

Bible Study: 1 Corinthians

(Part 4-Chapters 13-16)

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Chapter 13

Now we come to the chapter that has the answer to all of the Church's problems! You will remember that in this section of the book from chapters 12-16 we are talking about "The Use of Gifts and Doctrines of the Church versus Their Abuse." A key chapter in this section then is this one. Here we find the ultimate fulfillment of the use of gifts and doctrines in the Church and that is showing of LOVE!

(1) If we have the gift of tongues, being able to speak in other human or angelic languages, but do not have love, then all our speaking will be worthless, like an old tin can tied onto the back of a car of a couple just married, the can just makes an obnoxious rattling sound. We are just trying to bring attention to ourselves, but have nothing people want to listen to. God cannot use instruments that do not show Christian love!

(2) If I have the gift of prophecy and can expound every prophecy in the Bible, and have the gift of the Word of Wisdom, and the gift of the Word of Knowledge, and understand all things. If I had so much faith so that I could move mountains, but did not have love, I would be NOTHING!!! We had a man come to our Bible School to speak. He was a well known radio speaker on prophecy, but when he came and spoke at the Bible School, it was evident that what he had to say was not of the Lord. His message lacked something. We are not to judge, but as I look back now, I wonder if what he had to say was not backed with love, only God knows.

(3) One could go so far as to sell all of their things and give the money to feed the poor, but if it is not done in the right motive of love, it is of no avail. Maybe they were just thinking about how people would think that they were something great, which is what we have in Acts chapter five where Ananias and Sapphira kept back part of the money from the land they sold. They were killed for lying to the Holy Spirit, but their motive probably was for other people to see that they had given the money to the church. The money was not given in a motive of love to help others, but a motive of pride.

There are those who have burned themselves to death. I think of several who did this over the Vietnam War. These people soaked themselves in gasoline and struck the match. They went up as a torch, but they did this for no purpose really, because if they would have had real love for the Vietnamese people, they could have gone as missionaries to them. You see they really did not love the people at all. No doubt, they thought by doing such a thing they could gain eternal life or maybe they did it because of hatred for the establishment. Whatever the reason, it was wrong, and it did not profit them anything. The same thing is true of people blowing themselves up today over various causes. This is never what God intended, and it does not have a motive of love.

(4) We will put up with a lot because we love people. Some people keep track of how many times people offend them -- and they never forget it. God help us if we are like that! Remember, Christ said if

we do not forgive others their faults He will not forgive us our sins. He has forgiven us far more than other people have sinned against us. Love displays itself in us by being kind. Love does not want what other people have. A person who has love in their life, is not bragging about themselves, what they have done or what they have. We will not think that we are better than others. God help me not to think of myself as better than anyone!

(5) We will not do things that will be unbecoming to a Christian. We are not out thinking about number one. (This is just the opposite from the world. Their slogan is, I am number one, look out for number one. The world says if it feels good do it. Do not care about others, worry about yourself.) A person who is filled with the love of Christ does not get angry over things or with people. There is such a thing as righteous indignation. Christ was angry with sin, but He loved the sinner. We will have to correct our children, and we are angry with their sin, but we love them and will correct them in love. We do not think bad thoughts about people, but we see the good in them.

(6) We should not be happy when we hear that something bad has happened to someone. God forgive us for this type of attitude. We should be rejoicing when the truth and righteousness are prevailing. We should love to see the Church going and growing. Let us get on our faces before God and ask Him to forgive us for our coldness in these last days.

(7) We should be the type of people that whatever circumstances face us we do not give up, but say, "God has a purpose in this thing." We need to believe the promises God has given in His Word for us to believe, and believe them with all our hearts. Our actions betray what we believe. If we worry or fret over our circumstances then we really do not believe God can help us. If we believe Christ is coming soon, we will be busy telling others the Good News. We should be people full of hope (this includes joy), we have much we are looking for in anticipation. Christians are not to think about death, but about life. Life with a capital L! Think about it, we have the hope of glory, eternity with Christ! We have much to make us glad; hope makes glad the Word says. When the going gets tough, the tough Christian gets going. Any old dead fish can float down stream, but it takes a live one to swim upstream!

(8) Love will never fail us; it works every time in every circumstance of life. God will continue to love us, and we will continue to love Him. The gifts that have been discussed previously such as prophecies, tongues, and the gift of knowledge; will not be needed in heaven. All of these gifts that are temporary, will pass away.

(9) Right now we need these gifts of the Holy Spirit because we do not know everything.

