view of Theissen that "'Tongues' may be viewed as 'the language of the unconscious' because it is unintelligible (unless it is 'interpreted') not only to others but also to the speaker. In 14:11 'foreign language' is unintelligible to the listener but intelligible to the speaker. But this represents a 'logical jump.' Paul prepares to urge 'the speaker, not the listener' (my italics) 'to pray for the power to interpret,' i.e., to articulate what he or she utters, bringing it up from the levels of unconscious depths to those of cognitive consciousness... Paul does not say that the glossolalist *does* understand his or her utterances, but that he *wishes* that they would, and urges them to pray for this further gift. Usually the gift of 'tongues' is given 'to one,' and 'intelligible articulation of tongues speech' 'to one another' (12:10). But ideally 'one and the same person can possess both gifts,' as 14:27-28 probably presupposes... Theissen convincingly concludes that 'glossolalia is language of the unconscious – language capable of consciousness.'"

ἐρμηνεια, ας f interpretation, translation

### 1 Corinthians 12:11

πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα, διαίρουσιν ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται.

ἐνεργεω see v.6

διαίρω divide, distribute, apportion

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own

ἐκάστος, η, ον each, every

βουλομαι want, desire, wish, intend, plan

Paul's words underline the personality (not mere power) of the Spirit.

### 1 Corinthians 12:12

Καθάπερ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα ἐν ἑστίν καὶ μέλη πολλὰ ἔχει, πάντα δὲ τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος πολλὰ ὄντα ἐν ἑστίν σῶμα, οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός·

καθαπερ as, just as

σωμα, τος n body

μέλη Noun, nom/acc pl μελος, ους n member, bodily part

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου much, many

For Christ as head of the body, see also Eph 5:23; Col 1:18. The picture of a body with its various members was familiar in Greek and Roman political rhetoric as an expression of order and hierarchy in society. Christ gives distinctive shape to *this* body.

### 1 Corinthians 12:13

καὶ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἐν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν, εἴτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἴτε Ἕλληνες, εἴτε δοῦλοι εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι, καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεῦμα ἐποτίσθημεν.

ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι is this *locative*, indicating sphere, 'in one Spirit' (NRSV, JB, RV, REB, NJB) or *instrumental*, indicating agency, 'by one Spirit' (AV, RSV, NASV, NIV)?

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

Baptism is, symbolically, the means by which a person is joined to Christ and to the body of his people. Paul here speaks of the spiritual reality corresponding to that outward sign, baptism with (rather than by) the Spirit. This is the act of the risen Christ by which Christ, by the Spirit, saves and equips his people (see Lk 3:16; Acts 1:5,8). Note that being baptised with the Spirit and belonging to Christ and to his people are co-extensive.

"Any theology that might imply that this one baptism in 13a in which believers were 'baptised by [or in] one Spirit' might mark off some post-conversion experience or status enjoyed only by some Christians attacks and undermines Paul's entire argument and emphasis. Paul's constant use of ἐν, 'one,' and παντες, 'all,' constitutes a direct onslaught against categorisation or elitism within the church. As Mitchell and Martin (among others) have decisively shown, the argument picks up the categorisations which Paul attacks in 1:10-12. The 'all' and the reference to transcending the Jew-Gentile, male-female, slave-free divisions of Paul's day reflect the reference to baptism in Gal 3:27-28." Thistleton.

"These verses are a crushing rejoinder to Pentecostalist ideas about the reception of the Spirit. The reception of the Spirit is the beginning of the Christian life (3:3-5)... The gift of the Spirit and justification are two sides of the one coin... The gift of the Spirit is what makes us ... sons of God ..." Similarly, Gal 3:26-27 concerns "a metaphor drawn from the rite of baptism to describe the entry of the believer into Christian experience." In the context of baptism or of Christian experience "there is no talk of a subsequent coming of the Spirit." Dunn

εἴτε if, whether

Ἕλληνα, ἡνός m a Greek, non-Jew

ἐλευθερός, α, ον free, free person

ποτιζῶ give to drink, water

### 1 Corinthians 12:14

Καὶ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν μέλος ἀλλὰ πολλά.

μέλος see v.12

"Diversity is not an accidental attribute of the body. It is of its very essence." Morris  
 "Unless the many perform their assigned functions, however diverse, the one body would not exist as a single entity but as a chaotic array of conflicting forces, without focus or coherence." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 12:15

ἐὰν εἴπῃ ὁ πούς· Ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι χεῖρ, οὐκ εἰμι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος;

ἐὰν if, even if, though

πούς, ποδος m foot

χεῖρ, χειρος f hand, power

παρὰ with acc. here in sense of by, by that token

Some at Corinth who lacked the more spectacular gifts of others may have been so discouraged that they began to ask whether they had any place or function in the church.

### 1 Corinthians 12:16

καὶ ἐὰν εἴπῃ τὸ οὖς· Ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι ὀφθαλμός, οὐκ εἰμι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος;

οὖς, ὠτος n ear, hearing

### 1 Corinthians 12:17

εἰ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα ὀφθαλμός, ποῦ ἡ ἀκοή; εἰ ὅλον ἀκοή, ποῦ ἡ ὄσφρησις;

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

ἀκοή, ης f report, news, hearing

ὄσφρησις, εως f sense of smell

### 1 Corinthians 12:18

νυνὶ δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἔθετο τὰ μέλη, ἐν ἑκάστων αὐτῶν, ἐν τῷ σώματι καθὼς ἠθέλησεν.

νυνὶ (originally an emphatic form of νυν)

now

ἔθετο Verb, 2 aor midd indic, 3 s τιθημι

midd put place, set, determine

μέλη Noun, nom/acc pl μελος

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

ἐν ἑκάστων places emphasis on each one – 'each and every one'

θέλω wish, will

Each member is deliberately and thoughtfully set in place by God to serve its particular function. Gifts are gifts, gifts from God.

"Christians must give up anxiously comparing themselves with each other... It leads to jealousy [cf. 1:10-12; 3:1-4] and discouragement... They complain that they are not like so-and-so... They develop an inferiority complex and lose all joy of salvation. The foot grumbles because it walks in the dust and carries the whole weight of the body... Others would like to be the eye which oversees or [especially!] the mouth which speaks... God knows why he has made each one of us as we are; he knows what use each one of us can be." Deluz

### 1 Corinthians 12:19

εἰ δὲ ἦν τὰ πάντα ἐν μέλος, ποῦ τὸ σῶμα;

### 1 Corinthians 12:20

νῦν δὲ πολλὰ μὲν μέλη, ἐν δὲ σῶμα.

"This emphatic reiteration of the theme of unity in diversity concludes this part of the discourse." Morris

**1 Corinthians 12:21**

οὐ δύναται δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς εἰπεῖν τῇ χειρὶ·  
Χρείαν σου οὐκ ἔχω, ἢ πάλιν ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῖς  
ποσίν· Χρείαν ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔχω·

χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

χρεια, ας f need, want

ἢ or

παλιν again, once more

κεφαλη, ης f head

ποσίν Noun, dat pl πους, ποδος m foot

Those more gifted and seemingly more useful cannot dispense with those they view as having a lesser position than themselves. "The sin of 'autonomy,' *self-sufficiency*, or 'the right to do what I like' (6:12) is precisely the 'fleshly' attitude within the church (3:1-4), which Paul finds alien to Christlike existence 'for others,' but reflects much more secular culture (whether inside or outside the church) at the beginning of the twenty-first century."

Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 12:22**

ἀλλὰ πολλῶ μᾶλλον τὰ δοκοῦντα μέλη τοῦ  
σώματος ἀσθενέστερα ὑπάρχειν ἀναγκαῖα  
ἐστίν,

μαλλον adv more; rather

πολλῶ μᾶλλον 'it is much more the case that',  
'far rather.'

δοκεω intrans be recognised, seem

μέλη Noun, nom/acc pl μελος, ους n

member, bodily part

ἀσθενεστερος, α, ον weaker; comparative  
from ἀσθενης

In light of 1:27 and 4:10 Thistleton argues that the reference is to social status and perhaps (following Glad) disposition of character. He offers the translation 'less endowed with power.' "They were insufficiently impressive to count for much, either socially or spiritually, within the church, or in terms of what 'contacts' or ability they might show for mission or for speaking with wisdom and knowledge to outsiders. Probably they never did effective mighty works of healing, seldom or never prophesied, and perhaps never spoke in tongues. In v.23 they are spoken of as *less attractive* and less '*presentable*' (εὐσχημοσύνην)." Thistleton

ὑπαρχω be (equivalent to εἰμι)

ἀναγκαιος, α, ον necessary, essential

It is the 'weak' who are especially the objects of God's saving activity (1:27).

**1 Corinthians 12:23**

καὶ ἃ δοκοῦμεν ἀτιμότερα εἶναι τοῦ σώματος,  
τούτοις τιμὴν περισσοτέραν περιτιθέμεν, καὶ  
τὰ ἀσχήμονα ἡμῶν εὐσχημοσύνην  
περισσοτέραν ἔχει,

δοκεω think, suppose; intrans seem

ἀτιμοτερος, α, ον less honoured;

comparitive from ἀτιμος

τιμη, ης f honour, respect, price

περισσοτερος, α, ον more, much more

περιτιθημι put around, clothe in, treat with  
honour

Thistleton suggests the translation 'invest.'

ἀσχημων, ον unrepresentable

"The semantic contrast between ἀσχημονα (σχημα, form, with alpha privative) and εὐσχημοσύνην (σχημα, form, with εὐ, well) embodies two semantic oppositions (i) between *ugly* and *beautiful* or *adorned*; and (ii) between *private parts* of the body and *publicly 'presentable'* limbs and organs. The only way to preserve the wordplay in English seems to be to explicate both double aspects: 'our unrepresentable private parts have greater adornment to make them presentable.'" Thistleton

Thistleton

εὐσχημοσυνη, ης f modesty, propriety

Paul would seem to be illustrating his point from the way in which we clothe our bodies.

**1 Corinthians 12:24**

τὰ δὲ εὐσχήμονα ἡμῶν οὐ χρείαν ἔχει. ἀλλὰ ὁ  
θεὸς συνεκέρασεν τὸ σῶμα, τῷ ὑστεροῦντι  
περισσοτέραν δούς τιμὴν,

εὐσχημων, ον gen ονος respected,  
presentable

χρεια see v.21

συνεκέρασεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

συγκεραννυμι put together, arrange

Used of a painter mixing colours or of a musician composing harmonies.

ὑστερεω lack, be inferior to; pass be  
lacking; midd be in want

δούς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s διδωμι  
give

τιμη, ης f honour, respect

**1 Corinthians 12:25**

ἵνα μὴ ᾗ σχίσμα ἐν τῷ σώματι, ἀλλὰ τὸ αὐτὸ  
ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων μεριμνῶσι τὰ μέλη.

ᾗ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἰμι

σχισμα, τος n division, opposing group

Cf. 1:10.

ἀλληλων, ος, ους reciprocal pronoun one  
another

μεριμναω be anxious/concerned about

μέλη Noun, nom/acc pl μέλος, ους n  
member, bodily part

### 1 Corinthians 12:26

καὶ εἴτε πάσχει ἐν μέλος, συμπάσχει πάντα τὰ μέλη· εἴτε δοξάζεται μέλος, συγχαίρει πάντα τὰ μέλη.

εἴτε if, whether

πάσχω suffer, experience

συμπάσχω suffer together, share the same suffering

δοξάζω praise, honour, glorify, exalt

"If the ear and fingers of a musician are 'praised,' or the hands and feet of an athlete are 'praised,' a person receives 'congratulations' for his or her coordination *as a whole*. The whole person is described as a good musician or as a good athlete, and indeed some intrusive bodily distraction could wreck the performance."

Thistleton

συγχαίρω rejoice with, rejoice together

### 1 Corinthians 12:27

Ἵμεῖς δὲ ἐστε σῶμα Χριστοῦ καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους.

μέρος, ους n part, in part, partly

ἐκ μέρους 'part by part.'

### 1 Corinthians 12:28

καὶ οὓς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρῶτον ἀποστόλους, δεύτερον προφήτας, τρίτον διδασκάλους, ἔπειτα δυνάμεις, ἔπειτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων, ἀντιλήμψεις, κυβερνήσεις, γένη γλωσσῶν.

ἔθετο see v.18

ἐκκλησία, ας f congregation, church

"On 'apostles' see the extended discussion under 1:1. In this context Dunn helpfully notes that Paul alludes to a 'limited circle of individuals (though much wider than 'the twelve')' who are 'apostles of Christ rather than delegates of a church ... commissioned personally by the risen Christ ... missionaries and church founders ... Theirs was a distinctively and decisively eschatological role (Rom 11:13ff; 15:15-16; 1 Cor 4:9; 15:8; Eph 3:5).' *Eschatological apostles*' (Dunn's italics) had no successors, and Paul uses the term in this sense in 12:28." Thistleton

δευτερος, α, ον second; (το) δ. in the second place, secondly

On prophets, see notes on 12:10; 14:3.

τρίτος, η, ον third; τρίτον or το τ. adv. the third time, in the third place, third

FF Bruce argues that first ... second ... third "mark these out as exercising, in Paul's estimation, the three most important ministries. In Eph 4:11 these are also enumerated, together with evangelists, in the order (a) apostles, (b) prophets, (c) evangelists, (d) pastors and teachers, as given by the ascended Lord to equip his people '... for building up the body of Christ.'"

Chrysostom asserts, "Because they thought highly of themselves in respect of the tongue, he [Paul] sets it last everywhere. For the terms 'first' and 'secondly' are not used by him at random, but in order by enumeration to point out the more honourable and inferior."

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

"Presumably they [teachers] were mature Christians who instructed others in the meaning and moral implications of the Christian faith (cf. Gal. 6:6); possibly (as some think) they expounded the Christian meaning of the OT." Barrett

ἔπειτα then, afterwards

On δυνάμεις and χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων see 12:9

χαρισμα see v.9

ἰαμα see v.9

ἀντιλήμψεις, εως f ability to help, helper

The general function of assisting those in need – see Acts 20:35. Some suggest it covers the work of deacons. Thistleton suggests probably 'kinds of administrative support.'

κυβερνήσεις, εως f ability to lead

A word originally denoting the steering of a ship. It could refer to the work of elders. Thistleton thinks it refers to leadership, or ability to formulate strategy.

"The expressions are the reminder of the immense amount about the life of the apostolic Church of which we are ignorant." Morris

γένη see v.10

### 1 Corinthians 12:29

μη πάντες ἀπόστολοι; μη πάντες προφήται; μη πάντες διδασκαλοι; μη πάντες δυνάμεις;

The questions are introduced with μη indicating the expectation of a negative answer.

### 1 Corinthians 12:30

μη πάντες χαρίσματα ἔχουσιν ἰαμάτων; μη πάντες γλώσσαις λαλοῦσιν; μη πάντες διερμηνεύουσιν;

λαλεω speak, talk

διερμηνεω interpret, explain, translate

**1 Corinthians 12:31**

ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα. καὶ ἔτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι.

"Although commentators traditionally link either the whole of v.31 or at least v.31b with ch 13 rather than with ch 12, I have become convinced that to do this is to deprive the verse of its integral rhetorical and logical force with the argument which Paul has steadily built up from 12:19-30 and prepared for in 12:12-18. We have seen that there was a *zealous concern*, even a *striving*, for the gifts of the Spirit that were deemed to be 'greatest' in the sense of their supposedly constituting a mark of *high social and/or spiritual status*. Once again Paul uses redefinition... Paul rejects their view of 'high status' gifts utterly. But, he argues, tongue-in-cheek (Smit, with 'sharp irony'), *do not stop being 'zealously concerned about the "greatest" gifts,* provided that you follow me in transposing and subverting your understanding of what counts as 'the greatest.' The 'greatest' are not those that minister to status or to self, but those which *serve* the good of others and *build* the community. 'I now show you' that what is 'an even greater way still' is the way of *love*." Thistleton

ζηλωσ be jealous of, be very concerned about

The verb here is very strong, speaking of a driving passion. This form may be either indicative or imperative. Here it is clearly imperative.

μείζων, ον and μείζοτερος, α, ον (comp of μεγας) greater, greatest  
ἔτι still, yet, moreover  
ὑπερβολη, ης f surpassing, beyond measure

Thistleton prefers to translate, 'an even greater way still' to make this a comparative with respect to μείζονα.

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

The love that Paul describes in the following verses is to determine the path for our actions, rather than pursuit of more showy gifts.

δεικνυμι show, point out, reveal

**1 Corinthians 13:1**

Ἐὰν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, γέγονα χαλκὸς ἢ χῶν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον.

It is often commented that the noun *ἀγαπη* is rare in Greek literature outside of the NT – though the verb is more frequently used. Nygren and Moffatt argue that Paul is concerned to disengage 'love' in his own theology from Greek and other pagan ideas. Nygren writes, "Agape comes to us as quite a new creation of Christianity ... Without it nothing that is Christian would be Christian." Or, in the words of Jonathan Edwards, "All the virtue that is saving and that distinguishes true Christians from others is summed up in Christian love."

This love is "the power of the new age" breaking into the present, "the only vital force which has a future." Stauffer. It is the love which God displayed in Christ and particularly his dying love. "Moltmann and Jungel rightly relate this to the *self-giving grace of the cruciform, Christomorphic God*." Thistleton. It is love which is not dependent upon the worthiness of its object but springs from the character of the lover: love which "seeks nothing for itself but only the good of the loved one." Morris

ἐὰν if, even if, though

λαλεω speak, talk

Paul begins with "values that are significant to the community at Corinth." Conzelmann. It may have been that some at Corinth considered tongues to be a 'language of heaven' or Paul could merely be using a hypothetical superlative, 'even if these tongues were to be angelic language itself ...'

γένονα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s γινομαι  
χαλκος, ου m copper, bronze, gong

A resounding bronze vessel.

ἤχεω be noisy, sound producing

ἢ οἱ

κύμβαλον, ου n cymbal

ἀλαλάζω wail loudly; clang

"The man who is taken up with saying rather than doing has become nothing more than sound." Morris

**Verse 2**

καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω προφητείαν καὶ εἰδῶ τὰ μυστήρια πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γνῶσιν, καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάναί, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐθέν εἰμι.

