

1 Corinthians

A congregation divided

The City of Corinth

- Located on the isthmus between Northern and Southern Greece
- Situated between the Corinthian and Saronic Gulfs
- Had two ports - Lechaenum and Cenchreae
- Site of the ancient citadel Acrocorinth
- Route for diolkos (dragged ships between Saronic and Corinthian gulfs) which was a tremendous source of income
- Rich agricultural area



ATTICA

ATHENS

Piraeus

Salamis

Corinth

SARONIC GULF

Angistri

Aegina

ARGOLIS

Poros

**AEGEAN
SEA**

ARGOLIC GULF

Dokos

Hydra

Spetses

Castroville



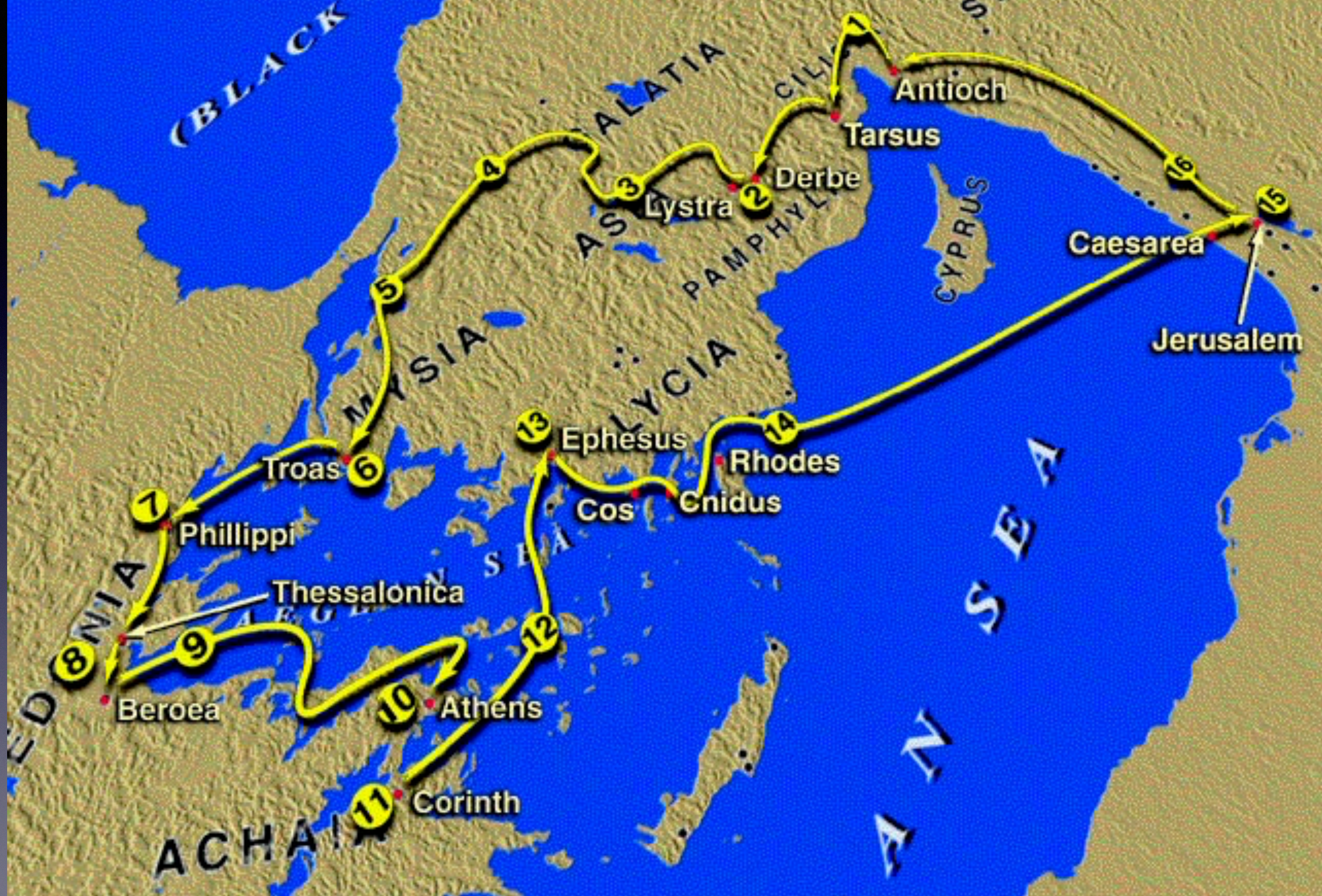
- Corinth rebuilt by Julius Ceasar in 44 B.C. and quickly grew to around 100,000 people (could have been more; number includes slaves)
- Was elevated to capital province of Achaia
 - evidenced by Gallio hearing the case against Paul at the “seat of judgment”
- Spoke primarily Latin

- City is very well known for its sexual immorality
 - Closely associated with Aphrodite (large numbers of temple prostitutes)
- Place where Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans

- Corinth was religiously very pluralistic
 - Epicureanism (pleasure not pain or passion)
 - death was a passing to nothingness and thus not to be feared
 - Stoicism of Seneca (individualism, self-sufficiency, spiritual pride)

- Sophism
 - puffed up wisdom centered around getting paying students
 - contrasted against Paul's emphasis on foolishness and weakness
 - traveled around hiring themselves out
 - Paul's motivation for not taking support from congregation
 - better foil for epistle rather than Gnosticism which didn't take hold until 2nd century

- Heavy emphasis on social connection, status, and influence
- Very common to desire spiritual power
 - informs Paul's emphasis on the weakness of the cross and the apostle and the preaching



Corinthian Congregation

- Established on Paul's Second Missionary Journey (AD 49-52)
 - Acts 18:1-22
- Paul met and was hosted by Aquila and Priscilla (fellow tent makers driven out of Rome) and was joined by Silas and Timothy
- Congregation met at home of Titius Justus which was next to the synagogue. The ruler of the synagogue, Crispus, was converted with his household.

- Primarily ex-pagans dissatisfied with the hedonism and inconsistencies of pagan religions and philosophies
- Drawn by monotheism and high moral life of Judaism but repelled by the nationalism and ceremonies (circumcision)
- Several Jewish families - Crispus household, possibly Sosthenes (Acts 18:17; 1 Corinthians 1:1)
- Large homes were quite possible due to the wealth of Corinth (e.g. Gaius/Tittius Justus)

Paul's Epistle

- Likely written in early AD 55, some weeks before Pentecost, during Paul's 3rd missionary journey from Ephesus where he spent 3 years
- Prompted by word of factions (1:10ff) and questions sent to Paul (7:1 - marriage; 8:1 - food offered to idols; 12:1 - spiritual gifts)
- Centered on unity of the Church grounded in the foolishness of the cross which then stimulates true Christian selfless love

- Paul rejects boasting and arrogance of Christian congregation which was likely infected with cultural desire for spiritual power
 - equivalent of Reformation-era Schwärmerei (“swarming bees”)
 - Christians were unwilling to bear the cross of this life (over-realized eschatology or no eschatology at all)

