

# 1<sup>st</sup> CORINTHIANS

## Carnal Church Disorder

### "Carnal Church Disorder"

- C1 = Perfectly joined and rebuke
- C2 = Wisdom & spiritual discernment
- C3 = Carnal babes
- C4 = Paul's authority & credentials
- C5 = Leaven and judging
- C6 = Lawsuits
- C7 = Marriage
- C8 = Idols and liberty
- C9 = Ministry wage
- C10 = Temptations
- C11 = Follow Paul
- C12 = Spiritual gifts
- C13 = Charity
- C14 = Tongues
- C15 = Resurrection denial
- C16 = Travel arrangement

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all **speak the same thing**, and that there be **no divisions** among you; but that ye be **perfectly joined together** in the **same mind** and in the **same judgment**." (1 Cor 1:10)

"**Be ye followers of me**, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Cor 11:1)

"**Church disorders** of factions, immorality, lawsuits, meats offered to idols, Lord's supper abuse, divisions, strifes, false apostles, marriage problems, disorderly conduct of assemblies, lack of ministry support, self-promotion, women's role in the church, resurrection heresies"

**1. AUTHOR, DATE, PLACE:** Paul, 57AD, Ephesus.

**2. TO WHOM IS IT WRITTEN:** The Corinthian church

**3. THEME:** Christian life, conduct and unity.

**4. PURPOSE:**

To rebuke, exhort, admonish but encourage the fleshy and vice ridden church at Corinth.

**5. PAUL ARRIVES:**

Paul arrives as a working man at Corinth for the first time and looked around for a workshop that made tents so he could ply his trade and earn a living. There were no advance media announcements or road-side advertising that Paul, the renowned evangelist, had hit town. He just came in and started doing tent-making which was a large industry in those times. He teams up with Aquila and Priscilla (Jews who had been kicked out of Rome) who were also tentmakers. He was there about 18 months in total and began speaking to the Jews in synagogues, to the Greeks and to mixed congregations of both.

**6. CITY OF CORINTH:**

Corinth was the most important city of all Greece in Paul's day. The wealth was vast and men spent much of their days in sporting tournaments, plays, speeches and entertainments – much like all cities in the world today. Wasteful use of time and energy in frivolous diversions combined with luxury and public immorality was rife among this vast industrial and seafaring city. Corinth attracted lots of travellers and foreigners from the East and the West. "Sex, drugs rock and roll" were the

pursuits. Like today the four main things were money, sex, entertainment and education. It was a city of much 'culture' and art, abounding in large numbers of philosophy schools, language schools and universities.

**7. OT QUOTES:**

There are **21 quotes** from the Old Testament and best summed with *For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.* 1 Cor 1:19 which comes from the OT "Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: **for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.**" (Isaiah 29:14)

Date	Trips	Books & Authors
32		The cross
37		<b>Matthew</b> (Matthew)
42		<b>James</b> (James)
45-48	1 <sup>st</sup> Trip	
50		<b>Galatians</b> (Paul)
50-53	2 <sup>nd</sup> Trip	<b>1&amp;2 Thessalonians</b> (Paul)
54-58	3 <sup>rd</sup> Trip	<b>1 CORINTHIANS</b> (Paul) <b>2 Corinthians</b> (Paul) <b>Romans</b> (Paul)
58		<b>Mark</b> (Mark)
59-60		<b>Luke</b> (Luke)
60-70		<b>John</b> (John) <b>1,2,3 John</b> (John)
60-61		<b>1&amp;2 Peter</b> (Peter)
61-63	Prison #1	<b>Ephesians</b> (Paul) <b>Philippians</b> (Paul) <b>Colossians</b> (Paul) <b>Philemon</b> (Paul)
63		<b>Acts</b> (Luke)
64-66		<b>Titus</b> (Paul) <b>1 Timothy</b> (Paul) <b>Jude</b> (Jude)
66-68	Prison #2	<b>2 Timothy</b> (Paul) <b>Hebrews</b> (Paul)
80-90		<b>Revelation</b> (John)

The phrase **'the Lord'** is found **49 times in 43 verses**. Much of the confusion in the Corinthian church stemmed from the fact that they had lost sight of the fact the Jesus Christ was to be their Lord and not just their Saviour – like most churches today.