προφητεια, ας f prophecy, the gift of prophecy

εἶδῶ Verb, perf act subj, 1 s οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

μυστηριον, ου n secret, mystery (of something formerly unknown but now revealed)

'Depths too profound for human discovery'  
Thistleton

γνωσις, εως f knowledge, understanding

"In 1 Cor 13 there is a definite opposition, a contrast, between two different 'ways,' two different kinds of fellowship with God: on the one side, the Gnostic-mystical 'vision of God' typical of Hellenism; and on the other, the primitive-Christian and Pauline way of Agape ... 'Gnosis puffs up, Agape builds up.'" Nygren

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
ὄρος, ους n mountain, hill

See Mark 11:22f. The 'faith' spoken of here is not saving faith. "An especially robust, infectious, bold, trustful faith may well be a special gift that performs a special task within a community faced with seemingly insuperable problems." Thistleton

μεθιστημι remove, mislead, bring

"The Corinthians clearly thought that the possessors of certain gifts were extremely important persons. Paul stoutly maintains that if they have even the highest of gifts, and that in full amount, but lack love, not only are they unimportant, but they are actually *nothing*." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 13:3

καὶ ἐὰν ψωμίσω πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου, καὶ ἐὰν παραδῶ τὸ σῶμά μου, ἵνα καυθήσομαι, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι.

καν (καὶ ἐὰν) even if, and if  
ψωμιζω feed, give food to, give away

"The verb is in the aorist tense, pointing to a once-for-all action of a man who, in one grand sweeping gesture, sells all that he has and gives it away." Morris

ὑπαρχω be at one's disposal (τα ὑ. possessions).

παραδιδωμι hand or give over, deliver up

Could mean sell oneself into slavery (and so feed the poor with the proceeds).

σωμα, τος n body

καυχασμαι boast, boast about

Textual variants read either, καυχησωμαι (so that I might boast), or variants of καυθησωμαι (so that I might be burnt). The evidence is finely balanced and it is difficult to determine which is the original reading. The UBS text and Thistleton favour καυχησωμαι.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing;  
οὐδεν not at all

ὠφελεω gain, profit, achieve, benefit

'It counts for nothing'. "These wondrous gifts and triumphant victories all amount to 'nothing,' unless 'love' directs them, with its Christlike concern and regard for 'the other.'" Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 13:4

Ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ, χρηστεύεται ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐ ζηλοῖ ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐ περπερεύεται, οὐ φυσιοῦται,

μακροθυμεω be patient, wait patiently

Note the way in which Paul uses verbs to describe the *activity* of love rather than adjectives to describe its character.

χρηστευομαι be kind

ζηλωω be jealous of

'Burn with envy.'

περπερευομαι be conceited, brag

φυσιοω pass be conceited/arrogant

'Be puffed up, inflated.'

### 1 Corinthians 13:5

οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ, οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, οὐ παροξύνεται, οὐ λογιζεται τὸ κακόν,

ἀσχημονεω behave improperly

"The adjective ἀσχημων occurs in the NT only at 12:23, where Paul alludes to 'unpresentable' parts of the body, i.e., those which good taste and public respect expect to be clothed. In all three contexts the contrast defines the opposition between one side *courtesy, good taste, good public 'manners'*, and 'propriety', and on the other side thoughtless pursuit of the immediate wishes of the self regardless of the conventions and courtesies of interpersonal life. Thus 'Agape is not ill mannered' (Spicq). Love does not act in ways which are 'contrary to the requirements of propriety and good order, committed by some ill-mannered members' (Hering)." Thistleton

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

'not preoccupied with the issues of self' cf. Rom 15:3; 1 Cor 10:24; Phil 2:4,21.

παροξυνομαι be irritable, be greatly upset

'provoked to anger.' "not touchy" Phillips, Barrett.

λογιζομαι reckon, count, credit, suppose

Either, 'does not keep a record of wrongs', or, 'does not think evil' — i.e. always imputes best motives. Bruce thinks the reference is to determination to pay someone back in their own coin.

κακος, η, ον evil, bad, wrong, harm

### 1 Corinthians 13:6

οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ·

χαίρω rejoice, be glad  
ἀδικία, ας f wrongdoing, evil, sin, injustice  
συγχαίρω rejoice with, rejoice together

'joyfully celebrate'

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality; ἐν ᾧ. truly

"Genuine love, as I argue as my main thesis in *Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self*, alone decentres the power of 'interests' of the self and of its peer group, and in recentring them in the Other (primarily in God, but also in the other person) disengages from self-interest. Only now can truth emerge as disengaged from a power agenda. True disinterested integrity is free to seek truth, without anxiety about what it helps or hinders in one's personal agenda. Love, Paul says, has discovered *integrity*: As Nygren constantly declares, because it is disinterested and creative of value. It delights in truth... As Karl Rahner observes, the person who has placed everything in the hands of God has no need to fear, or to hide from, the truth. For God already knows it and has accepted the believer as he or she is." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 13:7

πάντα στέγει, πάντα πιστεύει, πάντα ἐλπίζει, πάντα ὑπομένει.

'There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, its endurance.' REB  
"Love never tires of support, never loses faith, never exhausts hope, never gives up."  
Thistleton

στεγῶ endure, put up with  
πιστεύω have faith, have confidence in  
ἐλπίζω hope, hope for, hope in, expect

"a refusal to take failure as finite" Morris

ὑπομένω endure, remain behind

"Like Christ on the cross, love endures scorn, failure, ingratitude ... At the end shines out the light of Easter. For *love never ends*." Deluz

### 1 Corinthians 13:8

Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει. εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται· εἴτε γλῶσσαι, παύσονται· εἴτε γνώσις, καταργηθήσεται.

What applies at a personal level ('love never gives up', v.7) is now applied at a deeper, cosmic level.

οὐδέποτε never  
πιπτῶ fall, fall down, collapse

εἴτε if, whether  
προφητεῖα, ας f prophecy, preaching, the gift of prophecy  
καταργῶ render ineffective, cancel, do away with

Cf. the use of this verb in 1:28. "The future passive does not suggest simply that prophecies melt away of their own accord as they are fulfilled, but that a cosmic, eschatological, public deed of divine judgment 'brings them to an end.' How can preachers and prophets have anything to say when the last judgment not only reveals, but evaluates and pronounces judgment upon, everything. The sermons of prophets and the 'knowledge' of the theologians *are rendered redundant*, while the character and fruit of 'love does not fall apart.' To prophesy would be like switching on a torch in the full light of the noonday sun." Thistleton

γλωσσαι see 12:10

παύω stop; midd stop, cease

"This must surely call into question the notion that 'tongues' are either, in Paul's view, a language of heaven, or a paradigmatic way of expressing exalted intimacy with God. If this were so, why should they cease at the *eschaton*? Rather, it confirms Theissen's view (see above on 12:10) that 'tongues' primarily (although perhaps not exclusively) serve to express inarticulate preconscious longings, yearnings, and wellings up of praise prompted by the activity of the Spirit (Rom 8:26), but as yet 'raw' and in need of communicative, intelligible, conscious communication. 'Tongues' will evaporate as readily as tears when a resurrection *σωμα* allows the believer to come face to face with God without the limitations and hidden conflicts of the mode of this present life in its earthly *σωμα*. There is no need for them to be 'brought to an end'; their cause will have disappeared." Thistleton

γνώσις see 12:8

### 1 Corinthians 13:9

ἐκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκομεν καὶ ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν·

μερος, ους n part, piece, in part, partly

"We prophesy in part ... probably means that God does not reveal everything so that the prophet, no less than the sage, gives but a partial glimpse of the truth." Morris

Thistleton suggests ἐκ μερους means 'piece by piece' or 'bit by bit' and says, "Paul shares the view explored in the Hegelian tradition that piece-by-piece knowledge may lead to partial and mistaken judgments which set in motion endless processes of correction and re-correction." He continues, "In Paul's view any 'absolute' of revelation is anchored in the cross and in the resurrection within the framework of OT revelation and further disclosures as anticipation of the End when the whole picture becomes unveiled at the last judgment. Only then does 'knowledge' become definitive, unrevisable, and no longer corrigible."

### 1 Corinthians 13:10

ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, τὸ ἐκ μερους καταργηθήσεται.

ὅταν when, whenever

τέλειος, α, ον complete, whole, perfect, mature

Suggests both completeness and goal.

### Verse 11

ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα ἀνὴρ, κατήργηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου.

ὅτε conj when

ἤμην Verb, imperf act indic, 1s εἶμι νηπιος, α, ον baby, infant, child

Cf. 3:1.

λαλεῶ speak, talk

φρονεῶ think, have in mind

Thistleton suggests 'I had childish interests and concerns'

λογίζομαι reckon, count, reason

γέγονα Verb, perf act indic, 1s γίνομαι

The perfect here stands in contrast with previous imperfects. There is no going back to previous patterns of conduct.

ἀνὴρ, ἀνδρὸς m man, husband

κατήργηκα Verb, perf act indic, 1s

καταργεῶ

'I am done with childish ways' Moffatt

Paul's analogy here applies to the Corinthians' views of special gifts (cf. 3:1 on the issue of childishness versus maturity).

"Paul is alluding not simply to the *experience* of spiritual gifts, but to how they are *expressed* (λαλεῖν), what 'opinions' are held about them (φρονεῖν), and how they are 'valued' or *evaluated* (λογιζεσθαι)." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 13:12

βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἑσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μερους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην.

βλέπω see, look, be able to see

ἄρτι now, at the present

ἑσόπτρον, ον n mirror

A 'mirror' in NT times would have been made from polished metal. Corinth was famous for its mirrors. Fee suggests that Paul's use of the metaphor of a mirror emphasises the *indirect* character of our present knowledge.

αἰνίγμα, τος n dim or obscure image, puzzle

τότε then, at that time

μερος see v.9

ἐπιγινώσκω perceive, understand

ἐπεγνώσθην Verb, aor pass indic, 1s

ἐπιγινώσκω

"I am known is in the aorist tense. The knowledge God has of Paul is not something growing and becoming more and more perfect... God's knowledge of his servant is complete." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 13:13

νοὺν δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη· τὰ τρία ταῦτα, μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη.

νοὺν (originally an emphatic form of νυν) now

Not intended to be taken in a temporal sense, but in a logical sense, 'now in conclusion'

μενῶ remain, stay, abide

ἐλπίς, ἰδος f hope, ground of hope, what is hoped for

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

For the linking of faith, hope and love, see Rom.5:2-5; Gal 5:5f; Col 1:4f; 1 Thess 1:3; 5:8; Heb 6:10-12; 1 Peter 1:21f.

μείζων, ον and μείζοτερος, α, ον (comp of μεγας) greater, greatest

Tertullian comments "Rightly [is love the greatest]. For faith departs when we are convinced by vision, by seeing God. And hope vanishes when the things hoped for come about. But love both comes to completion and grows more when the perfect has been given."

By way of contrast, Thistleton, citing Barrett, writes, "Barrett assists us here. 'Faith' ceases, he argues, if the context is that of what he calls 'miracle-working faith' in 13:2. But in the sense used when Paul asserts 'whatever is not of faith is sin' (1 Cor 14:23), 'the life of the age to come will rest on faith as completely as does the Christian life now.' Similarly, unless we conceive of heaven as a 'closed' or static state, the openness of the heavenly life towards the future maintains the relevance of hope." Thistleton favours the 'middle view' of Barth, writing, "Barth concludes his study of these verses by taking up a closely related theme. Love is 'the future eternal light shining in the present. It therefore needs no change of form.' In one sense faith and hope abide also, but in forms in which faith becomes assimilated into sight, and hope absorbed into the perfect, even though this is an active perfection. Thus in a subtle sense love alone abides forever in the form in which Christ and the cross has revealed it: 'it is that which continues.' Thus, if there is any heavenly counterpart to the qualities and dispositions of the earthly life of the church, its worship, its understanding, its faith, and its hope will all undergo modification under new conditions. The teacher, theologian, pastor, and evangelist become redundant in the sense in which their work is currently carried out. But learning to love, to have respect and concern for the Other above the self, is grounded in the nature of God as revealed in Christ, and this will never become redundant, obsolete, or irrelevant. The future thus provides the model for the present in working out priorities at Corinth and in the church at large. *Agape* is much more than a 'moral virtue.'"

### Chapter 14

"It appears in this chapter that Paul sees the highest expression of spiritual gifts in the free, helpful discussion of Christians together and in their contribution in thoughtful speech to each other. (It is, in fact, our impression that expressions such as "thoughtful speech", "testimony", or even "counsel" better translate the word rendered now somewhat archaically "prophecy".)" F.D. Bruner  
"Contrary to widespread popular uses of this chapter to assume an intimate connection between being inspired by the Holy Spirit and 'spontaneity,' the chapter as a whole places the issue of concern for the other and communicative intelligibility at the centre of the discussion." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 14:1

Διώκετε τὴν ἀγάπην, ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ πνευματικά, μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε.

διώκω seek after, pursue

ζηλωω be jealous of, be very concerned about

πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual, pertaining to the spirit

In this context may mean 'spiritual utterances.'

μᾶλλον adv more, rather

### 1 Corinthians 14:2

ὁ γὰρ λαλῶν γλώσση οὐκ ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ ἀλλὰ θεῷ, οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀκούει, πνεύματι δὲ λαλεῖ μυστήρια·

λαλεω see 13:11

οὐδεὶς no one

οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀκούει "The issue in these verses clearly turns on intelligible communication or effective communicative action between speakers and listeners." Thistleton. Hence 'no one understands' or even 'no one learns.'

μυστήριον, ον n secret, mystery

Here 'what is unintelligible, baffling or enigmatic.'

"The reason for the inferiority of tongues is its unintelligibility." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 14:3

ὁ δὲ προφητεύων ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ οἰκοδομῆν καὶ παράκλησιν καὶ παραμυθίαν.

οἰκοδομή, ης f upbuilding, edification

παρακλησις, εως f encouragement, counsel

παραμυθία, ας f comfort

"Prophecy, then, is a means of building up Christian character, of strengthening men, of giving them comfort in their distress." Morris.

It is practical and pastoral in nature. "Such a pastoral concern brings together the OT tradition of prophetic contextual application to particular circumstances and claims by Hill and others that 'prophesying' has pastoral *preaching* at its centre." Thistleton concludes, "In summary, *prophesying* in Paul's theology and in his argument in this chapter is *the performing of intelligible, articulate, communicative speech-acts, the operative currency of which depends on the active agency of the Holy Spirit mediated through human minds and lives to build up, to encourage, to judge, to exhort, and to comfort others in the context of interpersonal relations.* Such a definition is not comprehensive. It allows for short utterances or, in accordance with Paul's own wishes, of longer stretches of speech to which the nearest modern parallel is probably that of an informed pastoral sermon which proclaims grace and judgment, or requires change of life, but which also remains open to question and correction by others. We may note that Zwingli (1484-1531) and Bullinger (1507-75) used the term 'prophesyings' loosely in this way, although with a greater emphasis on the place of 'Bible readings' as generating the 'prophesyings.' However, just as many unduly restrict prophecy to the 'spontaneous,' we should avoid the converse mistake of insisting that prophecy should not in any circumstance take the more 'oracular' form often identified as such today. In the end our view will be determined by a dialogue between careful exegesis and a theology of the nature of God and of God's ways of action in the world."

#### **1 Corinthians 14:4**

ὁ λαλῶν γλώσση ἑαυτὸν οἰκοδομεῖ· ὁ δὲ προφητεύων ἐκκλησίαν οἰκοδομεῖ.

ἑαυτος reflexive pronoun, himself  
οἰκοδομεω build, edify

Thistleton argues that the first occurrence of 'builds up' should be in quotation marks "first to indicate that Paul takes it up as a catchword for the dialogue, and second because whether this first use is positive (i.e., *edifies* the self) or negative (i.e., ministers to *self-esteem* or *self-affirmation*) remains acutely controversial." Having considered arguments for positive and negative understandings of the first οἰκοδομεῖ Thistleton concludes, "The best explanation is that while the positive evaluation adopted by Fee may apply to tongues *specifically used in private*, the *public* use of tongues becomes so bound up with perceived status and self-affirmation that *in public* (but not in private) the negative effects come to outweigh the otherwise positive."

ἐκκλησια, ας f congregation, church

#### **1 Corinthians 14:5**

θέλω δὲ πάντα ὑμᾶς λαλεῖν γλώσσαις, μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε· μείζων δὲ ὁ προφητεύων ἢ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσσαις, ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ διερμηνεύη, ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομηῖν λάβῃ.

θελω wish, will

Thistleton prefers the REB 'I am happy for ... but happier still for ...', θελω here being conciliatory or concessive. Cf. Numb 11:29. "Paul does not, I conclude partly on the basis of 12:29-30, *wish* that every member of the church at Corinth may speak with tongues; it is the Holy Spirit alone who wills how his gifts are apportioned, and egalitarianism is as much an undifferentiated dullness as arbitrary hierarchy ministers to authoritarianism and elitism. Paul 'takes pleasure in' the sense of intimacy, liberation, and prayerful doxology and those who speak in tongues enjoy. However, their pleasure is very solemnly and seriously constrained by two things: first, that this gift is used only *privately*; second, that proclaiming the gospel of Christ, or 'prophesying' for the building up of *others*, holds priority and privilege as an 'apostolic' of Christlike, cruciform mode of ministry."

μαλλον see v.1

μείζων, greater, greatest

ἢ or, than

ἐκτος conj ἐκτος εἰ μη except, unless

διερμηνευω interpret, explain, translate

Thistleton argues that the meaning here is 'put into articulate speech.' The concern is not for *someone else* to interpret the 'tongue.' Thistleton presents detailed evidence concerning this use of *διερμηνεω*, even claiming that up to three quarters of the uses of *διερμηνεω* in Philo mean 'put into words.' He concludes, "There is no 'interpreter' standing by. Paul declares that 'the person who prophesies is of greater importance than the one who speaks in tongues unless' some specific condition is fulfilled: the tongue speaker who is overwhelmed with the presence and love of God to the extent that praise and prayer flow forth in inarticulate sounds uttered by the tongue (*γλωσσα*) finds that, after all, he or she can 'put into words' the ground of praise, prayer, joy, or longing, and thereby 'the church community' as a whole similarly 'receive' (*λαβη*) this public ministry of 'building up' (*ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία οικοδομήν λαβῆ*)." *ἐκκλησία, ας f congregation, church*

### 1 Corinthians 14:6

Νῦν δέ, ἀδελφοί, ἐάν ἔλθω πρὸς ὑμᾶς γλώσσαις λαλῶν, τί ὑμᾶς ὠφελήσω, ἐάν μὴ ὑμῖν λαλήσω ἢ ἐν ἀποκαλύψει ἢ ἐν γνώσει ἢ ἐν προφητείᾳ ἢ ἐν διδαχῇ;

*νῦν* here means something like 'well now.' It introduces hypothetical illustrative scenarios. *ἐάν* is used in the sense of 'suppose ...'

