

## Expansions on First Corinthians

### Introduction

What we have here is another scripture related document with the express intent to be read...rather prayed or contemplated...within the context of *lectio divina*. In the Introductions to other documents of the same format I've gone into some detail as to the definition and significance of *lectio divina*. Because all have the same general orientation, I see no reason to give a further definition of that phrase. If interested, the reader can always refer to those texts.

At the same time I never tire of offering the following three notes of caution. What's presented here is not a commentary on First Corinthians.<sup>1</sup> If the reader wishes information along those lines, obviously plenty of other sources are at one's disposal. Furthermore, I am fully aware of the limitations of the document at hand, more precisely, the absence of a disciplined academic approach. To compensate for that lack, I rely on the reader's insight to use the material here as a means to deepen his or her prayer life.

As for the second note of caution, the approach which favors *lectio divina* doesn't mean one should read **Expansions on First Corinthians** in the conventional way. That's more difficult a task than at first imagined. Rather, the document at hand is merely a helper...a point of reference...to shepherd the reader along with regard to a particular verse or part of a verse. That means one shouldn't breeze through the document. Instead, one needs to take time, yes, considerable time, to absorb what the text is communicating to us.

The third note of caution pertains to the numerous Greek words. In one way that can come across as burdensome but in another way is all-important. This approach compels the reader to slow down considerably in order to appreciate the text at hand. As anyone who had struggled with doing *lectio divina*, that's a more difficult task than imagined.

As to First Corinthians in and by itself, it's a letter written in a straight-forward manner. That means the text moves from point to point or from one issue to the next, usually dealing with practical matters. By reason of its

---

<sup>1</sup> Hopefully a sequel to this text will follow, that is, one with regard to Second Corinthians. The two pretty much form one unit. As for the founding of the church at Corinth, see Acts 18.1-17.

narrowness, such an approach is difficult to expand upon. It leaves little or no wiggle room I've come to associate with the word "expansion" as found in the title of this document. That term had been used with other texts as, for example, **Genesis** which lends itself for expanding since it's a story. The same could be said with regard to more historical documents including the Gospels as well as the Book of Revelation. And so the material presented with regard to First Corinthians means the text is more limited in the attempt to focus upon points used directly for *lectio divina*.

Moving along through the document, we encounter words which have been explained earlier. To avoid going over them again, they are marked by a plus sign (+). However, this doesn't preclude offering further observations with regard to the context at hand.

As for the texts used: **The Greek New Testament** (Stuttgart, 1968) and **The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha or RSV** (New York, 1973). On occasion **The NIV Study Bible** (Grand Rapids, 1984) is consulted. As for the font, I prefer High Tower Text simply because it's easy on the eyes.

From time to time the document will be updated. Once complete, it will be removed albeit temporarily for reevaluation but restored shortly thereafter.

+

## Chapter One

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

In a way, this opening verse leans more towards being presented as a formal title. Stretching it a bit, the same can apply to verse two. In vs. 1 Paul wants to be clear in stating his presence as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Next in vs. 2 he addresses the church in Corinth and finally in vs. 3 he wishes that particular church grace and peace. Thus in one stroke which has a certain majestic air about it all three verses are rolled into one overall format. Actually it's not difficult to pick up on a certain delight he's taking by adopting this tone.

In light of this, we could say that the letter doesn't get underway until vs. 4. Once this formal introduction is put out there for all to behold, Paul feels free enough that the stage is set for him to address those doctrinal and ethical

problems from the Christians in Corinth which have reached his ears. He's not content to let them slide nor entrust them to other trusted disciples. Rather, he feels compelled to address them in person.

The first three words opening First Corinthians convey a seriousness of intent by reason of last two letters of each one, that is, -os: *Paulos kletos* and *apostolos* (Paul, called and apostle). The three terms are almost interchangeable and essentially convey the same meaning. Paul is careful to attribute his role as apostle as one who had been called and not as one who had set himself up as such. This is authenticated not just by *kletos-apostolos* but by these two words as associated with Jesus Christ. Paul states both simply and boldly that such a roll had been presented to him through (*dia*) the will of God, *thelema*. We can be certain that not all at Corinth accepted this statement but considered it as presumptuous.

Paul also is careful to add "our brother" Sosthenes who had been an official associated with the synagogue in Corinth and later became a Christian. By including him in his opening words, Paul is seeking to put the Corinthians at ease. Thus Sosthenes is a kind of ticket for Paul...a way in...to the local church. If he as one of them had now become associated with Paul, then chances are that Paul will be better received.

## **1.2: To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus called to be saints together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours;**

Once the somewhat formal yet important presentation of vs. 1 is out of the way, Paul can now loosen up a bit and get down to business. That is to say, he turns to those whom he's addressing, that is, the church of God, *ekklesia* also as assembly or community which is located in Corinth. The phrase "church of God" is a phrase implying that a given association has the same essential identity with other Christian communities. All are the same despite being situated in different parts of the world. Practically speaking, a "church of God" doesn't include the entire city of Corinth, just a fraction of it.

Vs. 2 speaks of one particular church of God in a given location, namely Corinth. In that place are members—we don't know the exact number, this being considered incidental compared with the strength of these members—who are sanctified in Christ. The verb is *hagiazo* which is suggestive of having been set aside. Not only that, such persons are called to be saints, *hagios* as derived from *hagiazo*. The verb is not simply *kaleo* or to call but *epikaleo*, to call upon, the

preposition *epi-* or upon prefaced to the root giving an air of greater significance to the situation at hand.

The saints just mentioned are not in isolation. They tie in with a much larger group we could call the church as a whole or those who call on the name of Jesus Christ. Note that right away Paul assumes a fairly broad or universal stance here. He says that they are in every place acknowledging Jesus as both their Lord and ours, the latter most likely being Christians not in Corinth. While he's focused upon addressing a given audience, his words have universal application. Surely those in Corinth pick up on what's involved here. It's to their advantage that they do so. Thus in one verse we see the genius of Paul which combines the local and universal elements of the Christian church.

### **1.3: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

It is precisely to this local and perhaps minuscule assembly or *ekklesia* that Paul imparts grace and peace (*charis* and *eirene*) from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Those in Corinth hearing the words "all those in every place" noted in vs. 2 will feel that Paul is speaking with a first-hand knowledge of other Christian communities. It comes across as a welcomed relief and implies that everyone is of the same accord.

Paul, of course, can come across as somewhat domineering with regard to his language which as noted earlier, has the benefit of giving him of a much needed air of legitimacy. If he were to take a more informal approach, chances are the citizens of Corinth would be less receptive. In fact, they just might dismiss him as another preacher albeit a good intention-ed one. Now having presented himself to the full *ekklesia*, Paul can proceed and speak with apostolic authority.

### **1.4: I give thanks to God always for you because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus,**

The verse at hand is part of an extended sentence which runs through vs. 9. Paul's way of communicating can be somewhat long-winded which can be difficult for modern day readers to accept.

Paul starts off on an upbeat note intended in part to have the Corinthians be well disposed to accept him. He's right to adopt such a stance in order to avoid any potential conflict. After all, in the letter to follow Paul seeks to

address some internal strife that had reached his attention. Nevertheless, with full sincerity he gives thanks to God on their behalf, *euchristeo* also to express appreciation or gratitude. He does this *pantote* or always, at all times, not just at the present. Such thanks is not because of any inherent goodness in those at Corinth but because of the divine grace (*charis* +) bestowed on them in Christ Jesus.<sup>2</sup> That is to say, this grace (also as gracious care, solicitude), had been freely bestowed. Such wording makes it clear that the recipients are to accept it as a gift, not as something earned. This can't be drilled home enough and is at the issue of any conflict among the Corinthians.

### **1.5: that in every way you were enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge-**

As already noted, the verse at hand is part of a larger sentence. Here Paul acknowledges that the Corinthians had been enriched in Jesus, *ploutizo* also as to cause to abound. He recognizes that these Christians were so endowed with speech and knowledge (*logos* and *gnosis*) but needed to keep in mind their divine source. Paul's words reveal that their renown had reached him even though he was writing from a distance and not present at Corinth. To receive such praise means that the local inhabitants were fortunate to have had gifted teachers. These persons go unrecorded; some may have had the opportunity to be with one of the original apostles.

Though the dash in this verse and in the next aren't in the Greek critical text, the RSV uses them to mark off some remarks Paul wishes to emphasize.

### **1.6: even as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you-**

This verse contains additional words which Paul inserts as further praise of the Corinthians. *Kathos* or "even as" puts the remarks at hand on the same level as those of the preceding verse, thereby providing a kind of supplement that isn't to be overlooked. Paul recognized the *marturion* or testimony—also witness which implies a steadfastness in the face of opposition—as it applies to Christ.

As for this *marturion* having been confirmed (*bebaioo* also as to establish),

---

<sup>2</sup> Note the two ways of expressing the divine name, Jesus Christ and Christ Jesus. The latter comes across as more formal putting the role of the anointed one first followed by what we'd call today the first name, that is, Jesus.

most likely Paul is acknowledging the unnamed teachers responsible for having enriched the Corinthians noted in vs. 5. Chances are he may have known some if not all of them who have since departed for other places. For such *marturion* to receive high praise means that Paul was indeed impressed by what he had encountered and that it held up to reports he had heard earlier. Obviously it did the Corinthians good to hear this as well that they remain firm in their faith.

**1.7: so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ;**

Hoste or “so that” appears on the other side of the hyphen, that is, with regard to vs. 6. The verse at hand shows the result, if you will, of the enrichment or *ploutizo* of vs. 5. The verb that offsets this is a similar one though put in the negative, *hustero* or to come up short, to be deficient in something. Here it pertains to not lacking all spiritual gifts or *charisma* also as a favor which has been bestowed.

Such gifts are meant to be temporary while the Corinthians are waiting for the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ. The verb *apedekomai* suggests an eager expectation with regard to *apokalupsis* or that which is hidden yet already present. And so Paul comes across as being impressed by the way the Christians in Corinth have been engaged in this waiting while knowing what is involved. Again, this is due in large parts to the anonymous teachers who had been among them.

**1.8: who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

This is the conclusion of one of scripture’s longest sentences begun with vs. 4. The “who” of course is Jesus Christ. He’s engaged not just in sustaining the Corinthians, *bebaino* +, but continues to do so unto the end or *telos*, a word which often means completion or a fullness that has been achieved. Such *bebaino* involves making the Corinthians guiltless, *anegkletos* or irreproachable. This is a particular location or better time, the day (*hemera* is equal to a *kairos* event) which belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Note that it is this same Lord Jesus Christ in vs. 7 who’s involved here. In other words, Jesus is projecting himself into a future time or *hemera* which will be fulfilled in the Corinthians. Surely some of those listening to Paul have

an inkling of what he's saying by reason of having been exposed to those anonymous teachers who had visited Corinth.

**1.9: God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Paul brings to a conclusion his introductory remarks, deliberately favorable but in a way designed to prepare the Corinthians for discussing the dissensions among their ranks. They knew this is why Paul had composed his letter which naturally put them on edge. In a way this was to be expected because the teachers who had spent some time among them had left and sent him a report of their findings. Now the Corinthians had to fend for themselves.

*Pistos* is the adjective for faithful, also dependable with respect to God. He is responsible for having called (*kaleo* implies summoning) the Corinthians into fellowship with his son, Jesus Christ. *Koinonia* is the noun, an association with mutual interests. Again, this had its origins in those teachers who had spent time in Corinth.

