
a *Grace Notes* course

The Acts of the Apostles

an expositional study
by Warren Doud

Lesson 313: **Acts 19:15-28**

ACTS, Lesson 313, Acts 19:15-28

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Acts 19:15-28**Acts 19:15**

And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?

There are several accounts in the Gospels of an evil spirit who speaks through the mouth of a possessed person.

Matt. 8:28, 29. When He came to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed met Him as they were coming out of the tombs. *They were* so extremely violent that no one could pass by that way.

And they cried out, saying, "What business do we have with each other, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

Mark 1:23-26. Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"

And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!"

Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.

Luke 4:40,41. While the sun was setting, all those who had any *who were* sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them.

Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.

In these instances, the demons acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God. In Ephesus, the demon, hearing the formula spoken by the exorcists,

also responds that he is acquainted with Jesus, "I know Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"

Acts 19:16

And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Well, obviously the sons of Sceva were not successful in casting out this demon. Quite the contrary, the possessed man tore their clothes off and beat them up! They narrowly escaped from that house, thankful to be alive. On the plus side, this incident was very effective in promoting the cause of the gospel of Christ.

Other examples of the power and rage of those who were possessed with evil spirits:

Mark 5:1-5. They came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes.

When He [Jesus] got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him,

and he had his dwelling among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain;

because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him.

Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones.

Luke 9:37-43. On the next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him.

And a man from the crowd shouted, saying, "Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only *boy*,

and a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming *at the mouth*; and only with

difficulty does it leave him, mauling him *as it leaves*.

"I begged Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not."

And Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here."

While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him *to the ground* and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father.

And they were all amazed at the greatness of God.

Acts 19:17,18

And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds.

We saw a parallel of this event with the account in Acts 5 of the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira. At that time "great fear came upon the whole church and all who heard these things" (Acts 5:5; 5:11).

The whole population knew about these things and were caused to develop a great deal more respect for the name of Jesus, who had revealed divine power and authority, and more people were saved.

It seems that some of the believers had practiced divination and sorcery, or been fortune-tellers, or engaged in black magic. The disciples would have taught them that God had forbidden these practices (Deut. 18:10-14). The word of God convicted people of their sins; they repented and turned from their evil deeds.

Acts 19:19

Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned

them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

These books were manuscripts used for all the magic arts. Many Christians confessed to having some contact with these practices and decided to get rid of the documents.

These books had substantial value. Since books were parchment scrolls, inscribed by hand, any book was expensive. The Greek word for silver coin is (**argurios**), which some translate "drachma".

The public burning of the books was a good sign that many people in Ephesus were turning away from magic and embracing the gospel of Christ. The local church experienced much growth during Paul's ministry there.

Acts 19:20

So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Luke attributes the growth of the church to the prevalent use of the Word of God, preached by Paul and the other disciples. The believers were applying the message of the scriptures to their daily conduct. They strengthened their faith, showed obedience to God's Word, and lived godly lives.

The process of Christian growth is described in Ephesians 4. Teachers teach; believers grow, attain unity, become mature, and function together in an effective local church.

Eph. 4:11-16. And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers,

for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ,

from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Acts 19:21

After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

Paul began to plan his travel route that would take him back to Jerusalem, and after that, on to Rome. This is the high point of Paul's work in Ephesus and the time of his departure is drawing near.

During Paul's second missionary journey, the cities of Thessalonica and Corinth became Christian centers. And during this third journey, Ephesus became the focal point of Christianity. On every side of the Aegean Sea (north, east, and west), centers of the Christian faith dominated the scene. From these harbors the gospel spread throughout the Mediterranean basin. Still Paul was not content. His heart's desire was to visit Rome, the capital of the empire.

However, his proposed route would take him northwest and west, to Macedonia and Achaia, not east and southeast, the direction of Jerusalem. He was still diligent in strengthening the Christians in the churches he had founded. He would visit the brethren in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth, before making his way to Jerusalem.

Paul knew that the Roman Christians had a flourishing church (Romans 1:11,12), so he was eager to have a teaching ministry there, too. But he didn't leave Ephesus until after Pentecost (1 Cor. 16:8).

Acts 19:22

So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timothy and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

Luke did not provide any details of Timothy's activities in Ephesus; we suppose that Timothy had come to Ephesus to help Paul. From Paul's epistles we learn that Timothy served as Paul's emissary at Corinth, and that he returned to Paul in Ephesus (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10,11). Paul now sends him to Macedonia, probably to Philippi and Thessalonica.

The name of Erastus appears in two other places in the New Testament. Paul describes Erastus as the city treasurer in Corinth (Rom. 16:23); and in 2 Timothy he remarks that Erastus stayed in Corinth (2 Tim. 4:20).

While Paul was in Ephesus, there was discord in the Corinthian church; He had written letters to them, including 1 Corinthians, and had sent Titus to Corinth to reconcile the differences (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6,13; 8:6, 16-18, 23; 12:18). He was waiting for Titus to bring him encouraging news. For details:

TOPIC: PAUL – FIRST LETTER TO CORINTH

While he waited at Ephesus, Paul witnessed the riot instigated by Demetrius the silversmith.

Acts 19:23-27

And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;

Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs,

you know that by this craft we have our wealth.

Moreover you see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods, which are made with hands:

So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship.

This disturbance occurred just as Paul was ready to leave the city; we read in Acts 20:1, "After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had exhorted them and taken his leave of them, he left to go to Macedonia."

Luke calls the riot a "stir", a typical understatement, but he does add "not a small one". In Ephesus the shock waves from this uprising were of grave concern to the Christian brethren. Later, when Paul was writing to the Corinthians about it, he said "I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus..." (1 Cor. 15:32). And in 2 Corinthians;

2 Cor. 1:8-11. For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came *to us* in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life;

indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; who delivered us from so great a *peril of* death, and will deliver *us*, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us, you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through *the prayers of many*.

The controversy was an economic one; if we are fair, we would have to say that we understand

how merchants might have been made angry to see their trade disappear as more and more people became Christians and put away their idols.

The temple of Artemis attracted worshipers who, before returning to their homes, bought small shrines and images depicting Artemis. These artifacts, used as objects of worship in private homes, were made and sold by the silversmiths in Ephesus. One of those silversmiths was Demetrius.

Perhaps Demetrius designed the images and employed craftsmen to make them. In addition, he seems to have been the spokesman for the silversmiths' guild in Ephesus. We do know that he and other silversmiths had a lucrative enterprise, for Luke, using a characteristic understatement, writes, "Demetrius was bringing no little profit for the artisans." There were, in fact, many subsidiary businesses that would have been affected; a lot of people got their living from the manufacture of shrines and images.

These artisans, incited by Demetrius, opposed anyone and anything that posed a threat to their trade. Under the guise of religion, they defended their source of income.¹

In fact, they had heard from other parts of the world how Christianity had an adverse effect on temple worship, at least in western Asia Minor.

Demetrius cleverly changes the course of his address. He moves from the topic of material prosperity to that of the worship of Artemis (Diana), and emphasizes not so much the craftsmen's affluence as interest in Artemis's temple. He points out the connection between their craft and the worship of the goddess and alerts his audience to the danger of Artemis losing her good name. If she is discredited, their source of income will dwindle. He is saying not that they already are seeing a decline in their trade but that the danger is imminent.

¹ Baker New Testament Commentary: Acts 19:24ff.

“The temple of the great goddess Artemis will be regarded as nothing.” Of greater concern than their own future is the disregard people will have for the temple of Artemis. This temple, built of marble, “was of enormous proportions—about four times the size of the Parthenon.” It measured 425 feet by 220 feet, was 60 feet in height, and was surrounded by 127 columns. When Paul lived in Ephesus, he observed the temple in all its beauty. After it burned in 356 B.C., it had been restored to its full size and even surpassed its previous splendor. Archaeologists have discovered that this temple was located about a mile and half to the northeast of Ephesus.

The temple honored the great goddess Artemis. Not the temple but Artemis is described as great. Demetrius accurately states that the worship of Artemis was universal, and his statement constitutes a call to action. He sounds the trumpet, so to speak, and declares strident opposition to the Christian faith.²

Acts 19:28

And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

One manuscript adds the line “they ran out into the street”. The artisans have become almost apoplectic with rage; the Christians were threatening them and they are now searching the city for their enemies. The people milled through the city and kept up their shouting, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” This shouting stirred the crowd to a greater frenzy; as Luke points out in verse 34, later in the day they shouted this chant for two hours.

² *ibid.*, Acts 19:25-27.

Paul – First Letter to Corinth

Paul pays a short Visit to Corinth³

We have hitherto derived such information as we possess, concerning the proceedings of St. Paul at Ephesus, from the narrative in the Acts; but we must now record an occurrence which St. Luke has passed over in silence, and which we know only from a few incidental allusions in the letters of the Apostle himself. This occurrence, which probably took place not later than the beginning of the second year of St. Paul's residence at Ephesus, was a short visit which he paid to the Church at Corinth.⁴

³ This article is from Conybeare, W. J. and Howson, J. S., *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul, Chapter 15*

⁴ The occurrence of this visit is proved by the following passages:

(1) 2 Cor. 12:14

(2) 2 Cor. 13:1, If the visit after leaving Ephesus was the third, there must have been a second before it;

(3) 2 Cor. 12:21. He fears lest he should again be humbled on visiting them, and again to have to mourn their sins. Hence there must have been a former visit, in which he was thus humbled and made to mourn.

Paley in the *Horae Paulinae*, and other commentators since, have shown that these passages (though they acknowledge their most natural meaning to be in favor of an intermediate visit) may be explained away; in the first two St. Paul might perhaps only have meant 'this is the third time I have intended to come to you;' and in the third passage we, may take again with come in the sense of 'on my return.' But we think that no-thing but the hypothesis of an intermediate visit can explain the following passages :

(4) 2 Cor. 2:1, “I decided not to come again in grief to you” (which is the reading of every one of the Uncial manuscripts). Here it would be exceedingly unnatural to join *again* with *come*; and the feeling of this probably led to the error of the Textus Receptus.

(5) 2 Cor. 13:2 (according to the reading of the best MSS.). I have warned you formerly, and I now

If we had not possessed any direct information that such a visit had been made, yet in itself it would have seemed highly probable that St. Paul would not have remained three years at Ephesus without revisiting his Corinthian converts. We have already remarked on the facility of communication existing between these two great cities, which were united by a continual reciprocity of commerce, and were the capitals of two peaceful provinces. And examples of the intercourse which actually took place between the Christians of the two Churches have occurred, both in the case of Aquila and Priscilla, who had migrated from the one to the other (Acts 18:18,19), and in that of Apollos, concerning whom, "when he was disposed to pass into Achaia," "the brethren [at Ephesus] wrote, exhorting the disciples [at Corinth] to receive him" (Acts 27:27).

Some of the results of this visit of Apollos to Corinth have been noticed; he was now probably returned to Ephesus, where we know (1 Cor. 16:12) that he was remaining (and, it would seem, stationary) during the third year of St. Paul's residence in that capital. No doubt, on his return, he had much to tell of the Corinthian converts to their father in the faith, much of joy and hope, but also much of pain, to communicate; for there can be little doubt that those tares among the wheat, which we shall

forewarn you, as when I was present the second time, so now while I am absent, saying to those who had sinned before that time, and to all the rest, 'If I come again, I will not spare.'