(10) When we get to heaven, everything will be perfect; we will no longer need the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Some people teach "that which is perfect," is the Bible. When it was completed, after the book of Revelation was written, we no longer need the gifts of the Holy Spirit. If that were the case, why did Paul use so much of the Bible here talking about the rules for the use of the gifts for the Church? He wasted space in the Bible if it were only for those Christians living at the beginning of the Church Age.

What about the prophecies of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit by Joel in the end times? No, the gifts are still in effect and will be until we are at home in heaven, which is the obvious context of these verses! It is like a building that is being built that needs scaffolding, but when the building is built the scaffolding is no longer necessary. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are like that scaffolding for the Church, when we are in heaven they will no longer be needed.

(11) When we were children we did things in fun. these things were not necessarily wrong, but they were childish. Now that we are full grown we do not do these things any longer.

Here on earth we are children spiritually, when we get to heaven we will be full grown spiritually.

(12) Now we are looking as it were in a steamed up mirror, but one day we will see His face like we see our face when the mirror is not steamed up. We will see Jesus face to face. Like Billy Graham says, "I am looking forward to that day!" Now we know some things, but when that day comes we will know all things just like Jesus and the angels know us now. So it is with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are good in themselves now, but in heaven we will not need them.

(13) There are three things that will remain that we have now, and they are faith, hope, and the most important of all is love. Even in the millennial reign of Christ there will be a need for faith and hope. There will be no preaching and spreading of the Gospel because Jesus will be right there on a throne with the people.

"No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD, For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (Jeremiah 31:34)

There will still be a need for love, and there will be love throughout eternity. This is why God created us, so He could display His glory and love to those who choose to love Him, of their own free will. Now, we cannot really love others like this chapter says, unless Christ is living within us by His Holy Spirit.

In ourselves we are not like this chapter talks about, but the neat thing is that Jesus is, and He can help us love others as we should. In fact, if you take the word love and put the name Jesus in each place the word love appears in this chapter you will see it is Jesus who wants to love others through us. If you are not born again though, you do not have Christ's Holy Spirit to help you. Why not right now, repent of your sin, and invite Him into your heart and life?

Chapter 14

(1) Now Paul says to remember to show love in every area of your life, but there is nothing wrong with spiritual gifts. In fact, we are to ask ourselves what is the gift or gifts God has given to use for Him. We must try different things to see where God has gifted us. It is really good if God has given us the gift of prophesy (or preaching the Word). There are those spontaneous things God will give us to say, but most of what we have to say will come from the Bible.

(2) Now one who speaks in a tongue is not speaking to men, but to God. You see, no one else understands what he or she is saying, except God, but in his or her spirit they speak mysteries. There are wonderful things God is speaking through our spirit, prayers that will be answered because they are being prayed by the Holy Spirit through our spirit.

"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8:26-27)

(3) Now if you prophecy (preach the Word) you will be edifying (building people up), exhorting (challenging), or comforting people. Some would try to make prophecy some mysterious thing, but it is being open to the moving of the Holy Spirit to share His Word in a manner pleasing to Him. We get out of the way and are sensitive to the Holy Spirit, and let Him preach His message through us. Some preachers only study the Word and write out everything they are going to say, and do not allow for the moving of the Holy Spirit. There may be the opposite extreme too, where the preacher never studies and just waits for a message to come to them. This extreme, I believe is because the person misunderstands what this verse is saying.

"Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist." (Luke 21:14-15) But these verses are speaking about a person under persecution, if you look at the context (verses before and after). Look at verse 12-13: "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony."

So we should still study the Word in preparation for a message, but in the same token we need to be very sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us when we are preparing a message, and also while we are giving the message. There have been times I have been praying about a message, and nothing is coming. God had something else in mind. Sometimes it is that someone else is to speak or something else is to happen. Other times, the Lord says speak on this subject. I am always glad when I am obedient.

One time recently, I was speaking at the Union Gospel Mission to the Spanish group and I was praying about what I should speak on. The Lord said, "I want you to use the Wordless Book," which is a story usually used for children about colors, and up to that point there had not been any children at the mission when I spoke. That night, sure enough, a family came in with two children. I was glad I had obeyed the Lord. The story had pictures as well, and I believe the adults got as much out of the lesson as the children. At the end I gave an opportunity for the people to pray the sinner's prayer with me. All prayed, and the mother and father had tears in their eyes as they thanked me for the message.