**1.10: I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.**

Now we're getting into the main reason for Paul's letter to the Corinthians, these words not especially welcomed but necessary for the local church to hear. He starts off with the verb *parakaleo*, literally to call or to summon beside with the preposition *dia* or through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is to say, Paul uses the mediation of *onoma* (name) for the second time, the first being in vs. 2 though in a different context.

The *parakaleo* of Paul is divided into two parts and is aimed at what the Corinthians had anticipated. The first that all the Corinthian agree—that is, the entire *ekklesia*—the verb being *lego* or simply to say. Though a simple verb, it implies ongoing dialogue so as to make all positions clear. The second part is more specific as to what is involved, that the Corinthians do not have any dissensions. *Schisme* is a vivid term meaning a crack or fissure, something often associated as with an earthquake. The effect of such a fissure is profound as by the preposition *en* for “in you.”

Instead of this fissure in the Corinthian church Paul wishes all to be

united in the same mind and same judgment. The verb is *katartizo* where the preposition *kata* or according to prefaced to the root *artao*, to fasten to and serves to make the fastening all the more secure. As for the fastening, both mind and judgment are involved, that is, *nous* and *gnome*. The former often applies to perception, sense and even judgment where as the latter a viewpoint or way of thinking of a matter. Note that the adjective *autos* applies to both which here is rendered as the same. This insertion by Paul is deliberate and intended to offset the *schisme* at hand, the chief reason for his visit to Corinth.

**1.11: For it has been reported to me by Chloe's <sup>3</sup> people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren.**

As for the report—*deeloo* is a verb meaning to make clear, evident—Paul had gotten word through persons associated with Chloe before composing his letter. Chances are that the people involved could have been slaves. In fact, most likely they had prompted Paul to address the Corinthian church, the prospect of which naturally having set them on edge. As for the *deloo*, it pertained to the dissensions of vs. 11 which here are rendered as discord and even outright strife. It's made worse by being *en* or “in you.” Because the matter is so delicate Paul uses familiar language, that is to say, “my brethren.”

**1.12: What I mean is that each one of you says “I belong to Paul” or “I belong to Apollos” or “I belong to Cephas” or “I belong to Christ.”**

Here Paul gets more specific with regard to the report of strife or quarreling that's disturbing the church at Corinth. Nothing is said as to how widespread it is. However, given that Paul is presented in terms of a competition suggests it was quite serious. Surely those anonymous teachers who had taught the faith at Corinth after Paul first came there must have gotten word and were equally dismayed. At the same time they figured the situation was beyond their competency to step in.

Paul cites directly what he had heard, that is, four instances of the Corinthian Christians belonging to groups, each of which was at odds with the

---

<sup>3</sup> From a reference off the Internet, the precise source having escaped me: “Chloe...reported to Paul about divisions and quarrels within the Corinthian church. While nothing more is definitely known about Chloe, it is widely believed she was a prominent, possibly wealthy, Christian who was a leader in a house church, and her household's credible report prompted Paul to write the letter address the problems.”

other. As for Apollos and Cephas, the first is an important figure in the local church and the latter's latter is Aramaic for rock and thus referring to the apostle Peter. Paul must have been dismayed to hear that his name was mentioned. Not just that, he was even more disturbed that others gave their allegiance to Jesus Christ. Obviously this is not bad in and by itself but harmful insofar as Jesus is being used as a representative of a particular group among three others. As for the belonging mentioned four times, the genitive case is used.

#### **1.13: Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?**

Here Paul spontaneously utters three rhetorical questions basically to shake up the Corinthians. Hopefully they'll be disposed to see the divisions existing among them. Certainly Christ is not divided, *merizo* meaning not just to divide but to distribute the parts after such a division. Paul being crucified instead of Jesus is intended to directly shame the Corinthians. The same with regard to being baptized in his name. There's no adequate response to such questioning which means that the Corinthians were reduced to silence.

#### **1.14: I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius;**

This and the next verse form one whole sentence. In the previous verse Paul concludes with the Corinthians supposedly being baptized in his name. Here he shows deliberate frustration at not having baptized any of the congregation at hand with the exception of two people. A footnote in the NIV says that Crispus is probably the synagogue ruler in Acts 18.8 and Gaius is referred to in Rom 16.23. Paul's thankfulness therefore is a way of showing the foolishness of the Corinthians in their dissensions.

#### **1.15: lest any one should say that you were baptized in my name.**

Paul concludes his somewhat sarcastic words about the divisions shown by those at Corinth. Obviously he considers anyone baptized in his name as contrary to every Christian teaching on the matter.

**1.16: (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else.)**

The RSV puts this verse in parentheses in light of the cautionary statement of the previous verse. A posting on the Internet also gives this information with regard to Stephanas: “In the Book of 1 Corinthians, Stephanas is presented as a prominent Christian in Corinth whose household was among the first to believe in Achaia and were personally baptized by the Apostle Paul. Paul refers to Stephanas and his family as the ‘first-fruits of Achaia’ and commends them for having ‘devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints’ (1 Corinthians 16:15). Stephanas also came to Paul in Ephesus, along with Fortunatus and Achaicus, possibly to deliver a message from the Corinthian church.”

**1.17: For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel and not with eloquent wisdom lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.**

The verb to send here is *apostello*, the root for apostle which Paul proudly applies to himself in the very first verse: “to be an apostle of Christ Jesus.” In the verse at hand this sending does not come of his own accord; rather, Paul attributes it directly to Christ. Though baptism is important for a person to become initiated into Christian life, Paul makes it clear that it is not the proper work for an apostle. That can be assigned to those whom Paul appoints within the church at Corinth.

Preaching the gospel is the primary task of an apostle, *euaggelizo*<sup>4</sup>. Implied is that other persons are to pick up the slack, as it were, and fill in the necessary pieces of this preaching. As for this preaching, Paul is clear about not using eloquent wisdom or literally “in word of wisdom,” *logos* + and *sophia*, the latter also as technique. If Paul used such language, the cross of Christ would run the risk of being emptied of its power. “Power” is lacking in the Greek text; only the verb is used, *kenoo* often as to vanish into nothingness. Here we have the first mention of the importance of the cross as a kind of living presence intimately bound up with Jesus Christ and an essential part of any *euaggelizo*.

---

<sup>4</sup> This word, so common in Christian circles, is worth a quick examination. We have the root *aggello* or to bear a message prefaced with *eu-*, the adverbial form of *agathos* (good) which means well. This *euaggelizo* comes across as doing a good job at transmitting a message. In sum, emphasis is upon action, nothing static.

**1.18: For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

Paul now speaks of the cross or more specifically the *logos* + of the cross, its full expression. Most likely the Christians at Corinth head about Jesus having been crucified and had just a basic understanding of what that meant. Indeed this *logos* in and by itself is folly, *moria* also as foolishness which Paul specifies as belonging to those persons who are in the process of perishing, *apollumi* being a vivid verb as to come to utter destruction.

Despite this gloomy prospect which is applicable to some persons, Paul attributes not the cross but the *logos* of it as being the power of God, its *dunamis* also as might or power to function in a given way. Such *dunamis* is operative only with regard to being saved, *sozo* also as to rescue. Thus we have two verbs in the present participle meaning that perishing and being saved are going on concurrently.

**1.19: For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart.”**

With regard to the bold statement of the previous verse Paul figures he had better back it up with something substantial. That's why he quotes from Ps 29.14, a partial verse insofar as it's part of the previous one. Because of this, the two are quoted here as one: “And the Lord said: ‘Because this people draws near with their mouth and honors me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men learned by rote; therefore, behold, I will again do marvelous things with this people, wonderful and marvelous; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hid.’”

Note the unity of the two verbs, *apollumi* + (as in vs. 18) and *atheteo*, the latter to do away with. The first is with respect to the *sophia* + of those who are *sophos* also as experienced. The second is with respect to *sunesis* of those who are *sunetos*, both from the same root literally as to be with, *sun-*.

**1.20: Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?**

Paul comes off with four rapid fire rhetorical sentences not meant to be

answered but to put the Corinthians on the spot. The first three begin with *pou* or “where” which infers that the person who’s wise, a scribe or debater (*sophos* +, *grammateus* and *suzhetes*) are no longer present but better, have melted away before the word or *logos* of the cross perceived as folly in vs. 18. To Paul all three are basically cut from the same piece of cloth. That’s why in question number four he says that God himself has made the world’s wisdom foolish. The verb is *moraino* which also can be rendered as to make insipid or tasteless. *Sophia* + as belonging to the world (*kosmos*) usually applies to current philosophical schools of thought which Paul see as both a threat and as empty.

**1.21: For since in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.**

Paul presents two types of wisdom or *sophia* +: that of God and that of the world or *kosmos* +. The failure of the latter’s wisdom is ignorance of God, the common verb *ginosko* with *ouk* or not. However, God was pleased (*eudokeo*, to consider something as good and worthy of making a choice) to save those who believe (*sozo* + and *pisteuo*) through the folly of preaching, *moria* + and *kerugma*. Such folly rests upon what Paul had just said with regard to the cross of Jesus Christ. Note that he uses the first person plural which is not in the Greek text.

**1.22: For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom,**

This verse and the next two form one extended sentence.

Here Paul is speaking from his experience in having dealt with other Christian communities before coming to Corinth. His audience basically consists of Jews and Greeks, the former being of his own kin though like many other educated persons, he was familiar with Greek thought and culture.

Jews = *semeion* or distinguishing mark by which something is known. The verb at hand is *aiteo* also as to request.

Greeks = *sophia* +. The verb at hand is *zeteo* also as to search, to look for.

**1.23: but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,**

Note the use of *de* beginning this and the next verse rendered as “but” which can be defined as a marker connecting a series of closely related pieces of information or lines of narrative. Thus in contrast to the interests of both Jews and Greeks of the previous verse Paul preaches Christ crucified, *kerusso* also as to make a public declaration. He uses the first person plural which can suggest two things. First, he has in mind those associated with him who are engaged in the same work and second, that the first person plural has a way of putting people at ease, that Paul isn’t presenting himself to the Corinthians as a one man show.

In place of the signs associated with the Jews, Paul presents a stumbling block or *skandalon* and folly or *moria* + associated with the Gentiles instead of wisdom.

**1.24: but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**

This verse begins with the second *de* + as “but,” the first noted in the previous verse. Paul holds out hope to both Jews and Greeks as being called or *kletos* + suggestive of being invited. To them is offered—and done so directly with any mediating factor involved—Christ as *dunamis* and *sophia* (both +) or power and wisdom of God. He is associated with both that the Corinthians accept Christ as son of God.

**1.25: For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.**

Paul attributes two negative qualities to God which assume significant meaning and most likely are unfamiliar to the Corinthians let alone other Christians. First is foolishness, the adjective *moros* (cf. *moria* as in vs. 23) which turns out to be wiser than men, *sophos* +. Second Paul presents God’s weakness or to *asthenes* (what is weak or also delicate) as being stronger than men, *ischuros*. Note that the adjectives are attributed to God whereas there are none with regard to men.

**1.26: For consider your call, brethren; not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth;**

This and the next verse form one lengthy verse.

Armed with a reversal of how people generally perceive God, Paul starts off by asking the Corinthians to consider their call. *Blepo* or to see is the verb along with *klesis*. In other words, they are to look closely at themselves as Christians. Next Paul singles out what seems to be a handful of three groups of Corinthians: the first as being wise (*sophos*) according to worldly standards, the second as not powerful (*dunatos*, having *dunamis* as in vs. 24) and third as lacking noble birth, *eugenēs* also as well born. The danger of speaking as such is that those who qualify could think themselves as special and set apart which is not the case.