- Epistle well-attested in extra-Biblical writings
 - 1 Clement (AD 95/96)
 - Didache (1st century)
 - Ignatius (AD 110)
 - Polycarp (AD 110)
 - canonicity well-accepted
 - Marcionite and Muratorian Canons (2nd century AD)
 - Athanasius' Thirty-ninth Festal Letter (AD 367)

Outline of Epistle

- See also outline in *TLSB*, pg. 1946.
- I. Introduction and Thanksgiving for the Corinthian Congregation (1:1-1:9)
- II. Apostolic Appeal for Unity in the Congregation (1:10-4:20)
 - A. Rejection of personality cult (1:10-1:17)
 - B. Foolishness/weakness of the Gospel (1:17-2:16)
 - C. Chastisement of division (3:1-3:23)
 - D. Apostolic office (4:1-4:21)

- III. Sexual immorality in the Church (5:1-7:40)
 - A. Enthusiasm (5:1-5:11)
 - B. Judgment in the Church (5:12-6:8)
 - C. Christian Freedom (6:9-6:20)
 - Faithfulness in marriage and celibacy (7:1-7:40)

- IV. Food Offered to Idols and Christian Freedom (8:1-11:34)
 - A. Love of the weak vs. puffed of knowledge (8:1-8:13)
 - B. Christian “rights” (9:1-10:33)
 - C. Unity in worship (11:1-11:34)
 - 1. Head coverings/authority
 - 2. Holy Communion

- V. Spiritual Gifts (12:1-14:40)
 - A. Gifts are for the benefit of others (12:1-13:13)
 - B. Supremacy of love (14:1-14:40)
 - Centrality of Christ's death and resurrection (15:1-15:11)
- VI. The Resurrection of the Christian (15:12-15:58)
- VII. Collection for the Jerusalem Church (16:5-16:18)

- VIII. Future Plans and Instructions (16:5-16:18)
- IX. Final Greetings and Apostolic Blessing (16:19-16:24)

I. INTRODUCTION AND THANKSGIVING

Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,

² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Trifecta of “calling” by God
 - the apostle is called (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος)
 - the Corinthian Christians are called saints (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις)
 - both are among “the called out ones” - the church (τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ)

- Paul everywhere works to stamp out the factionalism that had grown in the Corinthian congregation.
- “the Church of God which is in Corinth” (not Paul’s or Apollos’)
- “together with all who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”
- “in every place”
- “both their [Lord] and ours”
- Does factionalism still threaten the church today?

- Sosthenes likely was the scribe other than the final greeting as well as a collaborator on the content.
- Peace was desperately needed in the congregation and that peace was found in the common grace of God which is in Christ Jesus who humbled Himself and took the form of a servant though He is “Teacher” and “Lord”.

- Paul starts briefly on a high note, looking to the good in the congregation which was that which God had done for them in causing the good news of salvation to be proclaimed among them giving them true “knowledge” which led to right “speech”.
- “speech” also included the various gifts (χαρίσματα) such as the gift of tongues, prophecy, etc. (see chpt. 12 & 13)
- Paul’s thanksgiving for the χαρίσματα is genuine and “Throughout the epistle everything he says will be aimed at correcting distortions and developing the right understanding of Christian speech and knowledge.” (Lockwood, 35)
- Paul uses χαρίσματα rather than the Corinthian term πνευματικῶν in order to focus on the grace of the gift and the grace that preceded the gift.

- The Corinthians' longing for the revelation of Jesus Christ on the last day had given way to an obsession with the πνευματικῶν as though they were the object of the Christian faith.
- Paul confidently asserts that God will keep the Corinthians in the faith until the Last Day.
 - FC SD XI 32 - "Holy Scripture also assures us that God who has called us will be so faithful that after 'he has begun the good work in us' he will also continue it to the end and complete it, if we ourselves do not turn away from him but 'hold fast until the end the substance which has been begun' in us. For such constancy he has promised his grace."
 - It is imperative that we keep the Last Day in full view so that our eyes and hearts are lifted away from the things of this world.

- ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ

- “an actual participation in him (Jesus), a union with him through faith and Baptism into his body, so that their bodies were now in a mysterious way members of his body. This deep communion was constantly nourished by the Gospel and Christ’s true body and blood in the Sacrament of Holy Communion” (Lockwood, 37)

- chpts. 10 and 11

- communion with Christ is the basis of our communion with one another as the one body of Christ.

ISSUE 1

Factions in the Body of Christ

Gospel-centered urging

- Paul's admonition was for the building up of the body of Christ, not its division.
- "Brothers"
 - common sonship in the the Son, Jesus
 - receivers of the inheritance
- the "Name of our Lord Jesus Christ"
 - one name shared by all through Holy Baptism

- “say the same thing” (τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε) = a common confession rooted in the apostolic teaching
 - people had begun to love senseless and divisive arguments
 - rejection of a “reconciled diversity”
 - unity in Christ means a unity among men
- factions/divisions (σχίσματα) = tears in a garment or fishing nets

- Report of Chloe's people
 - Naming the source of information to avoid appearance of rumors
 - Chloe's identity is uncertain
 - quarrels/schisms - Galatians 5:19-20
 - "I belong to..."

- Named factions
 - Paul - founder/apostle
 - Apollos - eloquent/watered
 - Cephas - personal visit?/Jewish Christians baptized by Peter?
 - Christ - rejection of others/“super spiritual”

- Three questions
 - 1) Is Christ divided?
 - 2) Paul was not crucified for you, was he?
 - 3) Or were you baptized into the name of Paul?
- Crucifixion + Baptism + Name of Christ

- Paul the non-baptizer
- Crispus - synagogue official (Acts 18:8)
- Gaius - Gaius Titius Justus/ Rom 16:23?/host to Paul and the church/likely a man of means
- Family of Stephanas - from Achaia/ likely baptized by Paul before coming to Corinth
 - with Paul when writing epistle from Ephesus

- baptized by vs. baptized into
 - into the name of Jesus (the Holy Trinity)
- preaching as priority
 - appointed elders responsible for administering sacraments
 - Luther, pg. 52
 - truly good preaching (faithful and simple) give place to the cross

- σοφία λόγου
 - cross, not clever words, is the power of preaching
 - rejection of human philosophy (φιλοσοφίας)
 - rejection of “wise” content and eloquent presentation
 - the cross is weakness and is incompatible with human wisdom (it is μωρία to “the ones who are being destroyed”)
 - What is wise in the eyes of the world?
 - wisdom - 12X in verses 17- 31

- The foolishness of the cross is the Church's unity
 - The weakness and foolishness of the cross will never be acceptable to the world which always seeks after glory and power
 - theology of glory vs. theology of the cross
 - you can only rightly know God in the crucifixion of Jesus.
 - Paradoxically, God's power is found in what we call weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9)
 - Isaiah 29:14, 19:12

- God's power vs. God's grace
- Human wisdom always seeks glory - crosses are for criminals and slaves
- Salvation is accomplished through means that our flesh and reason utterly despise because it doesn't glorify them.
 - cross, preaching, sacraments

- God, by His wisdom, can't be known through wisdom (v. 21) but through the folly of the preaching of the cross
- Matthew 11:25-26
- Human wisdom, apart from revelation, always begins with man and tries to work to God