There are times God does not give me the message until I am standing in front of the people. You know what, He always does a lot better job than I would anyway. Normally, I believe, we are to study and prepare ourselves, but let the Holy Spirit direct when you are using the gift of prophecy.

(4) You see tongues are for edifying yourself. Some call this a prayer language. He or she who is prophesying is edifying the church because people can understand what they are saying. This is why this gift of tongues would be better used at home or with only believers in a prayer setting.

(5) Paul says I wish you all spoke with tongues (had a prayer language). I believe this is available to all Spirit-filled Christians or why else would Paul say this? However, he really wishes that you prophesied (could preach the Word in a language people could understand). A person who can preach is meeting the needs of others so this is better than speaking in tongues, unless the tongues are interpreted. That way the church could understand what is being said.

Again it says the church (believers) would understand the message. This is important to remember, even tongues with interpretation are meant only for believer's ears. This is why Chuck Smith and Calvary

Chapel, I understand, have decided to have the tongues and related gifts used in a setting where only believers are present.

(6) What if I or someone else starts speaking in tongues, but does not have someone interpret it? What good does that do the congregation? If I speak a revelation (which is a form of prophecy), or a word of knowledge, or am prophesying (preaching), or teaching; all of these are in a language which people can understand.

(7) If you have a musical instrument you are playing, and you just make sounds with no melody that people can recognize, what will people think?

(8) What about a trumpet that is supposed to prepare soldiers for battle, what good would it do to play it if the notes were not the right notes?

(9) The same thing is true of speaking in tongues in the congregation, how are people supposed to understand what you are saying?

(10) There are a lot of languages in the world and they have their place where people understand them.

(11) If you speak in Chinese and I do not understand Chinese it will be of absolutely no value to me, because I do not understand it.

(12) Since you are eager about gifts, let it be for some good to the church, then you will be doing well.

(13) If you are with believers in a prayer group, and you pray loud enough for everyone to hear, you need to also pray for the interpretation.

(14) Even you are not going to know what is being said, if it is just a message in tongues.

(15) Let us sum this up. If I am praying in the church, I will pray with my spirit to myself, but I will also need to be praying in a language I and other people can understand. I can sing in the spirit, but it will also need to be in a language that I and others can understand.

(16) If you are using your prayer language in the church, how is a person who is not saved or a new Christian going to know what you are saying? (They may not even know there is such a thing as tongues.)

(17) You may be giving thanks with your prayer language, but the rest do not know what you are saying.

(18) Now there is nothing wrong with tongues (a prayer language) Paul says, I use it more than any of you when I am by myself.

(19) However, when I am with the congregation, (where there very well may be unsaved as well), I would rather speak five words in a language people can understand rather than ten thousand words in a tongue no one will understand!

(20) Grow up, and learn the things you need to know. Ok, be careful not to learn wrong things, but please start maturing in your understanding of spiritual things!

(21) The reason God allowed tongues in the Church Age, for one thing, is to speak to the Jewish nation in fulfillment to this prophecy of Isaiah 28:11-12.

(22) Tongues then, for one thing, is given so the Jews will also know that God is speaking through these people. Look at what happened on the day of Pentecost, even though the Nation of Israel as a whole did not receive the message, they cannot deny the prophecy of Isaiah 28:11-12 was fulfilled.

So in this case, tongues can be a sign for the unsaved Jews and others who hear the tongues, which is in a language they can understand, like on the day of Pentecost. However, in this case, prophecy is used more for the saved in the congregation. It is not as much of a sign gift as tongues. (That is not to say prophecy is not used for the unsaved because most of the Old Testament Prophets spoke to many nonbelievers.)

(23) So what is going to happen if you are speaking in tongues to the congregation which has unsaved and new converts in it? Will they not think you are out of your mind? Needless to say this is not going to accomplish what you wanted to accomplish.

(24) Now if you are prophesying (speaking in a language people can understand) and an unbeliever or new convert comes in, he or she will see their need of salvation or grow in the Lord if they are saved.

(25) The unsaved are going to come under conviction of sin and be saved, since it is in a language he or she can understand!

(26) When you get together for a service, do things that are in a language people can understand. You should sing some worship songs, have some teaching, have a tongue with interpretation (if you are going to use this, nothing says you have to have it). Do whatever you do for the edification or building up of others.

(27) If you are together with other Christians and you speak in tongues, let it be no more than two or at the most three, but it always needs to be interpreted right away.