**1.27: but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong,**

God makes a twofold choice: that which is foolish and that which is weak, *moros* and *asthenes* (both +). The two are located in the world or *kosmos* +, genitive case or “of the world” meaning they are part and parcel of it. This choice has as its aim to impart shame, *kataischuno* where the preposition *kata-* or down, in accord with prefaced to the verbal root *aischuno* intensifies the meaning. This is with regard those who are wise and strong, *sophos* and *ischuros* (both +).

**1.28: God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,**

This verse continues with Paul speaking of the inverse value at hand, that is, God preferring what the world considers low and despised, *agenes* and *exoutheneo*, not of noble birth and to disdain, to have no merit. Both are of (genitive case) of the world or *kosmos* +. To both Paul adds “those which are not.” At the same time they have a purpose, to reduce to nothing things that are, *katargeo*. The preposition *kata-* as down serves to emphasize the meaning of the verb and the reduction to nothing of those things which are. As for these things, Paul doesn’t spell them out but infers they are useless in light of what he has communicated thus far.

**1.29: so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.**

*Hopos* or “so that” is important insofar as it serves to make a transition with regard to what Paul has been getting at by speaking of that which is despised and lowly. In sum, no human being is to boast in God’s presence. The verb is *kauchaomai* also as to take pride in something. *Sarx* or flesh is the noun used for human being and *enopion* implies face.

**1.30: He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption;**

The first part of this verse reads literally as “from him you are in Christ Jesus.” God made him not just wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption but ours or at least applied to the first two: *sophia* +, *dikaiosune*, *hagiasmos* and *apolutrosis*.

**1.31: therefore as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord."**

*Hina* or therefore serves to bring to a conclusion Chapter One where Paul uses the authority of a scriptural verse, the verb *kauchaomai* + to boast. The quote is from Jer 9.24 which is a partial sentence. In light of this, it and the previous verse run in full as “Thus says the Lord: ‘Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the Lord.’”

I include the following notations taken from [Expansions on the Book of Jeremiah](#) also on this homepage:

The remaining verses from 23 onward are in prose form, the one at hand beginning with “thus says the Lord” right after these words in the previous verse. The Lord gives a warning to the wise, the mighty and rich man (*chakam*, *gibor* and *hashyr*: cf. vss. 17, 5.16 but not noted there and Ps 45.12). All are not to glory in their respective natural abilities, *halal* (cf. 4.2). Obviously this leads to *halal* being transferred over to the Lord where they will both understand and know him (*sakal* and *yadah*, cf. 5.21 and vs. 3). After all, it’s the Lord, source of steadfast love, justice and righteousness (*chesed*, *mishpat* and *tsedaqah*: 2.2, 8.7 and 4.2). Note that they are done in the earth or ‘erets, the same ‘erets which is ruined and laid waste as a wilderness in vs. 12. Such are the three qualities which delight the Lord, *chaphets* (cf. 6.10). Unfortunately most of the people fail

to realize how simple are the requirements and the result, *chaplets* indicative of pure joy.

## Chapter Two

### 2.1: When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom.

A footnote in the Greek critical text refers to 1.17: “For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel (etc.).” The way this verse comes across Paul seems to have been among the Corinthians for some time and that he’s reflecting on the past. When there he was at pains to make himself feel not so much an outsider or someone superior but as a member of the local *ekklesia*.

Paul presents himself as proclaiming (*kerusso* +) the *musterion* or unmanifested or private council proper to God. This is a difficult word to render adequately since it has a wide variety of meanings. It seems to stand halfway between what is manifest and what is not manifest. Paul is aware of this which is why he says he has avoided lofty words or wisdom. The former consists of *huperoche* or superiority, preeminence with regard to *logos* +. As for wisdom or *sophia* +, perhaps he had in mind avoiding sophist teaching familiar to the Greeks and most likely was found in Corinth.

### 2.2: For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Paul continues almost bending backward to accommodate himself among the Corinthians. The verb *krino* fundamentally as to judge infers that he had deliberated for sometime as to focusing (*oida* as to know or to recognize) not so much upon Jesus Christ and him crucified but as Jesus present among the Corinthians or literally “in you.” That means at the beginning of his visit Paul intends not to go on a fault-finding mission. By his focus upon Jesus Christ with regard to the Corinthians he hopes that any problems will be resolved on their own. Note that Paul distinguishes between Jesus Christ and him as crucified. Perhaps this infers a distinction between what Jesus had taught and the significant of his cross as noted in 1.18.

### 2.3: And I was with you in weakness and in much fear and trembling;

This verse is part of an extended sentence continuing through vs. 5.

Here Paul speaks of himself as having been with the Corinthians or when he had first come to them and formed an *ekklesia* as noted with regard to Acts 18.1-17. At the time he describes himself as being in weakness and much fear and trembling or *astheneia*, *phobos* and *tromos*. All three are with regard to the preposition *pros* which indicates directness as well as constancy. Hopefully those who had known Paul then as such will known him now during his visit.

#### **2.4: and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,**

Obviously Paul has to communicate with the Corinthians. He's fully aware of his inadequacy and calls his speech and message—his *logos* and *kerugma* (both +)—not consisting of words which are generally considered persuasive, *peithos*. This adjective has a hit of sophist character about it as applied to wisdom or *sophia* + which amounts to copying the method of teaching by schools of philosophy which engage in teaching for a price.

Instead of this approach which certainly must have been familiar to the Corinthians Paul says that his *logos* and *kerugma* are in a demonstration of the Spirit and power. *Apodeixis* refers to showing forth the *Pneuma* and *dunamis* +. Here the former infers the Holy Spirit whose *dunamis* can impact the Corinthians. Paul is very clear about this lest anyone put their trust in him alone.

#### **2.5: that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.**

This verse brings to conclusion that long sentence begun with vs. 3.

*Hina* + or “that” is important insofar as it points to Paul’s wish for the faith or *pistis* of the Corinthians not to follow the *sophia* + of men but the *dunamis* + of God. *Pistis* also refers to reliability as well as fidelity. The word “rests” is not in the Greek text.

#### **2.6: Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age who are doomed to pass away.**

The small particle *de* + rendered here as “but” serves to counter Paul’s words in the previous few verses. That is to say, he now speaks of the mature or *teleios*, this adjective essentially referring to the end or completion of something but in the positive sense. Here it’s with the preposition *en*, literally “in those who are mature.” The common verb *laleo* to speak is used for “impart” with regard to wisdom or *sophia* +. Paul qualifies this *sophia* as not belonging to the following two:

- The current age or *aion* also as a period of time.
- Rulers of this *aion* who are doomed to pass away, *katargeo* also as to come to an end. As for the rulers, they seem to be the Romans who at the time pretty much controlled everything.

## **2.7: But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God which God decreed before the ages for our glorification.**

As with *de* in the previous verse, *alla* or “but” plays an important role with regard to Paul putting the Corinthians at ease concerning his intent. He also uses the first person plural, another way to convey this. *Laleo* + or to speak is the verb for “impart” as in vs. 6. Surely when the people heard this talk about something mysterious their attention was aroused, perhaps out of curiosity and a desire to learn more.

*Sophia* + is situated “in mystery” or *musterion* + which is modified by the participle *apokrupto* which infers providing a hiding place by God. He had decreed it or *proorizo*, literally to mark off with boundaries beforehand (*pro-*). At hand are the ages or *aion* + which is in the plural compared with vs. 6 inferring earlier periods of human existence. Thus before all these came into being or perhaps better, once they had come into being, the *sophia* described as both secret and hidden is for glorification, literally “into glory” or *doxa*. As for this glory, it is in the first person plural or something the Corinthians share in common.

## **2.8: None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.**

As for rulers, Paul infers two types: the demonic ones which most likely would be associated with the Romans who automatically came to mind by the

Corinthians. To him the former had influenced the latter in putting Jesus to death. It's obvious...more than obvious...that persons in such authority lack knowledge (*ginosko* +) of what Paul had said in the previous verse. If they had such knowledge, they wouldn't have crucified Jesus whom Paul calls the Lord of glory, *doxa* +, this inferring his divinity.

**2.9: But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived what God has prepared for those who love him,"**

This and the next verse form a complete sentence.

After having laid the blame of Christ's death on the rulers of this age, Paul shifts gears and comes off with a quote from Is 64.4 which runs in full as "From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God beside you who works for those who wait for him."

The first half is a direct quote, but the rest seems to consist of words Paul has added, that is to say, *kardia* with the preposition *epi* which reads literally "upon the heart." With it is an appropriate verb signaling upward movement, *anabaino*. He claims that God has prepared this for those who love him, *etoimazo* also as to cause to be ready and *agapao* from which the well-known noun *agape* is derived, that is, to have warm regard for someone.

As for the Hebrew, the verb *halom* or "from of old" means never with regard to hearing and seeing. Nevertheless, the people acknowledge that the Lord works for anyone who waits for him, the verb *chakah* connoting a tying or binding.

**2.10: God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.**

The first part of this verse is a continuation of the previous one. The verb at hand is *apokalupto* literally to cover-from or better, to uncover. Implied is that something is already present but not fully known and needs to become manifested. The means by which this happens is the *Pneuma* + or (Holy) Spirit. However, Paul doesn't give any details as to the precise nature as to what God has revealed. He simply says it and implies that it's Jesus Christ.

The *Pneuma* or breath is ideal for this uncovering because it essentially consists of wind, of blowing and therefore is constantly in motion. Thus it is an ideal candidate for searching everything, *eraunao* being in the present tense also

as to make a careful or thorough investigation. Here it has two objects, everything and the depths of God, *pan* and *bathos* signifying his essence as well as his attributes. Note that *apokalupto* infers seeing something beneath the surface whereas *eraunao* infers seeing something even deeper which is beyond human capacity.

**2.11: For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.**

This verse contains a rhetorical question and an answer which Paul throws out for the Corinthians to consider. It has the verb *oida* + but lacks the noun “thoughts” and instead reads literally “of men the of the man” (*anthropos*, twice). There follows the *pneuma* + or spirit of the man present in this same man which does the *oida*.

The second sentence builds on the structure of the first one as a rhetorical question where the *Pneuma* + of God alone knows (*ginosko* +) the things of God. Thus we have two examples of *pneuma*, lower and upper case or the human and divine along with two types of knowing, *oida* also as to recognize and *ginosko* in the sense of having knowledge of, the latter similarly of the human and divine.

**2.12: Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.**

*Pneuma* and *kosmos* (both +): the former in the sense that it breathes or animates the latter. In contrast to this *pneuma* is the *Pneuma* from God which similarly exhales outward from him in the sense of being his breath. The whole idea of *pneuma* (upper and lower case) infers several types of movement by the wind or air. One of the best examples is from 1Kg 19.11-12 which Paul must have had in mind: “And he said, ‘Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord.’ And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.”

Note the importance of *hina* + or “that.” It serves to take the *Pneuma* of God (not the *pneuma* of the world) and transfer it over to an understanding

(*oida* +) of gifts given by God. We could say that in light of what was said regarding the *Pneuma* of God these gifts are breathed into us, *charizomai* meaning to give graciously.