- Whenever you speak of Christ crucified to a worldly person, it will sound utterly foolish to them.
- The sign Jesus gives to the Jews who were demanding one, was His death and resurrection - but they still didn't believe.
- Christ is still the crucified one, though now resurrected

- God's power and wisdom are in the crucifixion
 - Jews expected a powerful Messiah
 - crucifixion = cursed (Deut. 21:23)
 - Gentiles (Greeks/Romans) found the cross offensive and abhorrent
 - Cicero, Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Lucian (Jesus was "that gibbeted sophists")
 - what is righteousness?
 - Isaiah 55:8-9

God chooses what the world rejects

1:26-2:5

- The Corinthian congregation
 - κλήσιν - station in life/social status rather than vocation
 - “not many” but some were (e.g. Gaius, Crispus, Stephanas)
 - many were slaves and freedmen
 - those to whom the Gospel was appealing were largely despised by the world

Celsus (2nd century philosopher)

“Their injunctions are like this: ‘Let no one educated, no one wise, no one sensible draw near. For these abilities are thought by us to be evils. But as for anyone ignorant, anyone stupid, anyone uneducated, anyone who is a child let him come boldly.’ By the fact that they themselves admit that these people are worthy of their God, they show that they want and are able to convince only the foolish, dishonorable and stupid, and only slaves, women, and children.” (From Origen’s *Against Celsus*)

- Is Celsus correct? Do we believe that wisdom and rhetoric and learning are evil?
- The Gospel is for those who confess their humility (Matthew 5)
- Paul chooses to speak a little more broadly of foolish, weak, and low things which God chooses rather than people.
- Paul excludes any kind of boasting which is exactly what was happening in the congregation reminding us that our whole existence in Christ is from God. (v.29)

This is God's wisdom

- Righteousness
 - Jeremiah 23:5-6
- Sanctification
 - holiness given in Baptism
 - made saints to live as saints
- Redemption
 - sprinkling of Blood (as at the Passover)



- The apostle
 - Paul stresses that he came in a manner completely contrary to that of the sophists (2:1)
 - 2nd sophistic movement of the 1st century AD
 - less about philosophy and more about making convincing arguments in any field of interest
 - Showy rhetoric undermines the weakness of the cross which is precisely its power.

- Paul is not highly thought of as a speaker
 - For they say, “His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account.” (2 Cor. 10:10)
- Paul doesn’t despise rhetoric but makes sure that it serves the Gospel and not the other way around. (2 Cor. 10:5)

- Paul's entire ministry is filled with weakness
 - preaching
 - sickness
 - persecution and rejection
 - ³ And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, ⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom," (1 Cor. 2:3)
 - ⁹ 'And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, ¹⁰ for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people." ¹¹ And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.' (Acts 18:9)

- The wisdom of Christ is for the spiritually mature
 - Corinthians are anything but mature in Christ; they were infants (3:1)
 - It is a wisdom contrary to the wisdom of the age and its rulers.
 - Christian wisdom is only obtained by revelation (Paul's apocalyptic language - "this age", "hidden mystery", "glory", "revealed")
 - What was once hidden under shadows is now fully revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ, crucified for sinners. Our life is seen most clearly in Him.

- The death of God (2:8)
 - hypostatic union (the two natures of Christ)
 - humanity assumed into the Godhead
 - communication of attributes
 - quote from Chemnitz, pg. 92-93
 - “O sorrow dread! Our God is dead, upon the cross extended.” (LSB 448, stz. 2)

- What makes a mature Christian? What makes an infant Christian?
 - Still thinking and living according to worldly wisdom - mix and match theology (cf. 5:6,7; Matthew 16:11; 2 Cor. 6:14)
 - Immaturity in the faith is not an excuse to sin but a prompt to learn and grow. (Ap IV)
 - Immaturity is not lack of faith.

- No one can claim full maturity - that is attained in the resurrection. (cf Eph 4:13, Phil. 3:12)
 - *simul justus et peccator*
 - “Progress in sanctification does not mean a decreasing consciousness of sin. On the contrary, increased holiness means increased knowledge of sin, for sanctification is increased surrender to the living Christ. The smaller our sense of sin, the less we are driven to surrender to Christ.” Prenter
 - Sanctification is growth both downward and upward.
 - Maturity is not static.

- How is Christian maturity attained?
 - Daily meditation and study of the Word of God
 - Devotion to the apostolic teaching and the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2)
- How is Christian maturity maintained?
 - Daily meditation and study of the Word of God
 - Devotion to the apostolic teaching and the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2)

- Christian wisdom is a wisdom of revelation.
 - You aren't wise because you figured something out, but because God has shown you something you otherwise couldn't have known.
 - Rom 10:17
 - Only the Spirit of God can reveal the things of God (cf. Matthew 11:27)
 - "Spirit" mentioned 6 times in 2:10-14
 - How does the Spirit reveal these things?
 - Just as another person must tell us what is going on in their mind, God must reveal to us His mind. Conversely "Jesus..knew all people" and "knew what was in man." (Jhn 2:24-25)

- God gives His Spirit so that we might know “the things” of v.9, things which God has graciously given to us in Jesus Christ.
- This giving leads to speaking/proclamation/revelation of the works of God.
 - verbal inspiration
 - διδακτοίς - teachings (ancient church’s catechesis; cf. John 14:26)
 - use the language which Scripture gives, not that human wisdom gives (learn the actual words of Scripture, not just broad ideas)
 - συγκρίνοντες - explain/bring together/interpret
 - explaining “things of the Spirit to people of the Spirit”
 - not a matter of some people being more spiritual (or religious) than others

- the unspiritual person/natural person (cf. 3:1)
 - ψυχικός - natural/without the Spirit/fleshly
 - οὐ δέχεται - does not receive warmly/favorably; hostile rejection
 - πνευματικὰ - things of the Spirit are utter foolishness, moronic to the ψυχικός ἄνθρωπος (cf. John 8:43; 12:37; 14:17)
 - it is impossible to understand/comprehend/believe the Scriptures apart from the Holy Spirit
 - “Only the spiritual person, blessed with sound spiritual judgment to know only Christ crucified, is able to bring spiritual things together for others and properly discern spiritual things.” (Lockwood, 100)

- πνευματικός
- the spiritual person judges everything by the Word of God (Christian worldview)
- the words and works of the spiritual person are a mystery to the ψυχικός άνθρωπος
- the spiritual person has/knows the mind of Christ and brings every thought captive to Christ because Christ is focal point of all wisdom

- Christian but ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος (3:1-4)
 - Paul acknowledges their baptized state but chides their failure to live and think accordingly
 - divisions within the body of Christ are a direct assault on the Gospel of the cross
 - “brothers” who had given themselves to worldly thinking rather than the cross
 - Christians are not to remain infants/babies in their understanding or in their living out of their calling to faith. We are to grow in understanding through study so that we don’t continue to think and walk like those who are fleshly. (cf. 13:11)

- ζήλος καὶ ἔρις (“jealousy and strife”)
 - evidence of spiritual immaturity and continuing to act as fleshly people, contrary to the Spirit
 - we don’t want our children to remain children in their thinking or conduct

- It's about the office, not the person in the office.
 - It is finally God working in the office through the person.
 - Apollos didn't do a different thing or even use different means than Paul. Though Paul was the first to plant the seed (preach God's Word - Matthew 13), Apollos continued to water (more of God's Word - Isaiah 55). In both cases it is God's Word that does the work, not the one applying it.
 - Our work is finite while God's is enduring. Luther found comfort in this during his ministry. The Word of God went and did all the work while he and others sat and drank beer.
 - Because it is one Word and one office, it is incoherent to imagine that that office changes form based on time or context.