(28) If no one can interpret what you are going to say in tongues, do not do it. You should pray in tongues at home in this case. I believe I have seen this rule violated. Someone who was at church was using their prayer language. Then several people would try to interpret what was said in tongues, but the Spirit of the Lord was not in it. It would have been better for this person to speak in tongues at home between them and the Lord. When they come to church and do this, it hinders people who would otherwise like to come to church to hear from the Lord. The spirit of the individual can control when and where they speak in tongues.

(29) When people speak, we need to judge what they say by the Word, or measure it by the Word as those in Berea did when Paul preached. "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11) I trust that you are doing the same as I teach.

(30) You can control your actions, and the Holy Spirit is a Gentleman. You can wait your turn to speak, you do not want to interrupt one another. I liked this so much about the Friends' Church when I was with them; they were so polite to one another.

(31) Take turns when speaking. It is nice when the service is opened up for people to testify or share what the Lord has laid on their hearts.

(32) This is so important, "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." Not so when a person is demon possessed, the demon takes over. If a person is truly speaking under the power of the Holy Spirit they will be very careful not to offend others. They will be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

(33) God is the author of order, so He wants us to operate in the church in order. How many times I wished I had never gone to a church business meeting. These can get so out of hand, and this is not of the Lord. It would be better not to have meetings if they are not going to be done in order.

(34-35) "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says." These are fighting words for so many people. There is a misunderstanding of this passage so often. Paul is not saying here that a woman can never pray or speak in the church, because he has already covered that they can do this as long as they are in submission to the authority of the male leadership. We covered this in chapter 11 verses 1-16.

What this verse is talking about is that some of the women, who sat on the opposite side from the men, were shouting out at the speaker, asking them to clarify some things. Paul was saying, look, have the women not interrupt the service, but ask their husbands at home their questions. It has nothing to do with women never praying or speaking in the service. Paul's advice would be good for someone who would not show respect in a service and interrupt the Word being declared from the speaker.

(36) Paul wanted to know from them -- did you preach to me first, or did I preach the message to you first? If they thought back they would realize Paul brought the message to them first, so maybe he knows more than they know about what God wants to happen in the church. These people were sure they were the only ones who knew the will of God. Often today, it is hard for pastors to have respect from the congregation. They may feel they know more than the Pastor. This is not right! Respect is always in order for the office.

(37) If you are spiritual at all, you will realize Paul is right on as far as giving the rules for the use of the gifts in the church.

(38) If there is anyone who does not want to listen, this person will probably never listen anyway.

(39) Desire to prophesy (preach the word basically), and do not say a person cannot speak in tongues. It is understood that they have to use the rules that Paul has laid down for the use of tongues, but do not forbid people from using this gift, as so often happens. People throw out the baby with the bath water, which is not the intent of what Paul has said.

(40) In conclusion, follow the rules for the gifts and do everything in an orderly manner!

Chapter 15

(1) Let us come back to the most important subject of all: the Gospel. If you received it, you are saved.

(2) If a person has made a real decision, and not just a profession (with no truth to it), then that individual is saved. There are people who say, "Oh yes I believe," but if you ask them if they asked Christ to take away their sins, they usually give some excuse why they have not done this. Maybe they do not think they are all that bad or they are trusting in their baptism or their joining of the church to save them. Then these people have believed in vain. They are trusting in their own good works to save them, and not in the blood of Christ.

(3-4) This is the most important thing in all of Scripture, and that is that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and came to life again the third day, according to the Bible.

(5) Now we have the list of men He appeared to. The reason the men's names are given and not the women's is because, in those days, only men could testify in a court of law as witnesses. The twelve would include Matthias now and not Judas, since he was dead.

(6) More than five hundred people had seen Christ at one time. Some say, "Oh, it was only a hallucination", but the same hallucination does not happen to five hundred people at one time! Most of these were still alive at the time of the writing of this book.

(7) There was the appearance to James and also all of the apostles. Jesus wanted all of those in the early Church to have a firsthand appearance as they went out to witness for Him.

(8) Paul was not with the apostles at the beginning. Chances are he could have been one of them if he had believed sooner, however, better late than never. Christ appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road, which had almost the sense of force to it. Therefore he thinks of himself as not on the same plain with the other apostles who willingly received the message.

(9-10) Paul was very humble; he realized he was what he was by the grace of God. He hated his past record of persecuting the church; therefore, he lived in such a way to make up for it.

(11) So Paul knew it was as a result of the other apostles preaching he was saved, with a little help from the Lord. The Corinthians were saved as a result of Paul's preaching.

(12) Some in Corinth doubted that the resurrection was possible, as some so called Christians today, who doubt it. They speak a lot about Christ's death but little or none at all about His resurrection.