**2.13: And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit.**

This verse contains the noun *Pneuma* + twice along with the adjectival form *pneumatikos*. All serve to make a contrast with human wisdom or *sophia* + which is modified by the verbal adjective *didaktos* or literally “taught in.” This suggests having been exposed to various philosophical schools with sophist leanings compared with the first mention of *Pneuma*.

In sharp contrast to this *didaktos* Paul uses the same verbal adjective in reference to the Holy *Pneuma* also as “taught in.” Part and parcel of this form of *didaktos* is the ability to interpret spiritual truths, the noun not being used, just the adjective *pneumatikos*. As for the verb *sugkrino*, it literally means to bring things together (*sug-* or with) so as to form a unit or in a word, to combine and thus to compare.

**2.14: The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.**

Paul makes a contrast between an unspiritual person and the Spirit of God. The first is the adjective *psuchikos*<sup>5</sup> or pertaining to the life of the natural world. The verb *dechomai* also means to accept and therefore is passive by nature. Inferred is that such a person is completely closed...not open...to gifts (*ta* or those things) of the divine *Pneuma* +.

Being so enclosed, this person is incapable of understanding them, *ginosko* +. The reason? He is not capable of discerning them spiritually, *anakrino*. Compare with *sugkrino* of vs. 13, that is, the two prepositions prefaced to the verbal root *krino* or to judge: *sug-* noted as with and *ana-*, on or upon.

**2.15: The spiritual man judges all things but is himself to be judged by no one.**

The person who is *pneumatikos* + judges all things, the verb being *anakrino*

---

<sup>5</sup> This adjective is related to the noun *psuche* or soul.

+as in the previous verse. In contrast to the ability to judge everything, he is incapable of being judge by anyone else, the second use of *anakrino*.

**2.16: "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.**

Paul quotes in part Is 40.13, a rhetorical question. No human being has known (*ginosko*) the mind of the Lord, *nous* (both +). If such *ginosko* were possible a human being could instruct him, *sumbibazo*<sup>6</sup> as to bring together or to unite (*sum-*, with).

As for the verse itself, it runs in full as “Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord or as his counselor has instructed him?” Note the two verbs: *kun* and *yadah* +. The former connotes establishing or setting up and the latter is the common verb to know and refers to intimate knowledge, especially between persons. *Kun* pertains to the divine *ruach* or *Pneuma* and *yadah* as being counselor to the Lord, *hetsah*.

## Chapter Three

**3.1: But I, brethren, could not address you as spiritual men but as men of the flesh, as babes in Christ.**

*Kago* consists of *kai* and *ego*, “and I.” Use of this slurred conjunctive shows that the distinction between chapters is not cut and dry, that they flow seamlessly into each other as presenting Paul’s teaching for the benefit of the church at Corinth.

No question. Paul is getting right down to the business for which he’s addressing the Corinthians. Actually he’s just starting out. One can imagine how his opening words resonate among the local congregation. Although he uses the affectionate *adelphos* (brother), he cannot address them as spiritual, *laleo* + being the verb. Instead, he considers them as yet men of the flesh thus contrasting *pneumatikos* + with *sarkinos*. The latter is equivalent to *nepios* also as an infant.

**3.2: I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not ready for it; and even**

---

<sup>6</sup> The root *bibazo* means to mount, to lift up.

**yet you are not ready,**

This and part of the next verse form one extended sentence.

Paul seems to be referring to his first visit to Corinth and the establishment of the church in that place. Some of those local Christians recall with fondness his first visit when they had been fed with milk instead of solid food, *broma* also as meat. True, the Corinthians weren't ready for solid food, a way of expressing greater details and explanation of Christian teaching. This was only natural. Unfortunately the Corinthians hadn't made any advancement and currently are no better than when they had started out. The verb *dunamai* (verbal root of *dunamis* as in 2.5) is used twice meaning to be able or capable.

**3.3: for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving like ordinary men?**

Paul puts it as simple as possible. The Corinthians haven't grown in the slightest but are *sarkikos* or of the flesh, that is, rooted in the physical or material realm.

A second occurrence of the adjective *sarkikos* with the first two examples of it as *zelos* and *eris* or jealousy and strife, also as zeal and quarreling. Paul adds a third example where jealousy and strife are characteristic of ordinary men literally "according to man" or *anthropos* +. The preposition *kata* here is important insofar as it means behaving in certain way or following a given pattern. Once this pattern has taken hold, it can be a difficult situation from which to emerge.

**4.4: For when one says, "I belong to Paul" and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely men?**

As for this verse, it echoes 1.12 which runs in full as follows: "What I mean is that each one of you says, 'I belong to Paul' or 'I belong to Apollos' or 'I belong to Cephas' or 'I belong to Christ.'" For Paul, this manifestation of the division among the Corinthian Christians is the issue that must be decided else the church will collapse. In an attempt to shame them and give up their fractions, Paul exclaims rhetorically that they are merely men, *anthropos* +, "merely" or its equivalent not in the Greek text.

**5.5: What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each.**

After posing two quick rhetorical questions with regard to Apollos and Paul, Paul identifies both as servants or *diakonos*. This noun means one who serves as an intermediary in a transaction. Being as such, his job as well as Apollos is to convey information or resolve a situation without lingering in the sense of getting in the way. Instead, Paul is savvy enough to see when his task is done and move off the scene. To be sure, he has his hands full dealing with other Christian communities.

**3.6: I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.**

Paul elaborates the definition of a *diakonos* as outlined above in three concise stages. First comes planting (Paul), second comes watering of the planting (Apollos) followed by the growth (God) although the third is working through the first two. Though not explicit, both Paul and Apollos know they are acting as intermediaries through which the divine growing was taking place.

**3.7: So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything but only God who gives the growth.**

This is a simple re-statement of the previous verse where Paul wishes to drive home the fact that the Corinthians got it all wrong and need to focus upon the growth of their community which comes from God, not from Apollos nor from Paul nor from anyone else.

**3.8: He who plants and he who waters are equal, and each shall receive his wages according to his labor.**

Paul is at pains to make sure the Corinthians know that there's no distinction between his ministry and that of Apollos or for anyone else who may come along in the future. The two who are equal by reason of their work (planting and watering) will receive wages in accord with the work put in, *kopos* also a state of distress or difficulty.

### **3.9: For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.**

Paul continues speaking of himself and presumably Apollos along with others who are all the same. That is, they are *sunergos*, literally working-with. Choice of this word is deliberate and shows how closely united they are with God in their ministry. Their object is the field of God and his building, that is, the church at Corinth.

### **3.10: According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it.**

Paul continues the same theme of being a *diakonos* laid out in vs. 5, this applied to anyone else engaged in such service. Here he amplifies it by calling himself a skilled master builder, *architektos*, an architect. *Sophos* + is the adjective modifying it which derives from the noun *sophia*. Once in this capacity Paul has laid a foundation (*themelion* also as base), someone else is building upon it, *epoikodomeo* being comprised of three words: *epi*, *oikos* and *domos*. The second infers something more inclusive as household whereas the third, more along the lines of a physical structure.

Paul cautions anyone engaged in this *epoikodomeo* to take care, the verb *blepo* + fundamentally as to see or to look closely. Such *blepo* is to be on guard against favoring divisions within the local church as noted above.

### **3.11: For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ.**

For both “lay” and “laid” the Greek text has two different verbs. For the first, it’s *titheimi* or to set, to place and for the second, it’s *keimai*, also to set but implies to lie or to recline. Both apply to a foundation or *themelion* +, another word for Jesus Christ. Those different factions which the Corinthians followed need to concur on this matter.

### **3.12: Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw-**

This and the next verse form one extended sentence.

In the last two verses Paul spoke of the foundation as Jesus Christ who is necessary for any *ekklesia* or church to flourish. That *ekklesia* must be built up by living members. Despite the material used—Paul lists several ranging from the most precious to the most flimsy—all without exception will not suffice.

**3.13: each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.**

Note the four words dealing with uncovering:

-*Phaneros* also as readily known with regard to the *ergon* or work by each person.

-*Deloo* + or disclose by the Day (*Hemera* <sup>7</sup>) which is the agent responsible. It bears a similarity to *kairos* but refers more often to the return of Jesus Christ as noted in Phl 1.6.

-*Apokalupto* or to reveal literally “in fire.”

-*Dokimazo* or to test by this same fire, also as to make a critical examination. Even if the majority of structures are burned away, the foundation will remain. Implied in all this is that only a few will stand.

**3.14: If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.**

Paul speaks of those buildings which will survive the fiery ordeal just outlined. His words come across as having insight into a future result of which the Corinthians are unaware. The structure each person builds (*epoikodomeo* +) upon the foundation of Jesus Christ must be firmly rooted in him else it will be consumed by fire. The verb *meno* or to remain in an abiding sense is used as surviving. Should a person persevere in this *meno*, he will receive a reward, *mistho*.

**3.15: If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss though he himself will be saved but only as through fire.**

Paul offers both a harsh consequence as well as redemption despite the fearful language about being consumed by fire. He makes a distinction between

<sup>7</sup> In 1.8 *hemera* is with lower case.

a man and his work or *ergon* + though both are closely related. Despite any loss (*zemioo* also to sustain injury) through fire, he will be saved, *sozo* +. However, it will be through fire. In sun, though his *ergon* will be consumed, he will not suffer that same fate. Again, all this takes place within the context of Jesus Christ as the foundation upon which one has constructed a building, the nature of which of yet is not specified.

**3.16: Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?**

Here at last Paul specifies the building at hand, a temple of God, *naos*. He puts the matter as a rhetorical question to make the Corinthians realize that such is their dignity despite the harsh, even scary, words of the previous verses. If they are as such, then God's *Pneuma* + dwells in them, *oikeo* also as to inhabit. Thus a person is both a temple and a home though distinct from the one inhabiting it.

**3.17: If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are.**

When Paul speaks of someone destroying (*phtheiro* also as to cause harm, to ruin) the temple or *naos* + of God, God will do the same to that person or persons. That is to say, he will deal out compensation by means of the same *phtheiro*. As for the temple, it is holy or *hagios* just as the person is who's identified with it.

**3.18: Let no one deceive himself. If any one among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.**

This verse is comprised of two distinct sentences. The first is a warning not to deceive oneself, *exapatao* whose root *apatao* means to cheat or beguile, the preposition *ex-* or from intensifying its meaning.

The second sentence fleshes out the meaning of the first, that is to say, Paul gives counsel to a person who considers himself wise (*dokeo*: to suppose, imagine with *sophos* +). Note that it takes place within the context of this age or *aion* + which infers various philosophical schools. Instead of opting for these, he must become a fool or *moros* + in order to be *sophos* +. In other words, Paul

inverts conventional wisdom which must be new for the Corinthians.

**3.19: For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness,"**

This verse comprises one sentence follows by another which runs into the next verse.

Note the sequence: *sophia* -> *kosmos* -> *moria* or wisdom -> world -> folly. As for *sophia* which naturally applies to the world, it's *moria* is *para* God, that is, folly placed squarely in his presence or near him. This outline leads to a quote from Job 5.13 where the Lord catches (*drassomai* also to seize) the wise or *sophos* + in their craftiness, *panourgia* also as cunning. This noun consists of the adjective *pan* or all prefaced to *ergos* or work which infers ready to do anything (evil).

The verse from Job runs in full as "He takes the wise in their own craftiness; and the schemes of the wily are brought to a quick end." It should be kept in mind that Eliphaz, one of Job's friends, is citing this in that sophist know-it-all attitude noted a number of times thus far.