Against these arguments Paley sets (1st) St. Luke's silence, which, however, is acknowledged by all to be in-conclusive, considering that so very many of St. Paul's travels and adventures are left confessedly unrecorded in the Acts. (2nd) The passage, 2 Cor. 1:15, 16, in which St. Paul tells the Corinthians he did not wish now to give them a second benefit; whence he argues that the visit then approaching would be his second visit. But a more careful examination of the passage shows that St. Paul is speaking of his original intention of paying them a double visit, on his way to Macedonia, and on his return from :Macedonia.

presently see in their more mature growth; had already begun to germinate, although neither Paul had planted, nor Apollos watered them.

One evil at least, we know, prevailed extensively, and threatened to corrupt the whole Church of Corinth. This was nothing less than the addiction of many Corinthian Christians to those sins of impurity which they had practiced in the days of their Heathenism, and which disgraced their native city, even among the Heathen. We have before mentioned the peculiar licentiousness of manners which prevailed at Corinth. So notorious was this, that it had actually passed into the vocabulary of the Greek tongue; and the very word "to Corinthianize," meant to play the wanton; ⁵ nay, the bad reputation of the city had become proverbial, even in foreign languages, and is immortalized by the Latin poets.

Such being the habits in which many of the Corinthian converts had been educated, we cannot wonder that it proved most difficult to root out immorality from the rising Church. The offenders against Christian chastity were exceedingly numerous; at this period; and it was especially with the object of attempting to reform them, and to check the growing mischief, that St. Paul now determined to visit Corinth.

He has himself described this visit as a painful one; (2 Cor. 2:1) he went in sorrow at the tidings he had received, and when he arrived, he found the state of things even worse than he had expected; he tells us that it was a time of personal humiliation (2 Cor. 12:21) to himself, occasioned by the flagrant sins of so many of his own converts; he reminds the Corinthians, afterwards, how he had "mourned" over those who had dishonored the name of Christ by "the uncleanness and fornication and wantonness which they had committed." (2 Cor. 12:21)

But in the midst of his grief he showed the greatest tenderness for the individual

⁵ It is so used by Aristophanes.

offenders; he warned them of the heinous guilt which they were incurring; he showed them its inconsistency with their Christian calling; ⁶ he reminded them how, at their baptism, they had died to sin, and risen again unto righteousness; but he did not at once exclude them from the Church which they had defiled. Yet he was compelled to threaten them with this penalty, if they persevered in the sins which had now called forth his rebuke. He has recorded the very words which he used." If I come again," he said, "I will not spare." 2 Cor. 13:2.

It appears probable that, on this occasion, St. Paul remained but a very short time at Corinth. When afterwards, in writing to them, he says that he does not wish "*now* to pay them a passing visit," he seems ⁷ to imply, that his last visit had deserved that epithet. Moreover, had it occupied a large portion of the "space of three years," which he describes himself to have spent at Ephesus (Acts 20:31), he would probably have expressed himself differently in that part of his address to the Ephesian presbyters; ⁸ and a long visit could scarcely have failed to furnish more allusions in the Epistles so soon after written to Corinth. The silence of St. Luke also, which is easily explained on the supposition of a short visit, would be less natural had St. Paul been long absent from Ephesus, where he appears, from the narrative in the Acts, to be stationary during all this period.

⁶ There can be no doubt that he urged upon them the same arguments which he was afterwards obliged to repeat at I Cor. 6:15.

⁷ I Cor. 16:7. Yet this admits of another explanation; for perhaps he only meant to say, "I will not *now* (at once) come to you (by the direct route) on my way to Macedonia for a passing visit,"

⁸ Wieseler, however, gets over this, by supposing that when St. Paul mentions three years spent among his hearers, he means to address not only the Ephesian presbyters whom he had summoned, but also the companions of his voyage (Acts 20:4) who had been with him in Macedonia and Achaia.

On these grounds, we suppose that the Apostle, availing himself of the constant maritime intercourse between the two cities, had gone by sea to Corinth; and that he now returned to Ephesus by the same route (which was very much shorter than that by land), after spending a few days or weeks at Corinth.

But his censures and warnings had produced too little effect upon his converts; his mildness had been mistaken for weakness; his hesitation in punishing had been ascribed to a fear of the offenders; and it was not long before he received new intelligence that the profligacy which had infected the community was still increasing. Then it was that he felt himself compelled to resort to harsher measures; he wrote an Epistle (which has not been preserved to us) ⁹ in which, as we learn from himself, he ordered the Christians of Corinth, by virtue of his Apostolic authority, "to cease from all intercourse with fornicators."

By this he meant, as he subsequently explained his injunctions, to direct the exclusion of all profligates from the Church. The Corinthians, however, either did not understand this, or (to excuse themselves) they affected not to do so, for they asked, how it was possible for them to abstain from all intercourse with the profligate, unless they entirely secluded themselves from all the business of life, which they had to transact with their Heathen neighbors. Whether the lost Epistle contained any other topics, we cannot know with certainty; but we may conclude with some probability that it was very short, and directed to this" one subject; ¹⁰ otherwise it is not easy to understand why it

⁹ In proof of this, see the note on I Cor. 5:9-12. This lost Epistle must have been written *after* his second visit; otherwise he need not have explained it in the passage referred to.

¹⁰ Probably it was in this lost letter that he gave them notice of his intention to visit them on his way to Macedonia; for altering which he was so much blamed by his opponents.

should not have been preserved together with the two subsequent Epistles.

Soon after this short letter had been dispatched, Timothy, accompanied by Erastus,¹¹ left Ephesus for Macedonia. St. Paul desired him, if possible, to continue his journey to Corinth; but did not feel certain that it would be possible for him to do so consistently with the other objects of his journey, which probably had reference to the great collection now going on for the poor Hebrew Christians at Jerusalem.

Meantime, some members of the household of Chloe, a distinguished Christian family at Corinth, arrived at Ephesus; and from them St. Paul received fuller information than he before possessed of the condition of the Corinthian Church. The spirit of party had seized upon its members and well nigh destroyed Christian love. We have already seen in our general view of the divisions or the Apostolic Church, that the great parties which then divided the Christian world had ranked themselves under the names of different Apostles, whom they attempted to set up against each other as rival leaders. At Corinth, as in other places, emissaries had arrived from the Judaizers of Palestine, who boasted of their "letters or commendation" from the metropolis of the faith; they did not, however, attempt, as yet, to insist upon circumcision, as we shall find them doing successfully among the simpler population of Galatia. This would have been hopeless in a great and civilized community like that of Corinth, imbued with Greek feelings of contempt for what they would have deemed a barbarous superstition.

Here, therefore, the Judaizers confined themselves, in the first instance, to personal attacks against St. Paul, whose apostleship they denied, whose motives they calumniated, and whose authority they persuaded the

¹¹ Erastus was probably the "treasurer" of the city of Corinth, mentioned in Rom. 16:23 and 2 Tim. 4:20, and therefore was most likely proceeding at any rate to Corinth.

Corinthians to repudiate. Some of them declared themselves the followers of "Cephas," whom the Lord Himself had selected to be the chief Apostle; others (probably the more extreme members of the party) boasted of their own immediate connection with Christ Himself, and their intimacy with "the brethren of the Lord," and especially with James, the head of the Church at Jerusalem. The endeavors of these agitators to undermine the influence of the Apostle of the Gentiles met with undeserved success; and they gained over a strong party to their side. Meanwhile, those who were still steadfast to the doctrines of St. Paul, yet were not all unshaken in their attachment to his person: a portion of them preferred the Alexandrian learning with which Apollos had enforced his preaching, to the simple style of their first teacher, who had designedly abstained, at Corinth, from anything like philosophical argumentation. (1 Cor. 2:15)

This party, then, who sought to form for themselves a philosophical Christianity, called themselves the followers of Apollos; although the latter, for his part, evidently disclaimed the rivalry with St. Paul which was thus implied, and even refused to revisit Corinth, (1 Cor. 16:12) lest he should seem to countenance the factious spirit of his adherents.

It is not impossible that the Antinomian Free thinkers, whom we have already seen to form so dangerous a portion of the Primitive Church, attached themselves to this last named party; at any rate, they were, at this time, one of the worst elements of evil at Corinth: they put forward a theoretic defense of the practical immorality in which they lived; and some of them had so lost the very foundation of Christian faith as to deny the resurrection of the dead, and thus to adopt the belief as well as the sensuality of their Epicurean neighbors, whose motto was "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"

A crime recently committed by one of these pretended Christians, was now reported to St. Paul, and excited his utmost abhorrence: a member of the Corinthian Church was openly

living in incestuous intercourse with his step mother, and that, during his father's life; yet this audacious offender was not excluded from the Church.

Nor were these the only evils: some Christians were showing their total want of brotherly love by bringing vexatious actions against their brethren in the Heathen courts of law; others were turning even the spiritual gifts which they had received from the Holy Ghost into occasions of vanity and display, not unaccompanied by fanatical delusion; the decent order of Christian worship was disturbed by the tumultuous claims of rival ministrations; women had forgotten the modesty of their sex, and came forward, unveiled (contrary to the habit of their country), to address the public assembly; and even the sanctity of the Holy Communion itself was profaned by scenes of reveling and debauch.

About the same time that all this disastrous intelligence was brought to St. Paul by the household of Chloe, other messengers arrived from Corinth, bearing the answer of the Church to his previous letter, of which (as we have mentioned above) they requested an explanation; and at the same time referring to his decision several questions which caused dispute and difficulty.

These questions related,

1st, To the controversies respecting meat which had been offered to idols;

2nd, To the disputes regarding celibacy and matrimony; the right of divorce; and the perplexities which arose in the case of mixed marriages, where one of the parties was an unbeliever:

3rd, To the exercise of spiritual gifts in the public assemblies of the Church.

St. Paul hastened to reply to these questions, and at the same time to denounce the sins which had polluted the Corinthian Church, and almost annulled its right to the name of Christian. The letter which he was thus led to

write is addressed, not only to this metropolitan Church, but also to the Christian communities established in other places in the same province, which might be regarded as dependencies of that in the capital city; hence we must infer that these Churches also had been infected by some of the errors or vices which had prevailed at Corinth.

The letter is, in its contents, the most diversified of all St. Paul's Epistles; and in proportion to the variety of its topics, is the depth of its interest for ourselves. For by it we are introduced, as it were, behind the scenes of the Apostolic Church, and its minutest features are revealed to us under the light of daily life.

We see the picture of a Christian congregation as it met for worship in some upper chamber, such as the house of Aquila, or of Gaius, could furnish. We see that these seasons of pure devotion were not unalloyed by human vanity and excitement; yet, on the other hand, we behold the heathen auditor pierced to the heart by the inspired eloquence of the Christian prophets, the secrets of his conscience laid bare to him, and himself constrained to fall down on his face and worship God; we hear the fervent thanksgiving echoed by the unanimous Amen; we see the administration of the Holy Communion terminating the feast of love.