<b>Matthew</b>	<b>Jesus the Son of man</b>
<b>Mark</b>	<b>Jesus the Son of man</b>
<b>Luke</b>	<b>Jesus the Son of man</b>
<b>John</b>	<b>Jesus is God</b>
<b>Acts</b>	<b>Early church &amp; Paul's trips</b>
<b>Romans (Paul)</b>	<b>Law &amp; God's righteousness</b>
<b>1 Corinthians (Paul)</b>	<b>Carnal church</b>
<b>2 Corinthians (Paul)</b>	<b>Paul's ministry</b>
<b>Galatians (Paul)</b>	<b>Bewitched by Judaizers</b>
<b>Ephesians (Paul)</b>	<b>Unity with one church</b>
<b>Philippians (Paul)</b>	<b>Vain glory &amp; servanthood</b>
<b>Colossians (Paul)</b>	<b>Gnostic heresy</b>
<b>1 Thessalonians (Paul)</b>	<b>Persecution &amp; rapture</b>
<b>2 Thessalonians (Paul)</b>	<b>Rapture &amp; disorderly walking</b>
<b>1 Timothy (Paul)</b>	<b>Church care, pastoral advice</b>
<b>2 Timothy (Paul)</b>	<b>Church care, pastoral advice</b>
<b>Titus (Paul)</b>	<b>Church care, pastoral advice</b>
<b>Philemon (Paul)</b>	<b>Imputed righteousness</b>
<b>Hebrews (Paul)</b>	<b>Messiah to Saviour</b>
<b>James</b>	<b>Temptations &amp; patience</b>
<b>1 Peter</b>	<b>Hope</b>
<b>2 Peter</b>	<b>Knowledge &amp; false teachers</b>
<b>1 John</b>	<b>Antinomian gnosticism</b>
<b>2 John</b>	<b>False teachers</b>
<b>3 John</b>	<b>Rebellion against authority</b>
<b>Jude</b>	<b>God's wrath on ungodly men</b>
<b>Revelation</b>	<b>Future events</b>

## 8. RELIGIOUS MIX:

Most cities of this size had large populations of Jews with their appropriate moral standards and religious beliefs, however the city itself was **the centre** of the **pagan** worship of **Venus** – the equivalent to a Catholic Mary but with 'considerably' looser morals one might say.

## CHAPTER SUMMARIES

- Ch 1 = Perfectly joined and rebuke**
- Ch 2 = Wisdom & spiritual discernment**
- Ch 3 = Carnal Babes**
- Ch 4 = Paul's authority & credentials**
- Ch 5 = Leaven and judging**
- Ch 6 = Lawsuits**
- Ch 7 = Marriage**
- Ch 8 = Idols and liberty**
- Ch 9 = Ministry wage**
- Ch 10 = Temptations**

**Ch 11 = Follow Paul**

**Ch 12 = Spiritual gifts**

**Ch 13 = Charity**

**Ch 14 = Tongues**

**Ch 15 = Resurrection denial**

**Ch 16 = Travel arrangements**

## Ch 1 = Perfectly joined and a rebuke

As they were no large church buildings at Corinth when Paul arrives, they were meeting in separate homes and rooms and these small congregations were under their own leadership. In this wicked city, these home churches were developing into **rival and competing groups**. Taking on the Greek characteristics of the city with its prideful intellectual and philosophical arrogance, these home churches were rallying around the leaders of **various factions** (v11-13), with each trying to stamp their own version of Christianity on Christ. So Paul calls for unity (v19). He calls out the various factions (v11-13) and mentions **water baptism** (v14-18) saying that churches were at risk of making **the cross** and the preaching of the cross of **none effect** with this practice (v17-18).

He then stresses that they had better all 'climb down' and back away from their wise pet theories (v19-22) and start to concentrate and emphasize Christ - the power and the wisdom of God (v24). He says it is better to be foolish, weak and base as God doesn't call the powerful, mighty, wise or noble (v26-29).

## Ch 2 = Wisdom & spiritual discernment

As Athens was a city very close in proximity to Corinth, the **philosophical arrogance** of Athens had permeated them. As we find today, churches of different nations reflect the cultural and social standards of the surrounding society. So Paul detects this arrogant, philosophical and knowledgeable stance appearing in the Corinthian churches and he deals them a scorching rebuke for it. He says to them "Leave off and climb down from your lofty mental heights and be like me" (v1-9) for God alone will reveal his wisdom (v9-11). Like Corinth, churches today live in cities with many universities and through their own learning, not God's knowledge, religious leaders reveal the 'gnostic, deeper and hidden' things of God from their own minds. Such that they say "The Bible doesn't mean that and that word should be this and so on." "Furthermore, the Bible says what it really means ....". All produced from their own wisdom and false studies.