**3.20: and again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile."**

Paul cites another verse along with the one from Job, that is, Ps 94.11. *Ginosko* + is the verb to know with regard to *dialogismos* where the verbal root *logizomai* means to count, to reckon and is intensified by the preposition *dia-* or through. *Dialogismos* thus represents an over-active mind. No small wonder that when this type mind is associated with those who are *sophos* +, it produces that which is futile, *mataios* also as vain.

The verse at hand is part of a more extensive sentence beginning with the previous verse and runs in full as "He who chastens the nations, does he not chastise? He who teaches men knowledge, the Lord, knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath." Here the Hebrew *hevel* or breath (also as vanity) is equivalent to *mataios*.

**3.21: So let no one boast of men. For all things are yours,**

This and the next two verses form one complete sentence.

Such boasting of men (*kauchaomai* also as bragging) is literally "in men"

or *anthropos* +. To do so would be engaging in that *sophia* or wisdom of the world against which Paul takes pains to caution.

All things belong to the Corinthians by way of comparison, this theme continuing into the next verse. The way Paul puts it is very attractive for his audience.

**3.22: whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future, all are yours;**

That which belongs to the Corinthians are Paul, Apollos, Cephas together with the world, life, death, present and future. In other words, Paul takes pain to be as universal as possible, something that hopefully resonates with as many Corinthians as possible.

**3.23: and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's.**

After saying that literally everything under the sun belongs to the Corinthians, Paul continues with they as belonging to Christ. This, in turn, makes them belong to God long with Christ.

## Chapter Four

**4.1: This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.**

Paul starts off with encouraging words about how non-Christians should regard the church at Corinth, he identifying with the latter by using the first person plural. The verb at hand is *logizomai* also as to reckon, to calculate. It infers close, careful examination of those as both servants and stewards, *hueretes* and *oikonomos*. The first refers to one who's in the service of others usually in a subordinate capacity whereas the second to one in charge of a household, often a trusted slave.

Christ belongs to the first and mysteries of God to the second. As for the latter, the noun is *musterion* + which here intimates liturgical celebrations, most likely the Eucharist.

#### **4.2: Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.**

This short verse begins with *hode*, “moreover” or something like “in that case.” Paul singles out stewards or *oikonomos* +...not servants...perhaps because this word is more comprehensive signifying service with regard to a household as explained in the previous verse. They are to be trustworthy, *pistos* + also as faithful. Paul doesn’t give the source of authority for this, *zeteo* + for “it is required.”

Also note the neuter of *loipos*, *loipon* which can be rendered something like “it remains.”

#### **4.3: But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself.**

This verse consists of two sentences. In the first the particle *de* + with the dative “to me” does not show any arrogance on Paul’s part but infers his status as an apostle. He isn’t concerned about being judged by the Corinthians or anyone else, *anakrino* +.

In the second sentence Paul doesn’t even pass judgment on himself. Such words seem to be in the context of what the church at Corinth has come to think of him even it might involve a possible cloud of fear and suspicion due to his past as persecutor of Christians. Awareness of this past is not explicit, but one can pick it up while going through the epistle.

#### **4.4: I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me.**

This verse consists of two sentences. In the first, some of the Corinthians must have been angered by Paul’s words of apparent superiority, he seemingly acquitting himself of any possible fault or accusation. Even though he’s unaware of any accusation—*sunoida* as to know something about oneself but not by others—he does not consider himself acquitted, *dikaioo* or to be in the right. Such matters are incidental to Paul even if he were guilty.

In the second sentence Paul says with confidence that the Lord judges him, *anakrino* +. Another way of viewing his words is reference to the time before his conversion when he had persecuted the Christians. In addition to this it took some time for the Corinthians to get used to his rather overbearing and

somewhat impulsive character.

**4.5: Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then every man will receive his commendation from God.**

Here *kairos*—a fixed or appropriate time—is of great importance. Paul urges the Corinthians not to engage in judging (*krino* +) before this *kairos*. He defines it for them as the coming (*erchomai*) of the Lord. Intimately bound up with *kairos* are the following two:

-He will bring to light what's now hidden in darkness. The verb *phaino* also means to become visible, to appear and is with two words with regard to its opposite, *krupto* which is intensified by *skotos* or that which is hidden and darkness. Even such hidden things can be right before our eyes...not distant...because they are concealed.

-The Lord will reveal the purposes of the human heart. The verb is *phaneroo* also as to expose publicly. The heart or *kardia* + similarly is hidden where it has *boule* (also as plan, intention) done in this hiddenness.

After the Lord comes, brings to light and discloses, each person will receive his commendation from God, that is, from Jesus to his Father. *Epinos* fundamentally means recognition as well as praise. Paul presents a positive spin here instead of using condemnatory language.

**4.6: I have applied all this to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brethren, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.**

Paul is quick to apply what he had said in the previous verse both to (*eis*, into) himself as well as Apollos, the latter presumably having concurred. The verb is *metaschematizo*, literally to put after (*meta-*) a form or *schema* which also means shape. In other words, Paul is transferring the form of what he has assumed on to the Corinthians. He's doing this for their own benefit which is rendered in the Greek as “through you.”

Paul desires that the Corinthians may learn (*manthano*, also as to gain knowledge or skill through instruction) both by his and Apollo's example not to exceed what's written, the preposition *huper* or beyond being used. Perhaps he is

referring to earlier instructions he had given which would involve passages from scripture. Such reference to what is written is that the Corinthians do not get puffed up and be at odds against each other. The verb is *phusioo* or to inflate with the preposition *kata* here as against.

#### **4.7: For who sees anything different in you? What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?**

Paul presents three rapid fire rhetorical questions not meant to elicit a response but intended to rouse the Corinthians from their complacency:

-*Diakrino* or literally to judge through which intimates judging between two persons. It's a humbling question where Paul puts the Corinthians in their place.

-The second question is to make the Corinthians realize that their faith is does not have a human origin.

-As for the third question, the Corinthians run the risk of boasting that their faith is not a gift. *Kauchaomai* fundamentally means to speak loudly with the verb *lambano* or to receive. Paul recognizes this as fatal should it be allowed to continue.

#### **4.8: Already you are filled! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign so that we might share the rule with you!**

The RSV has exclamation marks with each of these four sentences in one verse. Paul wishes the Corinthians to focus upon what's really important, namely, the abundance they have received.

In the first sentence Paul joyously exclaims that the Corinthians already are filled, *korenumi* usually with regard to food.

In the second sentence Paul says that the Corinthians already are rich, *plouteo* also as to be plentifully supplied. This plus the first sentence begin with *hede* or already signifying past tense carried over into the present.

In the third sentence Paul says that the Corinthians have become kings without his interference or anyone associated with him.

In the fourth sentence Paul expresses admiration for the Corinthians and a desire to partake of their rule as kings. The verbs *basileuo* and *sumbasileuo* are used here.

**4.9: For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men.**

From here through vs. 13 Paul doesn't so much belittle himself and other apostles but is speaking honestly, that they are made of flesh and blood just like anyone else. Surely he must have been thinking of when he had persecuted Christians. And so these words are intended to put the Corinthians at ease, that they are not to be intimidated.

It is Paul's belief (*dokeo* +) that God has specifically made an example of the apostles (*apodeiknumi*, also to show forth) by having them as the last, *eschatos* or at the every end of the line and sentenced to death, *epithanatos* pretty much as common criminals. Paul continues this same theme by saying that we-as-apostles have become a spectacle or *theatron* also a play or theater for all the world, angels and men to behold.

**4.10: We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor but we in disrepute.**

Paul continues using the first person plural in three sentences of this one verse making contrasts between apostles and the Corinthians.

*Moros* + or fools literally through (*dia*) Christ contrasted with you or the Corinthians as wise or *phronimos* in Christ also as sensible, thoughtful.

*Asthenes* + or weak vs. *ischuros* + or strong.

*Endoxos* vs. *atimos* or held in high esteem vs. despised.

**4.11: To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless,**

This verse is the beginning of an extended sentence which includes the next two verses.

*Achri tes arti* literally reads "until the present" and refers to the miserable condition associated with being an apostle. Such words also are intended as a means of Paul putting himself and those associated with him in a position of service. This condition of being in dire straits which is now present is destined to continue.

**4.12: and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure;**

This verse consists of two parts, the first belonging to the previous one and a sentence which flows into the next.

*Kopiao* or to labor means hard work along with the more general *ergazomai*.

As for the sentence begin in this verse, Paul contrasts two pairs:

- loidoreo* - *eulogeo* or to abuse with words - to speak favorably
- dioko* or to pursue - *anechomai* or to endure.

**4.13: when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become and are now as the refuse of the world, the off-scouring of all things.**

This is a continuation of the previous verse divided into two parts. The first is a contrast between being slandered and an attempt at conciliation, *dusphemeo* and *parakaleo* +. The former also as to defame with *dus-* indicative of hardness, harshness and the latter literally to summon beside or near, *para-*.

The second part of this verse is a full sentence where Paul states both his past and present condition, again using the first person plural: refuge and off-scouring or *perikatharma* and *peripsema*. Both are similar in that they are prefaced with the preposition *peri-* or around. The first is with regard to cleaning and the second is similar, a wiping off or wiping from around.

**4.14: I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children.**

Again, Paul is at pains to put the Corinthians at ease. This letter is not to shame but to admonish them, *entrepo* and *noutheteo*. The first literally means to turn in and the second to put in the mind (*tithemi* + *nous*). Paul adds that the Corinthians are his beloved children, objects of his *agapao* +.

**4.15: For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.**

This verse consists of two sentences. In the first Paul acknowledges that the Corinthians have countless guides in Christ, *paidagogos* also a guardian; it consists of *pais* or child and *ago* or to lead, to guide. Despite this, Paul cautions that the Corinthians don't have many fathers. Note the two adjective modifying each: *murios* or without number for the former and *polus* or the common word many for the latter.

In the second sentence Paul says that he had become the Corinthians' father in Christ Jesus through the gospel or *euaggelion*. As for the verb, *gennao* means to bear or to produce. As for the noun, it also means good news or more literally, that which has been proclaimed well, *aggello* prefaced with *eu-* (cf. Footnote #4).

#### **4.16: I urge you, then, be imitators of me.**

As a result of having begotten the Corinthians in the faith, Paul urges the Corinthians to be imitators of him. The verb *parakaleo* as in vs. 13 is rendered here as to urge and *mimetes* is the noun for one who copies.

#### **4.17: Therefore I sent to you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ as I teach them everywhere in every church.**

In this letter Paul sends Timothy who apparently is making his way to Corinth as his personal representative. He's described as a child or *teknon*, a term of endearment who's both beloved and faithful, *agapetos* and *pistos* +, the former from the same verbal root of *agape*. Paul situates him in the Lord.

Timothy's task is to remind the Corinthians of Paul's way in Christ, *hodos* as a manner of life which he teaches in every church, *didasko* being the verb. As for these teachings, they must be based on word of mouth accounts from those who had either been with Jesus Christ or his disciples. In addition to this, Paul certainly accessed sacred scripture which was very familiar to him as a devout Jew.

#### **4.18: Some are arrogant as though I were not coming to you.**

Paul got word that some of the Corinthians were arrogant, *phusioo* also as to be puffed up. Such persons were attempting to thwart Paul's authority. A

reference to this may be found in 9.1-3: “Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me.”