Again we become familiar with the perplexities of domestic life, the corrupting proximity of heathen immorality, the lingering superstition, the rash speculation, the lawless perversion of Christian liberty; we witness the strife of theological factions, the party names, the sectarian animosities. We perceive the difficulty of the task imposed upon the Apostle, who must guard from so many perils, and guide through so many difficulties, his children in the faith, whom else he had begotten in vain; and we learn to appreciate more fully the magnitude of that laborious responsibility under which he describes himself as almost ready to sink," the care of all the Churches"

But while we rejoice that so many details of the deepest historical interest have been preserved

to us by this Epistle, let us not forget to thank God who so inspired His Apostle, that in his answers to questions of transitory interest he has laid down principles of eternal obligation. ¹² Let us trace with gratitude the providence of Him, who "out of darkness calls up light;" by whose mercy it was provided that the unchastity of the Corinthians should occasion the sacred laws of moral purity to be established for ever through the Christian world; that their denial of the resurrection should cause those words to be recorded whereon reposes, as upon a rock that cannot be shaken, our sure and certain hope of immortality.

First Epistle to the Corinthians ¹³

¹² The contrast between the short-lived interest of the questions referred to him for solution, and the eternal principles by which they must be solved, was brought prominently before the mind of the Apostle himself by the Holy Spirit, under whose guidance he wrote; and he has expressed it in those sublime words which might serve as a motto for the whole Epistle (1 Cor. 7:29-31).

¹³ The date of this Epistle can be fixed with more precision than that of any other. It gives us the means of ascertaining, not merely the year, but even (with great probability) the month and week, in which it was written.

(1) Apollos had been working at Corinth, and was now with St. Paul at Ephesus (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4, 22; 4:6; 16:12). This was the case during St. Paul's residence at Ephesus (Acts 19:1).

(2) He wrote during *the days of unleavened bread*, i.e. at Easter (1 Cor. 5:7, see the note on that passage), and intended to remain at Ephesus till Pentecost (16:8, cf. 15:32). After leaving Ephesus, he purposed to come by Macedonia to Achaia (16:5-7). This was the route he took (Acts 10:1, 2) on leaving Ephesus after the tumult in the theatre.

(3) Aquila and Priscilla were with him at Ephesus (16:19). They had taken up their residence at Ephesus before the visit of St. Paul (Acts 18:26).

(4) The Great Collection was going on in Achaia (16:1-3). When he wrote to the Romans from

1 CORINTHIANS 1

PAUL, a called Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes the Brother, TO THE CHURCH OF GOD AT CORINTH, hallowed in Christ Jesus, called Saints; ¹⁴ together with ¹⁵ who can upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord in every place which is their home and our home also. ¹⁶

Corinth during his three months' visit there (Acts 20:3), the collection was completed in Macedonia and Achaia (Rom. 15:26).

(5) He hopes to go by Corinth to Jerusalem, and thence to Rome (16:4, and 15:25-28.) Now the time when he entertained this very purpose was towards the conclusion of his long Ephesian residence (Acts 19:21).

(6) He had sent Timothy towards Corinth (4:17), but not direct (16:10). Now it was at the close of his Ephesian residence (Acts 19:22) that he sent Timothy with Erastus (the Corinthian) from Ephesus to Macedonia, which was one way to Corinth, but not the shortest.

¹⁴ The sense of the word for 'Saints' in the New Testament is nearly equivalent to the modern 'Christians;' but it would be an anachronism so to translate it here, since (in the time of St. Paul) the word 'Christian' was only used as a term of reproach. The objection to translating it 'saints' is, that the idea now often conveyed by that term is different from the meaning of the Greek word as used by St. Paul. Yet as no other English word represents it better, either the old rendering must be retained, or an awkward periphrasis employed. The English reader should bear in mind that St. Paul applies the term to all members of the Church.

¹⁵ This is added to comprehend those Christians of the Church of Achaia who were not resident at Corinth, but in the neighboring places of the same province.

¹⁶ The Authorized Version here appears scarcely reconcilable with the order of the Greek, though it is defended by the opinions of Chrysostom, Billroth, Olshausen, etc. The translation of Meyer, "in every place under their and our dominion," seems more like a Papal than an Apostolic rescript; and that of De Wette, "in every place both of their and our

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

I thank my God continually on your behalf, for the grace of God given unto you in Christ Jesus. Because, in Him, you were every wise enriched; with all the gifts of speech and knowledge, (for thus my testimony to Christ was confirmed among you), so that you come behind no other church in any gift; looking earnestly for the time when our Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed to sight.

And He also will confirm you unto the end, that you may be without reproach at the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. For God is faithful, by whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

I exhort you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to shun disputes, and have no divisions among you, but to be knit together in the same mind, and the same judgment.¹⁷ For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by the members of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. I mean, that one of you says, "I am a follower of Paul;" another, "I of Apollos;" another, "I of Cephas;"⁷ another, "I of Christ."

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized unto the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius (lest anyone should say that I baptized unto my own name); and I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides these I know not that I baptized any other. For Christ sent me forth as His Apostle, not to baptize, but to publish the Glad tidings; and

abode," is frigid. and adds nothing to the idea of 'every place.' St. Paul means to say that he feels the home of his converts to be also his own. Both sentiment and expression are the same as in Rom. 16:13: 'His mother and mine.'

¹⁷ "Mind" refers to the view taken by the understanding; "judgment" to the practical decision arrived at.

that, not with wisdom of word, lest thereby the cross of Christ should be made void. For the word of the cross,¹⁸ to those in the way of perdition, is folly; but to us in the way of salvation,¹⁹ it is the power of God. And so it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."²⁰

Where is the Philosopher? Where is the Rabbi? Where is the reasoner of this world? Has not God turned the world's wisdom into folly? for when the world had failed to gain by its wisdom the knowledge of God in the wisdom of God, it pleased God, by the folly of our preaching, to save those who believe. For the Jews require a sign [from heaven], and the Greeks demand philosophy; but we proclaim a Messiah crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks a folly; but to the called²¹ themselves, whether they be Jews or Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. For the folly of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. For you see, brethren, how God has called you; how few of you are wise in earthly wisdom, how few are powerful, how few are noble,

But the world's folly, God has chosen, to confound its wisdom; and the world's weakness God has chosen, to confound its strength; and the world's base things, and things despised, yea, things that have no being, God has chosen, to bring to nought the

¹⁸ I.e., the tidings of a crucified Messiah.

¹⁹ For the present participle we may refer to Acts 2:47, and to 2:6, below.

²⁰ (Isa. 29:14, not quite literally quoted from the LXX).

²¹ All who make an outward profession of Christianity are, in St. Paul's language, the "called." They have received a message from God which has called them to enter into His church.

things that be; that no flesh should glory in His presence. But you are His children in Christ Jesus, whom God sent unto us as our wisdom,²² and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that it might be according as it is written, "He that boasts, let him boast in the Lord. (Jer. 9:23,24)

1 CORINTHIANS 2

So, brethren, when I myself came among you, and declared to you the testimony of God, I came not with surpassing skill of speech or wisdom. For no knowledge did I purpose to display among you, but the knowledge of Jesus Christ along, and Him crucified. And in my intercourse with you, I was filled with weakness and fear and much trembling.²³

And when I proclaimed my message, I used not persuasive words of human wisdom, but showed forth the working of God's Spirit and power, that your faith might have its foundation not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Nevertheless, among those who are ripe in understanding, I speak wisdom; albeit not the wisdom of this world, nor of its rulers, who will soon be nought.²⁴ But it is God's wisdom

²² Literally, "who became wisdom to use from God," the preposition implying "sent from."

²³ St. Paul appears, on his first coming to Corinth, to have been suffering under great depression, perhaps caused by the bodily malady to which he was subject (cf. 2 Cor. 12:8), perhaps by the ill success of his efforts at Athens.

The expression "fear and trembling," is peculiarly Pauline, being used in four of St. Paul's Epistles and by no other writer in the New Testament. It does not mean "fear of personal danger," but a "trembling anxiety to perform a duty." Thus, in Eph. 6:5, slaves are charged to obey their masters thus, and this "anxious conscientiousness" is opposed to "eye-service."

²⁴ Literally, "passing away into nothingness."

that I speak, whereof the secret is made known to His people;²⁵ even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages, that we might be glorified thereby. But the rulers of this world knew it not; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. But as it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."²⁶ Yet to us God has revealed them by His Spirit. For the Spirit fathoms all things, even the depths of God. For who can know what belongs to man but the spirit of man which is within him? even so none can know what belongs to God, but the Spirit of God alone. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might understand those things which have been freely given us by God.

These are the things whereof we speak, in words not taught by man's wisdom, but by the Spirit; explaining spiritual things to spiritual men. But the natural²⁷ man rejects the teaching of God's Spirit, for to him it is folly; and he cannot comprehend it because it is spiritually discerned. But the spiritual man judges all things truly, yet cannot himself be truly judged by others. For "Who hath known the mind of the Lord that he should instruct Him?" (Isa. 40:13, LXX) but we have the mind of the Lord²⁸ [within us].

²⁵ "Wisdom in a mystery," is a wisdom revealed to the *initiated*, to Christians, but hidden from the rest of the world.

²⁶ Isa. 64:4 is the nearest passage to this in the Old Testament. The quotation is not to be found anywhere exactly.

²⁷ Properly, man considered as endowed with the *anima* (the living principle), as distinguished from the spiritual impulse.

²⁸ The best manuscripts are divided between the readings of "Christ" and "Lord" here.

1 CORINTHIANS 3

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as spiritual men, but as carnal, yea, as babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, and not with meat; for you were not able to bear it; nay, you are not yet able, for you are still carnal. For while you are divided amongst yourselves by jealousy, and strife, and factious parties, is it not evident that you are carnal, and walking in the ways of men? When one says, "I follow Paul," and another "I follow Apollos," can you deny that you are carnal?

Who then is Paul, or who is Apollos? what are they but servants, by whose ministrations you believed? and was it not the Lord who gave to each of them the measure of his success? I planted, Apollos watered; but it was God who made the seed to grow.

So that he who plants is nothing, nor he who waters, but God alone who gives the growth. But the planter and the waterer are one together; and each will receive his own wages according to his work. For we are God's fellow laborers, and you are God's husbandry. You are God's building; God gave me the gift of grace whereby like a skilful architect I laid a foundation; and on this foundation another builds; but let each take heed what he builds thereon, ["thereon," I say,] for other foundation can no man lay, than that already laid, which is Jesus Christ.²⁹ But on this foundation one may raise gold, and silver, and precious stones; another, wood, hay, and stubble.³⁰ But each man's work will be made

²⁹ The MSS vary here, but the same sense is virtually involved in all three readings, namely that the Messiahship of Jesus was the foundation of the teaching of the Apostles.