(13) But if there is no resurrection, then how could Christ be raised?

(14) If you do not believe Christ was raised then how could faith in Him save us?

(15) Worse than that (if it could be worse), we are teaching that there is a resurrection. If it is not true, we are liars; if dead people cannot come back to life under the power of God.

(16) You cannot deny that we are going to be raised and then turn right around and say, but I believe Christ was raised. You cannot believe one statement but not the other.

(17) To believe something that has no facts to back it up is entirely useless. So if in fact there is no resurrection you may as well realize then that you are still a sinner and still in your sins.

(18) If Christ did not come to life again, then every Christian who has died are just as dead as a doornail and are no longer in existence, or worse, are in hell.

(19) If all there is to our faith in Christ is here and now we are stupid, stupid people, everyone should feel sorry for us!

(20) But Christ has risen from the dead, and furthermore, He was only the beginning of those who rose from the dead and those who will rise from the dead in the future.

(21) Adam brought death into the world by his sin. The second Adam, Jesus, brought life through His obedience and resurrection! "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned-

"But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many." (Romans 5:12; 15)

(22) All those who are born only of the first Adam will die, but those who are born of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, will live eternally. We will be resurrected one day if we die trusting in Christ to save us. "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 3:23; and 6:23)

(23) Now Christ was the first to be resurrected, but we who are saved will be resurrected at His coming again.

(24) After the Rapture and Millennial Reign of Christ, Jesus will turn everything back over to the Father.

(25) Jesus will reign on this earth for 1,000 years, where He will reign with a rod of iron, the prophecies say.

(26) Then He will also do away with death at the end of everything.

(27-28) We believe at the end of Christ's Millennial Reign Satan will be allowed out of Hell for a time to give people a chance to choose between him and Jesus. When the Millennial Reign started there were only believers, but these believers have children who live for a very long time, even as it was before the flood. At the end of this Golden Age on the earth with everything being done as it should be done, Satan is allowed once again to deceive people.

These children who now are grown, have to make a choice. Many will listen to Satan's lies, as today, and go against Christ. At that time they are judged, and all who have not been raised to life will be raised and judged. Those who are saved and in the Lamb's Book of Life will be raised first, then the unsaved. The

unsaved will be judged for every sin they ever committed, because they did not want Christ as their Savior and LORD. (Revelation 20)

(29) This business about being baptized for the dead has been greatly misunderstood. In verses 1-11 we have looked at the "fact" of the resurrection of Christ, and then in verses 12-58 Paul is looking at the theological ramifications of the resurrection. He says in verses 12-19 that the resurrection is a necessary part of the Gospel message, for if it is not true, then our faith is vain and we are still in our sins.

Furthermore, the resurrection is proof that Christ's work on the cross was sufficient as a substitutionary atonement for our sin 20-28. Now in this verse the "otherwise" refers us back to the resurrection of verse 12. We have covered it before, that our faith would be in vain if Christ has not risen 12-28, so also would the things we do for the Lord be in vain 29-34.

So Paul begins this section with the question: "What will they do who are baptized for the dead?" This question at the time it was written was just a simple rhetorical question that would have been instantly understood by everyone who read it. Today it is a very difficult expression to understand, because we are so far removed from those times. We can put aside the heretical thought that this refers to the practice of vicarious baptism as a means of salvation for the dead. The reason we can do away with this thought is because it would be contrary to everything else in Scripture. Scripture is very clear that once a person is dead, it is too late to do anything for him or her. "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27)

No doubt, there were some there in Corinth who were on their death bed when the gospel came to them for the first time. With their dying words they asked someone in the church to be baptized for them. In this way their friends and relatives would know for sure that they had turned to Christ. At first one might object, and say why would they do this? Until we realize that many countries, and at many times down through history, when someone has been baptized, this has been a sign of total commitment; seeing this act would encourage the loved ones to follow him or her in his profession of faith in the Gospel. So it would be a strong means of convincing them that this meant a lot to them.

"if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead? The "they" here refers to the ones who were baptized. Paul asks, what would be the point in this act if the dead rise not, for embodied in the ordinance of baptism is the symbol of death, burial, and resurrection with Christ. If there is no resurrection then again this act would be totally pointless.

(30) "And why do we stand in danger every hour?" He says, later on in 2 Corinthians 11:24-26 of himself: "From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren." Paul wants to know why he should go out of his way to preach the Gospel then, if what they are saying is true. Because by doing what he was doing, he was risking his own "neck" every hour. If he will never rise again, then why take a chance on losing the only life he will ever have?