So Paul points this out to them that he that is spiritual judges all things by the spiritual standards set forth in God's words of the Bible (v12-16).

### Ch 3 = Carnal Babes

Now Paul doesn't pull any punches and calls them carnal babes that are unable to take the strong meat of the word (v1-3). Why? They have strife and envying amongst themselves that are causing divisions (v3-6). Paul's admonition to them is to labour and God will reward (v8-9).

Paul then breaks a few of their 'spiritual bones' by establishing himself as a wise masterbuilder (v10) with Christ as the foundation (v11). He states that if the results of your work and what you have produced is any good, it will stand up against God's fire (v12-15). Once again he alludes to the fact that they are crafty and foolish with the wisdom of the world (v18-19).

In essence he says in common language "Look you proud and arrogant fools, give yourself a punch in the head, take a couple of Panadol and have a good lie down. You must have God's wisdom and change your thinking about the divisions you have created. Christ is the foundation and I, Paul, am the masterbuilder. I am here to destroy your philosophy, both root and branch. **Be ye followers of me.**" (1Cor 4:16; 11:1)

### Ch 4 = Paul's authority credentials

Paul continues to establish himself by saying that there are many mysteries of God (v1) and these have been given to Paul by God (v6) such that anyone that is puffed up (v6) should humble themselves and learn off Paul. He 'mocks' them for being rich, full, reigning, wise, strong and honourable (v8, 10) and takes the lower seat by saying he is fool and has no standing in the world (v10) compared to them. (You can hear the paint peel off the walls with this blast). But of course the reverse was true – they were blind and couldn't see it. Paul was as smart as they come (Acts 22:3) but truly, and in all honesty, he had chosen to value all that he knew before he was saved as dung (Phil 3:8).

Paul says they are like fatherless proud children running around ignorantly instructing each other (v15) and so he appeals to them to be followers of him (v16). Like a good father Paul says that he won't come to them with a rod of iron but in the spirit of meekness and love (v21) but he warns them that God has given the power to discern the pretenders with puffed speech and no power (v19) – and they'd better watch out.

### Ch 5 = Leaven and judging

You can hear in the Corinthians' mind that they are still not convinced just because Paul has appeared on the scene. So he raises the problem of **fornication** in the church, but here's the thing – **they were proud of it!** They were proud of their liberal stance on sex! They were open, proud and congratulating themselves on their inclusiveness to all (v6). Very much like the churches today.

He also admonishes them to get their 'judging glasses' on in other cases of brotherly sins (v11). He in no uncertain terms tells them that they must not associate with these fornicators, idolaters, railers, covetous and drunkards (v13). All these sinful behaviours are infecting the rest of the church (v6).

### Ch 6 = Lawsuits

He warns them **not** to go into the **heathen courts** of the world with cases against each other (v1-8). He says suffer the wrong but don't make it public to the world (v7). Paul says that although all things are lawful to him, he will not be brought under the power of any (v12) and they must flee fornication (v18) as they do not have the ownership of their own body (v19). He that joins his body to a prostitute joins her body so that they become as one (v16). Like today, people view their bodies as their own - you know they are living out the popular song 'It's My Life and I'll do What I Want'. No Paul says, our actual physical body is the temple where the Holy Ghost lives (v19).

### Ch 7 = Marriage

The church had deteriorated to such a low state, that Paul has to outline "Marriage 101" from the beginning. It seems odd, that while the Corinthians were enquiring about the rules and regulations of husband and wife details (v1-35), they were blind to the elephant in the room – a man was fornicating with his father's wife!

As we read Paul and his views on marriage, we get the impression he seems to know a fair bit about the intimacies of married life. Was Paul ever married with a wife? Now some commentators conclude that Paul has been married and had lost his wife and this conclusion is reached for the following reason. In order to vote as a member of the Sanhedrin (Acts 26:10) it was a necessary prerequisite to have a wife. Therefore

they assume that Paul had been married with a wife as he seems to be a member. However a closer study of the scriptures reveals that he was **not** a member but was merely **given** the authority to act on the chief priests' behalf (Read Acts 26:10 carefully). This makes sense because along with many things that were revealed to him in the third heaven (2Cor 12:2-4), God could have easily put this knowledge of marriage into his head as well.