³⁰ The image becomes much more vivid, if we remember the contrasted buildings of an ancient city, the sumptuous edifices of granite and marble, with ornaments of gold and silver, on the one hand, and the hovels of the poor on the other, with walls of wood and roof of thatch, and interstices stuffed with

manifest; for The Day³¹ will make it known; because that day will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test each builder's work. He whose building stands unharmed, shall receive payment for his labor; he whose work is burned down, shall forfeit his reward: yet he shall not himself be destroyed; but shall be saved as it were through the flames.

Know ye not that you are God's temple, and that you form a shrine wherein God's Spirit dwells? If any man ruin the temple of God, God shall ruin³² him; for the temple of God is holy; and holy therefore are ye.

Let none deceive himself; if any man is held wise among you in the wisdom of this world, let him make himself a fool [in the world's judgment], that so he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, as it is written, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." (Job 5:13, from the LXX) And again, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain." (Psalm 94:11) Therefore let none of you make his boast in men;³³ for all things are yours; both Paul and Apollos, and Cephas, and the whole world itself; both life and death, things present and things to come all are yours but³⁴ you are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

1 CORINTHIANS 4

straw. See the description of Rome below, Chapter 22.

³¹ The Day of Christ's coming; cf. I Thess. 5:4.

³² The verbal link is lost in the AV.

³³ The meaning is "Boast not of having this man or that as your leader; for all the Apostles, nay, all things in the universe, are ordained by God to co-operate for your good."

³⁴ All things work together for the good of Christians; all things conspire to do them service; but their work is to do Christ's service, even as He Himself came to do the will of His Father.

Let us be accounted as servants of Christ, and Christ's and stewards of the mysteries of God." Moreover, it is required in a steward to be found faithful.³⁵ Yet to me it matters nothing that I be judged by you or by the doom of man; nay, I judge not even myself. For although I know not that I am guilty of unfaithfulness, yet this does not justify me; but I must be tried by the judgment of the Lord. Therefore judge nothing hastily, until the coming of the Lord; for He shall bring to light the secrets of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of men's hearts; and then shall each receive his due praise from God.

But these things, brethren, I have represented under the persons of myself and Apollos, for your sakes; that by considering us you might learn not to think of yourselves above that which has been written, 9 and that you may cease to puff yourselves up in the cause³⁶ of one against another. For who makes thee to differ from another? what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and how then canst thou boast, as if thou hadst won it for thyself? But ye forsooth have already eaten to the full [of spiritual food], ye are already rich, ye have seated yourselves upon your throne, and have no need of me. Would that you were indeed enthroned, that I too might reign with you. For, I think, God has set forth us the Apostles last of all, like criminals condemned to die, to be gazed at in a theatre³⁷ by the whole world,

³⁵ Or rather, "Inquiry is made into a steward's conduct in order that he may be proved faithful."

³⁶ St. Paul probably means "in the cause of your party leaders;" but speaks with intentional indistinctness.

³⁷ Literally, because we have been made a theatrical spectacle. Compare Heb. 10:33. The spectacle to which St. Paul here alludes was common in those times. Criminals condemned to death were exhibited for the amusement of the populace on the arena of the amphitheatre, and forced to fight with wild beasts, or to slay one another as gladiators.

both men and angels. We for Christ's sake are fools, while you are wise in Christ; we are weak, while you are strong; you are honorable, while we are outcasts; even to the present hour we bear hunger and thirst, and nakedness and stripes, and have no certain dwelling place, and toil with our own hands; curses we meet with blessings, persecution with patience, railings with good works. We have been made as it were the refuse of the earth, the off scouring of all things, unto this day. I write not thus to reproach you, but as a father I chide the children whom I love. For though you may have ten thousand guardians³⁸ to lead you towards the school of Christ, you can have but one father; and it was I who begat you in Christ Jesus, by the Glad tidings which I brought. I beseech you, therefore, become followers of me.

For this cause I have sent to you Timotheus, my beloved son, a faithful servant of the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in all the churches. Now some have been filled with arrogance, supposing that I am not coming to you. But I shall be with you shortly, if the Lord will; and then I shall learn, not the word of these boasters, but their might. For mighty deeds, not empty words, are the tokens of God's kingdom. What is your desire? Must I come to you with the rod, or in love and the spirit of meekness?

1 CORINTHIANS 5

It is reported that there is fornication generally among you, and such fornication, as is not known even among the Heathen, so that one among you has his father's wife. And you

These criminals were exhibited at the end of the spectacle as an exciting termination to the entertainment ("set forth last of all"). So Tertullian paraphrases the passage, *Nus Deus Apostolos novissimos elegit velut bestiarios*.

³⁸ This is the same word used in Gal 3:24 referring to "The guardian slave who led the child to school"

forsooth have been puffed up when you should have mourned, that the doer of this deed might be put away from the midst of you.

For me being present with you in spirit, although absent in body, I have already passed sentence, as though present, on him who has done this thing; [and I decree] in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you convene an assembly, and when you, and my spirit with you, are gathered together, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you deliver over to Satan ³ the man who has thus sinned, for the destruction of his fleshly lusts, that his spirit may be ⁶ saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Unseemly is your boasting; know ye not that "a little leaven leavens the whole lump?" ³⁹ Cast out therefore the old leaven, that you may be an untainted mass, even as now ⁴⁰ you are without taint of leaven; for our

³⁹ The same proverb is quoted in Gal. 5:9.

⁴⁰ In spite of the opinion of some eminent modern commentators, which is countenanced by Chrysostom, we must adhere to the interpretation which considers these words as written at the Paschal season, and suggested by it. The words *leaven*, *lump*, *Paschal Lamb*, and *feast* all agree most naturally with this view. It has been objected, that St. Paul would not address the Corinthians as engaged in a feast which he, at Ephesus, was celebrating; because it would be over before his letter could reach them. Anyone who has ever written a birthday letter to a friend in India will see the weakness of this objection. It has also been urged that he would not address a mixed church of Jews and Gentiles as engaged in the celebration of a Jewish feast. Those who urge this objection must have forgotten that St. Paul addresses the Galatians (undoubtedly a mixed church) as if they had all been formerly idolaters (Gal. 4:8); and addresses the Romans, sometimes as if they were all Jews (Rom. 7:1), sometimes as if they were Gentiles (Rom. 11:18). If we take 'as ye are unleavened' in a metaphorical sense, it is scarcely consistent with the previous 'cast out the old leaven;' for the passage would then amount to saying, 'Be free from leaven (metaphorically) as you are free from leaven (metaphorically)'; whereas, on the other view, St.

Paschal Lamb is Christ, who was slain for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, nor the leaven of vice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of purity and truth.

I enjoined you in my letter ⁴¹ to keep no company with fornicators: not that you should

Paul says, 'Be free from leaven (metaphorically) as you are free from leaven (literally).' There seems no difficulty in supposing that the Gentile Christians joined with the Jewish Christians in celebrating the Paschal feast after the Jewish manner, at least to the extent of abstaining from leaven in the love-feasts. And we see that St. Paul still observed the 'days of unleavened bread' at this period of his life, from Acts 20:6. Also, from what follows, we perceive how naturally this greatest of Jewish feasts changed into the greatest of Christian festivals.

⁴¹ Literally, 'I wrote to you in the letter,' viz. the letter which I last wrote, or the letter to which you refer in your questions; for they had probably mentioned their perplexity about this direction in it. So in 2 Cor. 7:8 the present letter (1 Cor.) is referred to in the same phrase (I grieved you in the letter). There are two decisive reasons why these words must refer to a previous letter, not to the letter St. Paul is actually writing. (1.) No such direction as 'Keep no company with fornicators' occurs in what has gone before. (2.) If St. Paul had meant to say 'I have just written,' he could not have added the words 'in the letter,' which would have been then worse than superfluous. Prof. Stanley (who has recently supported the view here opposed) urges that the aorist might be used of the present epistle as at I Cor. 9:15, which is obviously true. He also urges that 'the letter' may sometimes refer to the present letter; which may also be admitted in cases where the letter is referred to as a whole in its postscript; e.g. 'I Tertius, who wrote the letter' (Rom. 16:22). 'I charge you that the letter be read' (1 Thess. 5:27). 'When the letter has been read among you, cause it to be read at Laodicea' (Col. 4:16). But none of these instances gives any support to the view that a writer could refer to his own words, just uttered, by such a phrase as 'I wrote to you in the letter.' We are forced, therefore, to conclude that these words refer to a preceding letter, which has not been preserved. And this view receives a strong confirmation from the words of St.

utterly forego all intercourse with the men of this world who may be fornicators, or lascivious, or extortioners, or idolaters; for so you would need to go utterly out of the world. But my meaning was, that you should keep no company with any man who, bearing the name of a Brother, is either a fornicator, or a wanton,⁴² or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a man, I say, you must not so much as eat. For what .need have I to judge those also that are without? Is it not your part to judge those that are within? But those without are for God's judgment. "From amongst yourselves ye shall cast out the evil one." (Deut. 24:7)

1 CORINTHIANS 6

Can there be any of you who dare to bring their private differences into the courts of law, before the wicked and not rather bring them before the saints? Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is subjected to your judgment, are you unfit to decide the most trifling matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more the affairs of this life? If, therefore, you have disputes to settle which concern the affairs of this life, give the arbitration of them to the

Paul's Corinthian opponents (spoken before 2 Cor. was written): 'His letters are weighty,' etc. (2 Cor. 10:10).

⁴² The Greek word has the meaning of a concupiscent man in some passages of St. Paul's writings. Compare Eph. 5:5 (where it is coupled with *unclean*). So the corresponding substantive, in St. Paul, almost, invariably means lasciviousness. See Eph. 4:19, 5:3, and Col. 3:5. The only places where the word is used by St. Paul in the sense of *covetousness* are 2 Cor. 9:5, and 1 Thess. 2:5, in the latter of which passages the other meaning would not be inadmissible. How the word contracted its Pauline meaning may be inferred from the similar use of concupiscence in English. Since the above was first published, Prof. Stanley and Prof. Jowett have both expressed their concurrence in this rendering of the word.

very least esteemed in your Church. I speak to your shame.

Can it be that amongst you there is not so much as one man wise enough to arbitrate between his brethren, but must brother go to law with brother, and that in the courts of the unbelievers? Nay, farther, you are in fault, throughout, in having such disputes at all. Why do you not rather submit to wrong? Why not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, you are yourselves wronging and defrauding, and that your brethren. Know ye not that wrongdoers shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived – neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor self defilers, nor sodomites, nor robbers, nor wantons, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but you have washed away your stains, you have been hallowed, you have been justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God.

All things are lawful for me.⁴³ But not all things are good for me. Though all things are in my power, they shall not bring me under their power. "Meat is for the belly, and the belly for meat," though God will soon put an end to both; but the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body;⁴⁴ and as God raised the Lord from

⁴³ See the explanation of this in Chapter 13; and compare (for the true side of the phrase) Gal. 5:23, 'Against such there is no law.' Probably St. Paul had used the very words 'All things are lawful for me' in this true sense, and the immoral party at Corinth had caught them up, and used them as their watchword. It is also probable that this fact was mentioned in the letter which St. Paul had just received from Corinth (1 Cor. 7:1). Also see chapter 8:1 below. From what follows it is evident that these Corinthian freethinkers argued that the existence of bodily appetites proved the lawfulness of their gratification.