(31) "I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord." He seems to be saying here: You know my actions among you, that I have because of Christ, proving that I do not believe death ends

all. "I die daily." This is very similar to what he says in Romans 8:36 where he quotes the Old Testament, and also in 2 Corinthians 1:8-9.

(32) "If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me?" Some use this to say that Paul literally was fighting with wild beasts in the amphitheatre, at a Roman show in that city. This seems very unlikely. More likely he was compelled to go through some wilderness area (as mentioned before in the list of perils) on his missionary journey through Ephesus and there met with lions.

It seems strange that he didn't mention fighting with animals in his list in 2 Corinthians 6:24ff, so for this reason we can rule out actual animals and discuss it as a figure of speech. He may be referring to something they were more familiar with, where some men, metaphorically speaking, (like animals) had attacked him. What human motive would cause a person to want to fight with Satan's demons working through these men at Ephesus? Obviously there is no human motive that would spur a man on to do this!

"If the dead do not rise, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!'" This is a phrase that was coined in Isaiah's time, when the city of Jerusalem was surrounded by Sennacherib's army. The people were supposed to be praying, but they were in such a backslidden condition that instead of being sorry for their sin, they were getting drunk, and saying tomorrow we die so today let's live it up. Paul uses this, which the Jewish segment there in Corinth would recognize right away, and he says in effect, if we are just like animals when we die, then live like animals. Keep this thinking in mind, because what he says next goes right along with it.

(33) "Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits.'" Staying around people who think like this, Paul says, will cause one to live like the devil. Because this is the one who originated the phrase "Eat and drink for tomorrow we die." This has a real application to us today. If we go along with people who have wrong teachings, this can lead us into thinking the way they do.

For example, if one compromised his belief with that of the Mormons, who say it is good to have more than one wife for the life to come, a person could very easily start to lust after another wife or two. But even closer to the context of the passage; if one associates with those who do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, it could lead a person into acting as if there is no judgment to come. This teaching, live however you please, will corrupt his or her good morals.

(34) "Awake to righteousness, and do not sin." They are suppose to wake up to righteousness; and notice Paul says such thinking as they have had is sin. "for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame." To tell a Corinthian, who prided themselves on their knowledge, "some do not have the knowledge," would be enough to put them to shame.

From here 35-58, the apostle goes into a discussion along this same line. Still theological in nature, but answering the objection, "Well how would a resurrection work?" What kind of body would a person have, and so on?

(35) There are some people who have to know all the details of how God is going to do something before they will believe. They want to know just exactly what type of body we will have. It might not have been a bad question, but Paul could see unbelief written all over the question.

(36-37) So he says, you foolish people, when you go to plant some wheat do you find some wheat on the stalk already grown? No, you get a shriveled up dead (to all appearances) seed. Then you plant the seed. Our bodies do literally die, and decay.

(38) But God is able to create it again. How was Adam created, was it not of the dust of the ground? So too, God can make us new bodies out of nothing, if need be! Now we do not know what these bodies will exactly be like, but He does. We assume that they will be similar to what we look like now, but only perfect in every respect. Note: Christ's body after His resurrection. He could go through walls, etc. There will be no inherited defects. I kind of think we will be in the prime of our lives, or we may get to choose the way we want to look. Who knows, but it will be good. God always does everything good!

(39) Now Paul explains to us that there are different types of bodies God has created on this earth, of people, of animals, of fish and of birds. I do believe science will one day admit this to be true, but whether they do or not, we know it to be a fact because God says it is. God says it, I believe, it is that simple!

(40) There are different types of planets. Men have been trying to find signs of life on other planets for a long time. We understand that God made our planet with life, and others do not have life on them other than maybe demon or angelic activity. Celestial is of the heavens or heavenly, terrestrial is of the earth. Jesus came to this earth and took on a terrestrial body, but after he died for our sins on the cross, He came back after the resurrection with a celestial body.

Our body will be like Jesus' body, and it will be like the angels bodies, they are sexless. "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven." (Matthew 22:30) Angels do not propagate their kind, and neither will we in heaven. That means in the resurrection we are not going to be men and women like we are now, but we will be saved people with no sex distinctions whatsoever. We will have a body like Christ's glorified body. We will be able to go through walls, and from one place to another very fast, maybe at the speed of thought.

(41) The sun is burning gases and has its glory (beauty), while the moon in its glory reflects the light of the sun, and there are differences in the glories of the stars.