ἔλθω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἔρχομαι  
ὠφελεω gain, profit, achieve, benefit

A keynote in these verses.

ἢ or, (ἢ ... ἢ either ... or)  
ἀποκαλύπτω, εως f revelation

Cf. 1:7.

γνώσις, εως f knowledge, understanding

Cf. 1:5; 8:1,7,10,11; 12:8; 13:2,8. "This term mattered greatly at Corinth. Hence Paul's insistence that inarticulate sounds could not convey *γνώσις* would have been especially sharp and poignant to these addressees. In this context the term denotes *cognitive* 'knowledge,' so prized in 8:1-11 by 'the strong' at Corinth, and REB's looser *enlightenment* conveys the cultural flavour." Thistleton

προφητεία, ας f prophecy, preaching, the gift of prophecy

The precise distinction between these terms, particularly, 'revelation' and 'prophecy' is unclear – though cf. 14:3 and Thistleton on prophecy.

διδάχη, ης f teaching, what is taught

### 1 Corinthians 14:7

ὅμως τὰ ἄψυχα φωνὴν διδόντα, εἴτε αὐλὸς εἴτε κιθάρα, ἐὰν διαστολὴν τοῖς φθόγγοις μὴ δῶ, πῶς γνωσθήσεται τὸ αὐλούμενον ἢ τὸ καθαριζόμενον;

ὅμως even, nevertheless

Paul seems to use this adverb (here and in Gal 3:15) as an equivalent to *ὁμοίως*. Here then, 'similarly with reference to ...'

ἄψυχος, ον inanimate

διδόντα Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s δίδωμι

τὰ ἄψυχα φωνὴν διδόντα 'inanimate musical instruments'

εἴτε if, whether

αὐλός, ου m flute

κιθάρα, ας f harp, lyre

Here the sense may be general, 'in the case of wind or stringed instruments.'

διαστολή, ης f distinction, difference

Maybe here "a musical 'interval' ... the difference in pitch between two sounds." Edwards

φθόγγος, ου m voice, sound, tone

"The point is not that notes are produced badly or inappropriately, but that untuned strings or overblown wind produces mere noise where there is no 'difference' in Saussure's sense of linguistic or semiotic 'difference' as the very basis of conveying *anything* articulate or communicative... *φωνή* ... is regularly used of the 'voice' of musical instruments ... but an instrumental 'voice' without *intervals* ... is mere *noise* or mere *sound* (unmodulated *φωνή*, which is not actual 'music' at all), and it cannot be 'recognised.'" Thistleton

δῶ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s δίδωμι

πῶς how? in what way?

αὐλεω play a flute; τὸ αὐλούμενον what is played on a flute

κιθαρίζω play a harp

"Neither flute nor harp makes sense unless there is a meaningful variation in the sounds produced. A melody played finely speaks to a man's very soul. An aimless jangle means nothing." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 14:8

καὶ γὰρ ἐὰν ἄδηλον φωνὴν σάλπιγξ δῶ, τίς παρασκευάζεται εἰς πόλεμον;

ἀδηλός, ον unmarked, indistinct

δηλός (clear, evident) relates primarily or most often to *clear communication*.

σαλπίξ, ιγγος f trumpet; trumpet blast

δῶ see v.7

παρασκευάζω prepare; midd. prepare oneself, get oneself ready

πολεμος, ου m war, battle, strife, conflict

The blowing of a trumpet for military signalling fails utterly in its purpose if the distinct message is not conveyed by the sounds.

### 1 Corinthians 14:9

οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς διὰ τῆς γλώσσης ἐὰν μὴ εὐσημον λόγον δῶτε, πῶς γνωσθήσεται τὸ λαλούμενον; ἔσεσθε γὰρ εἰς ἀέρα λαλοῦντες.

The tongue has been designed and given precisely for the purpose of intelligible speech.

εὐσημος, ον intelligible, easily understood  
πως see v.7

ἔσεσθε Verb, fut indic, 2 pl εἰμι

"Communicative acts of speech entail a transactive engagement between speaker, writer or 'sender,' and addressee, hearer, or 'receiver.' If the receiver cannot comprehend (γινωσκω) the content of what is being said (το λαλουμενον), communication does not occur." Thistleton

ἀηρ, ερος m air, space

Whenever the word of God is conveyed in a manner that is unintelligible to the hearers it is no better than speaking into the air. *This principle has application not only to 'tongue speaking' but also to unintelligible preachers.*

### 1 Corinthians 14:10

τοσαῦτα εἰ τύχοι γένη φωνῶν εἰσιν ἐν κόσμῳ, καὶ οὐδὲν ἄφωνον·

τοσουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative adj so much, so great, so large; pl so many  
τύχοι Verb, aor act opt, 3 s τυγχανω attain, experience; εἰ τυχοι if it should turn out that way, it may be, perhaps

γένη Noun, nom/acc pl γενος

"The meaning of the whole expression is, 'there are probably ever so many languages in the world' Goodspeed" Morris

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing  
ἄφωνος, ον without meaning

### 1 Corinthians 14:11

ἐὰν οὖν μὴ εἰδῶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς φωνῆς, ἔσομαι τῷ λαλοῦντι βάρβαρος καὶ ὁ λαλῶν ἐν ἐμοὶ βάρβαρος.

εἰδῶ Verb, perf act subj, 1 s οἶδα know, understand

δυναμιν here has the sense of 'force'

ἔσομαι Verb, fut indic, 1 s εἰμι  
λαλοῦντι Verb, pres act ptc, m dat s λαλω  
βάρβαρος, ον non-Greek, uncivilized, foreigner

There is a derogatory flavour to the term βάρβαρος. "The ecstatic speech which seemed to the Corinthians a matter for such pride turned out to be the means of making them nothing more than *barbarians*. This would be worse for a Greek than for us." Morris

ἐμοὶ Pronoun, dat s ἐγώ

### 1 Corinthians 14:12

οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ἐπεὶ ζηλωταὶ ἐστε πνευμάτων, πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ζητεῖτε ἵνα περισσεύητε.

ἐπεὶ since, because, for  
ζηλωτης, ου m one who is zealous

πνευμάτων Thistleton suggests here means 'powers of the Spirit.'

οικοδομη see v.3

ζητεω see 13:5

περισσευω increase, abound, excel

"Where Paul diverges from the Corinthians is in his insistence that since the Spirit is also the Spirit of Christ, and since Christ gave himself *for others*, any claims about 'spirituality' or 'powers of the Spirit' become problematic if they have more to do with self-enhancement than with the welfare and benefit of others. Hence all this 'burning concern' about 'powers of the Spirit' must be redirected into a more Christlike 'eagerness' for the 'building up' (on οικοδομη see above, e.g., 8:1; 14:4) of the 'church community' as a corporate whole (cf. the body-of-Christ language in 12:12-30, esp. 12:27)." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 14:13

Διὸ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσση προσευχέσθω ἵνα διερμητεύῃ.

διο therefore, for this reason

προσευχομαι pray

διερμηνευω interpret, explain, translate

Cf. note on 14:5. "Paul neither criticises nor questions the authenticity of speaking in tongues (especially in the sense of v.5 above and in vv. 18-19). However, he requests *either* of two conditions: *either* (a) 'private' use (see exegesis of vv. 16-23), i.e., outside the context of public worship; *or* (b) effective prayer that the speaker will be able to express in articulate communicative speech the wondrous perception of God or the gospel which is otherwise 'too deep for words.' *No 'second' agent* is envisaged; *a second 'gift' is indeed needed, i.e., the gift of being able to put it into words.*" Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 14:14**

ἐὰν γὰρ προσεύχωμαι γλώσση, τὸ πνεῦμά μου προσεύχεται, ὁ δὲ νοῦς μου ἄκαρπός ἐστιν.

τὸ πνεῦμά μου 'my innermost [spiritual] being'  
Thistleton

νοῦς, νοοῦς m mind, reason, understanding  
ἄκαρπος, ον barren, unfruitful

"The Christian life is considerably more than mental exercise. But the man whose mind is *unfruitful* is not being true to his Christian calling." Morris

**1 Corinthians 14:15**

τί οὖν ἐστίν; προσεύξομαι τῷ πνεύματι, προσεύξομαι δὲ καὶ τῷ νοῷ· ψαλῶ τῷ πνεύματι, ψαλῶ δὲ καὶ τῷ νοῷ·

τῷ πνεύματι The sense here is not 'in the Spirit' since v.14 refers to τὸ πνεῦμά μου, but 'with my innermost being' – unless Paul's usage here reflects a catchphrase of the Corinthians by which *they claimed* to be praying *in the Spirit*.

νοῷ Noun, dat s νοῦς  
ψαλῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s ψαλλῶ sing,  
sing a hymn of praise, sing praises

That which is spiritual and that which involves the use of the mind should not be opposed. Prayer and song in worship must involve the worshipper entering "into them wholeheartedly, with mind as well as with spirit. All too often prayers are offered in a kind of emotional jargon, and hymns are chosen on the basis of attractive tunes rather than sound theology." Morris  
"Solos that people do not understand lose more than half their value in church worship." AT Robertson

**1 Corinthians 14:16**

ἐπεὶ ἐὰν εὐλογῆς πνεύματι, ὁ ἀναπληρῶν τὸν τόπον τοῦ ἰδιώτου πῶς ἐρεῖ τὸ Ἀμήν ἐπὶ τῇ σῆ εὐχαριστίᾳ; ἐπειδὴ τί λέγεις οὐκ οἶδεν·

ἐπεὶ since, because, for  
εὐλογεῶ speak well of, bless  
ἀναπληροῶ fill up, occupy  
τοπος, ου m place  
ἰδιωτης, ου m untrained, unskilled man

The phrase ὁ ἀναπληρῶν τὸν τόπον τοῦ ἰδιώτου has been given a number of interpretations. Morris tends towards the view that ἰδιώτης is here a technical term for an 'inquirer', "people who had not committed themselves to Christianity but who were interested. These had ceased to be simply outsiders, but were not yet Christians." So also Hering who says these "have a definite place in the assembly... They are not pagans present by chance, but sympathisers who are yet unbaptised, or quite simply 'ordinary' Christians who do not possess any gifts of inspiration." Could Paul's phrase here reflect some elitist division *among the Corinthians*? The NIV seems to reflect an informal use of the term. Thistleton translates, 'the uninitiated person.' Those referenced are those who, when the words are spoken in tongues, find themselves unable to understand what is said.

πῶς how?  
ἐρεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s λεγῶ  
σοῦ, σῆ, σου possessive adj. your, yours  
εὐχαριστία, ας f thanksgiving  
ἐπειδὴ since, because, for

"Worship and prayer, Paul emphasises, should be *intelligible and corporate*." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 14:17**

σὺ μὲν γὰρ καλῶς εὐχαριστεῖς, ἀλλ' ὁ ἕτερος οὐκ οἰκοδομεῖται.

εὐχαριστεῖς Verb, pres act indic, 2 s  
εὐχαριστεῶ thank, give thanks  
ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different  
οἰκοδομεῶ build, build up, edify

"The goal of corporate worship is not a personal thrill, but the building up of the body of Christ." Murphy O'Connor

**1 Corinthians 14:18**

εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ, πάντων ὑμῶν μᾶλλον γλώσσαις λαλῶ·

μᾶλλον adv more; rather, instead, more than that

Thistleton suggests 'more gifted in' rather than more in terms of "sheer frequency."

**1 Corinthians 14:19**

ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ θέλω πέντε λόγους τῷ νοῷ μου λαλῆσαι, ἵνα καὶ ἄλλους κατηχήσω, ἢ μυρίους λόγους ἐν γλώσσῃ.

ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ 'in the assembled congregation.'

θελῶ wish, will  
πεντε (indeclinable) five  
νοῷ see v.15  
ἄλλος, η, ο another, other  
κατηχεῶ inform, instruct

ἢ ὁ, ἢ ἄνθρωπος

μυριοι, αι, α ten thousand

Having repeated his understanding of διερμηνεύω (see 14:5), Thistleton says, "Paul does not approve of uttering unintelligible noises in public worship, whether or not someone purports subsequently to 'decode' them. Moreover, since the 'tongue' would normally be addressed to God (14:2, 15, 16), the notion of interpreting glossolalia as a 'message' of prophecy addressed to the congregation (14:3, 'prophecies ... to other people') owes more to pietist traditions than to exegesis of this epistle. Our arguments are set forth above, and are corroborated by Paul's allusion to Isaiah in vv. 20-25."

### 1 Corinthians 14:20

Ἀδελφοί, μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσίν, ἀλλὰ τῇ κακίᾳ νηπιάζετε, ταῖς δὲ φρεσίν τέλειοι γίνεσθε.

"Nowhere does Paul state more clearly than in v.20 that the way in which speaking in tongues is used at Corinth minister to childish love of display or thoughtless self-centredness."

Thistleton

παιδιον, ου n child

The negative present imperative μη ... γινεσθε suggests 'do not continue to be.'

φρεσίν Noun, dat pl φρην, φρενος f  
thinking, understanding

"It is indeed the characteristic of the child to prefer the amusing to the useful, the brilliant to the solid." Godet

"Children love anything that shines or moves or makes a noise... Many modern Christians have the same mentality... They would rather be made to feel than to think ... fall too easily under the spell of virtuosi ... It shows lack of maturity in the things of the Spirit." Deluz

κακια, ας evil, wickedness

νηπιαζω be a child

τελειος, α, ου complete, perfect, mature

### 1 Corinthians 14:21

ἐν τῷ νόμῳ γέγραπται ὅτι Ἐν ἑτερογλώσσοις καὶ ἐν χειλέσιν ἑτέρων λαλήσω τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ, καὶ οὐδ' οὕτως εἰσακούσονται μου, λέγει κύριος.

νομος is here used of the OT generally (cf. Rom 3:19; Jn 10:34).

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

The quotation is from Is 28:11-12, though the wording here differs both from the LXX and the Hebrew MT.

"Paul superimposes the parallel situations of Corinth and Isaiah 28 onto one another with the effect that the genuine force of OT scripture speaks creatively to a new situation. Ronald Clements explains the situation which Isaiah addressed. 'Isaiah found himself in conflict with certain priests and prophets of Jerusalem': their self-indulgence in festivities and drink had confused their speech and their thinking, and led them to mock the serious declarations of Isaiah about divine action.

'Isaiah turns back their mockeries on their own head by warning of the way God himself will punish them (v.11)... [with] the coming of the Assyrians.' 'Whom will he teach knowledge?' (28:9) alludes to Isaiah's wasting his time because the scoffers are too drunk, confused, and self-confident to care. The Hebrew of 28:10 suggests 'onomatopoeic ... representation of the din made by the revellers' who found Isaiah's rebuke 'foolish and childish,' while in 28:11 'the reference is clearly to the harsh-sounding Assyrian language which ... 'this people' would soon be hearing... [These foreigners] would soon be teaching them a lesson...' Bruce, Kistemaker, Allo and Schrage paint a similar background.

"The two contexts match well. Those who are 'wise' and 'gifted' in their own eyes dismiss the plain message as 'childish,' when in reality it is the supposedly wise who think and act like children. Divine judgment, as so often occurs in life, has a dimension of 'internal grammar,' i.e., God permits the seeds of its own fall to operate. The disdain of plain speech comes home with a vengeance: if they want something other than intelligible speech, they can have it; however, it will serve as an uncomfortable judgment, for it will place many of God's own people for whom they ought to care in the position of *aliens and outsiders*...

"This now accounts for many of the similarities to, and apparent divergences from, the LXX text of Isa 28:11-12, for Paul is *simultaneously quoting and applying the passage*." Thistleton

ἑτερογλωσσοσ, ου speaking a  
foreign/strange language

χειλος, ους n lip

λαος, ου m people, a people

εἰσακουω obey

### 1 Corinthians 14:22

ὥστε αἱ γλῶσσαι εἰς σημεῖον εἰσιν οὐ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀπίστοις, ἢ δὲ προφητεία οὐ τοῖς ἀπίστοις ἀλλὰ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν.

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
ἀπιστος, ου unfaithful, unbelieving

Tongues, in the passage quoted, are a sign of (or upon) unbelief or disobedience: a mark of the judgement of God. It is strange therefore that Christians should prefer tongues to intelligible speech.

"In the public worship of the church the transference of experience of being alien prefigured in Isaiah 28 constitutes a sign of judgment rather than of grace; it is prophetic speech which proclaims grace." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 14:23

ἐὰν οὖν συνέλθῃ ἡ ἐκκλησία ὅλη ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πάντες λαλῶσιν γλώσσαις, εἰσέλθωσιν δὲ ἰδιῶται ἢ ἄπιστοι, οὐκ ἐροῦσιν ὅτι μαίνεσθε;

The language of vv 23f. is deliberately extravagant as Paul paints what Thistleton refers to as an 'impressionistic' scenario of the *whole* church together in one place and *all* speaking in tongues, etc.

συνέλθῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s συνεργομαι  
come together, assemble, meet  
ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire  
εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in  
ἰδιώτης see v.16  
ἢ οἱ  
ἐροῦσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl λεγω  
μαινομαι be out of one's mind, be raving

"The term carries the double meaning of emotional lack of self-control, expressed as 'raving,' and an unattractive, even frightening loss of rational *sanity*." Thistleton

It is important to realise that Paul is here using two separate arguments to support two different points. The first, in vv 21 & 22, highlights the inappropriateness of Christians revelling in tongues. The second argument, developed in this and the following verses, shows that tongues convey entirely the wrong message to the unconverted. They might think that this "is simply one more mystery cult that whips its partisans into a frenzy of frothy enthusiasm." Hayes

### 1 Corinthians 14:24

ἐὰν δὲ πάντες προφητεύωσιν, εἰσέλθῃ δὲ τις ἄπιστος ἢ ἰδιώτης, ἐλέγχεται ὑπὸ πάντων, ἀνακρίνεται ὑπὸ πάντων,

ἐλέγχω show (someone his) fault, convince (someone of his) error, convict

ὑπο παντων Thistleton means 'by all that is said'

ἀνακρινω examine, judge, evaluate

"As Calvin and Barrett note, the sense is closely parallel to that which John 16:8 ascribes to the work of the Holy Spirit – Paraclete." Thistleton

The Spirit is more evident in, and works more effectively through, clear proclamation of Christ than in ecstatic but incomprehensible speech.