⁴⁴ The body is for the Lord Jesus, to be consecrated by His indwelling to His service; and the Lord Jesus

the grave, so He will raise us also by His mighty power.⁴⁵ Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ's body? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Know ye not, that he who joins himself to an harlot becomes one body with her? For it is said "They twain shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2:24) But he who joins himself to the Lord, becomes one spirit with Him. Flee fornication. The root of sin is not in the body,⁴⁶ [but in the soul]; yet the fornicator sins against his own body. Know ye not that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit which dwells within you, which ye have received from God? And you are not your own, for you were bought with a price.⁴⁷ Glorify God, therefore, not in your spirit only, but in your body also, since both are His.

1 CORINTHIANS 7

As to the questions which you have asked me in your letter, this is my answer. It is good for a man to remain unmarried. Nevertheless, to

is for the body, to consecrate it by dwelling therein in the person of His Spirit.

⁴⁵ St. Paul's argument here is that sins of unchastity, though bodily acts, yet injure a part of our nature (compare the phrase 'spiritual body,' I Cor. 15:11) which will not be destroyed by death, and which is closely connected with our moral well-being. And it is a fact no less certain than mysterious, that moral and spiritual ruin is caused by such sins, which human wisdom (when untaught by Revelation) held to be actions as blameless as eating and drinking.

⁴⁶ Literally, "every sin which a man commits is without (external to) the body." The Corinthian freethinkers probably used this argument also; and perhaps availed themselves of our Lord's words, Mark 7:18: 'Do ye not perceive that whatsoever thing from without enters into the man, it cannot defile him, because it enters not into his heart.

⁴⁷ The "price" is the blood of Christ. Compare Acts 20:28 and Col. 1:14.

avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband. Let the husband live in the intercourse of affection with his wife, and like wise the wife with her husband. The wife has not dominion over her own body, but the husband; and so also the husband has not dominion over his own body, but the wife. Do not separate one from the other, unless it be with mutual consent for a time, that you may give yourselves without disturbance to prayer, and then return to one another, lest, through your fleshly passions, Satan should tempt you to sin. Yet this I say by way of permission, not of command. Nevertheless I would that all men were as I myself am; but men have different gifts from God, one this, another that. But to the unmarried and to the widows, I say that it would be good for them if they should remain in the state wherein I myself also am; yet if they are incontinent, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn. To the married, not I, but the Lord gives commandment, 3 that the wife part not from her husband; (but if she be already parted, let her remain single, or else be reconciled with him;) and also that the husband put not away his wife.

But to the rest, speak I, not the Lord. If any Brother be married to an unbelieving wife let him not put her away, if she be content to live with him; neither let a believing wife put away an unbelieving husband who is willing to live with her; for the unbelieving husband is hallowed by union with his believing wife, and the unbelieving wife by union with her believing husband; for otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. But if the unbelieving husband or wife seeks for separation, let them be separated: for in such cases the believing husband or wife is not bound to remain under the yoke. But the call whereby God has called us, is a call of

peace.⁴⁸ For thou who art the wife of an unbeliever, how knowest thou whether thou mayest save thy husband? or thou who art the husband, whether thou mayest save thy wife?

Only⁴⁹ let each man walk in the same path which God allotted to him, wherein the Lord has called him. This rule I give in all the churches. Thus, if any man, when he was called, bore the mark of circumcision, let him not efface it; if any man was uncircumcised at the time of his calling, let him not receive circumcision. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but obedience to the commands of God. Let each abide in the condition wherein he was called. Wast thou in slavery at the time of thy calling? Care not for it. Nay, though thou have power to gain thy freedom,⁵⁰ rather make use of thy condition. For the slave who has been called in the Lord is the Lord's freedman; and so also, the freeman who has been called, is Christ's slave. He has bought you all; beware lest you make yourselves the slaves of man.⁵¹ Brethren, in the state wherein he was called, let each abide with God.

⁴⁸ The inference is, "therefore, the profession of Christianity ought not to lead the believer to quarrel with the unbelieving members of his family."

⁴⁹ Literally, "only, as God allotted to each, as the Lord has called each, so let him walk."

⁵⁰ The Greek here is ambiguous, and might be so rendered as to give directly opposite precepts; but the version given in the text (which is that advocated by Chrysostom, Meyer, and De Wette) agrees best with the order of the Greek words, and also with the context. We must remember, with regard to this and other precepts here given, that they were given under the immediate anticipation of our Lord's coming.

⁵¹ Alluding to their servile adherence to part leaders. Compare 2 Cor. 11:20.

Concerning your virgin daughters⁵² I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment, as one who has been moved by the Lord's mercy to be faithful. I think, then, that it is good, by marriage. reason of the present necessity, for all to be unmarried. Art thou bound to a wife? seek not separation; art thou free? seek not marriage; yet if thou marry, thou sin not.⁵³ And if your virgin daughters marry, they sin not; but the married will have sorrows in the flesh, and these I would spare you.⁵⁴ But this I say, brethren, the time is short; ⁵⁵ that henceforth both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not,

⁵² We cannot help remarking, that the manner in which a recent infidel writer has spoken of this passage, is one of the most striking proofs how far a candid and acute mind may be warped by a strong bias. In this case the desire of the writer is to disparage the moral teaching of Christianity; and he brings forward this passage to prove his case, and blames St. Paul because he assumes these Corinthian daughters to be disposable in marriage at the will of their father; as if any other assumption had been possible, in the case of Greek or Jewish daughters in that age. We must suppose that this writer would (on the same grounds) require a modern missionary to Persia to preach the absolute incompatibility of despotic government with sound morality.

⁵³ Literally, "though thou shalt have married, thou hast not sinned;" the aorist used for the perfect, as constantly by St. Paul.

⁵⁴ "I" is emphatic, *I, if you followed my advice*, also observe the *present*, "*I am sparing you* [by this advice]," or, in other words, *I would spare you*.

⁵⁵ We adopt Lachmann's reading, "The object of this contraction of your earthly life is that you may henceforth set your affections on things above.

and they that use this world as not abusing⁵⁶ it; for the outward show of this world is passing away. But I would have you free from earthly care. The cares of the unmarried man are fixed upon the Lord, and he strives to please the Lord. But the cares of the husband are fixed upon worldly things, striving to please his wife. The wife also has this difference⁵⁷ from the virgin; the cares of the virgin are fixed upon the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; but the cares of the wife are fixed upon worldly things, striving to please her husband.

Now this I say for your own profit; not that I may entangle you in a snare; but that I may help you to serve the Lord with a seemly and undivided service.

But if any man think that he is treating his virgin daughter in an unseemly manner, by leaving her unmarried beyond the flower of her age, and if need so require, let him act according to his will ; he may do so without sin; let them marry. But he who is firm in his resolve, and is not constrained to marry his daughter, but has the power of carrying out his will, and has determined to keep her unmarried, does well. Thus he who gives his daughter in marriage does well, but he who gives her not in marriage does better.

⁵⁶ Literally, the verb appears to mean *to use up*, as distinguished from *to use*. Compare 9:18. It thus acquired the sense of *to abuse*, in which it is sometimes employed by Demosthenes and by the grammarians.

⁵⁷ The reading of Lachmann makes a considerable difference in the translation, which would thus run: 'The husband strives to please his wife, and is divided [in mind]. Both the unmarried wife [i.e. the widow] and the virgin care for the things of the Lord,' &c. This reading gives a more natural sense to 'divided' (cf. 1:13, so Stanley); but on the other hand, the use of 'unmarried wife' for widow is unprecedented; and in this very chapter (verse 8) the word widows is opposed to unmarried.

The wife is bound by the law of wedlock so long as her husband lives; but after his death she is free to marry whom she will; provided that she choose one of the brethren in the Lord. Yet she is happier if she remain a widow, in my judgment; and I think that I, no less than others, have the Spirit of God.

1 CORINTHIANS 8

As to the meats which have been sacrificed to idols, we know (for we all have knowledge)⁵⁸ but knowledge puffs up, while love builds. If any man prides himself on his knowledge, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know; but whosoever loves God, of him God hath knowledge as to eating the meats sacrificed to idols, we know (I say) that an idol has no true being, and that there is no other God but one. For though there be some who are called gods, either celestial or terrestrial, and though men worship many gods and many lords, yet to us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.⁵⁹ But "all" have not this "knowledge;" on the contrary, there are some who still have a conscientious fear of the idol, and think the meat an idolatrous sacrifice, so that, if they eat it, their conscience being weak is defiled. Now our food cannot change our place in God's sight; with Him we gain nothing by eating, nor lose by not eating. But beware lest, perchance,

⁵⁸ It is necessary, for the understanding of this Epistle, that we should remember that it is an answer to a letter received from the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. 7:1) and therefore constantly alludes to topics in that letter. It seems probable, from the way in which they are introduced, that these words 'We all have knowledge,' are quoted from that letter.

⁵⁹ That is, by whom the life of all things, and our life also, is originated and sustained. So Col. 1:16: 'By Him and for Him were all created, and in Him all things subsist;' where it should be remarked that the 'for Him' is predicated of the Son, as in the present passage of the Father. Both passages show how fully St. Paul taught the doctrine of the Logos.

this exercise of your rights⁶⁰ should become a stumbling block to the weak. For if one of them see thee, who boastest of thy knowledge, 2 feasting in an idol's temple, will not he be encouraged to eat the meat offered in sacrifice, notwithstanding the weakness of his conscience? And thus, through thy knowledge, will thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died. Nay, when you sin thus against your brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Wherefore, if my food cast a stumbling block in my brother's path, I will eat no flesh while the world stands, lest thereby I cause my brother's fall.⁶¹

1 CORINTHIANS 9

Is it denied that I am an apostle? Is it denied that I am free from man's authority? Is it denied that you are the fruits of my labor in the Lord. If to others I am no apostle, yet at least I am such to you; for you are yourselves the seal which stamps the reality of my apostleship, in the Lord; this is my answer to those who question my authority. Do they deny my right to be maintained [by my converts]? Do they deny my right to carry a believing wife with me on my journeys, like the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or do they think that I and Barnabas alone have no right to be maintained, except by the labor of our own

⁶⁰ This liberty of yours. Observe again the reference to the language of the self-styled Pauline party at Corinth. Compare 'all things are lawful for me' (6:12). The decrees of the Council of Jerusalem might seem to have a direct bearing on the question discussed by St. Paul in this passage; but he does not refer to them as deciding the points in dispute, either here or elsewhere. Probably the reason of this is, that the decrees were meant only to be of temporary application; and in their terms they applied originally only to the churches of Syria and Cilicia (see Acts 15:23; also Chapter 7.).