- To whom do the servants answer?
- Mixing metaphors - from fields to buildings
 - Paul focused on laying foundations.
 - A warning to those who would build - watch what materials you use.
 - The foundation is Christ crucified. All teaching and practice has to be in keeping with that.
 - Noncombustible vs. combustible building materials.
- Salvation is not the reward for faithful service. But in the light of the Day, all who tried to build with woods, hay, and straw will be ashamed of mishandling their stewardship.

- Not just any building but the temple of God.
 - applies both individually and corporately
 - First Petition of the Lord's Prayer - when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and we live holy lives according to it
 - Doctrine and practice either build or harm the Church. Neither is neutral.

- Going beyond the Scriptures
 - The Corinthians were seeking after a supposed deeper level of spirituality. They were trying to go beyond what was found in Holy Scripture.
 - φυσιοῦσθε (v 6) = puffed up
 - used primarily in 1 Corinthians (also Colossians 2:18)
 - perhaps reference back to Habakkuk 2:4 (Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.)
 - “what is written” = 1:31
 - Scripture as the norming norm (*norma normans*)

- Contrast between Corinthians and apostles
 - Corinthians think they have already obtained everything that is possible. They have arrived at what the apostles still hope for.
 - The fact that the apostles were still suffering was evidence of the fact that the Corinthians hadn't, in fact, begun their reign because that doesn't begin for anyone until the Last Day when all will begin it together.
 - Riot in Ephesus (Acts 19) and James' execution (Acts 12) were probably fresh in Paul's mind.
 - Lockwood - Imagery of victorious Roman general parading his condemned captives through the streets with God as the general. The difference is that those who appear to be the conquered are actually the ones who share in the victory.

- Lockwood believes that Paul sees the suffering of the Church as the filling up of Christ's own sufferings - the total sufferings of Christ include the suffering of His Church, His body. (147-148)
 - In the eyes of many, Christians are the scum of the earth and the source of every evil and the hindrance of progress. Are we willing to suffer such hatred and revision for the Gospel or do we think we should be able to avoid it? (Lam. 3:45)
 - Quote from Luther in Lockwood (150, fn. 25)
- The Corinthians had come to despise suffering for the sake of the Gospel as below them.
- The cruciform life - suffering for the benefit of others

- Paul's fatherly approach (v 14-21)
 - Paul isn't looking to humiliate the Corinthians or to elevate himself over them, but to teach them and bring them back to the truth. Overlords humiliate. Loving fathers admonish (correct rather than embitter) and teach in order to build up and strengthen.
 - Sons imitate their fathers. That is how God ordered creation. Jesus was, of course, the perfect example of a son who imitates his father and serves as a perfect mirror of his father by submitting himself to the will of his father rather than trying to assert his own (cf Gospel of John).
 - Those who preach and teach falsely are nothing but bags of wind. They speak foolishness. They know nothing of the power of the cross. They seek only glory for themselves and despise the weakness and humility that necessarily follow faith in Christ.

- Paul will not spare the rod of public rebuke and chastisement if it is necessary. How would such a threat be received by modern ears?
- Is Paul speaking in metaphor when using the language of father and child or is defining the true nature of the relationship and how we are to understand it? Does his definition have broader implications than simply the pastoral office?

Issue 2

Sexual Immorality in the Church of Christ

- Sexuality immorality was a result of the factionalism
 - “puffed up” (4:6)
 - Corinthians proud of their libertine Christian freedom and enlightenment
 - Likely a stepmother since Paul doesn’t say “mother” but “father’s wife”, yet still incest and adultery.

- Judgment in the Church
 - Who is judging whom?
 - Bias of the Roman courts toward the rich against the poor
 - Christian eschatological mindset
 - Judging within the Church

- Ruled by greed, not by faith
- Can Christians use secular courts?
- Judgment of God against unrighteousness
 - there is no room left for unrighteousness of any kind
 - cf. Ephesians 5:5 and Galatians 5:21
 - practicing self-deceit

- “You claim to know/have knowledge, but do you really?”
- Christians, on the basis of God’s Word, MUST make distinction between the righteous and the unrighteous
- Sin destroys faith, individually and corporately
- What we were and what we now are - very different things

- “Return” to sexual sins
 - abuse of freedom for personal indulgence rather than for the good fo the whole body
 - surrendering control/freedom/authority for slavery
 - the body does not equal food

- Our body is Christ's - sexual immorality tears the Christian apart from Christ
 - sex is always a joining of two into one
 - OT union language between God and His people
 - “forsaking all others, remain united to her/him alone”

- Flee!
 - sin and temptations to sin
 - e.g. Joseph and Potiphar
 - sexual sins are self-destruction
 - what measures are needed to mitigate the damage of sexual sins?
- the body is a temple - a place of holiness and purity, thus any form of sexual immorality/unchastity is a desecration of marriage

- Exhortation to marriage
 - “Now concerning”
 - 7:25, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1 & 12
 - issues raised by the Corinthians
 - Paul’s comments driven by:
 - his conviction that the Lord’s return is imminent (should be our constant thought)
 - the particular dangers and pressures of the time - i.e. the frequency of and encouragement toward all manner of adultery

- Some of Paul's words are rooted in clear commands of Christ, others are apostolic advice grounded in Scripture but no specific command
- marriage is the norm and celibacy the rare exception
 - "it is not good for man to be alone"
 - marriage is the created order
 - Jer. 16:1-2 (God specifically forbids Jeremiah from taking a wife as a sign of the judgment that was about to fall on God's people)

- In a world infested with sin, marriage now helps restrain the sinful flesh
 - “each man and woman must have...”
 - “each man and woman must give...”
 - the body of the husband and wife belongs to the other
 - you don’t have authority over your own body, your spouse does (contrary to NIV translation) - this is a hard saying that runs completely contrary to modern “sensibilities”
 - 6:19 - “You are not your own”
 - “Stop depriving/defrauding one another (see 6:8)

- temporary abstinence must be symphonic (both must agree to it) and for the purpose of prayer/worship
- instructions to three groups
 - widowers (τοῖς ἀγάμοις) and widows (ταῖς χήραις)
 - was Paul a widower?
 - Paul was a scribe
 - Paul typically deals in male/female pair
 - “remain as I am”
 - remarriage is neither commanded nor forbidden

- married Christians
 - this comes from a specific command of God
 - do not divorce
 - counter-cultural
 - Greco-Roman culture allowed women to initiate divorce
 - Paul possibly addressing “eschatological women” who were using new heightened spirituality to leave their husbands toward asceticism
 - either remain celibate or reconcile
 - Paul, contra-society, puts men and women on equal footing