### 1 Corinthians 14:25

τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ φανερὰ γίνεται, καὶ οὕτως πεσὼν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον προσκυνήσει τῷ θεῷ, ἀπαγγέλλων ὅτι Ὅντως ὁ θεὸς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστίν.

κρυπτος, η, ον hidden, secret, private  
φανερως, α, ον evident, plain, visible  
πεσων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s πιπτω  
fall, fall down

προσωπον, ου n face

"Since this is a conscious act of worship ... this *falling down* (NIV, REB) must not be confused with neo-Pentecostalist phenomena often described as being 'slain in the Spirit.' *To throw oneself to the ground* (in prostration) was used in the OT and in the first century 'as a sign of devotion, before high-ranking persons of divine beings especially when one approaches with a petition' BAGD." Thistleton

προσκυνεω worship  
ἀπαγγελλω announce, proclaim  
ὄντως really, certainly, indeed

"The effect of the prophetic word is to reveal to the man his state. His whole inner being is searched out. Those things he fondly imagined to be locked within *his heart* he finds reprovved and judged, and he can only ascribe this to the activity of God." Morris

"Allo suggests that the conviction brought about by prophetic speech stands in contrast to the Corinthian claim that it is speaking in tongues that provides the necessary sign of authenticity." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 14:26

Τί οὖν ἐστίν, ἀδελφοί; ὅταν συνέρχησθε, ἕκαστος ψαλμὸν ἔχει, διδαχὴν ἔχει, ἀποκάλυψιν ἔχει, γλώσσαν ἔχει, ἐρμηνείαν ἔχει· πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω.

Τί οὖν ἐστίν, ἀδελφοί 'What should be done, then, my friends.'

ὅταν when, whenever  
συνερχομαι come together, meet

Dunn believes that the following describes a "typical gathering for worship," but the stress is on ὅταν συνέρχησθε ... πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

Many MSS add ὕμων after ἕκαστος. The shorter text is more likely to be earlier.

έκαστος here with various έχει phrases means 'one contributes a psalm, another a teaching ...' It is not clear whether these are pre-prepared or spontaneous items.

ψαλμος, ου m psalm, song  
 διδαχη, ης f teaching, what is taught  
 αποκαλυψις, εως f revelation

"A revelation (NRSV, REB, NIV, NJB, KJV/AV) seems to suggest an act of divine disclosure on the spot. The word may indeed include this, but it does not exclude the communication of what came to be revealed by God through some experience or through biblical reflection prior to the act of worship itself." Thistleton

έρμηνεια, ας f interpretation, translation

Thistleton sticks here with the view he has expounded in 14:2,4,6,11,13 and 18-22. See his comment on v.27 below.

οικοδομη, ης f upbuilding, edification

A refrain throughout this chapter, cf. 3,5,12,26.

γινέσθω Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 3 s  
 γινομαι

### 1 Corinthians 14:27

είτε γλώσση τις λαλει, κατά δύο ή τὸ πλείστον τρεις, καὶ ἀνά μέρος, καὶ εἰς διερμηνεύτω·

"We have argued consistently that all (or at least virtually all) the relevant passages in 12:1-14:26 which use διερμηνεω or έρμηνεω (especially 14:6 and 14:13) are more likely to refer to the persons who speak in tongues as themselves articulating what had otherwise been inexpressible in everyday speech... The syntax makes this understanding entirely compatible with this verse, even if on its own the Greek could be understood either in the traditional way or in the terms proposed here." Thistleton

είτε if, whether

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two  
 πλειστος, η, ον (superl. of πολυς) most,  
 large; το π. at the most

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three  
 ἀνα prep used distributively with acc. each,  
 each one

ἀνα μέρος may mean either 'in turn' i.e. one at a time, or 'by shares' i.e. each one being given a fair share of the time.

μερος, ους n part, piece, in part, partly

εἰς Thistleton suggests refers back to the τις at the beginning of the verse, 'let the one who speaks put it into words.'

διερμηνεω interpret, explain, translate

### 1 Corinthians 14:28

ἐάν δε μή ή διερμηνευτής, σιγάτω ἐν ἐκκλησία, ἐαυτῷ δε λαλείτω καὶ τῷ θεῷ.

ή Verb, pres subj, 3s εἰμι  
 διερμηνευτης, ου m interpreter

Thistleton, following Weiss, suggests that the sense is 'if he/she is not an interpreter' i.e. 'if he or she (the speaker in tongues) cannot put it into words...'

σιγαω keep silent, be/become silent  
 ἐαυτος, ἐαυτη, ἐαυτον reflexive pronoun,  
 himself, herself, itself

Here meaning 'privately.'

### 1 Corinthians 14:29

προφήται δε δύο ή τρεις λαλείτωσαν, καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν·

'In the case of prophets, however,...' (bringing out the contrast implied by δε).

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other  
 διακρινω judge, evaluate, discern

"The utterance of a prophet is not to be given uncritical acceptance, but to be tested by those qualified." Morris.

"The 'others' are to 'distinguish between' (i) *prophetic speech which is God-given and coheres with the gospel of Christ and the pastoral situation* and (ii) *speech which is merely self-generated rhetoric reflecting the speaker's disguised self-interests, self-deceptions, or errors, albeit under the guise of supposed 'prophecy'...* The authentic is to be 'sifted' from the inauthentic or spurious, in the light of the OT scriptures, the gospel of Christ, the traditions of all the churches, and critical reflections. Nowhere does Paul hint that preaching or 'prophecy' achieves a privileged status which places them above critical reflection ... *It is never infallible.*" Thistleton  
 Who are the *others* who are to make the judgement? The use of ἄλλος in the following verse might suggest the other prophets, but a wider use of the term is here probably intended. Allo understands 'the others' "principally" (but not exclusively) as "the leaders of the congregation."

### 1 Corinthians 14:30

ἐάν δε ἄλλω ἀποκαλυφθῆ καθημένω, ὁ πρῶτος σιγάτω.

ἀποκαλυφθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s  
 ἀποκαλυπτω reveal, disclose  
 καθημαι sit, sit down, live  
 πρωτος, η, ον first, earlier

"It is quite conceivable that what is 'disclosed' or *revealed* to the second speaker is that the first has now unwittingly drifted into self-deceptive, manipulative, mistaken, or merely self-important discourse and has ceased to communicate what God's Spirit has revealed." Thistleton

σιγαω see v.28

### 1 Corinthians 14:31

δύνασθε γὰρ καθ' ἓνα πάντες προφητεύειν, ἵνα πάντες μανθάνωσιν καὶ πάντες παρακαλῶνται πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

"The dispute here is not whether all or some may prophesy; it is whether 'everyone' who has the gift of using prophetic speech also has the reflective and critical self-awareness and control to begin and especially 'to stop' (v.30) when the circumstances which are going on outside the speaker's immediate prophetic awareness warrant it. Paul insists that there are no exemptions to the rule that prophetic speech, like speaking in tongues, *remains subject to the ethics of controlled speech*, even if this necessitates a critical awareness of what one is doing, and what others are doing, when one's utterance is 'inspired' or 'given' by God." Thistleton

μανθάνω learn, find out

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

### 1 Corinthians 14:32

(καὶ πνεύματα προφητῶν προφήταις ὑποτάσσεται,

ὑποτασσω put in subjection; pass. be subject, submit to

"Just as those speaking with 'tongues' had the ability to keep silent when they chose, so it is with prophecy. It is not an irresistible divine compulsion that comes upon a man." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 14:33

οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀκαταστασία ὁ θεὸς ἀλλὰ εἰρήνης), ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων.

ἀκαταστασια, ας f disorder, insurrection  
εἰρηνη, ης f peace

"Probably we should place a full stop after *peace*, and take what follows with the next verse. There are not wanting those who favour the division of the AV, but it is difficult to think that such a high-sounding principle as the one we have been examining should be given simply as the custom of the churches." Morris

Paul is appealing to the Corinthians to conform to what is general practice in the churches. For his description of the church here cf. 1:2.

### 1 Corinthians 14:34-36

"The translation and exegesis is immensely complex. Contextual factors are vital, including presuppositions about what the addressees were *assumed* to understand by language of which we know only Paul's part of the dialogue. Nevertheless, the main themes of 'controlled speech' and 'order' (14:24-40) continue." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 14:34

Αἱ γυναῖκες ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις σιγάτωσαν, οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν· ἀλλὰ ὑποτασσέσθωσαν, καθὼς καὶ ὁ νόμος λέγει.

Verses 34-35 are displaced to after v.40 in a number of Western MSS, leading some, including Fee, to suggest that these verses are an early marginal gloss which found its way into the text in two different places. Such arguments are highly tenuous given the weight (or lack of weight) of the evidence. Other commentators (including Hayes and Barrett) suggest that the whole section vv 33b-36 is an interpolation. Ross, pointing out that only a handful of related MSS have these verses dislocated and none omit them, concludes "We are bound to accept the unanimous testimony of the manuscripts, however deeply we may regret that Paul expressed this opinion." A second means by which some seek to avoid the difficulties of vv.33b-36 is exemplified by Odell-Scott who suggests that in verses 34-35 Paul is quoting a Corinthian view which he rejects. The ἡ at the beginning of v.36 introducing a resounding rhetorical rejoinder. This suggestion does not fit with v.33b. Ellis and Witherington stress that vv. 34 and 35 continue significant themes and use a significant amount of vocabulary from the previous verses – they are a continuation of the one argument.

γυνη, αικος f woman, wife

σιγάτωσαν Verb, pres act imperat, 3 pl σιγαω see v.28

ἐπιτρέπω let, allow, permit

ὑποτασσω see v.32

But Paul's appeal is not to mere custom. He appeals here to the law. Some suggest that the appeal is to Gen 3:16 but Bruce, followed by Thistleton, argues forcefully that the reference is to the creation narrative and to creation order (Gen 3:16, they argue, is descriptive (not prescriptive) of the *fallen* human condition). The principle is therefore of continuing importance and application even though its expression may change with cultural norms. What is the principle? It depends in part on what is demanded of the Corinthians in women 'keeping silent'. There are several views, but in light of 1 Tim. 2:11-14 it may be best to understand this as a prohibiting the women from passing judgement in the assembly on words of prophecy (v.29).

"We must therefore firmly keep in view that since 11:5 makes it clear that Paul approves of women using 'prophetic speech' their *silence* may allude either to 'stopping speaking' or more probably to the possibility of sitting in judgment over prophetic speech which may come from their husbands, i.e., 'sifting prophetic speech,' or to a constant invention of 'questions' cf. v.35) under the guise of 'sifting' what has been said." Thistleton  
Paul calls for 'order' in the churches. The issue is not so much whether they may speak as it is the abuse of their right to speak.

### 1 Corinthians 14:35

εἰ δέ τι μαθεῖν θέλουσιν, ἐν οἴκῳ τοῦς ἰδίους ἄνδρας ἐπερωτάτωσαν, αἰσχρὸν γάρ ἐστιν γυναικὶ λαλεῖν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ.

μαθεῖν Verb, aor act infin μανθανω see v.31  
ἰδιος, α, ον one's own  
ἄνηρ, ἄνδρος m man, husband  
ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question  
αἰσχυρος, α, ον disgraceful, shameful

Again, we need to be careful to distinguish the abiding principle from its cultural expression. What is meant by ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ? The definite article is not used here (compare v.33b). Paul may therefore be using the term in its general sense and appealing to recognised custom — 'it is shameful for a woman to speak [or to speak in a manner challenging what has been said by others] in an assembly [of men and women]'.

### 1 Corinthians 14:36

ἢ ἀφ' ὧν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξηλθεν, ἢ εἰς ὡμᾶς μόνους κατήντησεν;

μονος, η, ον adj only, alone  
κατανταω come, arrive, reach, attain

Paul rebukes the arrogance of the Corinthians in flouting all custom. "They must not think that they alone know what is Christian. The customs and thinking 'in all the churches of the saints' (verse 33) must be given due force." Morris

"It is a tragedy of church life that some are so weighed down by history that church activity becomes mere replication and routinisation while others are so concerned with novelty and 'relevance' that historical roots do not receive the respect that they deserve as part of a corporate memory and corporate identity." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 14:37

Εἰ τις δοκεῖ προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνευματικός, ἐπιγινώσκετω ἃ γράφω ὑμῖν ὅτι κυρίου ἐστίν·

δοκεω think, suppose, have reputation  
εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι  
πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual  
ἐπιγινώσκω understand, recognise  
ἐντολη, ης f command, instruction

The theme of discerning the genuine from the false continues. The Corinthians must discern the truth of what Paul is saying.

"Paul's axiom is entirely logical. God's Spirit does not contradict himself. He does not undermine his own prior disclosures and thereby cause 'confusion' or disorder (v.33a). If a prophet's utterance contradicts *apostolic* utterances (let alone biblical tradition), does not that of itself disenfranchise the currency of the prophetic utterance?" Thistleton  
"The bearing of this on the way the New Testament writers viewed their inspiration should not be overlooked." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 14:38

εἰ δέ τις ἀγνοεῖ, ἀγνοεῖται.

ἀγνοεω not know, fail to understand  
ἀγνοεῖται Verb, pres pass indic, 3 s ἀγνοεω

There are variant readings here. The AV reflects the pres *act* imperat, 'let him be ignorant'. The passive is well attested and makes the better sense, 'anyone who ignores this, let him be ignored.' Metzger comments, "Although the external evidence may not first seem to favour ἀγνοεῖται, several important representations of the Alexandrian texts unite to support the indicative. The alternation between active and passive forms of the same verb accords with Paul's usage in 8:2-3, whereas the use of the imperative form may have been suggested by Rev 22:11. In any case, the imperative gives a less forceful meaning than ἀγνοεῖται."

**1 Corinthians 14:39**

ὥστε, ἀδελφοί μου, ζηλοῦτε τὸ προφητεῦειν, καὶ τὸ λαλεῖν μὴ κωλύετε γλώσσαις·

ὥστε so that, with the result that

Thistleton thinks μου should be retained.

ζηλω be jealous of, be very concerned about

'be eager to'

κωλυω hinder, prevent, forbid

**1 Corinthians 14:40**

πάντα δὲ εὐσχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω..

εὐσχημονως properly, respectably

"The cognate noun εὐσημοσση clearly means, *propriety, decorum, what is presentable in public*, and we do not doubt that Paul has in mind both *reverence and dignity appropriate to address to and from God*, and a *missionary or evangelistic* rather than strictly aesthetic dimension... 'fittingly' perhaps best conveys the Greek." Thistleton

τάξις, εως f order, division

κατὰ τάξιν 'in an orderly manner'

γινέσθω Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 3 s  
γίνομαι

"Everything in it [worship] must be done in as seemly a manner as possible, and with due regard for order." Morris

**Chapter 15**

Thistleton cites Barth who says that this chapter "forms not only the close and crown of the whole epistle, but also provides the key to its meaning from which light is shed onto the whole." It concerns the nature of the Gospel which centres in the cross and resurrection. It demonstrates that the gospel concerns the sovereign grace of God who "gives life to the dead" (Rom 4:17). Thistleton writes, "Paul could not introduce a theology of the resurrection before the notion of the cross as the 'ground and criterion' of Christian identity and lifestyle had been fully reappropriated. A context of religious triumphalism and complacency leaves no conceptual space for the 'transformative reversal' of death and resurrection. Resurrection epitomises 1:31, 'let the person who glories, glory in the Lord,' Divine action is directed toward the *dead*, who cannot contribute to their welfare. This underlines both divine sovereignty and divine grace."

What were the erroneous beliefs which Paul addresses in this chapter? This is the subject of much debate but it would seem that there were people who were so influenced by Greek modes of thinking that they would not allow for any place in their hope and understanding for a resurrection *of the body* (cf. Acts 17:32). It may well have been that they alleged rather that the resurrection had already occurred (cf. 2 Tim 2:18). Thistleton, outlining this view, says, "If Christian believers have already been raised with Christ to a new mode of life, all that happens at death is the dissolution of the physical body, while the already existing 'pneumatic' or 'spiritual' nature continues its existence without the husk of the body. In various forms this approach is linked with an overrealised eschatology and sometimes with spiritual enthusiasm." Further than these possibilities it is difficult to be clear about the views of those at Corinth which Paul seeks to correct in this chapter.

**1 Corinthians 15:1**

Γνωρίζω δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν, ὃ καὶ παρελάβετε, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἐστήκατε,

γνωρίζω make known, disclose, know

"I give you to know" Dale Martin suggests that this is a rebuke for the 'strong' who are proud of their knowledge. Paul's opening word of this chapter suggests that their knowledge is defective or incomplete.

On εὐαγγέλιον see Dunn *The Theology of Paul*, pp 164-169 who argues that the term is rare outside of the NT and within the NT is largely (60 out of 76 occurrences) Pauline. He concludes "it is probable that it was Paul himself who coined the usage of a new technical term for his own proclamation." Nevertheless, the *content* of Paul's message is not novel to Paul. "Paul endorses the shared pre-Pauline tradition which both *proclaims the death and resurrection of Christ and interprets it in terms of the saving and transforming power of God as this receives explanation and intelligibility within the frame of reference provided by the [Old Testament] scriptures.*" Thistleton

παρελάβετε Verb, aor act ind, 2pl

παραλαβανω take, receive, accept

ἐστήκατε Verb, perf act indic, 2 pl ἰστημι  
intrans in pf stand, stand firm

"REB's 'have taken your stand' indicates *present* stability on the basis of past action as well as present state." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 15:2**

δι' οὗ καὶ σώζεσθε, τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν, εἰ κατέχετε, ἐκτός εἰ μὴ εἰκῆ ἐπιστεύσατε.

Paul moves from the gospel as declared (its objective content) to the gospel in its effects (its saving power).

σώζω save, rescue, heal

The present tense has continuous force. "There is a sense in which salvation is once for all ... and there is also a sense in which it is progressive (e.g. 1:18; 2 Cor 2:15). It is to this progressive character of salvation that Paul directs attention." Morris

The focus here is on the future. The gospel to which they responded when it was first proclaimed is the gospel which still saves. They have no need of any other.

κατέχω hold fast, keep

τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν εἰ κατέχετε 'if you hold fast to the substance of the gospel that I proclaimed to you.'