(42) Our bodies die and decay, but the new glorified body God will give us will not die or decay.

(43) Our bodies are imperfect now, we have physical defects. When we rise again, we will be perfect in every respect. We are limited now, but then our bodies will have far fewer limitations. We will not be angels, but we will be like the angels.

(44) Right now we are made of flesh and blood, just temporary clay vessels; someday we will have an entirely new body far beyond our wildest imaginations, a spiritual body. If there are natural bodies, there will also be supernatural bodies as well.

(45) Adam was just alive, but Christ (the second Adam) is the life giver!

(46) In God's economy He always saves the best for last. We have a natural body, but if we are born again, God will someday give us a far better body!

(47) The first man, Adam was of the earth, made of dust; the second Adam or Man is the Lord from heaven. Our bodies were created from material on earth the first time, the next time God will use the "material (we do not even have a word for it)" He used for Jesus' new body.

(48) How could anything heavenly come from here on earth? It is impossible! Even Christ's body was temporary and limited because it came for this earth. Thank God when He was given His new body it was not from this earth, but heaven. Here we see that Christ was not reincarnated, as some falsely teach! In other words he did not just go into another earthly body when He died and rose again, but He had a brand new glorified body from heaven.

(49) Just like we looked like our forefathers when we were born, so we will look like our heavenly Father, God. "As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness." (Psalm 17:15)

(50) Some people would like for us to think we are gods and came from heaven, and will return there. Some think they can use their minds to transport their bodies to heaven and elsewhere. Scripture is plain that our bodies, as they are now, will not go to heaven. Our bodies of clay must first dissolve, before God can give us another one.

(51) Now to make things real interesting for us and exciting, Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, reveals something that has not been revealed before (a mystery). He has just said our bodies must dissolve before we can get new ones so everyone might be thinking, well, we must all die then. No! Paul says there will be some who will not die. Enoch and Elijah are pictures of this in the Old Testament. Still God will dissolve the old body and give us a new one, even if we do not die.

(52) It will all happen so fast, in a twinkling of an eye, that is not a wink of your eye, but a twinkling-a small fraction of a second. There will be that trumpet sound, (probably only heard by saints). All those Christians who have died since the day of Pentecost will come out of their graves or wherever they are, in the ocean or wherever. They are given new bodies, and we will follow them with our new bodies back into heaven. I say we will follow them back because their spirits were in heaven when they died, and now God is putting their spirit into their new resurrected bodies a split second before we get ours.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."

(53) This is all for the purpose of giving us new eternal bodies. This dying body is going to be traded in for a brand new model.

(54) Mortal (temporary) is the body we have now, incorruptible (does not decay or get old) is what we will get. Mortal is what we have now, immortal (will last forever) is what we will get. Then we will finally realize that pain and death are forever gone for us, we are victorious over them!

(55) Paul leads us into a crescendo of thought and praise. We can mock death, and Hades (another term for death or the departed) because of what Christ has done for us on the cross and through His resurrection from the dead!

(56) As born again believers we have been delivered from the sting of death (fear of dying being in our sins), and the law tells us how bad we have sinned. But glory to God, Jesus' blood washed all that sin away when we received Jesus as our personal Savior!

(57) How do we have victory over death? It is only through Christ's death on the cross for our sins. So thanks be to God for the victory we now have! We do not have to live in defeat as Christians; Jesus has made us victorious as we are in Him! We do not live fearful of death. Death for a Christian is just going on to our reward, and being with Jesus and all the angels and saints that have gone to heaven before us! We do not think about death as the world thinks about it, but we look at life, for we are a people of life!!!

(58) Just keep working for the Lord, no matter what comes or what happens! God will reward us in the end. We have everything to look forward to! Christians should be the happiest people in the world, because we know Jesus' resurrection is true! This means we will rise again or be caught up to heaven in the Rapture one day!

Chapter 16

(1) Paul was a very down to earth kind of guy, in my opinion. Here he closes the book with personal comments and business that needs to be done, plus personal greetings. One item of business is the collection, not for Paul, but for the needy. (To hear a message by Pastor Magaña of Calvary Chapel in Yakima, WA, click here for [mp3](#) or [wma](#).) There had been a prolonged famine in the land of Palestine and other parts of Syria, and as a result many of the Jewish believers were suffering. Paul was ministering in areas in the Gentile world where there was not this famine, so they could help the Jewish Christians. This is a good thing to do today, and that is to help other Christians no matter what denomination they are in. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith." (Galatians 6:10)

(2) "The Jerusalem church was going through some difficult times, so Paul wanted the churches in Galatia and Corinth to take up a collection for them. He didn't want them to collect it when he arrived, but to do it beforehand. It is interesting that he told them to take up the collection '[on the first day of the week](#).' This is an indication that the church at this time was meeting on Sunday. This is also mentioned in Acts 20:7." (*The Word For Today Bible* by Chuck Smith Calvary Chapel) We should [give willingly](#) to those around the world who need help. The Church should be the first to meet the needs, and then the world will see what we are really all about. Paul wanted it all organized before he got there so he did not have to raise money.