- religiously-mixed marriages
 - addressed to situations where in an existing marriage one of the spouses converts to Christianity and the other doesn't
 - Jesus had not left a specific command for such situations
 - such a rare instance that Paul feels the need to point it out
 - remain as you are if possible (preserve the existing marriage)
 - “Does my unbelieving spouse make me or my children unholy?” (vis-a-vis Paul's warnings about not associating with the immoral)

- prayer and the Word of God sanctify the situation and may lead to the salvation of the unbeliever who agrees to live peaceably with the Christian
 - Timothy
 - both the unbelieving spouse and the children have the opportunity to hear the Gospel

- For those who have converted but whose spouses do not want to be married to a Christian, tells them not to burden their consciences trying to desperately save the marriage.
- Marriage shouldn't be treated as an evangelism tool but God may certainly use it that way.
- Paul does not speak here to the Christian spouse remarrying. (RC "Pauline privilege")

- Remain as you were when you were called.
- The call to faith in Christ is not bound to a particular vocation or station in life. “Faith and the Christian life are so free in essence that they are bound to no particular order or estate of society, but they are to be found in and throughout all orders and estates.” (LW 28:39)
- “what counts is keeping the commandments of God” (v19)
 - the full divine revelation, OT and NT (*mandata Dei*)
 - faith in Christ and living according to that faith

- examples of circumcision and slavery
 - Timothy vs. Titus - you can be but you don't have to be
 - some tried to alter their circumcised/uncircumcised state
 - slaves can remain slaves but may also take their freedom if it is offered
 - all who are in Christ through faith (Baptism) are free in Christ as sons of God (Jn 8:36) with Jesus as His Lord
 - avoid the slavery of asceticism and factionalism
- Just as in marriage, all stations in life are sanctified by the Word of God and prayer as they are carried out in faith and service to the neighbor

- “the betrothed” (lit. “the virgins”)
 - use of pastoral judgment rooted in the study of the divine revelation
 - concern for the end times or possibly for current famine afflicting the Roman world (probably both)
 - the apostle is making an observation about the troubles of the times (context is important in the Scriptures) and realizes, perhaps even from experience (see above), that marriage brings with it unique crosses
 - Paul is NOT demanding that everyone remain single or holding up celibacy as superior in the eyes of God

- all are to live eschatological lives
 - whatever station you are in, the reality is the same - you are to be prepared to leave this world at any moment
 - “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness...”
 - celibacy and marriage both come with earthly concerns that have to be addressed but not at the expense of the concern for salvation

- Christ says that we are to stop worrying about what we will eat and drink and wear (Mtt 6:25-34)
- Paul is encouraging each to that life which helps to relieve the anxieties of the flesh - for some that is celibacy, for others it is marriage
- The world circumstances of that time (famine) changed and thus it is quite imaginable that Paul would have give different advice under such changed circumstances. This is why Paul doesn't make it "a noose around your neck". Celibacy is not a law, neither is it forbidden.

- a last word to widows
 - women in particular were put into hardship (it was always a particular concern of the church to care for widows and orphans)
 - again, freedom - you can marry or not
 - if you do, only marry a Christian (see above)
 - being single allows for greater single-minded devotion to the things of God (including serving the neighbor)
 - Paul has already rejected the exaltation of celibacy and asceticism in the Corinthian congregation as more pleasing to God
 - both marriage and celibacy require special gifts of God's grace

Issue 3

Food offered to idols

- Idol worship in Corinth highly polytheistic
 - Demeter (Ceres - cereal) and Kore
 - associated with agriculture
 - offerings of grain, cakes, fruits, young pigs, the female figure
 - temples had areas of eating (restaurants)

Demeter

- agriculture
- fertility
- sacred law
- harvest



Kore (Persephone)

- daughter of Zeus and Demeter
- goddess of underworld - abducted by Hades
- associated with vegetation - life springing forth



Asklepios

- physician - later deified
- healing
- medicine
- rejuvenation
- physicians



- kukeon - potion; kernos - earthen dish with small pots affixed for miscellaneous offerings
- there was likely a socio-economic element to the problem (much like there was in the case of lawsuits)
 - the rich were probably invited to the temple “restaurants” for social events other than religious ones, whereas the poor were only likely at the temple for religious observance

- 3 situations
 - can you recline at table and eat sacrificial foods
 - can you eat food purchased in the market at your home
 - how do you conduct yourself as a guest in the home of a non-Christian

- Relationship between chapter 8 and 10
 - 2 different attitudes by Paul? (two different letters)
 - general advice and then specific advice; advice concerning the brother and then advice concerning the self

- Knowledge vs. love (chapter 1)
 - “we all have knowledge” - those who know (catechized) were using their knowledge as a club over the weak
 - φυσιοῖ - puffs up, makes arrogant (self) - cf. 13:4
 - ἀγάπη - builds up (brother)
 - “Paul’s concern throughout the chapter is that arrogance may scandalize a brother and cause a fellow Christian to fall from the faith.” (Lockwood, 276)

- the one who thinks he knows (he is wise) is the one who still doesn't actually know (the Gospel) - cf. 1:10
- true Christian knowledge always moves us in the direction of our brothers and neighbors for their edification rather than our own
 - loving God is not license to trample on your neighbor
- being known by God is more important than to know something
 - the doctrine of election
 - true knowledge is a gift given by God, not something we obtain
 - the one who rightly knows that he is known by God will use his knowledge for the benefit of others

- There is only 1 God, the Holy Trinity
 - all other so-called gods are idols - they have no actual existence or power
 - Father
 - the Lord, Jesus Christ
 - other manuscripts include the phrase “and one Holy Spirit, in whom are all things, and we in him.” (Lockwood, 279)

- How can I help my weaker brother?
 - weak = more easily influenced by the behavior of others
 - seeing the actions of the strong, engage in things that then burden their conscience
 - good strength -> seeks the good of the weaker other in love
 - evil strength -> puffs up the stronger at the cost of the weaker
 - knowledge is necessary but it must be applied in love

- Salvation is not a matter of food - you are not shorted whether you avoid eating or not
- When we encourage a weaker brother to sin against his conscience, we are personally responsible for putting his salvation in jeopardy.

Apostolic Rights

- The Lord's command
 - “Those who proclaim the Gospel should get their living from the Gospel.” (1 Cor. 9:15)
 - Drawn from Luke 10:7 and Matthew 10:10 (“The laborer is worthy of his wages/sustenance/food”)
 - Supporting the pastor allows his focus to be on preaching and teaching and visitation. It is a thank-offering to God for providing the Office and the gifts through the Office.