ἐκτός εἰ μὴ except, unless

εἰκῆ adv. in vain, for nothing

"If men's grasp on the gospel is such that they are not really trusting in Christ, their belief is groundless and empty. They have not saving faith." Morris

**1 Corinthians 15:3**

Παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν πρώτοις, ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον, ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφάς,

παραδίδωμι hand or give over, deliver up  
πρωτος, η, ον first, foremost, prominent

ἐν πρώτοις 'first and foremost', 'of first importance'

παρέλαβον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl  
παραλαμβάνω receive, accept

Paul stresses the way in which he has not made up the gospel but has passed it on faithfully. Neither do the Corinthians have any liberty to alter the message. "*The juxtaposition of confession in the saving efficacy of the cross and the divine vindication or glorification of Christ in the resurrection feature in virtually all of these passages as an emergent core pattern of the earliest Christian confessions or creeds within the pages of the New Testament.*" Thistleton

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνήσκω die, face death

"Edwards ... sees in this verse 'a distinct statement that the doctrine of Christ's death was a propitiatory sacrifice for sin 'as' an essential aspect of the gospel (cf. 1:17; 2:2; Gal 3:1; Rom 4:25)... The word ὑπὲρ expresses the same notion as τιμῆς [bought with a price] in 6:20... Here therefore, as in 2 Cor 5:21, ὑπὲρ is synonymous with ἀντι." Thistleton  
On 'for our sins, Calvin comments, "That is to say, He took our curse upon himself ... a sacrifice of expiation of our sins."

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

κατὰ τὰς γραφάς Cf. Gal 1:4, also Lk 24:25-27, 44-46. On the import of this phrase, see CH Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*. The allusion may particularly be to Is 53, though Blomberg notes that "the first Christian writers saw *all* of the Scriptures pointing to Christ."

**1 Corinthians 15:4**

καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη, καὶ ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς,

ἐτάφη aor pass indic, 3s θάπτω bury

"Underlines not only the reality of Christ's death but also the reality of his resurrection: *had he not been 'buried', the genuine occurrence of either or both might lie more readily open to question.*" Thistleton  
In context it alludes to the reality of the empty tomb.

ἐγήγερται perf pass indic, 3s ἐγείρω raise

Note the perfect tense and its implication – he *is* risen.

τρίτος, η, ον third

κατὰ τὰς γραφάς "relate[s] this divine act of vindication and sovereign action to *the theme of promise*. Its occurrence rests not only on divine power and divine grace, but also on *divine faithfulness* to vindicate his obedient messianic agent." Thistleton. Thistleton also stresses that the resurrection of Christ is foundational to the life of the people of God both now, and on the last day. "Rom 8:11 summarises the Pauline logic formulated more fully in 1 Corinthians 15: 'if the Spirit of *him who raised Jesus from the dead* dwells in you, then *the God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead* will also give life to your mortal bodies through his indwelling Spirit' (REB, my italics). God will raise *the in-Christ corporeity who are identified with Christ* in the event in which *God raised Christ.*"

**1 Corinthians 15:5**

καὶ ὅτι ὤφθη Κηφᾶ, εἴτα τοῖς δώδεκα·

ὤφθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s ὁραω trans see, observe, perceive; pass. appear

Κηφας, α m Cephas (Aramaic equivalent of  
Πετρος, rock).  
εἶτα adv. then, and then  
δώδεκα twelve

The 'twelve' is a general name for the apostles even though there were no longer twelve. 'The twelve' is not a Pauline term (Paul uses the phrase 'the apostles'). Its use here suggests a pre-Pauline confession.

### 1 Corinthians 15:6

ἔπειτα ὄφθη ἐπάνω πεντακοσίοις ἀδελφοῖς  
ἐφάπαξ, ἐξ ὧν οἱ πλείονες μένουσιν ἕως ἄρτι,  
τινὲς δὲ ἐκοιμήθησαν·

ἔπειτα then, afterwards  
ἐπάνω adv. over, more than  
πεντακοσιοι, αι, α five hundred

This may be a reference to the incident recorded in Mat 28:16ff

ἐφάπαξ adv. once for all time, at one time  
μενω remain, stay  
ἕως until  
ἄρτι now, at the present

The phrase "is clearly calculated to provide further evidential support for the resurrection of Jesus; anyone who is disposed to be sceptical will find a formidable gallery of witnesses wanting to testify that they have seen him alive" Paul did not regard the resurrection "as some sort of ineffable truth beyond history; rather, it was an event ... for which historical eyewitness testimony was readily available. Hayes

κοιμαομαι sleep, fall asleep, die

For this use of *sleep*, see 1 Thess 4:13f. he term "carries with it the grammar of being *awakened* at the resurrection."

### 1 Corinthians 15:7

ἔπειτα ὄφθη Ἰακώβω, εἶτα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις  
πᾶσιν·

"Nothing more is known of the appearance to *James*. Nor is it certain which James is meant. Most think that it is James the Lord's brother, and that it was this appearance which led to his conversion and through him to that of his brothers." Morris

"That ... Jesus 'appeared to James' ... evidently produced in James a revolutionary effect comparable to that which a similar experience later produced in Paul himself." Bruce

### 1 Corinthians 15:8

ἔσχατον δὲ πάντων ὡσπερὶ τῷ ἐκτρώματι  
ὄφθη κάμοι.

ἔσχατος, η, ον last; ἐσχατον παντων last of  
all

ὡσπερὶ as, as though  
ἐκτρώμα, τος η abnormal birth,  
miscarriage

"The emphasis lies in the *undeserved grace of God* (explicated further on v.10), who chooses to give life and new creation to those reckoned as dead, or, in Paul's case, both a 'miscarried, aborted foetus' whose stance had been *hostile* to Christ and to the people of God." Thistleton  
"This abortive birth makes the grace of God all the more evident in Paul's case than if he had grown up in Christ little by little, step by step." Calvin

"Paul perceives himself as one who was unable to contribute anything to an encounter in which God's sovereign grace was all, even to the extent of giving life to one who was humanly beyond all hope. This precisely reflects the theme of resurrection as God's sovereign gift of life to the dead (not to those who already possess capacities of self-perpetuating survival) throughout this chapter." Thistleton

κάγω a compound word = και ἐγω

"Paul puts his vision on the road to Damascus on the same level as the other resurrection appearances. He thinks of himself as the last in the line of those who have seen the Lord." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 15:9

ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι ὁ ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων, ὃς  
οὐκ εἰμὶ ἰκανὸς καλεῖσθαι ἀπόστολος, διότι  
ἐδίωξα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ·

ἐλάχιστος, η, ον least, smallest,  
insignificant

ἰκανος, η, ον worthy, sufficient, fit  
διότι because, for,  
διωκω persecute, pursue

"As Munck and others have shown, Paul's persecuting the church underlines the sovereign initiative of God's grace as intervening gift and allows no room for so-called psychological explanations concerning supposed subconscious guilt feelings which 'contribute to the experience of sovereign call.' Paul compares this call to that of Jeremiah 'before birth' (cf. Gal 1:13-17 and 1 Cor 9:16-18)." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:10

χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ εἰμι ὃ εἰμι, καὶ ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ ἡ  
εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ κενὴ ἐγενήθη, ἀλλὰ περισσώτερον  
αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα, οὐκ ἐγὼ δὲ ἀλλὰ ἡ  
χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ σὺν ἐμοί.

χάριτι Noun, dat s χάρις, ιτος f grace

"We come to the heart of Paul's point. Undeserved, unmerited 'grace' (χαρις) which springs from the free, sovereign love of God alone and becomes operative in human life not only determines Paul's life and apostolic vocation but also characterises all Christian experience, not least the promise of resurrection and the reality of the activity of Christ as Lord." Thistleton

ἐμὲ Pronoun, acc s ἐγὼ

What he is, is sheer gift.

κενος, η, ον empty, to no purpose  
ἐγενήθη Verb, aor indic, 3 s γινομαι  
περισσότερος, α, ον adj here as adv more  
κοπιᾶω work, work hard, labour

The grace of God is seen in God's transforming power at work in men and women: it is dynamic, not static. Such grace saves, equips and empowers.

"Grace has shaped his entire life and character as an apostolic agent *through whom* God chooses to reach and transform others... The emphasis on 'labour' reminds us that difficulty and cost in Christian work, far from suggesting an absence of God's grace, presupposes the gift of such grace to prosecute the work through all obstacles (see 2 Cor 11:23-17). The theme of grace in and through 'weakness' is one which Paul constantly urges to Corinth." Thistleton Paul is careful to emphasise that though he has accomplished much, none of it can be credited to him.

### 1 Corinthians 15:11

εἴτε οὖν ἐγὼ εἴτε ἐκεῖνοι, οὕτως κηρύσσομεν καὶ οὕτως ἐπιστεύσατε.

εἴτε if, whether

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those  
κηρύσσω preach, proclaim

Paul emphasises that there is only one gospel, whether preached by him or the other apostles. This is the gospel they believed. There is none other for them now. "'Ecumenicity' is not the lowest common denominator in a miscellany of individual experiences. For Paul it is defined by the *common kerygma* of a *shared, transmitted gospel tradition*, anchored in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as ἐν πρώτοις (15:3)." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:12

Εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς κηρύσσεται ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται, πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν τινες ὅτι ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν;

νεκρος, α, ον dead

ἐγήγερται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω  
raise

Note the force of the perfect, 'was raised and continues to live.'

πῶς how? in what way?

Expresses astonishment, 'how can it be that one who has professed to accept the gospel and believe in Christ can now deny the resurrection!'

ἀναστασις, εως f resurrection, raising up

On the views at Corinth which Paul is opposing, see the note at the beginning of this chapter.

### 1 Corinthians 15:13

εἰ δὲ ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται·

The resurrection of Christ is not just an odd event, it is central to an understanding of God's purposes towards mankind.

"These verses underline *Paul's expectation that believing Christians will respect logical coherence and rational thought*. He does not hesitate to appeal to it." Thistleton.

### 1 Corinthians 15:14

εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, κενὸν ἄρα τὸ κήρυγμα ἡμῶν, κενὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν,

κενος, η, ον see v.10

κήρυγμα, τος n what is preached,  
message, proclamation

"So central are the truth claim and event of the resurrection of Christ that if the linchpin is removed a multiple of dependent derivatives collapses: (i) the content and currency of the gospel; (ii) the authenticity of the Christian faith; (iii) the truthfulness of testimony to the acts of God (v.15); (iv) liberation from the destructive and damaging power of sin (v.17); and (v) the irretrievable loss of believers who have died (v.18)." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:15

εὐρισκόμεθα δὲ καὶ ψευδομάρτυρες τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι ἔμαρτυρήσαμεν κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι ἤγειρεν τὸν Χριστόν, ὃν οὐκ ἤγειρεν εἴπερ ἄρα νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται.

εὐρισκω find, discover

ψευδομαρτυς, υρος m false witness, one  
who gives false testimony

μαρτυρεω bear witness, testify

εἴπερ since, if it is true that

ἀρα carries here the classical sense 'as they say'

The gospel is not a system of philosophy or a moral code but the declaration of what God has done in Christ. If the dead are not raised then the whole gospel is a sham and those who preach it are liars.

**1 Corinthians 15:16**

εἰ γὰρ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται·

The importance of this argument is clear from the way in which vv 16 & 17 repeat the points made in vv 13 & 14.

**1 Corinthians 15:17**

εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, ματαία ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν, ἔτι ἐστὲ ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν.

ματαιος, α, ον worthless, futile, useless  
ἔτι still, yet

"Christ dead, without resurrection would be a condemned, not a justified Christ. How could he justify others?" Godet  
"Ye are yet in your sins, because Christ is yet in your sins. And your faith, committing you to Christ, uniting you to Christ, makes you share with him in whatever is his condition, in whatever is his fate. You cannot be better off than he is." Candlish  
"The words can be given a second meaning. If Christ was not raised they would still be living in their sins like any pagan. But they have a new power over sin stemming from faith in the risen Christ. Therefore Christ must have been raised." Morris

**1 Corinthians 15:18**

ἄρα καὶ οἱ κοιμηθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ ἀπώλοντο.

κοιμηθέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl  
κοιμασμαι see v.6  
ἀπώλοντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl  
ἀπολλυμι destroy; midd be lost, perish

There is no new day of awakening for them without the resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:19**

εἰ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ ταύτῃ ἐν Χριστῷ ἠλπικότες ἐσμὲν μόνον, ἐλεεινότεροι πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἐσμέν.

ζωη, ης f life  
ἠλπικότες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl  
ἐλπίζω hope, hope in

"The perfect ἠλπικοτες ἐσμεν ... carries the idea, 'we have set our hope and continue to hope'." Morris

μονος, η, ον i) adj only, alone; ii) adv μόνον only, alone

Thistleton suggests that the positioning of μόνον also carries the force of hope *in Christ only*. He seeks to express the double meaning in the translation '... placed hope in Christ with nothing beyond.'

ἐλεεινότερος, α, ον most pitiable  
comparitive of ἐλεεινος, η, ον pitiable

"If Christ be not raised, the very peace and reconciliation which make this life at its worst not only tolerable, but even desirable to believers in Jesus, are themselves a delusion." Candlish

**1 Corinthians 15:20**

Νυνὶ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων.

νυνὶ (originally an emphatic form of νυν)  
now

The *now* is logical rather than temporal, 'but as a matter of fact', cf. Heb 9:26; 1 Cor 5:11.

ἐγήγερται see v.4 and the note there on perfect tense

νεκρος, α, ον see v.12

ἀπαρχη, ης f firstfruit, first portion (set apart to God)

Cf. Rom 8:23; 11:16. The firstfruits was the first of the harvest which was dedicated to God (Lev. 23:10f). Jesus was not the first to rise from the dead, he himself raised some, such as Lazarus. Nevertheless, Christ is the first to gain resurrection life – to enter into a life no longer subject to death. His resurrection is the "pledge and proof of the resurrection of his people." Hodge

κοιμασμαι see v.6

**1 Corinthians 15:21**

ἐπειδὴ γὰρ δι' ἀνθρώπου θάνατος, καὶ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν·

ἐπειδὴ since, because, for  
θάνατος, ου m death  
ἀνάστασις see v.12

"Paul now draws an analogy between two uniquely representative men: Adam, head of the old creation, in whom all die, and Christ, head of the new creation, 'the first-born from the dead' (Col 1:18; cf. Rev 1:8) in whom all are to be *made* alive in resurrection." Bruce. For Christ as second Adam, compare Romans 5:12-21. "Adam's sin brought disaster not only on himself, but also on all his posterity. But if Adam's sin had far-reaching consequences, so had Christ's resurrection. It concerned not himself only, but also all who should believe on Him. Just as death came into the world through Adam, so did life come into the world through Christ. Paul's repeated *by man* points to the reality of the incarnation. Christ was as truly man as was Adam." Morris

"The argument that humanity is, simply as a brute fact, bound up in the solidarities, vulnerabilities, and consequences of the life and destiny of Adam finds its saving parallel in the gospel assurance that the new humanity is bound up in the solidarities, atoning work, and resurrection victory and promise of Christ as the 'last' (i.e., eschatological) Adam (see 15:45)." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:22

ὡςπερ γὰρ ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν, οὕτως καὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται.

ὡςπερ as, even as  
ἀποθνήσκω die, face death, be mortal  
ζωοποιηθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl  
ζωοποιεω give life, make alive

The *all* points to necessary and inescapable consequence. All in Adam (the whole of the human race) are subject to death. *All in Christ* (every believer) are heirs to the life he has gained. There is no support here for universalism.

### 1 Corinthians 15:23

ἕκαστος δὲ ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι· ἀπαρχὴ Χριστός, ἔπειτα οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ·

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every  
ἰδιος, α, ον one's own  
τάγμα, τος η, ον proper order, turn  
ἔπειτα then, afterwards

"This proper arranged order explicates both (a) the logic of firstfruits (v.20) as temporally prior to *the rest of the harvest* and (b) the actual situation that Christ has been raised (perfect, 15:4, 12, 14, 16, 17, 20), whereas those in Christ will be raised (future 15:22, 49, 51, 52, 54). ἔπειτα indicates a firmly marked sequence: then or afterward; but may carry more emphasis: *thereafter*, then afterward, since it is often used in deliberate 'enumerations ... of time and order.' (Grimm-Theyer)" Thistleton

παρουσια, ας f coming, arrival, presence

### 1 Corinthians 15:24

εἶτα τὸ τέλος, ὅταν παραδιδῶ τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί, ὅταν καταργήσῃ πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δύναμιν,

εἶτα adv. then, and then

"There are some who hold that we now come to a third τάγμα or 'order' ... This is not impossible, but it seems unlikely." Morris. The term τέλος will not bear the sense 'last group.'

τέλος, ος η, ον end, conclusion

ὅταν when

παραδιδῶ Verb, pres act subj, 3 s

παραδιδῶμι hand over, deliver up

The present subjunctive is read by p<sup>46</sup> A D but N reads παραθῶ (aorist subjunctive) while B and G read παραδίδοι (which might be indicative or subjunctive). The present subjunctive with ὅταν is open ended, leaving the timing unspecified.

καταργεω render ineffective, do away with  
ἀρχη, ης f beginning, first principle, power  
ἐξουσια, ας f authority, right, power

"Paul's use of πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δύναμιν reflects what originally denotes the superhuman agencies of apocalyptic, including demonic powers, but may in Paul indicate *every structural power* against which the individual *qua individual* is helpless and held in bondage as victim. Paul neither asserts nor denies that 'demonic' or 'supernatural' power may be included, for he sees all oppressive structures which hinder God's purposes or entrap the human person as instruments which, in effect, represent forces which are hostile to God (see above on 2:6 and 2:8). Corporate and structural sin and evil are 'bigger' and more sinister than the sum of individual acts and attitude, since they form an oppressive network and godless ethos which holds individual persons in a grip of bondage and evil influence." Thistleton

"Paul's thought is that Christ will at the last have full and complete authority over all things and all men, and that he will then 'deliver up' this authority, this rule, to His Father." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 15:25

δεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν βασιλεύειν ἄχρι οὗ θῆ πάντας τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ.

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must

It is the stated purpose of God that defines this necessity – δεῖ. There is nothing that can frustrate God's sovereign purposes.