(3) The local church had a say in whom they trusted to help take care of the money. We cannot be too careful in choosing people who are trusted to handle God's money. I have seen firsthand those who seemed honest, but when it came to the church's money, they spent it on themselves.

(4) Paul was flexible, not lording it over them. He respected people's wishes. Pastors need to be like Paul.

(5-9) Paul was telling them his schedule for the coming year. He was coming to the Corinthians when he passed through Macedonia, and he thought he might stay there for the winter. But first he would visit Ephesus, and then after that he wanted to go to Jerusalem. He really wanted to be there by Pentecost, because at that time of the year there were Jews from all over the world. Think of how many he could reach for the Lord!

He could also fellowship with the saints in Jerusalem, but he knew there were enemies there as well (he just didn't know how many enemies would be waiting for him there).

(10-11) Treat brother Timothy right when he comes, he is serving the Lord like I am even if he is younger. Then send him on to me, because we are waiting for him here.

(12) Apollos was asked by the Apostle Paul, do you want to do this thing, but he thought he should do it another time. There is no demanding here, but Paul is a wonderful leader, asking, and suggesting, but not demanding.

(13) These words, to begin with, are military words and this section is given like commands in the military. These commands are in the present tense, and we must continue to do them. Which we truly are in a spiritual battle, we see this all through Scripture but especially in Ephesians 6. Watch! Do not let others get you into something other than what was taught. Stand! Fight like men do not turn and run, hold your ground to the end even if it means death. Be brave, be strong! "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." (Ephesians 6:10) To be a victorious Christian takes courage! Outside of heaven are the cowardly, Revelation 21:8a.

(14) Love is the most important, remember 1 Corinthians 13!

(15-16) Remember at the first of this letter he said he did not remember if he had baptized anyone except for Crispus, Gaius and the household of Stephanas, 1 Corinthians 1:14-16. Stephanas' family was the first to get saved in that area, and his was a devoted family, they had given themselves to the ministry. They had opened their home for a Bible study and prayer meeting, and served the Lord as leaders in the church there in Corinth. The Christians there should love and respect these people.

(17-18) Paul was glad that these men came to visit him in Philippi. They brought him some money and probably other much needed supplies. The rest of the church in Corinth probably did not help Paul, these did. The first time Paul went to Corinth he did not take any money because he did not want them to think this was his motive for preaching the gospel, 2 Corinthians 11:8. He still was a tent maker at this time, but some support besides this would be of a great help, and there is no reason he should not take it now since they were Christians. These men ministered to him spiritually as well, so the church should acknowledge them.

(19) Paul was in business with Priscilla and Aquila making tents. The churches of Asia salute you; Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. Aquila and Priscilla used to live in Corinth, and Paul stayed with them when he was there, but now they are together with Paul. So they wanted to send greetings to the folks back home.

(20) All the brothers and sisters wanted to send their regards. They were to greet each other with a holy kiss, which I believe should still be in order in the church today. However, in the meantime, we should at

least have a friendly hug or a warm handshake depending, on the culture where you are. Maybe you bow to each other, or whatever is a good greeting!

(21) Someone may have written down Paul's words, but here Paul signed his signature and wrote the rest with his own hand.

(22) Kind of a personal P.S. here by Paul, and what a powerful one it is! Anathema is a very strong Greek word meaning "a thing devoted to destruction or the object of a curse." If anyone is trying to tear up the work of the Lord there in Corinth because you do not really love the Lord, then you need to be accursed. The next word is Maranatha (Gr. Transliteration of an Aramaic expression, meaning O Lord, come! Paul was looking forward to Jesus' return and our being with Him, are you?!

(23-24) This is a benediction for them, but Paul does not want to even end his letter on this note, he goes on to say, "My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen" He says this lest some misunderstand that everything he has said in this letter is because he loves them and, as a father, he wants to discipline them in love. His love is for all in Corinth, even the wayward ones.

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