**4.19: But I will come to you soon if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power.**

Paul expresses his desire to visit the Corinthians but may be restrained due to other commitments. Instead of focusing upon their arrogance as noted in the previous verse...their *phusioo* +...he will discover where its power lay, *dunamis* +. In other words, Paul is more intent on the source, not the symptoms.

**4.20: For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power.**

Paul is clear as to the very basis of God’s kingdom: *dunamis* vs. *logos* +. The dissension among the Corinthians has blurred this important distinction.

**4.21: What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod or with love in a spirit of gentleness?**

Paul poses a challenge to the Corinthians in the form of two rhetorical questions. The first is a choice they are to make, *thelo* also as to want, to desire. The second is how they wish Paul to conduct his visit: with a rod or with love, *rhabdos* vs. *agape* +, staff or stick and love. The preposition *pros* as “to you” intimates directness and a determination of Paul coming to Corinth to deal with their internal discord.

## Chapter Five

**5.1: It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and of a kind that is not found even among pagans; for a man is living with his father’s wife.**

‘*Olos* or “actually” suggests everywhere as intensified by the verb *akouo* fundamentally as to hear. Both words suggest that the immorality Paul speaks of traveled quickly; as soon as one person heard (*akouo*) the report, immediately

it spread like a virus to someone else and so forth. As for the *porneia* or unlawful sexual intercourse, it is literally “in you.” In fact it’s so bad that even pagans don’t practice it, *ethnos* or nation, people. Paul specifies this as a man living with the wife of his father.

**5.2: And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.**

Paul expresses himself boldly claiming that the Corinthians are arrogant, *phusioo* + which got in the way of their taking any action. Instead of such an attitude, he asks that they engage in mourning, *pentheo* associated with regard to someone who has died. Apparently there seems to be one person at the center of all this, not a number of Christians. In a way that should be a relief. Nevertheless the community has an obligation to remove this person literally “from the midst (*mesos*) of you.” The verb is *airo* or to lift up or take away. The way this is put is not unlike an extraction.

**5.3: For though absent in body I am present in spirit, and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment**

This extended sentence continues through the next two verses.

An apparent contrast with regard to Paul between being absent and being present or *apeimi* and *pareimi*; *apo-* or from and *para-* or in the company of. The first applies to the body of *soma* and the second to the spirit or *pneuma* +. If the latter is in effect, Paul has pronounced judgment, *katergazomai* or to bring about, to produce.

**5.4: in the name of the Lord Jesus on the man who has done such a thing. When you are assembled, and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus,**

This verse picks up with Paul having pronounced judgment or *katergazomai*. It’s in the name (*onoma* +) of the Lord Jesus as applied to the unidentified man referred to in vs. 1.

The second sentence is more than a command. Rather, it’s Paul’s spirit or *pneuma* + present with the Corinthians when assembled (*sunago*). Not only that, he adds the presence of the Lord Jesus’ power or *dunamis* + also as strength, force, capacity.

**5.5: you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

Here Paul tells the Corinthians—again, he essentially as present with them—to deliver the man to Satan literally into the destruction of his flesh (*olethros* also as ruin and *sark* +). This act doesn't seem to involve anything physical but most likely consists in a condemnation followed by an exclusion from the Christian assembly. In this way the man's spirit or *pneuma* + will be saved (*sozo* +) in the day or *hemera* of the Lord Jesus.

As for this *hemera* which parallels a *kairos* event, refer to 3.13. The problem facing the man is that he's in a kind of limbo between his current condemnation and eventual redemption. Chances are he left Corinth to live somewhere else.

**5.6: Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?**

Paul drops the matter of the man accused of living with the wife of his father almost as an unwanted intervention and switches his attention to the Corinthians themselves. The issue is their boasting or *kauchema* or taking pride in something which is not good, *kalos* or beautiful, becoming, being the adjective.

In the second sentence Paul uses the image of leaven which must have been familiar to the Christians at Corinth insofar as refers to the Jewish feast of Passover.

**5.7: Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed.**

Reference is to the Jewish custom of removing leavened bread from one's house in preparation for the Passover. The passage at hand is Ex 12.15: "For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel." Note the last words of being cut off from Israel. Perhaps Paul is using the example of the just condemned man as a warning for the rest of the Christian community.

The second sentence refers to Christ as paschal lamb who has been sacrificed. The Corinthians were aware of this but most likely not as fully as they should when celebrating the Eucharist. Their boasting noted in vs. 6 has gotten in the way.

**5.8: Let us therefore celebrate the festival not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

When reading this verse there comes to mind Ex 12.14 which precedes the verse pertaining to leaven just above. “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance forever.” It ties in with Paul’s injunction to celebrate the festival, *heortazo* also to keep a holiday. Though not explicit, he seems to have in mind the Eucharist as based on its precedent, the Passover.

The verse at hand has a contrast between two pairs, two types of leaven: malice and evil (*kakia* and *poneria* or wickedness, depravity and maliciousness) vs. sincerity and truth (*eikolikrineia* or without hidden motives and *aletheia* or sincerity).

**5.9: I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with immoral men;**

A footnote in the NIV says the letter at hand is one Paul had written earlier but is not preserved. The verb to associate is *sunanamignum* rendered alternately as to relax in someone’s company. The verbal root to mix is prefaced with two prepositions, *sun-* and *ana-*, with and on or upon. With regard to that missing letter, the verb is with respect to persons who are *pornos* or depraved.

**5.10: not at all meaning the immoral of this world or the greedy and robbers or idolaters since then you would need to go out of the world.**

Paul seems to be excluding four categories of people which the Christians of Corinth are to avoid: *pornos* +, *pleonektes*, *harpax*, *eidololatres* or evil, covetous, extortioner and idol worshiper. If they fell under their influence, the only choice available is to leave this world or *kosmos* +. The verb *exerchomai* with *ek* or from or two “froms” suggest either exile or perhaps even martyrdom.

**5.11: But rather I wrote to you not to associate with any one who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of immorality or greed or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard or robber—not even to eat with such a one.**

After the rather strong reminder in the previous verse, Paul's earlier letter concerned the Corinthian Christians who aren't to associate (*sunanamignum* +) with a person bearing the name brother (*adelphos*). That is to say, should he be guilty of the following six types of persons: *pornos* +, *pleonektes* +, *eidololatres* +, *loidoros*, *methusos* and *harpax* + or immorality, greed, idolater, reviler, drunkard and robber. Paul prohibits them to eat with such persons, *sunesthio* having Eucharistic implications.

**5.12: For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?**

Paul poses two rhetorical questions. In the first he asks himself what he has to do with judging (*krino* +) outsiders, literally "those out" or *exo* meaning anyone not belonging to the Christian community at Corinth.

In the second rhetorical question he suggest that those *eso* or inside the church are to be judged by the local Christian community, *krino* + being the verb. And so this verse presents a distinction between *exo* and *eso*.

**5.13: God judges those outside. "Drive out the wicked person from among you."**

Paul leaves it up to God for him to judge those outside, *krino* and *exo* (both +).

Paul concludes Chapter Five with a quote from Dt 17.7<sup>8</sup> which runs in full as: "The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from the midst of you." The second sentence of the Hebrew text has the verb *bahar* which implies cleaning by fire.

## Chapter Six

**6.1: When one of you has a grievance against a brother, does he dare go to law**

---

<sup>8</sup> The critical Greek text also adds Dt 19.19, 22.21, 24 and 24.7.

## before the unrighteous instead of the saints?

A footnote in the RSV says that vss. 1-8 pertain to lawsuits in pagan courts. “Christians should settle their differences outside court, for they will participate with Christ in the final judgment of pagan magistrates.” Paul too is taking a negative view of the conventional Roman juridical process. Perhaps he doesn’t issue a wholesale condemnation but sees its limitations with regard to the new religion of Christianity.

This verse is the first in a series of rapid fire rhetorical questions posed by Paul in his letter to the Christians at Corinth, a predominantly pagan city. The verb *tolma* or to dare is with the noun *pragma* usually as an affair, business matter but here as a lawsuit. The preposition *pros* or against signifies directness, immediacy with regard to *heteros*, literally as other but here as brother.

The object of *tolma* is with regard to *krino* + or to judge those who are saints, *hagios* +, an adjective generally applicable to those who are distinct from unrighteous (*adikos*) persons. The preposition *epi* or upon is used with regard to both.

## 6.2: Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?

Two rhetorical questions in one verse, the first with regard to the saints, those who are *hagios* + as in the previous verse or Christians being distinct from others among whom they live. Concerning the issue of judging (*krino* +) the world, one such reference is Dn 7.21-22: “As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints received the kingdom.”

Should the world be judged by the saints—a serious matter indeed—Paul wonders if they can try much lesser cases. The adjective *anaxios* (the negative of *axios*, worthy, deserved) describes the saints with regard to such lawsuits. Surely those reading or hearing this must have felt some shame and hopefully complied with Paul’s desire to rectify a scandalous situation.

## 6.3: Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, matters pertaining to this life!

Chances are this rhetorical question about judging (*krino* +) angels took the Corinthians by surprise. One such reference is 2Pt 2.4: “For God did not spare angels when they sinned but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.” A footnote in the NIV refers to Gn 6.2 where the sons of God are said to have intermarried with human women meaning that angels had married them. Perhaps Paul considered those who aren’t Christian as having this particular lineage.

The second sentence refers to judging on a more practical level or with regard to this life, *biotikos* referring more specifically to the procurement of food, etc.

#### **6.4: If then you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who are least esteemed by the church?**

Paul is concerned about the Corinthians with regard to cases or *kriterion* (criterion, standard) described as *biotikos* + or essentially belonging to daily life. That is to say, why do they put (*kathizo*, to sit, to appoint) them before persons who are of little account in the church or *ekklesia* +? *Exoutheneo* is the verb meaning of not value, essentially as nothing.

#### **6.5: I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no man among you wise enough to decide between members of the brotherhood,**

The second sentence and the next verse form one extended unit.

The preposition *pros* is indicative of direction toward-which with regard to *entrope* also as humiliation.

In the second sentence Paul embarrasses the Corinthians by saying that none of them is wise (*sophos* +) enough to render a decision about a legal case literally “between the midst of the brethren,” the preposition *ana* (on, upon) and *mesos* or middle. The two verse at hand are *dunamai* and *diakrino*, to be able and to judge-through.

#### **6.6: but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers?**

The small word “but” or *alla* is a turning point in this extended sentence where the force of the rhetorical question at hand reveals the thorny issue at hand. That is to say, Paul is dismayed that one Christian is bringing a lawsuit

against another fellow Christian. He doesn't necessarily condemn that; instead, he's scandalized that the Corinthians are doing this literally "upon unbelievers," *apistas*. The preposition *epi* serves to show the close connection between the Corinthians and those who are not believers.

### **6.7: To have lawsuits at all with one another is defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?**

This verse contains three separate sentences, the second and third being rhetorical by nature presented in rapid fire succession.

It'd come as no surprise that the Corinthians strongly disagreed with what Paul is saying in these two questions. Such lawsuits (*krima*)—and Paul is thinking more of those unbelievers as in the previous verse—form a defeat for the Corinthians. The noun is *hettema* which has judicial and moral overtones along with *holos* or wholly.

In place of this Paul proposes two radical steps based upon acceptance. The first is to suffer wrong, *adikeo* also as to cause damage to. The second is to suffer being defrauded, *apostereo* also as to cause another person to suffer loss by taking away through illicit means.