βασιλευω rule, reign

ἄχρι (and ἀχρις) prep with gen; ἄχρι οὗ until, when

θῆ Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl τιθῆμι place, set, appoint

ἐχθρος, α, ον enemy, one hated

πόδας Noun, acc pl πους, ποδος m foot

Cf. Ps 110:1, though Hayes thinks that there is also clear allusion to Ps 8:6. "Although he is already Ruler of the world, only at his coming again will Christ annihilate all that possesses lordship, claims power, and exercises force (1 Cor 15:24)." Pannenberg

**1 Corinthians 15:26**

ἔσχατος ἐχθρὸς καταργεῖται ὁ θάνατος,  
ἔσχατος, η, ον adj last, final

The present passive καταργεῖται may suggest that the destruction has already begun in Christ's resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:27**

πάντα γὰρ ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ.  
ὅταν δὲ εἶπῃ ὅτι πάντα ὑποτέτακται, δηλον ὅτι  
ἐκτὸς τοῦ ὑποτάξαντος αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα.

ὑποτασσω subordinate, put in subjection

Cf. Psalm 8:6. "Paul now quotes from Ps 8:6 to explain the dynamics of how ἄνθρωπος (as in v.22), through whom death came, can come to receive 'dominion over all things.' Ps 8:5-8 provides a commentary on the creation of humankind in the image of God as God's vice-regent over the earth (Gen 1:26-30). As in Heb 2:5-8, the glorious destiny of mankind to be 'crowned with glory and honour' and to receive 'dominion over the works of thy hands' (Ps 8:5, 6a) reaches its climax in 'Thou hast put all things under his feet' (Ps 8:6b; Heb 2:a). Heb 2:6b adds, 'God left nothing that is not made subject.' The author to the Hebrews explains that whereas humankind *qua humankind* failed to achieve what God purposed, through *Jesus* the original role was reacquired, and the sovereignty described in Psalm 110 (LXX Psalm 109) was restored. Paul conjoins the same two psalms in vv 24-27 here: 'Christ as the last Adam, the 'son of man'... retrieved the situation which the first Adam lost.' (Bruce) Psalm 8 and Psalm 110 stand together not only in Hebrews but also in Eph 1:20-22."

Thistleton

ὅταν see v.24

ὑποτέτακται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s  
ὑποτασσω

δηλος, η, ον evident δηλον (ὅτι) it is evident (that)

ἐκτός prep with gen outside of, except  
ὑποτάξαντος Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s  
ὑποτασσω

"Paul's point ... is that God the Father has given to the Son unlimited sovereignty over all creation. That, however does not involve any infringement of the Father's own sovereignty." Morris. Christ is the means by which the goal of God's purpose is brought about.

**1 Corinthians 15:28**

ὅταν δὲ ὑποταγῇ αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, τότε αὐτὸς ὁ  
υἱὸς ὑποταγήσεται τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ τὰ  
πάντα, ἵνα ἢ ὁ θεὸς πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν.

ὑποταγη, ης f obedience, submission  
τοτε then, at that time

ὑποταγήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s

ὑποτασσω

ὑποτάξαντι Verb, aor act ptc, m dat s

ὑποτασσω

ἢ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἰμι

ἵνα ἢ ὁ θεὸς [τὰ] πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν Cf. Rom 11:36.

This does not undermine the deity of Christ. "Paul is not speaking of the essential nature of either Christ or of the Father. He is speaking of the work that Christ has accomplished and will accomplish." Morris

Neil Richardson suggests that Paul is here correcting an error of the 'Christ group' at Corinth (cf. 1:12) who exalted Christ *at the expense of or in place of* God.

**1 Corinthians 15:29**

Ἐπεὶ τί ποιήσουσιν οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν  
νεκρῶν; εἰ ὅλως νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, τί καὶ  
βαπτίζονται ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν;

ἐπει since, because, for

ἐπεὶ τί ποιήσουσιν 'what do those people think they are doing who ...'

νεκρος, α, ον dead

ὅλως adv at all; actually

νεκρος, α, ον dead

ἐγειρω raise

There are many suggestions as to the nature of this practice which Paul uses here as an illustration. Mathis Rossi devoted an entire book to the subject. Thistleton includes an excursus outlining the major views – 13 of them in his enumeration.

Grammatically, the most natural interpretation would seem to be that Paul is referring to a practice among some at Corinth of getting baptised on behalf of dead relatives. Morris considers other interpretations but concludes that if this is not what Paul is referring to (without condemnation but also without commendation) then we are left to conjecture.

However, Thistleton follows the suggestion of GG Findlay and Marion Raeder, suggesting that "baptism for the sake of (ὑπερ) the dead refers to the decision of a person or persons to ask for, and to receive, baptism as a result of the desire to be united with their believing relatives who have died. This presupposes that they would share the radiant confidence that they would meet again in and through Christ at the resurrection of the dead." Findlay, having rejected vicarious baptism writes, "Paul is referring rather to a much commoner, indeed a normal experience, that the death of Christians leads to the conversion of survivors, who in the first instance 'for the sake of the dead' (their beloved dead) and in the hope of re-union, turn to Christ – e.g., when a dying mother wins her son by the appeal 'Meet me in heaven!' Such appeals, and their frequent salutary effect, give strong and touching evidence of faith in the resurrection." Thistleton says, "We see no reason to reject this view ... as the least problematic and most convincing of all."

### 1 Corinthians 15:30

τί καὶ ἡμεῖς κινδυνεύομεν πᾶσαν ὥραν;

καὶ ἡμεῖς 'we also', probably reference to the apostles.

κινδυνεύω be in danger, run a risk

ώρα, ας f hour, moment

'every hour of the day.'

### 1 Corinthians 15:31

καθ' ἡμέραν ἀποθνήσκω, νῆ τὴν ὑμετέραν καύχησιν, ἣν ἔχω ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν

ἀποθνήσκω see v.22

Cf. 2 Cor 4:10; 1:9.

νῆ by (with acc. to denote a solemn oath)  
 ὑμετερος, α, ον possessive adj of 2 pl your  
 καυχῆσις, εως f boasting, ground for boasting

Morris cites the translation of Moffatt, "Not a day but I am at death's door! I swear it by my pride in you, brothers, through Christ Jesus our Lord." Morris comments, "It is interesting to see the expression of Paul's basic satisfaction with his Corinthian converts despite the many things for which he had to rebuke them."

A number of important early MSS include ἀδελθοι, i.e. ⋈ A B 33 ... however it is omitted by the earlier p<sup>46</sup> and also D F G L ... It is easier to account for its insertion than omission.

Thistleton sums up vv.30-31 saying, "Here is a succinct pastoral theology of the risks, fragility, and dearest, deepest concerns of a pastor who is willing to sacrifice all for the gospel in the light of the gathering together of all at the resurrection."

### 1 Corinthians 15:32

εἰ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον ἐθριομάχησα ἐν Ἐφέσῳ, τί μοι τὸ ὄφελος; εἰ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, Φάγωμεν καὶ πίωμεν, αὔριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν.

κατὰ ἄνθρωπον 'with merely human hopes' (NRSV), 'with human perspectives' (NJB), 'only with human horizons' Thistleton

ἐθριομάχησα Verb, aor act indic, 1 s

θηριομαχεω fight with wild beasts

On balance, it seems most likely that Paul is speaking *metaphorically* here of the troubles he had faced in Asia.

ὄφελος, ους n gain, benefit

The argument is not one merely of personal interest. Paul has devoted himself to the preaching of the gospel in the hope that he will "have a share in the gathering around the throne of God when the whole reconciled people of God shall enter fully into the purposed eschatological salvation. *Suffering* has its role in this eschatological and corporate context. Otherwise everything becomes empty, fruitless, and profitless, and his tenacity was for nothing." Thistleton

φάγωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ἔσθιω eat

πίωμεν verb, aor act subj, 1 pl πινω drink

αὔριον Adverb αὔριον tomorrow, the next day, in a short while

"Hayes observes in his commentary that such scepticism as is envisaged would lead the readers to 'act like the frenzied inhabitants of Jerusalem who faced siege and annihilation at the hands of the Assyrians (Isa 22:12-14): instead of facing their fate with repentance and weeping, they decided to 'party like [i.e., as if] there were no tomorrow' ... quoted from Isa 22:13.' In practice virtually all major commentators assume or argue that Paul quotes from this passage. The question which arises is simply whether this quotation *also* coincides with a quotation from Hellenistic philosophical or ethical controversy. Epicureanism in its sophisticated form is more than crude materialism, but its opponents readily characterised it as such, especially in popular Stoic-Cynic circles ... The two sources together form an admirable, logical, and rhetorical bridge to vv.33-34, as Eriksson points out. Both Isa 22:13 and 'contemporary anti-Epicurean polemic' equally 'designate the libertine life ... Paul uses it to point to the utter futility of a life without the motivation given by the resurrection of Christ.'" Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:33-34

"These two verses, especially v.34, express the *theological* heart of the chapter and the hinge of the argument. *Knowledge of God* (God's resources, God's grace, God's transformative action through Christ) holds the key to understanding what the resurrection is actually about. The interrelationship between this knowledge of God and daily lifestyle is also fundamental." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:33

μη̄ πλανᾶσθε· φθείρουσιν ἡ̄θη χρηστὰ ὀμιλῖαι κακαί.

πλανᾶω lead astray, mislead, deceive

Paul seems to cite a popular maxim.

φθειρω corrupt, ruin, destroy

ἡθος, ος n habit: pl morals

'lifestyle'

χρηστος, η, ον kind, loving, good, merciful  
ὀμιλῖα, ας f company, association

"conveys the notion of a *clique*, a *group*, or a '*gang*' who regularly do things together and to which people 'belong.'" Thistleton. Suggests the strong peer-pressure of such a group.

κακος, η, ον evil, bad, wrong, harm

"The point of Paul's citation is that keeping the wrong kind of company (i.e. that of men who deny the resurrection) may well corrupt good Christian habits, and turn men away from the true position." Morris

"We cannot know whether Paul has in mind a bad gang of complacent and skeptical 'strong' within the church (Hering; cf. D B Martin) or whether he is concerned about the infiltration of non-Christian values through heightened social intercourse and influence from outside. Either or both of these provide practical pastoral warnings based on good social psychology for today. The pressures imposed by 'in-groups' are very strong, and a climate of so-called postmodernity encourages such groups to assume that no shared arbitration is possible or necessary within some larger frame of rationality or worldview." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:34

ἐκνήψατε δικαίως καὶ μὴ ἀμαρτάνετε,  
ἀγνωσίαν γὰρ θεοῦ τινες ἔχουσιν· πρὸς  
ἐντροπήν ὑμῖν λαλῶ.

ἐκνήψατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl ἐκνηψο  
come to one's senses, wake up

A verb originally used of becoming sober after drunkenness: 'wake up from your stupor' (NJB)

δικαίως adv (from δικαιοσ) righteously

Here 'as you should' or 'properly'. Paul calls them to regain a spiritual realism.

ἀμαρτανω sin, commit sin

ἀγνωσια, ας f lack of spiritual perception,  
ignorant talk

Maybe precisely those who claimed to possess knowledge. But they do not know God nor understand the power of God 'who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist' (Rom 4:12).

ἐντροπη, ης f shame

Praise and shame were matters of great importance at Corinth.

λαλεω speak, talk

### 1 Corinthians 15:35

Ἀλλὰ ἐρεῖ τις· Πῶς ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροί, ποῖω δὲ σώματι ἔρχονται;

ἐρεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s λεγω

πῶς how? in what way

'How is it possible?'

ποιος, α, ον interrog pro. what, which, of  
what kind

σωμα, τος n body

How can a body be fit for eternity?

**1 Corinthians 15:36**

ἄφρων, σὺ δὲ σπεῖρεις, οὐ ζωοποιεῖται ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ·

ἄφρων, ον gen ονος fool, foolish

Thistleton says that σὺ belongs with ἄφρων "Recent research on rhetoric has firmly established the rhetorical (not simply emotive) force of ἄφρων σὺ. The phrase functions as an *exclamatio* to intensify the argument." The force is not rude but rhetorical, 'how silly!', or Thistleton's 'you nonsense person!'

σπειρω sow

ζωοποιεω give life, make alive

ἐὰν if; ἐὰν μὴ except

ἀποθνήσκω die, face death, be mortal

Cf. John 12:24.

**1 Corinthians 15:37**

καὶ ὁ σπεῖρεις, οὐ τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον σπεῖρεις ἀλλὰ γυμνὸν κόκκον εἰ τύχοι σίτου ἢ τίνος τῶν λοιπῶν·

"The grammar and syntax do not flow smoothly, partly because, in effect, Paul repeats 'what you sow' twice; or, more accurately, the first ὁ σπεῖρεις can be construed in either of two possible ways. Paul probably dictates: 'And what you sow – it is not the body which is to come about that you sow but a bare grain.' He breaks off the construction, and begins again to emphasise 'what you sow,' understanding ἐστὶ to be supplied. However, it is equally possible to construe the relative pronoun as an accusative of respect: 'And as to what you sow: it is not the body which is to come about that you sow ...'" Thistleton

γενησόμενον Verb, fut midd dep ptc, m acc & n nom/acc s γινομαι

The rare future participle τὸ γενησόμενον is correct; p<sup>46</sup>, F and G appear to read γεννησομενον

γυμνος, η, ον naked, bare

κόκκος, ους m seed, grain

τύχοι Verb, aor act opt, 3 s τυγχανω obtain, attain, experience; εἰ τυχοι for example, if perhaps

σίτος, ους m grain, wheat

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining

**1 Corinthians 15:38**

ὁ δὲ θεὸς δίδωσιν αὐτῷ σῶμα καθὼς ἠθέλησεν, καὶ ἐκάστῳ τῶν σπερμάτων ἴδιον σῶμα.

θελω wish, will

The resurrection springs from the sovereign power of God. Thistleton cites Findlay saying, "The aorist in this context denotes 'not 'as he wills' (according to his choice or liking) but in accordance with his past decree in creation, by which the propagation of life on earth was determined from the beginning (Gen 1:11, 12; for the verb cf... 12:18)."

ἐκαστος, η, ον each, every

σπερμα, τος n seed, offspring

The singular, σπερμα is used collectively. Hence the plural has the force 'different kinds of seeds' as we might use the terms 'fruits' or 'cheeses.'

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own

**1 Corinthians 15:39**

οὐ πᾶσα σὰρξ ἡ αὐτὴ σὰρξ, ἀλλὰ ἄλλη μὲν ἀνθρώπων, ἄλλη δὲ σὰρξ κτηνῶν, ἄλλη δὲ σὰρξ πτηνῶν, ἄλλη δὲ ἰχθύων.

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body

"It is difficult to find a better translation of σαρξ than 'flesh' (as in virtually all English VSS), but the semantic range in Greek is far wider than Eng. 'flesh.'... Rather than referring to some 'part' of the person, σαρξ denotes 'the whole person, considered from the point of view of his external physical existence. Thus Gal 4:13f ('... an infirmity of the flesh ...') (and 2 Cor 12:7 ('... A thorn in the flesh')... refer generally to physical distress.' (Robinson)."

Thistleton

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

κτηνος, ους n animal; pl. cattle

πτηνον, ους n bird

ἰχθυς, υος m fish

Each has a body given it to suit its own function. We may be confident therefore that God will give us a resurrection body suitable for glory.

**1 Corinthians 15:40**

καὶ σώματα ἐπουράνια, καὶ σώματα ἐπίγεια· ἀλλὰ ἕτερα μὲν ἢ τῶν ἐπουρανίων δόξα, ἕτερα δὲ ἢ τῶν ἐπιγείων.

ἐπουρανιος, ον heavenly, celestial

The reference is probably to the same celestial 'bodies' referred to in v.41, but could also allude to angelic beings.

ἐπίγειος, ον earthly, of the earth

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

δοξα, ης f glory, splendour

"As there are differences on the earth, so also in the sky. There is a wide difference (έτερα) between terrestrial and celestial bodies; and there is a further difference (άλλη) between one celestial body and another. The God who made these myriads of differences in one and the same universe can be credited with inexhaustible power ... he has found a body fit for fish, fowl, cattle and mortal man: why not for ... [raised] man? Experience teaches that God finds a suitable body for every type of earthly life and every type of heavenly life. Experience cannot teach us that there is a type of life for which no suitable body can be found." Robertson and Plummer.

### 1 Corinthians 15:41

άλλη δόξα ήλιου, και άλλη δόξα σελήνης, και άλλη δόξα άστέρων, άστηρ γάρ άστέρος διαφέρει έν δόξη.

ήλιος, ου m the sun

The thought is of the glory or splendour *given by God*.

σεληνη, ης f moon

άστηρ, ερος m star

διαφερω intrans. be worth more than, be superior to, differ from

"Some patristic writers interpret this allegorically of the different glories of different raised believers. But this is not Paul's point, even if it suggests the broad principle of dynamic diversified life in the resurrection mode of existence." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:42

Ούτως και ή άνάστασις τών νεκρών. σπείρεται έν φθορά, έγείρεται έν άφθαρσία.

The contrast in this and the following verses is between two *living* bodies – the present body and the resurrection body (not between the body of the dead and a resurrection body).

άναστασις see v.12

νεκρος see v.12

φθορα, ας f decay, corruption, depravity

"φθορα denotes 'decreasing capacities and increasing weaknesses issuing in exhaustion and stagnation,' i.e., in a state of 'decay'... The semantic contrast to such 'decay' would not be *permanence* or *everlasting duration*, but *ethical, aesthetic, and psychological flourishing and abundance*, even perhaps *perfection*, and certainly *fulness of life*... To be 'raised' by and through *God* in the power of the *Holy Spirit* entails a dynamic of being that corresponds with the dynamic of the *living* God who acts purposively in ongoing ways, never 'trapped' in a timeless vacuum from which all experience of succession is excluded (see further on v.44). This is more than *imperishability* (NRSV, REB, NIV, NJB) or *immortality* (Collins)." Thistleton

άφθαρσια, ας f imperishability, immortality

"The chief objection that the typical Greek had to any doctrine of resurrection was that the body is essentially corruptible. It is, by its nature, subject to decay. He looked accordingly for an existence when the soul would be untrammelled by the corruptible body, when the soul would exist *in incorruption*. Paul associates this very state with the resurrection body." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 15:43

σπείρεται έν άτιμία, έγείρεται έν δόξη.

σπείρεται έν άσθενεία, έγείρεται έν δυνάμει.

άτιμια, ας f disgrace, shame, dishonour

'humiliation' cf. Phil 3:21.

δοξα, ης f glory

Signifies 'weight', 'substance', 'radiance.'