Not exercising rights

- Paul's personal practice
- Wanted nothing to stand in the way of the Gospel.
 - Received support from Macedonian churches so as not to burden Corinthians or give false impressions about his preaching
- Paul's apostolic debt - preach the Word entrusted to you (a steward of the divine mysteries)

A Gospel for all people

- Paul remains un beholden to anyone.
- An adapting ministry (not an adapting message)
 - Jews - always began preaching in the synagogue
 - follow the Law so long as it doesn't get confused with the Gospel (circumcise Timothy)

- Gentile God-fearers (“those under the Law”)
 - no real elaboration on how - perhaps in similar fashion to accommodating Jews
- Gentile converts (“those without/outside the Law”)
 - not insisting on Jewish ceremonial laws as necessary for salvation (refusal to circumcise Titus)
 - law of Christ - law of love (John 13) which is shaped by the moral law rather than the ceremonial law

- the weak
 - back to the original question
 - weak in Christian maturity and/or weak in status
- the Word doesn't change - only the conditions and presuppositions of the various hearers
- not the same as the modern-day mantra of "contextualization" which changes the message to fit the hearer

- Quoting from DA Carson “To promote it this way—by dying to self-interest, giving up all insistence upon the sacredness of one’s rights, and striving to win as many as possible—is to follow Christ crucified, who died, literally to his self-interest, gave up all insistence upon the sacredness of his very real rights, and set himself to win men and women from every people and tongue and tribe and nation.”

The prize of self-sacrifice

- Self-discipline - not seeking your own advantage
- Isthmian Games
 - bi-annual event that took place in AD 51 while Paul was in Corinth
 - competitors committed themselves to 10 months of strict training
 - renounce not only bad habits but also anything that may be good but is a distraction from the task and goal at hand.
- Give up that which does not press forward the cause of the Gospel for yourself or anyone else so that you may gain the prize of eternal life

Learn from our forefathers

- Paul wants the Corinthians to claim the history of Israel as their own history (“our fathers”) and learn from it.
 - Don’t think that what happened to them has nothing to do with you or can’t also happen to you.
 - All began in the same way but not to the same effect
- Paul is drawing clear connections between the OT shadows and the NT realities.

- “All” received -> objective BUT “with most of them God was not pleased” -> subjective
- “Spiritual” does not equal not physical
 - spiritual but real food = manna
 - spiritual but real drink = water from the rock
 - spiritual but real rock = Christ
- Pre-existence of Christ

- Faithlessness will disqualify us from the blessings of salvation - returning to the question of idol sacrifices.
- No one is so strong that they are beyond temptation.
- We may all share in the same sacraments but not all will benefit from them for lack of faith.
- Two temptations regarding our attitude toward the sacraments:
 - 1) *ex opere operato* - going through the motions
 - 2) sacraments as empty symbols

- Five examples for Corinthians to consider for themselves
 - coveting (9/10 Commandments)
 - Kibroth Hattaavah (the graves of craving)
 - idolatry (1 Commandment)
 - eating at the altar of an idol

- sexual immorality (6 Commandment)
 - rooted in idolatry
 - a sin against the temple of the Holy Spirit
- testing Christ (1 Commandment)
- grumbling (1 Commandment)

- Temptation will come but clinging to the Word of God you can resist, no matter how fierce the temptation may seem.
- Don't allow pride to drag you into other sins and draw you into God's judgment
- Take comfort that your temptations are not unique in human experience. The saints who have gone before you have suffered under the same temptations and by God's grace, submitting to the Word, they have endured.
- God will be faithful to His promises to you.

- Idolatry is not insignificant or harmless and therefore we are to run away from it in all its various forms.
- “The cup of blessing that we bless.../The bread that we break...”
 - Clear reference to the Lord’s Supper and the consecration (Verba)
 - Third cup of the Passover meal
 - There is an actual participation in the Body and the Blood of Christ in the Supper, otherwise, if it were just bread and wine, Paul wouldn’t have a point to make.
 - Participation in the Lord’s Table is substantive - it means something. It is not symbolic. You make a confession by communing with those who hold to particular doctrines. You join yourself to them and to their confession.

- By being united to Christ, we are united to all who are united to Christ, making us one body. Normal bread does not unite people with Christ or each other.
- Idols = demons
 - Participating in the meal makes you a participant in the worship, whether you believe it or not. You are publicly approving of what is being offered on that altar. You are also sharing in the communion of demons, which, unlike idols, are very real.
 - If you participate in the life of Christ, you cannot then participate in the worship of demons. You can't confess as true, opposing doctrines.
 - The Lord's Supper doesn't create fellowship, but is an expression of the fellowship of faith.
 - First Commandment issue.

- Paul draws on the language of the Close of the Commandments where God clearly states that He is a jealous God - He will not share the trust and devotion of our heart with another God.
- When we proclaim our fellowship with Him and the truth, we invite His wrath when we then also proclaim our fellowship with those who teach in a way contrary to His Word.
 - “participation in the Christian sacraments precludes participation in or compromise with any other religious rites or organizations.” (i.e. those organizations that confess something about God contrary to His Word) (Lockwood, 345)
- False doctrine, which always has the devil as its source, is always an attack on Christ and our salvation - nothing less. Should we do anything that would compromise the truth of salvation for ourselves or anyone else?

The Christian in the world

- Paul gives Christian counsel to those confronted with the day-to-day reality of living in a pagan culture - helpful for us indeed.
- 3 common situations
 - 1) buying food in the market place
 - 2) sharing a meal at the home of an unbeliever
 - 3) eating what is known to have been sacrificed

- Two over-arching objectives:
 - 1) The glory of God
 - 2) “Thus he (Paul) strives to please all people, not in the sense of currying favor with them, but in the sense of commending the Christian faith to them, profiting them spiritually.” (Lockwood, 354)

IV. C: Unity in worship

Head Coverings

- Paul maintains the position of a father teaching and guiding his children in love toward the truth.
- There are traditions of God's people that the Corinthians have set aside, indicating deeper problems.

- The question of head coverings for men and women is a question of authority and submitting to and clearly confessing God's order of creation.
- This text is often used by those who charge the church with hypocrisy because we do not demand that women wear head coverings.

- Essential to a correct understanding of the issue is verse 3 where Paul lays down the doctrinal underpinning for the teaching which informed the practice.
- It is only our sinful selfish flesh that is taken aback by Paul's words, reflecting the truth of Genesis 3:16.
- This is not a question of inferiority of essence - Christ is clearly not inferior to God (cf. John 17:22, the Nicene Creed)
- This practice was informed by the practice not only of the Church but also of the broader culture.

- The women in the congregation were conducting themselves as though there was no longer a difference between men and women.
 - This harkens back to the “super-spirituality” that many in the congregation believed they had obtained.
 - This was a gnostic idea that has arisen again. Homosexuality and transgenderism are no different - the body is inconsequential to identity and purpose. It is a denial that we are created beings and therefore do not have the authority to identify ourselves.

- Paul didn't see such things as women's head coverings as simply adiaphora wherein everyone was simply free to do as they wanted because God had neither commanded nor forbidden the practice. This, again, brings to bear what is best for our neighbor to strengthen them in the true faith. It also demonstrates how the Christian faith is much more all-encompassing than it is typically treated today.

- God made man and then made woman from man as a helpmeet for man.
- When we approach this text with a solid understanding of Ephesians 5 and the true nature of men and women, husbands and wives, and marriage we can better understand why Paul insists on the practice and the responsibility that rests upon us to make the same truths evident in both word and deed.
- Paul makes clear that neither man nor woman is independent of one another and, in fact, find part of the very definition of their existence in the other.