### **6.8: But you yourselves wrong and defraud and that even your own brethren.**

Before anyone can object to what Paul has just said, he brings up an uncomfortable fact. That is to say, those involved in these lawsuits commit wrong as well as defraud, *adikeo* and *apostereo* (both +). Such unacceptable behavior is done to each other or brother to brother.

### **6.9: Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual perverts,**

This and the next verse form an extended sentence. It's comprised of a rhetorical sentence where Paul asks those involved in the strife among fellow Christians that anyone who's unrighteous (*adikos* +) will not inherit the kingdom of God. The verb *kleronomeo* means to enter full possession.

We have here the second time the phrase kingdom of God is used thus far in First Corinthians, the first being 4.20.

The second sentence which runs into vs. 10 consists of a warning not to be deceived, *planao* basically as to wander. Paul lists a total of nine types of people who won't inherit the kingdom of God, the verse at hand containing four. The adjective for those who are sexual perverts is *malakos* meaning soft or effeminate and can refer to a person engaged in a homosexual relationship.

**6.10: nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God.**

This verse contains the remaining five categories of persons who won't inherit the kingdom of God, *kleronomeo* +.

**6.11: And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.**

In the first sentence Paul gives a short, simple, sharp yet conciliatory message by using the past tense to immoral behavior, that is, with regard to how some of the Corinthians had comported themselves.

What's key here is *alla* or "but" which introduces the second sentence where Paul makes a threefold transition to how those among the Corinthians are to be restored. It's a restoration to be done in two ways: first in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and then in the Spirit of our God, *onoma* and *Pneuma* (both +). Most likely Paul has in mind either a liturgical or sacramental means of effecting this.

As for the transition, it consists in having been washed, sanctified and justified: *apolouo* or to be washed in a thorough fashion, *dikaioo* + or to be declared in the right and *hagiazo* also to be set apart.

**6.12: "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything.**

Paul emphasizes what he's about to say by his words being put in two sets of quotes, the second continuing into the next verse. It seems he's encouraging the Corinthians by making a distinction between what's lawful and what's not helpful, *exestin* and *sumphero*, the latter in the negative sense: it is allowed and literally (not) to carry or to bear with.

In the second sentence Paul again uses *exestin* and *exousiazo* in the negative sense, to have the right or power for something. In both instances he uses *pan* or all, everything and could be referring to the Law or *Torah*.

**6.13: "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality but for the Lord and the Lord for the body.**

Another statement where Paul quotes himself for emphasis where he puts in vivid language the issue of eating. While necessary, in a way it's transitory, a fact he wishes to drive home for the Corinthians. The verb *katargeo* more specifically means to invalidate, make powerless.

In the second sentence Paul draws a negative parallel between the body and immorality, *soma* and *porneia* (both +). Instead of this, he says the body is for the Lord and visa versa, the dative case being used in both instances.

**6.14: And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.**

Reference is to the resurrection of the Lord, obviously the body, so this ties in with what Paul had just said with regard to treating one's body with care and reverence.

The first verb is *egeiro* or to raise as pertaining to the Lord and the second verb is the same prefaced with the preposition *ex-*, *exegeiro* or literally to raise from with regard to the Corinthians. Actually Paul uses the first person plural to include himself and those associated with him. *Exegiero* is with the noun *dunamis* + or power and the preposition *dia*, "through his power."

**6.15: Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!**

Two forceful rhetorical questions, the first with respect to physical bodies or *soma* + belonging to Christ as his members, *melos*. Paul is attempting to have the Corinthians wake up to this fact which also implies that they belong to each other. He dramatizes this mystery by saying that never would he make these members...the Corinthians...belong to a prostitute, *porne* also as a political enemy hostile to God.

**6.16: Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh."**

Surely everyone knows that anyone who joins with a prostitute becomes one *soma* + with her. The verb *kollao* fundamentally means to glue, to cement. Paul uses the verse from Gn 2.24 in a negative fashion. First, the verse runs in full as: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." Note the contrast between leaving and cleaving, the two Hebrew verbs being *hazav* and *davaq*: the former implies abandonment whereas the latter, similar to *kollao* or to glue.

**6.17: But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.**

Here Paul uses *kollao* + (*davaq*) in the positive sense or building upon how it's presented in Genesis, that is, with regard to the Lord. Such gluing makes a person one spirit or *pneuma* + with him. Being as such, the two breath together which is what this noun means. "With him" is lacking in the Greek text.

**6.18: Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body.**

The short injunction consists of the verb *pheugo* or to flee with regard to *porneia* +.

Paul makes a distinction between outside the body and against the body or *soma* +, that is, *ektos* and *eis*. The two verbs *porneuo* and *hamartano* are similar, that is, to commit immorality in the sexual sense and to sin.

**6.19: Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you which you have from God? You are not your own;**

The tone of this rhetorical question is to wake the Corinthians up with regard to a reality for the most part they had been ignorant. Paul equates *soma* + with *naos* +, body = temple. Within (*en* or *in*) this temple which is "you" dwells the Holy Spirit or *Pneuma* +. As for this *Pneuma*, it is from (*apo*) God. Thus the sequence runs as: body->temple->Holy Spirit->within you->from God.

The second sentence continues into the next and final verse of Chapter Six. Paul reminds the Corinthians that in light of them being temples, they do

not belong to themselves.

### **6.20: you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.**

The Corinthians need to realize that they are not their own by reason of having been bought with a price. The verb *agorazo* suggests being purchased in a market and *time* is the noun for price, genitive case. The latter also means honor, respect. Paul doesn't specify what this price is, but hopefully the Corinthians realize it's the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

Chapter Seven concludes with the exhortation to honor God in the body, *soma* + being plural with second person plural. *Doxazo* is the verb also as to praise, to exalt.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **7.1: Now concerning the matters about which you wrote. It is well for a man not to touch a woman.**

While Paul's remarks about marriage and other matters with direct moral consequences are very important, they are not as suitable for *lectio divina* which is the purpose of this document. The reason? It's more difficult to expand upon such a verse by reason of its straight-forward approach. Another difficulty from the *lectio* point of view is that reading such matter-of-fact verses (the total in this chapter being forty) is no easy matter. By no means does this detract from their inherent value.

“Now” which opens Chapter Seven is rendered by the small particle *de* + signifying a change with regard to Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Note it was they who had contacted him, not the other way around. As for this writing, it was in the form of a scroll just as Paul writing to the Corinthians.

Apparently the issue noted in the second sentence had caused considerable concern among the faithful. Though not explicit, judging by the next few verses the matter at hand is adultery. Paul starts off with the obvious. A man shouldn't touch a woman, *haptō* being the verb which refers to illicit sexual relationships. He uses the neuter of *kalos* + often rendered as beautiful which here is relative to proper behavior.

### **7.2: But because of the temptation to immorality, each man should have his own**

**wife and each woman her own husband.**

Paul recognizes the temptation for a man to have improper sexual relations with a woman who isn't his wife. The word "temptation" is lacking in the Greek text. *Porneia* + or immorality also applies to prostitution or fornication. To prevent this, each man needs to have his own wife and visa versa. At first glance the sense of this verse can come across as somewhat awkward, namely, that the marital state is solely for a man to avoid sexual promiscuity.

**7.3: The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights and likewise the wife to her husband.**

This verse comes across as straight forward or matter-of-fact where the Corinthians are concerned about problems that have arisen in the Christian community regarding marital relationships. They have to worry about the larger community of non-Christians in Corinth who most likely weren't bound by a strict moral code as inferred.

**7.4: For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does.**

Here it's a matter or ruling or governing with regard to the physical body or *soma* + belonging to both a married man and a married woman. The verb at hand is *exousiazo* or to have the right to do something. The noun *exousia* (power, authority) derives from it. Such a view is almost unheard of with regard to the non-Christians among whom the Christians are living.

**7.5: Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again lest Satan tempt you through lack of self-control.**

*Apostrepho* is the verb to refuse, also as to deprive and literally to turn away from. The context seems to be in light of what Paul has said thus far regarding marital relations. He gives an exception provided it's by agreement, *sumphonos* literally as voice-with (*sum-* + *phone*). It is to last for (*pros*, direction towards which) a season or *kairos* + being a specific time for prayer. The verb is

*scholazo*, to have leisure or time with regard to prayer or *proseuche* which often is rendered as petition.

Paul urges the Corinthians to come together, this being *palin* or again with *to auton*, “for the same thing.” Their assembly prevents Satan from offering temptation or *peirazo* also as to let trial be made with regard to a lack of self-control, *akrasia* also as self-indulgence.

**7.6: I say this by way of concession, not of command.**

The preposition *kata* often as according to governs both *suggnōme* and *epitage*. The former also means permission to do something as well as indulgence whereas the latter also means order or injunction.

**7.7: I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.**

*Thelo* + or wish as well as to desire where Paul is holding himself up as an example of not being married. There's no evidence as to his state prior to his conversion, but chances are that he had been married. If so, his wife may have died or left him shortly thereafter. And so he's speaking from a point of view based on experience.

Although Paul wishes the Corinthians to adopt a life style similar to his own, he recognizes that each person is endowed with his or her own special gift or *charisma* +.

**7.8: To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I do.**

Paul uses the neuter of *kalos* + often rendered as beautiful in the same way as in vs. 1. Once again, he doesn't hesitate to use himself as an example. We don't have information as to how it was received among the Corinthians but must have created some controversy.

**7.9: But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion.**

*Egkrateuomai* is the verb to exercise self-control, the noun *kratos* (might, strength) being derived from it. Paul uses a strong verb with regard to passion, *puroo* or to be on fire. While his observation is based on some truth, it can come across as a bit strong. Inferred is that married life belongs to a lesser standard than being unmarried. For Paul, the latter is a better state for serving the Lord.

**7.10: To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband**

This and the next verse for an extended sentence.

Paul is not speaking on his behalf but is a mouthpiece of the Lord, that is, as an apostle, *paraggello* alternately meaning to make an announcement. Literally it reads as to announce beside or nearby, *para-*. With regard to the situation at hand, a footnote in the RSV refers to “a possible reference to the teaching of Jesus found in Mk 10.2-9.” As for the verb *chorizo* or to separate, it also means to leave, to depart.

**7.11: (but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband)—and that the husband should not divorce his wife.**

The RSV puts the first half of this verse in parentheses Paul’s words about the possibility of a wife and husband being reconciled before moving on to his prohibition of a husband divorcing his wife. The preposition *kata-* in *katallasso* infers the possibility of literally of a change back.

**7.12: To the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her.**

In vs. 10 Paul speaks as the mouthpiece of the Lord whereas here he makes a clear distinction between his point of view and that of the Lord. Unlike his implied reference to Jesus’ teaching on marriage and divorce in Mk 10.2-9, he speaks out of a certain humility where he lacks authority.

At issue is a Christian who should not divorce a woman who’s an unbeliever (*apistos* +) and consents to live with him. *Suneudokeo* is the verb at hand consisting of the root *dokeo* (to think, to suppose) prefaced with the preposition *sun-* or with and the adverbial form of *agathos* (good), *eu-*.

**7.13: If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him.**

This verse counters what Paul has said in the previous one, that is, a woman who's a Christian should not divorce her husband who is not a believer. At issue is mutual consent between the two.

**7.14: For the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy.**

Whether a husband or wife is a believer or unbeliever (*pistos* vs. *apistos*, both +), the fact that one is a Christian suffices to be an agent of consecration. The verb at hand is *hagiazo* +. Should this not be the case, the children would be unclean, *akathartos* also as impure. Nevertheless, the fact that one spouse is a Christian makes them holy, *hagios* +.