⁶¹ The whole of this 8th chapter is parallel to Romans 14.

hands? What soldier⁶² ever serves at his private cost? What husbandman plants a vineyard without sharing in its fruit? What shepherd tends a flock without partaking of their milk? Say I this on Man's judgment only, or says not the Law the same? Yea, in the Law of Moses it is written "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn." (Deut. 25:4) Is it for oxen that God is caring, or speaks he altogether for our sake? For our sake, doubtless, it was written; because the ploughman ought to plough, and the thresher to thresh, with hope to share in the produce of his toil. If I have sown for you the seed of spiritual gifts, would it be much if I were to reap some harvest from your carnal gifts? If others share this right over you, how much more should I? Yet I have not used my right, but forego every claim, lest I should by any means hinder the course of Christ's Glad tidings. Know ye not that they⁶³ who perform the service of the temple, live upon the revenues of the temple, and they who minister at the altar share with it in the sacrifices? So also the Lord commanded (Matt. 10:9,10) those who publish the Glad tidings to be maintained thereby. But I have not exercised any of these rights, nor do I write this that it may be practiced in my own case. For I had rather die than suffer any man to make void my boasting. For, although I proclaim the Glad tidings, yet this gives me no ground of boasting; for I am compelled to do so by order of my⁶⁴ master. Yea, woe is me if I proclaim it not. For were my service of my own free choice, I might claim wages to reward my

⁶² He means to say that to have this right of maintenance, a man need not be an Apostle.

⁶³ Numbers 7 and Deut. 18>

⁶⁴ "Necessity" here is the compulsion exercised by a master over a slave. In calling his service compulsory, St. Paul refers to the miraculous character of his conversion.

labor; but since I serve by compulsion, I am a slave entrusted with a stewardship.⁶⁵

What then is my wage? It is to make the Glad tidings free of cost where I carry it, that I may forego my right as an Evangelist. Therefore, although free from the authority of all men, I made myself the slave of all that I might gain the most. To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to those under the law as though I were under the law (not that I was myself subject to the law), that I might gain those under the law; to those without the law as one without the law (not that I was without law before God, but under the law of Christ), that I might gain those who were without the law. To the weak, I became weak, that I might gain the weak. I am become all things to all men, that by all means I might save some.

And this I do for the sake of the Glad tidings, that I myself may share therein with those who hear me. Know ye not that in the races of the stadium, though all run, yet but one can win the prize? (so run that you may win) and every man who strives in the matches, trains himself by all manner of self restraint. Yet they do it to win a fading crown,⁶⁶ we, a crown that cannot fade. I, therefore, run not like the racer who is uncertain of his goal; I fight, not as the pugilist who strikes out against the air; but I bruise my body and force it into bondage; lest, perchance, having called others to the contest, I should myself fail shamefully of the prize.

⁶⁵ This "stewardship" consisted in dispensing his Master's goods to his fellow-slaves.

⁶⁶ This was the crown made of the leaves of the pine, groves of which surrounded the Isthmian Stadium: the same tree still grows plentifully on the Isthmus of Corinth. It was the prize of the great Isthmian games. Throughout the passage St. Paul alludes to these contests, which were so dear to the pride and patriotism of the Corinthians. Compare also 2 Tim. 2:5. And see the beginning of Chapter 20 on the same subject.

1 CORINTHIANS 10

For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that our forefathers all were guarded by the cloud, and all passed safely through the sea. And all, in the cloud, and in the sea, were baptized unto Moses. And all of them alike ate the same spiritual food; and all drank of the same spiritual stream; for they drank from the spiritual rock which followed them;⁶⁷ but that rock was Christ. Yet most of them lost God's favor, yea, they were struck down and perished in the wilderness. Now, these things were shadows of our own case, that we might learn not to lust after evil, as they lusted. Nor be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." (Exo. 32:6) Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. (Num. 25:9) Neither let us try the longsuffering of Christ, as did some of them, who were destroyed by the serpents. (Num. 21:6) Nor murmur as some of them murmured, and were slain by the destroyer.

⁶⁸ Now all these things befell them as shadows of things to come; and they were written for our warning, on whom the ends of the ages are come.⁶⁹ Wherefore, let him who thinks that he stands firm, beware lest he fall.

⁶⁷ St. Paul's meaning is, that, under the allegorical representation of the Manna, the Water, and the Rock, are shadowed forth spiritual realities: for the Rock is Christ, the only source of living water (John 4), and the Manna also is Christ, the true bread from Heaven (John 6).

⁶⁸ See Num. 16:41. The murmuring of the Corinthians against the Apostle is compared to the murmuring of Korah against Moses.

⁶⁹ The coming of Christ was the "end of the ages," i.e. the commencement of a new period of the world's existence. So nearly the same phrase is used in Heb. 9:26. A similar expression occurs five times in St. Matthew, signifying *the coming of Christ to judgment*.

No trial has come upon you beyond man's power to bear; and God is faithful to His promises, and will not suffer you to be tried beyond your strength, but will with every trial provide the way of escape, that you may be able to sustain it.

Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to men of understanding; use your own judgment upon my words. When we drink the cup of blessing, which we bless, are we not all partakers in the blood of Christ? When we break the bread, are we not all partakers in the body of Christ?⁷⁰

For as the bread is one, so we, the many, are one body; for of that one bread we all partake. If you look to the carnal Israel, do you not see that those who eat of the sacrifices are in partnership with the altar? What would I say then? that an idol has any real being? or that meat offered to an idol is really changed thereby? Not so; but I say, that when the heathen offer their sacrifices, "They sacrifice to demons, and not to God." (Deut. 32:17) and I would not have you become partners⁷¹ with the demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons; you cannot eat at the table of the Lord, and at the table of demons. Would we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

"All things are lawful,"⁷² but not all things are expedient; "all things are lawful," but not all

⁷⁰ Literally, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a common participation in the blood of Christ/ The bread which we break, is it not a common participation in the body of Christ?*

⁷¹ This is addressed to those who were in the habit of accepting invitations to feasts celebrated in the temples of heathen gods, "sitting in the idol's temple" (8:10). These feasts were, in fact, acts of idolatrous worship; the wine was poured in libation to the gods ("the cup of demons", verse 21), and the feast was given in honor of the gods.

⁷² See 6:12 and note.

things build up the church. Let no man seek his own, but every man his neighbor's good. Whatever is sold in the market, you may eat, nor need you ask for conscience sake whence it came: "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." (Psalm 24:1) And if any unbeliever invites you to a feast, and you are disposed to go, eat of all that is set before you, asking no questions for conscience sake; but if anyone should say to you, "This has been offered to an idol," eat not of that dish, for the sake of him who pointed it out, and for the sake of conscience. Thy neighbor's conscience, I say, not thine own; for [thou mayest truly say]" why is my freedom condemned by the conscience of another? and if I thankfully partake, why am I called a sinner for that which I eat with thanksgiving?⁷³

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all for the glory of God.⁷⁴ Give no cause of stumbling, either to Jews or Gentiles, or to the Church of God. For so I also strive to please all men in all things, not seeking my own good, but the good of all,⁷⁵ that they may be saved. I beseech you follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 11

I Praise you brethren, that⁷⁶ "you are always mindful of my teaching, and keep unchanged the rules which I delivered to you." But I would have you know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, as God is the head of Christ. If a man

⁷³ Compare Rom 14:16: "Let not your good be evil spoken of." Here again the hypothesis is that St. Paul is quoting from the letter of the Corinthians removes all difficulty.

⁷⁴ i.e. *that the glory of God may be manifested to men.*

⁷⁵ The phrase denotes not *many*, but *the many, the whole mass of mankind.*

⁷⁶ This statement was probably made in the letter sent by the Corinthian Church to St. Paul.

should pray or prophesy⁷⁷ in the congregation with a veil over his head, he would bring shame upon his head [by wearing the token of subjection]. But if a woman prays or prophesies with her head unveiled, she brings shame upon her head, as much as she that is shaven. I say, if she cast off her veil, let her shave her head at once; but if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her keep a veil upon her head. For a man ought not to veil his head, since he is the likeness of God, and the manifestation of God's glory. But the woman's part is to manifest her husband's glory. For the man was not made from the woman, but the woman from the man. Nor was the man created for the sake of the woman, but the woman for the sake of the man. Therefore, the woman ought to wear a sign of subjection upon her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, in their fellowship with the Lord, man and woman may not be separated the one from the other.⁷⁸ For as woman was made from man, so is man also borne by woman; and all things spring from God. Judge of this matter by your own feeling. Is it seemly for a woman to offer prayers to God unveiled? Or does not even nature itself teach you that long hair is a disgrace to a man,

⁷⁷ It appears from this passage that the Tallith which the Jews put over their heads when they enter their synagogues was in the apostolic age removed by them when they officiated in the public worship. Otherwise, St. Paul could not, while writing to a church containing so many born again Jews as the Corinthian, assume it as evidently disgraceful to a man to officiate in the congregation with veiled head. It is true that the Greek practice was to keep the head uncovered at their religious rites, but this custom would not have affected the Corinthian synagogue, nor have influenced the feelings of its members.

⁷⁸ In their relation to Christ, man and woman are not to be severed the one from the other. Compare Gal. 3:28. St. Paul means to say that the distinction between the sexes is one which only belongs to this life.

but a glory to a woman? for her hair has been given her for a veil. But if anyone thinks to be contentious in defense of such a custom, let him know that it is disallowed by me,⁷⁹ and by all the Churches of God.

[I said that I Praised you, for keeping the rules which were delivered to you; but while I give you this commandment I praise you not; your solemn assemblies are for evil rather than for good. For first, I hear that there are divisions among you, when your congregation assembles; and this I partly believe. For there must needs be not divisions only, but also adverse sects among you, that so the good may be tested and made known. Moreover, when you assemble yourselves together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper; for each begins to eat [what he has brought for] his own supper, before anything has been given to others; and while some are hungry, others are drunken.⁸⁰ Have you then no houses to eat and drink in? or do you come to show contempt for the congregation of God's people, and to shame the poor?⁸¹ What can I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. For I myself received from the Lord that which I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, in the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me." In the same manner also, He took the cup after supper, saying,

⁷⁹ Literally, *that neither I, nor the churches of God, admit of such a custom.*

⁸⁰ For the explanation of this, see Chapter 13. It should be observed that a common meal, to which each of the guests contributed his own share of the provisions, was a form of entertainment of frequent occurrence among the Greeks, and known by the name of **eranos**.

⁸¹ Literally, *Those who have no houses to eat in, and who therefore ought to have received their portion at the love-feasts from their wealthier brethren.*

“This cup, is the new covenant in my blood: this to ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you openly show forth the Lord's death until He shall come again. Therefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup. For he who eats and drinks of it unworthily, eats and drinks judgment against himself, not duly judging of the Lord's body. For this cause many of you are weak and sickly, and many sleep. For if we had duly judged ourselves, we should not have been judged. But now that we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned together with the world. Therefore, my brethren, when you are assembling to eat, wait for one another; and if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest your meetings should bring judgment upon you. The other matters I will set in order when I come.