- Paul argues that even nature confirms what he is saying, even going so far as to say that a woman's hair is itself given to her for a covering.
- OT references
 - Numbers 5:18 - And the priest shall set the woman before the Lord and unbind the hair of the woman's head and place in her hands the grain offering of remembrance, which is the grain offering of jealousy.
 - 6:5 - He shall let the locks of hair of his head grow long.
 - Ezekiel 44:20 - They shall not shave their heads or let their locks grow long; they shall surely trim the hair of their heads.

- Paul concludes by turning to the practice of the whole Church. Neither individual Christians nor individual congregations are free to just do as they choose. To do so is to deny that we are one body with one Head.

IV: D: Unity in Worship

The Lord's Supper

- Paul has to chastise the Corinthians over their practice of the Lord's Supper.
- Divisions plague the Corinthian congregation on every level
 - Favorite teachers
 - Super-Christians
 - Rich v. poor

- Factions and divisions will plague the Church until the Lord comes
 - between Christians
 - in congregations
 - among church bodies
- Through factions and divisions the Lord actually works the good of revealing those who confess the truth.

- It seems there was a fellowship meal in addition to the Lord's Supper and that they were observed in relation to one another.
- Holy Communion may have been taking place in the evening
 - the rich would have been able to gather throughout the day
 - the poor would not have been able to arrive until later and may have missed both the fellowship meal as well as the Lord's Supper.

- What Paul received from Christ he gave to the Corinthians
 - The Lord's Supper is the beating heart of the faith because it is the most concrete union the Christian has with Christ - His Body and Blood.
 - The Lord's Supper is a time for solemnity and reflection, not frivolity and certainly not division. Division is completely contrary to the nature of the Supper which unites us to Christ.
 - By eating and drinking, the Christian proclaims Jesus' death until He returns. This should bring sobriety to our understanding and participation in the Supper.

- Unworthy eating
 - Failing to discern the Body and Blood of Christ in the Supper
 - Dividing oneself from others who confess the same
 - Brings judgment and harm on the Christian
 - Requires that Christ's Body and Blood be truly present

- The Lord's Supper is a meal of fellowship both with God and with our brothers and sisters in Christ regardless of economic status.



V: Spiritual Gifts (12:1-14:40)

- Addressing another question raised either in the letter or by those who brought the letter.
- The confession of Christ is true evidence of the Holy Spirit
- Dual focus on varieties AND same Spirit

- The manifestations of the Spirit are given for the common good, not for the benefit of the one who has them.
- The Spirit is the one who gives the gifts and He gives them when and to whom He pleases.

- It is imperative that we think of ourselves as part of the one body of Christ, rather than simply individual Christians.
- Paul first seeks to lift up those who see themselves as less glorious or honorable by reminding them that they are just as much a part of the body as the others.
- The gifts and abilities we have been given have been given with the whole body in mind.
- Second, Paul chastises those who would seek to elevate themselves over others who have “lesser” gifts of the Spirit. Even if that were the case, God has arranged things so that the greater honor is given to that which is deemed weaker.

- Our lot is a common one. If one member suffers, we are all to help bear that suffering as if it were our own as Christ has born our suffering as His own.
- The second list is actually a ranked list which gives priority to the proclamation of the Gospel which leads to salvation. The other gifts, sometimes called gifts of service, are given in service to the Gospel.

V:B: The Supremacy of Love

- The necessity and centrality of love (v.1-3)
 - tongues of men and of angels could either be hyperbolic or may indicate that some of the Corinthian Christians believed that they were being transported into the heavenly realm of worship
 - some may have no longer been looking forward to the eschaton but believed that they were now, through their gifts, being raised to heaven
 - in the cults of Dionysus and Cybele, the worship was often purposefully loud and chaotic, contrary to the good order of the worship of God
 - the language of mysteries draws from places like Daniel 2 where the mystery is the revelation of salvation and the grand scheme of God's work

- when speaking of faith moving mountains, Paul echoes the language of Jesus' preaching, indicating a familiarity with Jesus' preaching
- “to be burned” is added by translators, though it is not outside of the definition; more appropriately, Paul seems to be referring to general physical suffering with which he was very familiar

- Love in action: what love is and is not
 - love is longsuffering and kind
 - “patient” is technically translated as longsuffering which is a term often used of God himself (e.g. slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love)
 -

- love is not envious or boastful
 - there was a great deal of envying and boasting going on in the Corinthian congregation
- love is not arrogant or rude
- love is not insistent upon its own way
- love is not irritable or resentful
- love is not pleased with unrighteousness but with the truth

- Gifts of speaking: Tongues v. Prophecy
 - Love is always directed outward
 - Luther's view on this text changed over time. Originally (1523), he dealt with it as though Paul encouraged the whole congregation to prophecy but later (1532) understood it as Paul addressing the preachers in the congregation. It could be a difference of purpose as well as authority versus practice.
 - The only speaking that is of value is the speaking that edifies the Church.

- Speaking in tongues, whether in human or heavenly languages, is useless unless there is understanding.
- The manifestations of the Spirit (gifts) are for the building up of the church - this is what we should be striving for.
- Paul regularly boasts in order to remove any cause for the boasting of others so that he may put the focus back on Christ.
- Tongues are a sign for unbelievers. Prophecy is for the building up of believers.

- The way the Corinthians were abusing the gift of tongues, Paul calls childish and immature - selfish striving after the opinions and praise of men.
- Worrying about yourself in worship is childish. Concerning yourself with the building up and edifying of others is mature Christian thinking
- We are to be innocent and childish in regards to sin - we don't have to go experience sin to understand it.

- The sign of tongues in Scripture is often a sign of judgment against God's people - they were being overthrown by unbelievers because of their own rejection of God and His Word.
- “Paul declare that the phenomenon of tongues in Corinth was (unlike prophecy) not designed simply as a salutary sign to build up believers in the faith; rather, one of its great purposes was to serve as a negative judicial sign arousing the hostility of unbelievers.” (Lockwood, 490)
 - Isaiah 28:11-12
 - 1 Corinthians 14:21

VI: The Resurrection of the Christian (15:1-58)

Reviewing the fundamentals

- Paul again gently chastises the Christians for their lack of true knowledge as he did in 10:1, 12:1, and 14:38.
- The same Gospel that established us, not a new or more advanced Gospel, keeps us now and preserves us to the end.

- Four main terms of the Gospel which Paul received and delivered
 - That Christ died
 - according to the Scriptures (e.g. Psalm 22 & 69; Zechariah 12:10 & 13:7)
 - That Christ was buried
 - That Christ has been raised
 - perfect tense: a past action with present consequences
 - according to the Scriptures (e.g., Psalm 16:8-11 & 110:1; Isaiah 53:10-12; Hosea 6:2; Jonah 1:17)

- That Christ appeared
 - eyewitnesses - Deuteronomy 17:6 & 19:15
 - the Twelve
 - more than 500 brothers
 - James
 - all the apostles
 - Paul

- an opportunity and invitation for investigation
- using the phrase “fallen asleep” helps cement the truth that those who fall asleep in Christ don’t die.