άσθενεια, ας f weakness, illness

"'Sown in weakness' expresses Paul's realism about the *frailty, fragility, vulnerability, and constraints* of human existence (including that of Christians) without diminishing the power of the cross, which is the presupposition for the triumph of the resurrection mode of existence." Thistleton

δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

"If 'weakness,' 'humiliation,' and 'decay' represent the pathos of the dominating *decrescendo* of human mortality 'power' denotes not a static source of competency, but an energising *crescendo* of equipment and capacities for 'splendour' and perhaps unimagined tasks and service yet to come. Such a mode of existence, however, remains *somatic* or *bodily* in the sense described under vv. 42 and 44." Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 15:44**

σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν. Εἰ ἔστιν σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἔστιν καὶ πνευματικόν.

ψυχικός, η, ον unspiritual, physical

Thistleton suggests 'natural' to avoid the wrong implications of 'physical.'

πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual, pertaining to the spirit

"This does not necessarily mean 'composed of spirit', but rather 'which expresses spirit', 'which answers to the needs of spirit'." Morris Thistleton argues that Paul regularly uses πνευματικός to denote 'that which pertains to the Holy Spirit,' cf. 3:1,3. Hence he here suggests the translation 'it is raised a body constituted by the Spirit' – following Barrett who suggests 'body animated by the Spirit of God,' and Wolff who says "The spiritual body is through and through a body under the control of the divine Spirit, according to v.45 a creation of Christ (cf. also vv. 21-22) who is 'the life-giving Spirit.'"

**1 Corinthians 15:45**

οὕτως καὶ γέγραπται· Ἐγένετο ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος Ἀδὰμ εἰς ψυχήν ζῶσαν· ὁ ἔσχατος Ἀδὰμ εἰς πνεῦμα ζῶσαν.

On Adam/Christ comparisons in Paul cf. Rom 5:12-19 and Dunn *The Theology of Paul* pp. 199-204, 208-12 and 241-42.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω  
πρῶτος, η, ον first, foremost, earlier  
ψυχή, ης f life, 'soul', living being  
ζῶσαν Verb, pres act ptc, f acc s ζαω live,  
be alive

Cf. Gen 2:7.

ἔσχατος, η, ον last, final  
ζῶσαν see v.36

"The first Adam was merely 'a living human being'... By emphatic contrast, the last Adam is not merely 'living', but 'life-giving'."

Thistleton

"Christ's characteristic in this office [of last Adam] is that he is a ... 'life giving spirit'. Not only is he the pattern for those who are in Him, but He is the source of that spiritual life which will result in the bodies of which Paul speaks." Morris. But we must not lose the reference to the *Spirit of God*. Christ was raised in the realm of the Spirit, by the agency of the Spirit, and is now the one who gives the Spirit. The resurrection is the hope of a full salvation "by an act of the sovereign God which entails the mediate agency also of Christ and the Spirit." Thistleton

"In saying that Christ is life-giving Spirit in the sense of the Holy Spirit, Paul is not introducing trinitarian confusion. Essential, eternal, intertrinitarian relationships are outside his purview here. Rather his perspective is *historical*. He is speaking about what Christ *became* in his identity as the last *Adam* and second *man* (v.47). The oneness or unity in view is economic, functional, eschatological (resurrection and ascension) Christ, as last Adam and second man, has come into permanent and complete possession of the Spirit that the two are equated in their *activity*. The two are seen as one, as they have been *made* one in the eschatological *work* of giving life to the church, that life which has its visible 'firstfruits' in Christ's own resurrection." Gaffin.

Oliver O'Donovan comments, "When Paul returns a second time ... to the comparison of Adam and Christ [cf. 15:21], he introduces a new thought: 'the first man was made a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit ... The first man was from the earth, made of dust, the second man was from heaven ... As we have borne the image of the man of dust, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man' (15:45ff.). The thought stated in the first contrast is still maintained here. Christ is the life-giver; he restores Adam's children to the life for which they were created. But a new thought is superimposed upon the old one. There is a difference between what was first given, described as 'soul' and 'dust', and what will be given, which is 'spiritual' and 'from heaven'... The categories of 'spirit' and 'heaven' point ... to the authority which belongs to God's reign. Christ, in giving us back our life, has endowed it with authority and power." *The Desire of The Nations*, p. 142.

**1 Corinthians 15:46**

ἀλλ' οὐ πρῶτον τὸ πνευματικόν ἀλλὰ τὸ ψυχικόν, ἔπειτα τὸ πνευματικόν.

ἔπειτα then, afterwards

**1 Corinthians 15:47**

ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός, ὁ δευτερός ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.

γῆ, γῆς f earth

χοϊκός, η, ον made of earth or dust

See Gen 2:7, maybe an allusion also to Gen 3:19.

δευτερός, α, ον second

After δευτερός ἄνθρωπος the TR includes ὁ κυριος. This would seem to be a conflated text reflecting Marcion's substitution of ὁ κυριος for the second ἄνθρωπος.

**1 Corinthians 15:48**

οἷος ὁ χοϊκός, τοιοῦτοι καὶ οἱ χοϊκοί, καὶ οἷος ὁ ἐπουράνιος, τοιοῦτοι καὶ οἱ ἐπουράνιοι·

οἷος, α, ον relative pronoun of what kind  
 τοιούτος, αὐτή, οὗτον correlative pronoun and  
 adj. such, of such kind, similar, like  
 ἐπουράνιος, ον heavenly, that which  
 pertains to heaven

"Then we shall have the same form and essence which He now has since His resurrection." Luther. Concerning the promise that those who belong to Christ will be made like him in his resurrection life, see also 1 John 3:2 and Phil 3:21

"Paul calls for eschatological realism.

Humankind remains *human and fragile* prior to the resurrection of the last day. Already the new order has begun a transformation at the level of Christlikeness of being 'from the Holy Spirit' in a limited sense that still leaves fallibility and constraint. Those at Corinth must not think and act as if they were already 'there.' Above all, however, the model of the raised mode of being of the raised Christ constitutes a form (σῶμα) and total self (σῶμα) 'from heaven,' i.e., grounded in the reality of God and the new creation. This renders the resurrection 'body' which lies in the future yet more credible and conceivable, and binds together the *somatic* and the process of *growth in holiness* as *inextricably* the mark of a mode of existence *directed by the divine Spirit, anticipated in Christ's raised life, and decreed by God* (cf. 1 Cor 2:11-15; 3:1-3; 15:21-28, 38-44). It is in the future that 'Christians are destined to become heavenly in the image of the heavenly Man,' i.e., the man 'from heaven.'" Thistleton

**1 Corinthians 15:49**

καὶ καθὼς ἐφορέσαμεν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ, φορέσομεν καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουράνιου.

φορεῶ wear

εἰκὼν, ονος f likeness, image, form

φορέσομεν "The majority of the more ancient MSS read 'let us bear [φορέσωμεν] instead of *we shall bear* in the second part of the verse. If this reading is adopted then Paul is exhorting the Corinthians to put on their heavenly state, progressively make it their own... The context seems to make it clear that *we shall bear* is the right reading." Morris. Metzger and Thistleton also favour the indicative. The subjunctive looks like a primitive corruption which may be the result of mishearing dictation.

**1 Corinthians 15:50**

Τοῦτο δὲ φημι, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα βασιλείαν θεοῦ κληρονομήσαι οὐ δύναται, οὐδὲ ἡ φθορὰ τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν κληρονομεῖ.

φημι say, affirm

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body,  
 human nature

αἷμα, ατος f blood

Denotes humankind in its present weakness and vulnerability.

κληρονομεῶ gain possession of, inherit

φθορα, ας f decay, corruption

ἀφθαρσια, ας f imperishability, immortality

Some commentators see here a reference to two groups: flesh and blood signifies those still alive when Christ comes again while 'decay' signifies those who have died. "Neither the living nor the dead at the coming of Christ will go into the kingdom as they are. Both must be changed." Morris. But it is better to preserve the parallelism between the two halves of the verse.

**1 Corinthians 15:51**

ἰδοὺ μυστήριον ὑμῖν λέγω· πάντες οὐ κοιμηθήσομεθα πάντες δὲ ἀλλαγῶμεθα,

μυστηριον, ου n secret, mystery

The sense is normally of something formerly unknown but now revealed, but the meaning here seems closer to our English word 'mystery'. "Paul cannot and does not say more about the precise nature of the change." Thistleton

"The textual variants reflect complex concerns of theology." Thistleton. See *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* and Fee for details. The text given here is undoubtedly original. Early amendments seem to have arisen in the wake of Paul's death.

κοιμηθήσομεθα Verb, fut pass dep indic, 1 pl  
 κοιμασμαι see v.18

"Some think that Paul means that the second coming will take place in his own lifetime, but this is to press his words illegitimately... [compare 6:14; 2 Cor 4:14; 5:8; Phil 3:11] ... Paul often classes himself with those he is describing without any implication that he is one of them (cf. 6:15; 10:22)." Morris. The meaning is 'not all of *us Christians* will sleep' cf. 1 Thess 4.

ἀλλαγῶμεθα Verb, fut pass indic, 1 pl  
 ἀλασσω change, alter, exchange

"Paul's major concern is *God's orderly plan for humankind* as a corporeity and for believers as the corporate body of Christ. *It does not matter, he urges, whether you have died or are still alive at the end time: all of us (equally) 'will undergo transformation.'*... This part of Paul's declaration serves to give assurance equally that those who have died lose nothing that will be experienced by those who will still be alive at the parousia, and conversely assures those who might survive that they, too, like the dead, share in the same experience of resurrection." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:52

ἐν ἀτόμῳ, ἐν ῥιπῇ ὀφθαλμοῦ, ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ σάλπιγγι· σαλπίζει γάρ, καὶ οἱ νεκροὶ ἐγερθήσονται ἄφθαρτοι, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀλλαγώμεθα.

ἀτομος, ον indivisible; ἐν α. in a moment, in an instant

ῥιπη, ης f blinking (of an eye)

More correctly, the term denotes rapid eye movement – 'shooting a glance' out of the corner of the eye.

ἐσχάτος see v.45

σάλπιγγι Noun, dat s σαλπιγξ, ιγγος f trumpet, trumpet blast

"In both Testaments (Exod 19:16; Zech 9:14; 1 Thess 4:16) manifestations of God are associated with the sound of 'the trumpet.' Additionally, however, 'the trumpet' awakens a sleeping army to be urgently aroused to activity, including possible battle when *the alert* is sounded... Bruce cites ... the 'great trumpet' for the return of the exiles in Isa 27:13 (cf. Matt 24:31) and that of the year of Jubilee (Lev 25:9), as well as the apocalyptic trumpet for the Lord's descent from heaven in 1 Thess 4:16-17." Thistleton

σαλπίζω sound a trumpet

ἄφθαρτος, ον imperishable, immortal

Cf. v.42 "The σωμα will be raised 'without degenerating decay' at the very least; perhaps Paul means also here *the reversal of decay*, i.e., *flourishing*." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:53

δεῖ γὰρ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσασθαι ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσασθαι ἀθανασίαν.

δει impersonal verb it is necessary

"Paul stresses the continuity between our present and our future states with a fourfold use (in this verse and the next) of the word 'this': 'this perishable'... (NIV omits all four)." Morris. "The same identifiable, recognisable, and accountable identity ... is transfigured into a *radically different form*, but remains 'this' *created being in all its wholeness*." Thistleton

φθαρτος, η, ον subject to corruption

ἐνδύσασθαι Verb, aor midd infin ἐνδύω

dress, clothe; midd put on, wear

ἀφθαρσία see v.50

θνητος, η, ον mortal

ἀθανασία, ας f immortality

### 1 Corinthians 15:54

ὅταν δὲ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσῃται ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσῃται ἀθανασίαν, τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος· Κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νίκος.

A number of MSS have a shorter reading ὅταν δὲ τὸ θνητὸν... i.e. omitting the φθαρτον clause. The shorter reading probably arose through an oversight in copying, "The phenomenon of homoioteleuton readily explains an omission of a clause or phrase when the eye of the copyist moves from one occurrence of a similar word or phrase to another." Thistleton

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as

On vocabulary, see v.53.

ἐνδύσῃται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 s ἐνδύω

τοτε then, at that time

γεγραμμένος Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom s

γραφω

Quotation from Is 25:8

κατεπόθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s καταπινω swallow, swallow up, devour

θανατος, ου m death

νικος, ους n victory

### 1 Corinthians 15:55

ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ νίκος; ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ κέντρον;

A number of MSS (followed by TR) read ποῦ σου, ἀδη το νικος in the second clause, reflecting the LXX.

"In language reminiscent of Scripture (Hos 13:14), Paul sings of the triumph to come. He is not basing an argument on Scripture, but using scriptural language for his exultation over the total defeat of death." Morris. However, Stanley and Collins argue that Paul intends that Is 25:8 and Hos 13:14 should shed light on the understanding of each other.

κεντρον, ου n sting, goad

"Paul projects an eschatological vision of a *stingless death* precisely because *Jesus Christ has himself absorbed the sting* on the basis of how his death and resurrection addresses the problem of human sin and the law (vv.55-57). Oscar Culmann has well portrayed the contrast between optimistic views of the death exemplified in Socrates and Plato as mere release of the 'soul' from the 'prison-house' of the body and Hebrew-Christian traditions of death as a tragedy apart from the transformation of death brought about by Christ. Nevertheless, he argues, the agony of Gethsemane as Jesus faces the prospect of death as a cruel God-forsakenness, as a sacrament of the wrath of God, should be kept before our eyes as a reminder of what 'death's sting' entails apart from the victory won by Christ." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:56

τὸ δὲ κέντρον τοῦ θανάτου ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἡ δὲ δύναμις τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ νόμος·

"Death is the primal power: it is 'the last enemy' (1 Cor 15:26) within the field of interlocking forces. The antithesis between the two ages can be summed up as 'the reign of death' as opposed to the 'reign of life' (Rom 5:17, 21). And death remains in some way the signature of the world, even after its allies – the law, the flesh, and sin – have been defeated in the death and resurrection of Christ." Beker.

"The law,' in spite of being 'holy and good' (Rom 7:12,13) and designed to bring life, comes to perform the very opposite effect in the context of human fallenness, sin, and bondage. Rom 1:18-2:29 and 5:12-21 underline human culpability, which the law appears to intensify as a kind of slavery (Rom 3:20; 6:20; cf. 7:7). However we interpret Rom 7:7-25, and the still sharper critique of Galatians 3-5, a major part of the work of Christ in establishing the new creation 'under grace' is that 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' Again, however we interpret Rom 10:4, Christ as the 'end,' 'goal,' or 'termination' of the law 'initiates a new eschatological life, where God and humankind meet under new conditions. And yet ... Christ satisfied the righteous requirements of the law (Rom 8:4) as expressive of his holy will, in order to establish a new relationship to God 'apart from the law' (Rom 3:21).' (Beker) Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 15:57

τῷ δὲ θεῷ χάρις τῷ διδόντι ἡμῖν τὸ νίκος διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

χαρις, ικος f grace, unmerited favour  
διδόντι Verb, pres act ptc, m dat s δίδωμι

### 1 Corinthians 15:58

Ὡστε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί, ἐδραῖοι γίνεσθε, ἀμετακίνητοι, περισσεύοντες ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ τοῦ κυρίου πάντοτε, εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ κόπος ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔστιν κενὸς ἐν κυρίῳ.

The conclusion echoes and answers the concerns expressed in the verses introducing this chapter, vv 1-2.

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
ἀγαπητος, η, ον beloved  
ἐδραῖος, α, ον firm, steadfast  
ἀμετακίνητος, ον immovable, steadfast

Cf. v.1, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἔστηκατε

περισσεύω increase, abound, excel

The Christian is to be immovable but not static.

παντοτε always  
εἰδότες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl οἶδα  
(verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand  
κοπος, ου m work, labour trouble  
κενος, η, ον empty, to no purpose, senseless

### 1 Corinthians 16:1

Περὶ δὲ τῆς λογεῖας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους, ὥσπερ διέταξα ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιήσατε.

Ὁν περι δε cf. 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1

λογεῖας Noun, gen s λογεια, ας f  
contibution, collection

This word is found only in papyri and inscriptions and here in the NT.

Thistleton writes, "As Collins observes, each of Paul's longer or major epistles makes reference to giving, finance, and collecting contributions (1 Cor 16:1-4; Rom 15:25-28; 2 Cor 8-9; Gal 2:10). In Gal 2:10 it expresses tangibly a recognition of mutual care, responsibility, and sharing on the part of the different ethnic or economic statuses within the worldwide church (Jew and Gentile). This 'sealed' the agreement with James of Jerusalem, Peter and John about the Gentile mission (Gal 21-10)." Having surveyed the various references to the collection in Paul's letters, particularly 2 Corinthians, he concludes, "In this light, it is theologically entirely appropriate to speak of 'the collection' not as a mundane chore of 'maintaining' the church in any routinised mechanistic sense, but of 'maintaining' (in the sense of *nurturing*) others by passing on *freely received grace*, *χαρις* ...; by tangibly and publicly expressing mutuality and reciprocity in *κοινωνία* or *partnership*; and by *servicing* (*διακονία*) others, even as Christ has yielded up his riches *to serve*. All of this brings *blessing* (*εὐλογία*) alike to the one who gives and the one who receives."

ὡσπερ *as, even as*

διέταξα *Verb, aor act indic, 1 s διατασσω*  
command, give instructions

### 1 Corinthians 16:2

κατὰ μίαν σαββάτου ἕκαστος ὑμῶν παρ' ἑαυτῷ τιθετω θησαυρίζων ὃ τι ἐὰν εὐδοῶται, ἵνα μὴ ὅταν ἔλθω τότε λογεῖται γίνωνται.

σαββατον, ου n (often in pl) the seventh day, Sabbath, week; μιαν σαββατον first day of the week

Cf. Mk 16:2; Lk 24:1. "This is the first piece of evidence to show that Christians observed that day, though there is no reason to doubt that it was their custom from the first (cf. Jn 20:19,26; Acts 20:7; Rev 1:10)." Morris

ἕκαστος, η, ον *each, every*

παρ' ἑαυτῷ τιθετω let him put by himself, i.e. let him store up.