1 CORINTHIANS 12

Concerning those who exercise Spiritual Gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. You know that in the days of your heathenism you were blindly led astray to worship dumb and senseless idols [by those who pretended to gifts from heaven]. This therefore I call to your remembrance; that no man who is inspired by the Spirit of God can say “Jesus is accursed;” and no man can say “Jesus is the Lord,” unless he be inspired by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, there are varieties of Gifts, but the same Spirit gives them all; and [they are given for] various ministrations, but all to serve the same Lord; and the working whereby they are wrought is various, but all are wrought in all by the working of the same God. But the gift whereby the Spirit becomes manifest, is given to each for the profit of all. To one is given by the Spirit the utterance of Wisdom, to another the

utterance of Knowledge⁸² according to the working of the same Spirit. To another Faith through the same Spirit. To another gifts of Healing through the same Spirit. To another the powers which work Miracles; to another Prophecy; to another the discernment of Spirits; to another varieties of Tongues; to another the Interpretation of Tongues.

But all these gifts are wrought by the working of that one and the same Spirit, who distributes them to each according to His will. For as the body is one, and has many members, and as all the members, though many, 7 are one body; so also is Christ. For in the communion of one Spirit we all were baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, 9 whether slaves or freemen, and were all made to drink of the same Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot should say, “I am not the hand, therefore I belong not to the body,” does it thereby sever itself from the body? Or if the ear should say, “I am not the eye, therefore I belong not to the body,” does it thereby sever itself from the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the smelling? But now God has placed the members severally in the body according to His will. If all were one member, where would be the body? But now, though the members are many, yet the body is one. And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of thee;” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” Nay, those parts of the body which are reckoned the feeblest are the most necessary, and those parts which we hold the least honorable, we clothe with the more abundant honor, and the less beautiful parts are adorned with the greater beauty; whereas the beautiful need no

⁸² *Knowledge (gnosis)* is the term used throughout this epistle for a *deep insight into divine truth*; *Wisdom* is a more general term, but here (as being opposed to **gnosis**) probably means *practical wisdom*.

adornment. But God has tempered the body together, and given to the lowlier parts the higher honor, that there should be no division in the body, but that all its parts should feel, one for the other, a common sympathy. And thus, if one member suffer, every member suffers with it; or if one member be honored, every member rejoices with it. Now ye are together the body of Christ, and each one of you a separate member. And God has set the members in the Church, some in one place, and some in another: first, Apostles; secondly, Prophets; thirdly, Teachers; afterwards :Miracles ; then gifts of Healing; Serviceable Ministrations; gifts of Government; varieties of Tongues. Can all be Apostles? Can all be Prophets ? Can all be Teachers? Can all work Miracles? Have all the gifts of Healing? Do all speak with Tongues? Can all interpret the Tongues? But I would have you delight in the best gifts; and moreover, beyond them all, I will show you a path wherein to walk.

1 CORINTHIANS 13

Though I speak all the tongues of men and angels, if I have not love, I am no better than sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all the mysteries, and all the depths of knowledge; and though I have the fullness of faith, so that I could remove mountains; if I have not love, I am nothing.

And though I sell all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned,⁸³ if I have not love, it profits me nothing. Love is long suffering; love is kind; love envies not; love speaks no vaunts; love swells not with vanity; love offends not by rudeness; love seeks not her own; is not easily provoked ; bears no malice;⁸⁴ rejoices not over⁸⁵

⁸³ Some MSS have "give my body that I may boast," which gives a satisfactory sense.

⁸⁴ Literally, *does not reckon the evil [against the evildoer]*. Compare 2 Cor. 5:19, "not reckoning their

iniquity, but rejoices in the victory of truth;⁸⁶ foregoes all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love shall never pass away; but Prophecies shall vanish, and Tongues shall cease, and Knowledge shall come to nought. For our Knowledge is imperfect, and our prophesying is imperfect. But when the perfect is come, the imperfect shall pass away. When I was a child, my words were childish, my desires were childish, my judgments were childish; but being grown a man, I have done with the things of childhood. So now we see darkly,⁸⁷ by a mirror,⁸⁸ but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as I now am known. Yet while other gifts shall pass away, these three, Faith, Hope, and Love, abide; and the greatest of these is Love.

1 CORINTHIANS 14

Follow earnestly after Love; yet delight in the spiritual gifts, but especially in the gift of Prophecy. For he who speaks in a Tongue, speaks not to men but to God, for no man understands him, but with his spirit he utters mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks to

sins." The Authorized Version here, "thinketh no evil," is so beautiful that one cannot but wish it had been a correct translation. The same disposition, however, is implied by the "believes all things" below.

⁸⁵ This verb sometimes means *to rejoice in the misfortune* of another, and the characteristic of love here mentioned may mean that it does not exult in the punishment of iniquity; or may simply mean that it does not delight in the contemplation of wickedness.

⁸⁶ Literally, *rejoices when the Truth rejoices*.

⁸⁷ Literally, *in an enigma*. Thus we see God in nature, while even revelation only shows us His reflected likeness. There is, no doubt, an allusion to Numbers 12:8.

⁸⁸ Not *through a glass, but by means of a mirror*.

men, and builds them up, with exhortation and with comfort. He who speaks in a Tongue builds up himself alone; but he who prophesies builds up the Church. I wish that you all had the gift of Tongues, but rather that you had the gift of Prophecy; for he who prophesies is above him who speaks in Tongues, unless he interpret, that the Church may be built up thereby.

Now, brethren, if when I came to you I were to speak in Tongues, what should I profit you, unless I should [also] speak either in Revelation or in Knowledge, either in Prophesying or in Teaching? Even if the lifeless instruments of sound, the flute or the harp, give no distinctness to their notes, how can we understand their music? If the trumpet utter an uncertain note, how shall the soldier prepare himself for the battle? So also if you utter unintelligible words with your tongue, how can your speech be understood? you will but be speaking to the air. Perhaps there may be as many languages in the world [as the Tongues in which you speak], and none of them is unmeaning. If, then, I know not the meaning of the language, I shall be as a foreigner to him that speaks it, and he will be accounted a foreigner by me.

Therefore, in your own case (since you delight in spiritual gifts) strive that your abundant possession of them may build up the Church. Therefore, let him who speaks in a Tongue, pray that he may be able to interpret what he utters. For if I utter prayers in a Tongue, my spirit indeed prays, but my understanding bears no fruit. What follows, then? I will pray indeed with my spirit, but I will pray with my understanding also; I will sing praises with my spirit, but I will sing with my understanding also. For if thou, with thy spirit, offer thanks and praise, how shall the Amen be said to thy thanksgiving by those worshippers who take no part in the ministrations, while they are ignorant of the meaning of thy words?

Thou indeed fitly offer thanksgiving, but thy neighbors are not built up. I offer thanksgiving to God in private,⁸⁹ speaking in Tongues [to Him], more than any of you. Yet in the congregation I would rather speak five words with my understanding so as to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a Tongue. Brethren, be not children in understanding; but in malice be children, and in understanding be men. It is written in the Law, "With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that they will not hear me, saith the Lord." So that the gift of Tongues is a sign⁹⁰ given rather to unbelievers than to believers; whereas the gift of Prophecy belongs to believers.

When, therefore, the whole congregation is assembled, if all the speakers speak in Tongues, and if any who take no part in your ministrations, or who are unbelievers, should enter your assembly, will they not say that you are mad?⁹¹ But if all exercise the gift of Prophecy, then if any man who is an unbeliever, or who takes no part in your ministrations, should enter the place of

⁸⁹ This is evidently the meaning of the verse. Compare verse 2, "He who speaks in a tongue speaks not to himself but to God," and verse 28, "Let him speak in private to himself and God alone."

⁹⁰ That is, a condemnatory sign.

⁹¹ We must not be led, from any apparent analogy, to confound the exercise of the gift of Tongues in the primitive Church with modern exhibitions of fanaticism, which bear a superficial resemblance to it. We must remember that such modern pretensions to this gift must of course resemble the manifestations of the original gift in external features, because these -very features have been the objects of intentional imitation. If, however, the inarticulate utterances of ecstatic joy are followed (as they were in some of Wesley's converts) by a life of devoted holiness, we should hesitate to say that they might not bear some analogy to those of the Corinthian Christians.

meeting, he is convicted in conscience by every speaker, he feels himself judged by all, and the secret depths of his heart are laid open; and so he will fall upon his face and worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. What follows then, brethren? If, when you meet together, one is prepared to sing a hymn of praise, another to exercise his gift of Teaching, another his gift of Tongues, another to deliver a Revelation, 6 another an Interpretation; let all be so done as to build up the Church.

If there be any who speak in Tongues, let not more than two, or at the most three, speak [in the same assembly]; and let them speak in turn; and let the same interpreter explain the words of all. But if there be no interpreter, let him who speaks in Tongues keep silence in the congregation, and speak in private to himself and God alone. Of those who have the gift of Prophecy, let two or three speak [in each assembly], and let the rest ⁹² judge; but if another of them, while sitting as hearer, receives a revelation [calling him to prophesy], let the first cease to speak. For so you can each prophesy in turn, that all may receive teaching and exhortation; and the gift of Prophecy does not take from the prophets the control over their own spirits. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

In your congregation, as in all the congregations of the Saints the women must keep silence for they are not permitted to speak in public, but to show submission, as saith also the Law. (Gen. 3:16) And if they wish to ask any question, let them ask it of their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful to women to speak in the congregation. [Whence is your claim to change the rules delivered to you ?] Was it from you that the word of God went forth; or, are you

⁹² i.e. let the rest of the prophets judge whether those who stand up to exercise the gift have really received it. This is parallel to the direction in I Thess. 5:21.

the only Church which it has reached? Nay, if any think that he has the gift of Prophecy, or that he is a spiritual ⁹³ man, let him acknowledge the words which I write for commands of the Lord. But if any man refuse this acknowledgment, let him refuse it at his peril.

Therefore, brethren, delight in the gift of Prophecy, and hinder not the gift of Tongues. And let all be done with decency and order.

1 CORINTHIANS 15

Moreover, brethren, I call to your remembrance the Glad tidings which I brought you, which also you received, wherein also you stand firm, whereby also you are saved, if you still hold fast the words wherein I declared it to you; unless indeed you believed in vain. For the first thing I taught you was that which I had myself been taught, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; ⁹⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose the third day from the dead, according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen by Cephas, and then by The Twelve; after that He was seen by about five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part are living at this present time, but some are fallen asleep. ⁹⁵ Next He was seen by James, and then by all the Apostles; and last of all he was seen by me also, who am placed among the rest as it were by an untimely birth; for I am the least of the Apostles, and am not worthy to

⁹³ "Spiritual," the epithet on which the part of Apollos (the ultra-Pauline party) especially prided themselves.

⁹⁴ So our Lord quotes Isa. 53:12, in Luke 22:37.

⁹⁵ Can we imagine it possible that St. Paul should have said this without knowing it to be true? or without himself having seen some of these , five hundred brethren,' of whom the 'greater part' were alive when he wrote these words? The skeptical (but candid and honest) De Wette acknowledges this testimony as conclusive.

be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not fruitless; but I labored more abundantly than all the rest; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. So then, whether preached by me, or them, this is what we preached, and this is what you believed.