Christ's appearance to Paul

- “Last of all”
 - Paul would seem to indicate that He is the last person to whom the risen Christ appears
 - either the first or second appearance to an unbeliever (James)

- “untimely” or “premature” birth
 - Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus
 - Greek ἐκτρώματι always refers to a still-born child (Num. 12:12; Job 3:16; Ecclesiastes 6:3)
 - May have been an insult spoken of Paul regarding the fact that he was not with Jesus during His earthly ministry as the other apostles had been

- “least of the apostles”
 - not the timing of his apostleship (that was chosen by God), but his persecution of Christ and His Church and participation in the murder of the saints
- Paul is a testament to the long-suffering and grace of God and to the monergistic work of salvation
- Through Paul, and only to God’s glory, God brought forth great fruit.
 - The working was not synergistic yet Paul was at work. His deep love and faith and thankfulness for salvation drove him to tireless work and to suffer great hardship for sake of spreading the Gospel
 - Paul will encourage the Corinthians to the same at the end of chapter 15

- There is only one Gospel proclaimed in common by all the apostles and witnesses of the resurrection. That Gospel alone is what the Corinthians first believed. There isn't another or better Gospel for those who have already come to faith.

No resurrection = No Gospel

- νεκρῶν - dead body
- It was common in Greek culture to deny the resurrection, especially of the body. Thus to claim the bodily resurrection was both shocking and laughable among the pagans.
- The Corinthians may have believed that the only Christian resurrection was a spiritual one which they had already experienced. Jesus' resurrection was a metaphor.

- 6 if-then statements revealing the consequences of denying the bodily resurrection.
- Ultimately, if Christ had not been bodily raised from the dead then the Christian faith is a complete waste and fraud.
- If Christ had not been bodily raised, then His death was a meaningless waste.

- As Christ has been raised, so to will be all who are baptized into Him.
- The fullness of our hope lies in a life beyond this one but it is still a life with our body.
- The bodily resurrection is part of the new creation.

But Christ has been raised!

- Christ has been bodily raised from the dead which changes everything.
- Christ is the firstfruits - the first of many
- This was pointed to in the gathering in of the firstfruits of the harvest on the day after the Sabbath (Sunday)
- The lot of humanity is tied together. One man brought death to all. One man brought life to all.

- It is through Baptism that we become participants in Christ's resurrection
- There is an order to the resurrection:
 - Christ
 - Those who have fallen asleep in Christ
 - Those who remain alive at the time of Christ's return

- At His return Christ will have all things under His feet as conqueror
- Psalm 110
 - ascension -> complete subjugation of all enemies -> Christ gives the kingdom to His Father
- death is the last enemy
 - Christians and Christian funerals should not ignore the reality that death is still an enemy and not God's intention for man.

- Psalm 8
 - Move from Adam to Christ
 - “All things” includes death - put under Christ’s feet at the resurrection
- Philippians 3:21

- God the Father is not subjected to the Son
 - The Son, in humility as man, subjects all things, including Himself to the authority Father
 - Not the same as subordinationism (the Son is less God than the Father)
 - Athanasian Creed

- What was the point of the apostolic suffering if there is no resurrection from the dead?
 - “wild beasts” likely a reference to the great opposition he encountered in Ephesus from the Jews
- False doctrine breeds loose morals
 - looks back at all the problems that were festering among the Corinthian Christians
- Corinthians’ false knowledge was leading them into ignorance of God

- Analogies of the resurrection built into creation
 - agriculture
 - different kinds of flesh

- Four contrasts of now and then
 - corruption -> incorruption
 - dishonor -> glory
 - weakness -> power
 - natural -> spiritual

- First Adam
 - of the earth
 - life-receiving
- Second Adam
 - from heaven (John 1 & 3)
 - Spirit-giving

- Adam's image
 - death
 - corruption
 - sin
 - weakness
 - dishonor

- Christ's image (Romans 8:29)
 - life
 - incorruption
 - perfect joyful obedience
 - strength
 - honor

“We shall...receive another’s [image], namely, the celestial Christ’s. Then we shall have the same form and essence which He now has since He resurrection...The entire body will be as pure and bright as the sun and as light as the air, and, finally, so healthy, so blissful, and filled with such heavenly, eternal joy in God that it will never hunger, Christ, grow weary, or decline.”

LW 28:196

The Mystery of the Transformation

- It is necessary that there be a change, a putting off and putting on because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.
 - “flesh and blood” refers to what is of sin, corruption, and death
- A person must be born again, born from above, of water and the Spirit in order to receive the promised inheritance.
- In Holy Communion we are promised a share in Christ’s own death and resurrection and that we will be like that which we receive.

- The truth of the resurrection of the body is a mystery that must be divinely revealed just as salvation must be divinely revealed. It cannot be known by reason.
- “We will all be changed” refers only to believers. Unbelievers will not receive that which is pure and incorruptible. They will languish in corruption and death for eternity as they desired here on earth.

- The transformation will happen instantaneously. It is not a process.
- When the trumpet of God's final victory over death sounds, death and mortality are removed and we are granted eternal life and immortality.
- At the resurrection, Isaiah 25 and Hosea 13 will be fulfilled.

- The pain of death exists because the Law sears the conscience on account of its guilt.
- Luther - “When it [sin] is aroused and agitates the heart, it cuts and pierces, so that no man can endure the sting, even though it issues from a slight transgression, unless he is comforted and again healed by the Gospel. If you ask: ‘Where does death come from?’ or: ‘How does death frighten people so easily and kill them?’ you are told here that nothing else but sin does that. Sin is nothing but spear and cannonball, indeed death’s thunder and lightning, through which he carries out his work.” (LW 28:208)

- Be steadfast as people of the resurrection!
- Those who hope in the resurrection and the putting off of sin strive to put away sin even now.
- Skepticism about the articles of faith leads to instability and sin.
- We are not to spend our days in disorderliness or idleness but in Christian service to God and neighbor - vocations.
- A reward is promised for works done in faith here on earth.

VII: The Collection for the Church at Jerusalem

- “Abounding in the work of the Lord”
 - the care of the saints (Matthew 25)
 - final preparations made in Paul’s second epistles (2 Cor. 8-9)
 - a large number of widows and famine (Acts 6, 11)
 - all members were to contribute whatever they could spare
 - representatives of the congregation carried the gift to Jerusalem

VIII: Paul's travel plans

- Paul is eager to be with the Corinthians in light of the issues addressed in the epistle.
- wanting to perhaps stay through the winter (Pentecost)
- acknowledges that it is up to the will of the Lord when and how long he may visit

- Paul planned to stay in Ephesus until Pentecost because the Lord had opened a “great and effective” door for the Gospel.
- the places of greatest opportunity are quite likely also the places where the greatest resistance and danger are found (15:32)

- Timothy was a young pastor who Paul would not have the Corinthians despise.
 - Timothy would give a report to Paul of the situation in Corinth
- Paul didn't see Apollos as a rival but a fellow faithful servant of the Gospel.
 - Apollos may have had concerns about encouraging those who idolized him.

- Warfare commands from the apostle
 - watching for the day of the Lord so as not to fall prey to the devil, false teachers, and temptations
 - the Christian needs to stand his ground in the face of opposition
 - face the battle against Satan in the confidence of the Lord (language used in Israel's warfare)
 - all is to be done for the benefit of the congregation, especially standing in defense of the weak