θησαυρίζω *store up, save, put aside*

ὃ τι ἐὰν *whatever*

εὐδοῶται *Verb, pres pass dep subj, 3 s*  
εὐδοομαι *have things go well (for oneself) [literally 'to journey well], earn, gain money*

"The meaning is that one's giving should be in direct proportion to the way one prospers; it should be determined as a matter of principle, not something done on impulse." Morris

ὅταν *when*

ἔλθω *Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἐρχομαι*

τοτε *then, at that time*

λογεῖται *cf v.1*

### 1 Corinthians 16:3

ὅταν δὲ παραγένωμαι, οὓς ἐὰν δοκιμάσητε δι' ἐπιστολῶν, τούτους πέμψω ἀπενεγκεῖν τὴν χάριν ὑμῶν εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ·

παραγένωμαι *Verb, aor midd dep subj, 1 s*

παραγίνομαι *come, arrive, appear*

οὓς ἐὰν *whomever*

δοκιμάσητε *Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl δοκιμαζω*  
approve

"Paul is alluding to the *trusted integrity* of those who can serve on behalf of a potentially suspicious congregation in which there are already 'splits' and perhaps competing patrons. His directive will work without back-firing only if these representatives who carry delegated responsibility for substantial funds amidst the hazards and perils of a long journey are utterly approved as 'tried and true.'" Thistleton

οἱ ἐπιστολῶν *who is to write these letters? It could be the church who both commends and writes the letters of commendation, but Morris thinks that these words go with πέμψω – the church commends but Paul sends those whom they have chosen with letters of commendation/introduction written by himself.*

πέμψω *send*

ἀπενεγκεῖν *Verb, aor act infin ἀποφερω*

carry, carry away

Note that Paul is careful at no time to take the money himself.

χαρις, ἰτος f here = gift

"Its use to denote God's *grace* would hardly escape the awareness of the readers."

Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 16:4

ἐὰν δὲ ἄξιον ᾗ τοῦ κάμει πορεύεσθαι, σὺν ἐμοὶ πορεύονται.

ἄξιος, α, ον *worthy, fitting*

Morris follows Moffatt in thinking ἄξιον here refers to the gift. In the translation of Moffatt "If the sum makes it worth my while to go, they will accompany me." (So also NIV.) Others see the reference merely to Paul's uncertainty regarding his timetable, or regarding circumstances at Jerusalem. "By the time he wrote 2 Cor 1:15-16, Paul had firmly decided to accompany the party, and according to Rom 15:26-27 'the collection' was duly made ready." Thistleton

ᾗ *Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι*

κάγω a compound word = και ἐγω

ἐμοὶ *Pronoun, dat s ἐγω*

**1 Corinthians 16:5**

Ἐλεύσομαι δὲ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ὅταν Μακεδονίαν διέλθω, Μακεδονίαν γὰρ διέρχομαι,

ἐλεύσομαι Verb, fut midd dep indic, 1 s  
έρχομαι

ὅταν see v.2

διέλθω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s διέρχομαι  
pass through, go through

The plan to 'go through' Macedonia would allude primarily to Thessalonica and Philippi. The present διέρχομαι has the force of 'imminent purpose' (Findlay) or 'firm intention' (Barrett).

"Paul does not know when he will come to them but it will be after he has gone through Macedonia, visiting the churches there." Morris suggests that the repetition of his intention to go through Macedonia is to emphasise this part of the plan which was something previously unknown to them: "They evidently knew that he was planning to visit them (even if some of them said he would never make it). But they had not known of Paul's plan for Macedonia. Now he tells them what he hopes to do, and they can see just where his visit to their own city fits in. His use of the present tense for future action is not uncommon; it lends an air of greater definiteness to the plan."

**1 Corinthians 16:6**

πρὸς ὑμᾶς δὲ τυχὸν παραμενῶ ἢ καὶ παραχειμάσω, ἵνα ὑμεῖς με προπέμψητε οὗ ἂν πορεύομαι.

τυχὸν Verb, aor act ptc, n nom/acc s τυγχάνω  
receive, experience; τυχον or εἰ τυχον  
if it should turn out that way, perhaps

παραμενῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s παραμενω  
stay, remain

ἢ or

παραχειμαζω spend the winter

"Paul hopes that he may combine a pastorally productive period with waiting for appropriate weather to travel." Thistleton

προπεμπω send on one's way, help on one's way, escort, accompany

Help on one's journey, i.e. with food, money, companions etc.

οὗ ἂν whenever

Note the uncertainty with which Paul speaks of the plans.

"It is worth noticing that, while Paul had evidently to change his plans more than once, and was accused of fickleness accordingly (2 Cor 1:15ff), the plan outlined here was the plan eventually adopted: he went from Ephesus to Macedonia, then to Greece, where he stayed three months (Acts 20:1-3)." Morris

**1 Corinthians 16:7**

οὐ θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἄρτι ἐν παρόδῳ ἰδεῖν, ἐλπίζω γὰρ χρόνον τινὰ ἐπιμεῖναι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἐὰν ὁ κύριος ἐπιτρέψῃ.

θέλω wish, will

ἄρτι now, at the present

παροδος, ου f passage; ἐν π. in passing

'just in passing.'

ἰδεῖν Verb, aor act infin ὄραω see

ἐλπίζω hope, expect

χρονος, ου m time, period of time

ἐπιμενω remain, stay

ἐπιτρεπω let, allow, permit

On *if the Lord permits* compare 4:19; Acts 18:21; Heb 6:3; James 4:13-15. "He is the Lord's servant. He must go where the Lord wills. All his plans must therefore be subject to the proviso (expressed or not) that the Lord may intervene and direct him elsewhere." Morris

**1 Corinthians 16:8**

ἐπιμενῶ δὲ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ ἕως τῆς πεντηκοστῆς· ἕως until, while

Confirms that this letter was written from Ephesus, sometime around the middle of spring.

**1 Corinthians 16:9**

θύρα γὰρ μοι ἀνέφωγεν μεγάλη καὶ ἐνεργῆς, καὶ ἀντικείμενοι πολλοί.

θυρα, ας f door, gate

ἀνοιγω open

The perfect has the force 'it stands open.' For this metaphor cf. 2 Cor 2:12; Col 4:3.

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

ἐνεργης, ες active, effective

ἀντικειμαι oppose, be against

"Paul's abrupt reference to them [opponents] reminds us that the Christian is not usually left to pursue his work unhindered. It is part of the condition under which we serve God that when we have great opportunities of service we have also serious difficulties." Morris  
See Acts 19 for the opposition to Paul at Ephesus, also reference in this epistle at 15:32.

**1 Corinthians 16:10**

Ἐὰν δὲ ἔλθῃ Τιμόθεος, βλέπετε ἵνα ἀφόβως γένηται πρὸς ὑμᾶς, τὸ γὰρ ἔργον κυρίου ἐργάζεται ὡς καὶ γὰρ·

ἐὰν δὲ ἔλθῃ Τιμόθεος "Conzelmann, Fee, and Collins rightly point out that since Paul explicitly states that he has sent Timothy to Corinth (4:17), the indefinite construction refers to the uncertainty not of the event, but of his time of arrival. With some support from BAGD they propose 'Whenever Timothy comes,' which is surely right." Thistleton

βλέπω see, see to it

ἀφόβως without fear

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

"From this very letter we may infer that there were some among the Corinthian believers who were confident and self-willed. Paul evidently feared that Timothy might not be adequate for a confrontation with such people, a fear which subsequent events were to show was well-founded." Morris. Since Timothy would come as Paul's representative and would continue Paul's work (cf. also 4:17), "any hostility toward Paul would be likely to rub off on Timothy as Paul's 'delegate,' 'representative' or co-worker. They may perhaps have preferred to welcome Apollos rather than Timothy." Thistleton

ἐργάζομαι work, do, perform

**1 Corinthians 16:11**

μή τις οὖν αὐτὸν ἐξουθενήσῃ. προπέμψατε δὲ αὐτὸν ἐν εἰρήνῃ, ἵνα ἔλθῃ πρὸς με, ἐκδέχομαι γὰρ αὐτὸν μετὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν.

ἐξουθενεω despise, treat with contempt

προπεμπω see v.6

εἰρήνη, ης f peace

ἐκδέχομαι wait for, look forward to

"The fact that he looks for Timothy to return shows that Paul had sent him on a specific task, not with a roving commission. The reference to *the brothers* is not clear. Acts 19:22 mentions only Erastus as being with him, though, of course, there may have been others. Paul may mean that he expects Timothy to come back with some brothers from Corinth. It is also possible that the brothers are with Paul, and that together they await Timothy's return." Morris

**1 Corinthians 16:12**

Περὶ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, πολλὰ παρεκάλεσα αὐτὸν ἵνα ἔλθῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς μετὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν· καὶ πάντως οὐκ ἦν θέλημα ἵνα νῦν ἔλθῃ, ἐλεύσεται δὲ ὅταν εὐκαιρήσῃ.

The περι δε suggests that the Corinthians had asked that Apollos should come. In the light of the existence of an Apollos 'party' at Corinth (cf. 1:12) Paul is at pains to stress that he has not sought to keep Apollos from them but has encouraged him to visit along with others. The πολλα may either mean 'many times' or be intensive 'earnestly.'" Thistleton

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

παντως by all means, surely; οὐ π. not at all, by no means

θελημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

Opinions differ as to whether it is the will of God that is spoken of here or that of Apollos.

ἐλεύσεται see v.5

ὅταν see v.5

εὐκαιρεω have time, have opportunity

Either Apollos was currently too busy, or he did not believe that this was an opportune time for him to visit. He may have been sensitive to the divisions at Corinth and have thought that a visit at this time might only exacerbate the difficulties.

**1 Corinthians 16:13**

Γρηγορεῖτε, στήκετε ἐν τῇ πίστει, ἀνδρίζεσθε, κραταιοῦσθε.

γρηγορεω be or keep awake, be alert

The present imperatives demand continuing action, 'keep alert, stand firm...'

στήκετε Verb, perf act indic & imperat, 2 pl ἵστημι stand, stand firm, hold ground.

πίστει Noun, dat s πιστις

ἀνδρίζεσθε Verb, pres midd/pass dep imperat, 2 pl ἀνδρίζομαι act like a man

"May refer to courage (as NIV ...), but more probably is meant to counter the immaturity so manifest in some of the Corinthians." Morris

κραταιοῦσθε Verb, pres midd/pass dep imperat, 2 pl κραταιομαι become strong

**1 Corinthians 16:14**

πάντα ὑμῶν ἐν ἀγάπῃ γινέσθω.

γινέσθω Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 3 s

γινομαι

"In manliness Paul is not looking for aggressiveness or self-assertion, but the strength that shows itself in love." Morris.

"As Paul has argued earlier, *childishness* often takes the form of self-centred concern and short-term gratification. Hence he pleads that whatever the Corinthian Christians do, the motivation and attitude should be that of 'love', i.e., a concern for the good of 'the other' which embodies *respect* and seeks to *build them up* in the long term (cf. 8:7-13; 13:1-13)." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 16:15

Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί· οἴδατε τὴν οἰκίαν Στεφανᾶ, ὅτι ἐστὶν ἀπαρχὴ τῆς Ἀχαΐας καὶ εἰς διακονίαν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἔταξαν ἑαυτούς·

παρακαλῶ exhort, encourage, urge

Here 'ask.' "Bjerkelund shows that in many examples of contemporary Greek it serves to introduce a request on the basis of a specific personal or institutional relationship between the sender and addressee, sometimes of friendship, sometimes of commerce, often of some official standing (see further above under 1:10)." Thistleton

οἰκία, ας f house, home, household  
ἀπαρχή, ης f firstfruit, first portion

Cf. 1:16. The meaning is not simply 'first' in order of time (first converts), maybe not *even* first in this sense, "*firstfruits*, derives its main significance not primarily from being *first* in a sequential sense, but *first* in the sense of contributing a *sample, pledge or promise of 'more to come'.*" Thistleton

διακονία, ας f ministry, service  
τάσσω appoint, designate, set aside

The verb *τάσσω* expresses the fact that the household of Stephanus had chosen to take on this task – of 'ministering to the saints'. They willingly devoted themselves to Christian service. I.e. "*those whose loyal work and witness holds promise of more believers 'to come'.*" Thistleton

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

### 1 Corinthians 16:16

ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ὑποτάσσησθε τοῖς τοιοῦτοις καὶ παντὶ τῷ συνεργῶντι καὶ κοπιῶντι.

ὑποτάσσω put in subjection; pass. be subject, submit to

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind

συνεργεω work with, work together with  
κοπιαω toil, work hard, labour

"Authentic leadership and service entail 'hard toil' (κοπιωντι), which in turn deserves respect and honour." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 16:17

χαίρω δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ παρουσίᾳ Στεφανᾶ καὶ Φορτουνάτου καὶ Ἀχαϊκοῦ, ὅτι τὸ ὑμέτερον ὑστέρημα οὗτοι ἀνεπλήρωσαν,

χαίρω rejoice, be glad

'I am delighted.'

παρουσία, ας f coming, arrival, presence  
ὑμετερος, α, ον possessive adj of 2 pl your  
ὑστέρημα, τος n what is lacking

"He does not spell out the meaning of *what was lacking from you*, but it seems that Paul was feeling his separation from the Corinthians; 'my lack of you' is the sense of it." Morris. "In modern English idiom Paul seems to say that they *compensate* for his 'missing' his dear Christian brothers and sisters there." Thistleton

ἀναπληρωω fill up, meet (the requirements)

### 1 Corinthians 16:18

ἀνέπαυσαν γὰρ τὸ ἐμὸν πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὑμῶν. ἐπιγινώσκετε οὖν τοὺς τοιοῦτους.

ἀναπαυω give relief, refresh

'they have raised my spirits.'

ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my, mine

καὶ τὸ ὑμῶν 'just as they do yours.'

ἐπιγινωσκω perceive, recognise

Show appreciation for.

τοιουτος see v.16

### 1 Corinthians 16:19

Ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἀσίας. ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς ἐν κυρίῳ πολλὰ Ἀκύλας καὶ Πρίσκα σὺν τῇ κατ' οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίᾳ.

ἀσπάζομαι greet, welcome, say goodbye

αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἀσίας. Paul uses Ephesus as a centre for ministry to the entire province of Asia, cf. Acts 19:10,26.

πολλὰ here of intensity – 'warmly.'

The authentic Pauline reading *Πρίσκα* occurs in 8 B 33 (and as *Πρεισκάς* in p<sup>46</sup>) while many other MSS read *Πρισκιλλα*, the diminutive form familiar from the book of Acts.

οικος, ου m house, home, household

For Aquila and Priscilla, see Acts 18 and Rom 16:4,5. "Barrett suggests that their various moves (Rome to Corinth, Corinth to Ephesus, and probably Ephesus back to Rome, when Claudius's edict was relaxed in AD 54) imply 'that they were not without money.' Travel was either for the wealthy or for those with productive business prospects. Hence it is by no means surprising that around late AD 52 or AD 53 they had acquired a house large enough to accommodate meetings for worship. In 'Aquila and Prisca' we see a combination of true Christian devotion and sacrifice, a vision for the spread of the gospel, deep affection for Paul, and affection for communities of Christians in a network of location that was growing into a worldwide church. F F Bruce observes that it was probably during this period of the Ephesian ministry that Prisca and Aquila 'risked their necks' for Paul's life (Rom 16:4). Bruce points out that this corrects the picture of an 'unlovable' Paul so often promoted in modern secular mythology, as well as the mistaken notion that Christian faith simply serves self-affirmation." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 16:20

ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ ἀδελφοὶ πάντες.  
ἀσπασασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἀγίῳ.

ἀλλήλων, οἰς, οὖς one another  
φιλημα, τοσ n kiss

Cf. Rom 16:16; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26 also 1 Peter 5:14. Drawing on the work of Klassen, Thistleton says, "In Graeco-Roman society the role of the kiss varies with geographical location and one's place or level in society: 'Graeco-Roman society treated the public kiss ... with considerable reticence,' although in some cases it 'serves ... as confirming reconciliation.' ... We conclude that it constituted a *physical sign in the public domain of respect, affection and reconciliation* within the Christian community, and that its distinctive use among fellow believers *underlined and nurtured the mutuality, reciprocity, and oneness of status and identity which all Christians share across divisions of race, class and gender*: It was clearly open to abuse, as patristic sources demonstrate, and a counterpart is needed today that offers an effective sign in the public domain that accords with these aims." Thistleton

### 1 Corinthians 16:21

Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου.

ἀσπασμος, ου m greeting  
χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

"It was Paul's custom to dictate his letters to an amanuensis who wrote them down. But as his letters draw to a close the apostle would take the pen and write a few words himself. His handwriting, he says, 'is the distinguishing mark in all my letters' (2 Thess 3:17)." Morris See also Gal 6:11; Col 4:18; Philem 19. It was also probably a mark of affection.

### 1 Corinthians 16:22

εἴ τις οὐ φιλεῖ τὸν κύριον, ἦτω ἀνάθεμα.  
Μαράνα θά.

φιλεω love, have deep feeling for, kiss  
ἦτω Verb, pres imperat, 3 s ειμι  
ἀναθεμα, τοσ n cursed, under the curse of  
God

See 12:3. Paul's call for love towards God is placed in a covenant setting of blessing and curse. He has set out throughout the letter the demands of the Gospel and is now in effect saying, "are you 'in' or are you 'out'?" The question is posed in the light of the prospect of Christ's coming who will say either 'go from me you who bear the anathema' or 'come to me, you who bear the blessing' (cf. Matt 24:34,41).

μαρανα θα (in Aramaic) our Lord, come!  
or μαραν αθα our Lord has come!

"Being Aramaic, the expression cannot have originated among the Greeks, but must have expressed a sentiment that the early church regarded as very important, else the foreign word would never have been taken over in this way by Greek-speaking Christians... Probably the best way of taking it is to divide the expression as *Marana tha* and take the verb as imperative, 'Our Lord, come' (a prayer like that in Rev 22:20, 'Come, Lord Jesus'). It would then express the eager longing felt by the church in those early days for the speedy return of the Lord." Morris

### 1 Corinthians 16:23

ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ μεθ' ὑμῶν.

Many MSS read Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

### 1 Corinthians 16:24

ἡ ἀγάπη μου μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

"Notice the *all*. He has some doughty opponents at Corinth, and there were some whom he had had to rebuke sharply. But he bears no malice. He sends love to all of them, a love in Christ Jesus." Morris

"Paul wishes to assure his readers that whatever have been the stresses and strains within a vibrant, articulate, overly self-centred church, he never doubts the work of God's grace within them (cf. 1:4-9), and he holds them in his heart with genuine 'love.'... He loves 'all' of them, not simply 'the weak' nor the most gifted, nor 'Paul's group' (1:12). It is as he sees them as One Body ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ that he sends them his genuine 'love' to be 'with' them 'all.'" Thistleton