**7.15: But if the unbelieving partner desires to separate, let it be so; in such a case the brother or sister is not bound. For God has called us to peace.**

Paul makes an exception with regard to the believer who's not under obligation to try to live with the unbeliever. Above all else he values peace to prevail, *eirene* +. Being at peace also is a witness to the non-believers of Corinth.

Throughout all this is the larger issue of *pistos* vs. *apistos* or faith vs. a lack of faith.

**7.16: Wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? Husband, how do you know whether you will save your wife?**

Paul poses two rhetorical questions, the first to a wife and the second to a husband. At hand is the issue of being saved, *sozo* +. For him, this is the real issue at hand that's been framed in terms of *pistos* vs. *apistos* as noted above.

**7.17: Only let every one lead the life which the Lord has assigned to him and in which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches.**

In this verse Paul sums up much of what he has said about the relationship between a man and a woman in the context of faith. Nevertheless, he will continue with remarks about marriage after some words about circumcision.

Regardless of one's state in life, a Christian has the obligation to live in accord with the state of life the Lord has assigned him. The verb is *merizo* which infers something to be measured out. Here *merizo* is a refinement of God calling or better, inviting a person, *kaleo* +. Note the verb *peripateo* with regard to following one's divine summons to live the life proper to one's situation. It means to walk around and thus be involved in all sorts of activity.

The second sentence comes across as authoritative. Paul is giving what he has said as a rule not just for the Corinthians but for all the churches. The verb is *diatasso* also to put into proper order or relationship which is inferred by the preposition *dia-*, through.

**7.18: Was any one at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was any one at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision.**

In this and the next verse Paul shifts to the issue of circumcision, important as far as Judaism is concerned. All four sentences are self-explanatory and can be seen in light of the Council of Jerusalem where this matter was brought up.

**7.19: For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God.**

Paul does not take sides with regard to circumcision. Rather, he stresses the importance of keeping God's commands, *tereo* fundamentally as to keep watch over or to guard with regard to *entole* also as mandate, ordinance.

**7.20: Every one should remain in the state in which he was called.**

Again, this counsel echos the Council of Jerusalem where Gentiles weren't obliged to adopt the laws and regulations of Judaism. The verb *meno* + or to remain means something akin to abiding. *Klesis* or calling and *kaleo* or to

call.

**7.21: Were you a slave when called? Never mind. But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.**

With regard to being called—*kaleo* + implying a particular vocation from God—one's status is secondary. The verb *chraomai* means to use, to make the most of an opportunity which here is freedom for a slave, *eleutherios* being the adjective.

**7.22: For he who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise he who was free when called is a slave of Christ.**

Paul reverses two roles: slave = freedman and free = slave or *doulos* = *apeleutherios* and *eleutherios* + = *doulos*. The first applies to the Lord and the second applies to Christ.

**7.23: You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.**

*Agorazo* + or to buy also means to ransom, the price or *time* + not specified. Paul believes that the Corinthians knows what this means, the death of Jesus Christ. Awareness of this precludes becoming slaves (*doulos* +) of men.

**7.24: So, brethren, in whatever state each was called, there let him remain with God.**

“So” is not in the Greek text. As for *adelphos* + or brethren, Paul is adopting a familial stance. Regardless of which state a person may be in, Paul counsels remaining in it (*meno* +) as long as it is with God, *para* suggesting in the company of or nearby.

**7.25: Now concerning the unmarried, I have no command of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.**

Paul returns to the issue of marriage left off with vs. 16 and continuing for the rest of this chapter. The noun *parthenos* or virgin is rendered as

unmarried and can refer to a young widow or widower who has been married once. The question seems to have raised whether a second marriage is acceptable or not.

*Epitoge* + or command here pertains directly to the Lord. When Paul claims he does not have such a command, he infers no direct communication from the Lord. Rather, he gives an opinion or *gnome* + also as viewpoint. By claiming to be trustworthy or *pistos* +, Paul is appealing to his role as an apostle which is through divine mercy, perfect passive participle of *eleeo* or to have mercy or pity.

**7.26: I think that in view of the present distress it is well for a person to remain as he is.**

This short verse contains a number of words worth spelling out. It begins with *nomizo* or to think also means to believe, to consider. Here it concerns a very real issue of distress which most likely pertains to those of the local church trying to follow a Christian way of life in a less than desirable environment.

*Anagke* is the noun for distress and also means necessity modified by *enistemi* literally to stand in and used for the present. Also the verb *huparcho* which literally means to begin from under is the verb to be. The idea seems to be that the distress at hand is something that underlays the Corinthians as just noted.

In light of this, Paul maintains it best for a person to remain just as he is, to *houtos einai* or “the being so.”

Note two uses of the adverb *kalon* often as well, the first not being rendered present in the English translation and the second rendered as such.

**7.27: Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek marriage.**

Two opposite words: *deo* and *lusis* or to bind and a loosening, the latter also applicable to divorce. With regard to both states of life Paul advises remaining as such.

**7.28: But if you marry, you do not sin, and if a girl marries she does not sin. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that.**

The first sentence contains two uses of the verb *hamartano* + or to sin. Implied is that the marital state, especially for a girl (*parthenos* +), involves considerable trouble. Paul admits this up front in the second sentence, *thlipsis* as tribulation, affliction of a nature pertaining literally to the flesh, *sarx* +. He concludes by wishing those to whom he's writing be spared of that anguish, *pheidomai* also as to refrain from.

**7.29: I mean, brethren, the appointed time has grown very short; from now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none,**

This verse and the next two form one extended sentence.

“I mean” runs literally as “I say this” which intimates that Paul has something important to say with regard to marriage. Here *kairos* + or special event is modified by the perfect participle *sustello*, literally to draw together. Paul is speaking of what he believes is the imminent coming of Jesus Christ. Awareness of the shortness of time between now and that time introduces five modes of behavior which differ radically from the normal way of doing things. The first pertains to those who are married. They are to conduct themselves as though they were not married which among other things means not to have sexual intercourse.

The words *hos me* are rendered as “as though not.”

**7.30: and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods,**

This verse continues with the mode of behavior as a way of preparing for Jesus' coming. The second which comes after that in vs. 29 pertains to mourning which can apply to those who have died. The third is with regard to rejoicing and the fourth with regard to the marketplace.

**7.31: and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the form of this world is passing away.**

This verse brings to conclusion the lengthy sentence begun with vs. 28 and contains the last or fifth mode of behavior as a preparation for Jesus' coming. Note the two forms of the same verb, *chraomai* + or to use. The first is

free standing while the second is prefaced with the preposition *kata-* here as in accord with (the world, *kosmos* +).

In the second sentence Paul gives the reason why people should disengage from the world. It's form or *schema* + is passing away, also as shape and that which is familiar, the root *ago* (to lead, to carry) prefaced with the preposition *para-*, beside. The verb *parago* is in the present tense meaning that the world's very *schema* is in the process of dissolving or perhaps better, being left behind.

**7.32: I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord;**

This verse is the first of three which form three sentences, the first in the verse at hand and the second beginning in vs. 34.

One can't help but wonder how many Corinthians took Paul's words seriously about not being anxious, *amerimnos* also as without anxiety. That is to say, he had gone on at some length with regard to how to behave in preparation for the imminent coming of Jesus Christ which certainly must have created some consternation.

The three verses to be taken as one unit contain five occasions of the verb *merimnao* or to be anxious or worried. The first is in the positive sense as applied to the Lord's affairs, literally "those of the Lord." In the verb next breath Paul adds that *merimnao* applies to pleasing the Lord, *aresko* also as to flatter.

**7.33: but the married man is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please his wife,**

The particle *de* + rendered as "but" serves to contrast Paul's words about the primacy of pleasing the Lord with a married man who's anxious (the second *merimnao* +) about "those of the world" or *kosmos* +. Chief among these are pleasing his wife, *aresko* + here in a negative sense compared with the previous verse, that is, the Lord.

**7.34: and his interests are divided. And the unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please her husband.**

The first part of this verse contains the conclusion of the sentence begin

in vs. 32. The short words are rendered by one verb, the third example of *merimnao* +.

The fourth example of *merimnao* + is similar to the one in vs. 32 where it pertains to a woman who's not married and whose focus is upon "those of the Lord." In addition to these her *merimnao* is with regard to being holy (*hagios* +) in both body and spirit, *soma* and *pneuma* (both +).

The fifth and final example of *merimnao* + pertains to a married woman and "those of the world" or *kosmos* + which infers pleasing her husband, another instance of *aresko* +.

And so in addition to *merimnao* these three verses contrast *aresko* + with regard to the Lord and with regard to things of the world and married life.

**7.35: I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.**

Note use of the preposition *pros*, direction towards-which relative to those whom Paul is addressing. The benefit or *sumphoros* (that which is carried together) just delineated is not done with the intent of laying on restraints, *epiballo* or to cast upon and *brochos*, literally a noose. Instead, Paul wishes the following two:

-To promote good order, the preposition *pros* with *euschemon* or to be of good order, *eu-* being the adverbial form of *agathos*, good.

-A second word with the preface *eu-*, *euparedros* meaning to be constantly in service and totally focused upon the Lord, *aperispastos* being an adverb or alpha privative, the preposition *peri-* or around and the verbal root *spao*, to draw or to pull.

**7.36: If any one thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his betrothed, if his passions are strong, and it has to be, let him do as he wishes: let them marry—it is no sin.**

Note two occasions of "if." The first concerns a person who thinks he isn't behaving properly with regard to the woman he's about to marry. The verb *aschemoneo* with alpha privative prefaced to a verbal root of the noun *schema* +, form or shape which implies a certain sense of being comely which is lacking in the case at hand. The preposition *epi* or upon is with regard to *parthenos* +.

The second "if" pertains to strong passions, *huperarkmos* or past one's

prime or marriageable age as well as at one's sexual peak. Should someone be in this situation, he should do as he wishes (*thelo* +) and get married. Paul deems it not as a sin, the verb *hamartano* +.

**7.37: But whoever is firmly established in his heart, being under no necessity but having his desire under control and has determined this in his heart, to keep her as his betrothed, he will do well.**

The particle *de* + shows a shift in Paul's thinking. That is to say, he has in mind a person who has the proper attitude, *hedraios* meaning fast or fixed in his heart or *kardia* +. Such a one isn't compelled by necessity or *anagke* + because he has his desire under control, *krino* + usually as to judge but here more along the lines of having one's mind made up. *Krino* pertains to the man who keeps the woman at hand as his betrothed, *tereo* +. In such a case he would do well, *kalos* + as adverb.

**7.38: So that he who marries his betrothed does well; and he who refrains from marriage will do better.**

Paul offers a choice between two examples, both of which are good: marriage and refraining from marriage, in the latter case the verb *gamizo* in the negative.

**7.39: A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.**

Paul speaks of the indissoluble bond of Christian marriage. Should the husband pass away, the woman can remarry as long as it is in the Lord. Such words imply that both marriage should have a third party, one who is divine. You could almost hear behind these words Paul's desire for a woman as well as a man not to get married or if the spouse dies, to remain single.

**7.40: But in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I have the Spirit of God.**

Paul is careful to couch his words as his own, *gnome* + as viewpoint.

In the second sentence Paul claims that he's speaking with the *Pneuma* + of the Lord, the verb *echo* or to have which, if you will, is a more possessive way of putting it.