If then this be our tidings, that Christ is risen from the dead, how is it that some among you say, there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen; and, if Christ be not risen, vain is the message we proclaim, and, vain the faith with which you heard it. Moreover, we are found, guilty of false witness against God; because we bore witness of God that He raised Christ from the dead, whom He did not raise, if indeed the dead rise not. For if there be no resurrection of the dead, Christ himself⁹⁶ is not risen. And if Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, you are still in your sins. Moreover, if this be so, they who have fallen asleep in Christ, perished when they died. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now, Christ is risen from the dead; the first fruits⁹⁷ of all who sleep.

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as, in Adam, all men die, so, in Christ, shall all be raised to life. But each in his own order; Christ, the first fruits; afterwards they who

⁹⁶ This argument is founded on the union between Christ and His members; they so share His life, that because He lives forever, they must live also, if we deny their immortality, we deny His.

⁹⁷ On the second day of the feast of Passover a sheaf of ripe corn was offered upon the altar as a consecration of the whole harvest. Till this was done it was considered unlawful to begin reaping. See Lev. 23:10, 11. The metaphor there is, "as the single sheaf of first fruits represents and consecrates all the harvest, so Christ's resurrection represents and involves that of all who sleep in Him."

are Christ's at His appearing; finally, the end shall come, when He shall give up His kingdom to God His Father, having destroyed all other dominion, and authority, and power.⁹⁸ :For He must reign "till He hath put all enemies under His feet." (Psalm 110:1)

And last of His enemies, Death also shall be destroyed. For "He hath put all things under His feet." (Psalm 8:6) But in that saying, "All things are put under Him," it is manifest that God is excepted, who put all things under Him. And when all things are made subject to Him, then shall the Son also subject Himself to Him who made them subject, that God may be all in all.

Again, what will become of those who cause themselves to be baptized for the Dead,⁹⁹ if

⁹⁸ Compare Col. 2:15 and Eph. 1:21.

⁹⁹ The only meaning which the Greek seems to admit here is a reference to the practice of submitting to baptism instead of some person who had died unbaptized. Yet this explanation is liable to very great difficulties. (1) How strange that St. Paul should refer to such a superstition without rebuking it? Perhaps, however, he may have censured it in a former letter, and now only refers to it as an *argumentum ad homines*. It has, indeed, been alleged that the present mention of it implies a censure; that this is far from evident. (2) If such a practice did exist in the Apostolic Church, how can we account for its being discontinued in the period which followed, when a magical efficacy was more and more ascribed to the material act of baptism? Yet the practice was never adopted except by some obscure sects of Gnostics, who seem to have founded their custom on this very passage.

The explanations which have been adopted to avoid the difficulty, such as "over the graves of the dead," or "in the name of the dead (meaning Christ)," etc, are all inadmissible, as being contrary to the analogy of the language. On the whole, therefore, the passage must be considered to admit of no satisfactory explanation. It alludes to some practice of the Corinthians which has not been recorded elsewhere, and of which every other trace has perished.

the dead never rise again? Why then do they submit to baptism for the dead?

And I too, why do I put my life to hazard every hour? I protest by my I boasting (which I have [not in myself, but] in Christ Jesus our Lord) I die daily. If I have fought (so to speak) with beasts at Ephesus, what am I profited if the dead rise not? "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." (Isa. 22:13) Beware lest you be led astray; "Converse with evil men corrupts good manners."¹⁰⁰ Change your drunken raveling into the sobriety of righteousness, and live no more in sin; for some of you know not God; I speak this to your shame.

But some one will say, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?"

¹⁰¹ Thou fool, the seed you sow is not quickened into life till it hath partaken of death. And that which you sow has not the same body with the plant which will spring from it, but it is mere grain, of wheat, or whatever else it may chance to be. God gives it a body according to His will; and to every seed the body of its own proper plant. For all flesh is not the same flesh; [but each body is fitted to the place it fills]; the bodies of men, and of

¹⁰⁰ St. Paul here quotes a line from *The Thais*, a comedy of Menander's. The line had probably passed into a proverbial expression. We from this passage that the free-thinking party at Corinth joined immoral practices with their licentious doctrine; and that they were corrupted by the evil example of their heathen neighbors.

¹⁰¹ The form of this objection is conclusive against the hypothesis of those who suppose that these Corinthians only disbelieved the Resurrection of the body; and that they believed the Resurrection of the dead. St. Paul asserts the Resurrection of the dead; to which they reply, 'How can the dead rise to life again, when their body has perished?' This objection he proceeds to answer, by showing that individual existence may continue, without the continuance of the material body.

beasts, of birds, and of fishes, differ the one from the other.

And there are bodies which belong to heaven, and bodies which belong to earth; but in glory the heavenly differ from the earthly. The sun is more glorious than the moon, and the moon is more glorious than the stars, and one star excels another in glory. So likewise is the resurrection of the dead; [they will be clothed with a body fitted to their lot]; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; for as there are natural bodies, so there are also spiritual bodies.

And so it is written, "The first man Adam was made a living soul," (Gen. 2:7) the last Adam was made a life giving spirit. But the spiritual comes not till after the natural. The first man was made of earthly clay, the second man was the Lord from heaven. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

But this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood¹⁰² cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither

¹⁰² The importance of the subject justifies our quoting at some length the admirable remarks of Dr. Burton (formerly Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford) on this passage, in the hope that his high reputation for learning and for unblemished orthodoxy may lead some persons to reconsider the loose and unscriptural language which they are in the habit of using. After regretting that some of the early Fathers have (when treating of the Resurrection of the Body) appeared to contradict these words of St. Paul, Dr. Burton continues as follows:

"It is nowhere asserted in the New Testament that we shall rise again *with our bodies*. Unless a man will say that the stalk, the blade, and the ear of corn are actually the same thing with the single grain which is put into the ground, he cannot quote St. Paul as saying that we shall rise again with the same bodies;

can corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I declare to you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

But when this corruptible is clothed with incorruption, and this mortal is clothed with

or at least he must allow that the future body may only be like to the present one, inasmuch as both come under the same genus, i.e. we speak of human *bodies*, and we speak of heavenly *bodies*. But St. Paul's words do not warrant us in saying that the resemblance between the present and future body will be greater than between a man and a star, or between a bird and a fish. Nothing can be plainer than the expression which he uses in the first of these two analogies, *Thou sowest not that body that shall be* (15:37). He says also with equal plainness, of the body, *It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body; there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body* (15:44). These words require to be examined closely, and involve remotely a deep metaphysical question. In common language, the terms *Body* and *Spirit* are accustomed to be opposed, and are used to represent two things which are totally distinct. But St. Paul here brings the two expressions together, and speaks of a *spiritual body*. St. Paul, therefore did not oppose *Body* to *Spirit*; and though the looseness of modern language may allow us to do so, and yet to be correct in our ideas it may save some confusion if we consider *Spirit* as opposed to *Matter*, and if we take *Body* to be a generic term, which comprises both. A *body* therefore, in the language of St. Paul, is something which has a distinct individual existence...

"St. Paul tells us that every individual, when he rises again, will have a spiritual body; but the remarks which I have made may show how different is the idea conveyed by these words from the notions which some persons entertain, that we shall rise again with the *same identical body*. St. Paul appears effectually to preclude this notion, when he says, *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God* (15:30)." Burton's *Lectures*, pp. 429-431.

immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, which is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." (Isa. 25:8) "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (Hosea 13:14) The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; ¹⁰³ but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; knowing that your labor is not in vain, in the Lord.

1 CORINTHIANS 16

Concerning the collection for the saints [at Jerusalem] I would have you do as I have enjoined upon Christian the churches of Galatia. Upon the first day of the week, let each of you set apart whatever his gains may enable him to spare; that there may be no collections when I come. And when I am with you, whomsoever you shall judge to be fitted for the trust, I will furnish, with letters, and send them to carry your benevolence to Jerusalem; or if there shall seem sufficient reason for me also to go thither, they shall go with me. But I will visit you after I have passed through Macedonia (for through Macedonia I shall pass), and perhaps I shall remain with you, or even winter with you, that you may forward me on my farther journey, whithersoever I go. For I do not wish to see you now for a passing I visit; since I hope to stay some time with you, if the Lord permit. But I shall remain at Ephesus until Pentecost, for a door is opened to me both great and effectual; and there are many adversaries [against whom I must contend]. If Timothy come to you, be careful to give him no cause of

¹⁰³ Why is the law called "the strength of sin"?

Because the Law of Duty, being acknowledged, gives to sin its power to wound the conscience; in fact, a moral law of precepts and penalties announces the fatal consequences of sin, without giving us any power on conquering sin. Compare Romans 7:7-11.

fear in your intercourse with him, for he is laboring, as I am, in the Lord's work. Therefore, let no man despise him, but forward him on his way in peace, that he may come hither to me; for I expect him, and the brethren with him.

As regards the brother Apollos, I urged him much to visit you with the brethren [who bear this letter] ; nevertheless, he was resolved not to come to you at this time, but he will visit you at a more convenient season.

Be watchful, stand firm in faith, be manful and stout hearted. Let all you do be done in love.

You know, brethren, that the house of Stephanas were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have taken on themselves the task of ministering to the saints. I exhort you, therefore, on your part, to show submission towards men like these, and towards all who work laboriously with them. I rejoice in the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, because they I have supplied all which you needed; for they have lightened my spirit and yours. To such render due acknowledgment.

The Churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla send their loving salutation in the Lord, together with the Church which assembles at their house. All the brethren here salute you. Salute one another with the kiss of holiness.

The salutation of me, Paul, with my own hand. Let him who loves not the Lord Jesus Christ be accursed. The Lord cometh.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.

In the concluding part of this letter we have some indication of the Apostle's plans for the future. He is looking forward to a journey through Macedonia (16:5), to be succeeded by a visit to Corinth, and after this he thinks it probable he may proceed to Jerusalem. In the Acts of the Apostles the same intentions are

expressed, with a stronger purpose of going to Jerusalem (16:21), and with the additional conviction that after passing through Macedonia and Achaia, and visiting Palestine, he must also see Rome'. He had won many of the inhabitants of Asia Minor and Ephesus to the faith: and now, after the prospect of completing his charitable exertions for the poor Christians of Judea, his spirit turns towards the accomplishment of remoter conquests. Far from being content with his past achievements, or resting from his incessant labors, he felt that he was under a debt of perpetual obligation to all the Gentile world. Thus he expresses himself, soon after this time, in the Epistle to the Roman Christians, whom he had long ago desired to see (Rom. 1:10 15), and whom he hopes at length to visit, now that he is on his way to Jerusalem, and is looking forward to a still more distant and hazardous journey to Spain. The path thus dimly traced before him, as he thought of the future at Ephesus, and made more clearly visible, when he wrote the letter at Corinth, was made still more evident as he proceeded on his course. Yet not without forebodings of evil, and much discouragement, and mysterious delays, did the Apostle advance on his courageous career. But we are anticipating many subjects which will give a touching interest to subsequent passages of this history. Important events still detain us in Ephesus. Though St. Paul's companions had been sent before in the direction of his contemplated journey (Acts 19:22), he still resolved to stay till Pentecost (1 Cor. 16:8). A "great door" was open to him, and there were "many adversaries," against whom he had yet to contend.