## Ch 8 = Idols and liberty

In this chapter he urges Christians not to use their liberty to destroy the faith of weaker Christians (v1-13). This is not only about the eating of meat, but attending social functions and gatherings of unsaved friends where a lot of immoral things could happen (also set out in 1Cor 10:14-33). "Well" some might say "If it's alright for Bob, and he's a Christian, to go to certain places, and not be affected, then it's alright for me!"

## Ch 9 = Ministry wage

The question was "Should ministers receive pay and support?" (v7) "Should they be able to take their wives with them on trips?" (v5) "Should the shepherd have some of the benefit of the fleece he takes off the sheep?" (v7). Paul says "Yes" (v14) although he never did (v18-19). He supported himself by working at his trade of tent making. He wanted to be servant to all but mastered by none v19).

He goes on further to say one of the abilities that the Lord had given him was that he was able to appear all things to all men in order to win some to Christ (v20-23). Some mistakenly equate being a **castaway** with loss of salvation (v27) but this is **not** correct. He would be still saved but a cast-off. A fuller understanding of this can be gained from studying the scriptures where branches indeed may be broken off from the tree's goodness and nourishment, but this is not the same as being **cut out** of the tree (Romans 11:15-27). An example would be Demas - was he saved? Yes! (Col 4:14) Would he have lost his salvation by going back out into the world? (2Tim 4:10). No! He was simply a castaway. Now some ministers are taken out of the ministry because they will not exercise the physical discipline necessary to remain. Their body and its appetites start to dictate to them rather than the other way around. Would Paul have lost his salvation because he didn't keep under his body? No! And this is the only meaning that can be attached to this word.

## Ch 10 = Temptations

Using old testament ensamples (v11) of **lusting** (v6 Num 11:4, 34); **idolatry** (v7 Ex 32:6); **fornication** (v8 Num 25:9); **tempting Christ** (v9 Ex 17:7) and **murmuring** (v10 Ex 16), Paul names these as common temptations for Christians. These can destroy a Christian but Paul issues hope by saying that God will make a way to escape (v13).

In the last half of the chapter (v14-33) Paul once again urges not to use liberty as a means to hurt or destroy the conscience of another Christian, Gentile or Jew (v32).

## Ch 11 = Follow Paul

Paul mentions the word 'ordinances' (v2-3) and immediately everyone thinks there are only two – the Lord's supper and water baptism. Indeed there is a set belief among many Christians that water baptism and the Lord's supper are the only two ordinances for the church today. Is this correct?

We must remember that Paul is writing to a **disorderly** church, a church out of order. They were in **profound disorder**. The following outlines just a few of the **sins** of the Corinthian church:

It had a man having **physical relations** with his **father's wife**; there were **quarrels** and **divisions**; there was the fleshy misapplication of **tongues**; there was **division** and **vain glory**; they were keeping company with professing Christians who were **fornicators, covetous, idolators, railers, drunkards and extortioners**; they were **unfaithful stewards**; they were taking each other into the **world's courts**; they were **defiling the consciences** of the weak in faith; they were **not** keeping their **bodies under control**; they were **lusting, fornicating, murmuring, idolatrous** and **tempting Christ**.

Today's church has misinterpreted the meaning of an ordinance. The proper meaning of the word 'ordinance' is to **bring back order** and to correct behaviour, and in this case, to correct the **wild excesses** of the fleshy Corinthian church.

It is to be noted that Paul states "... keep the ordinances, as I **delivered** (the **past tense** which was earlier in 1 Cor 1-10) *them to you.*"

Here, Paul was in fact referring to **instructions PREVIOUSLY given**. We note that when Paul talks to the saved, he entreats them not orders them. This is what ordinances are – they appeal **to reason**. Paul is certainly not averse to giving orders as he directly orders them concerning 'the collection for the saints' (1Cor 16:1). But **ordinances are not orders**. They are instructions on how to bring back and **set in order**, the **proper behaviours** in the church.

Now, are we to suppose that the **symbolic** ceremonies of water baptism and the Lord's supper would do this? Hardly!

What Paul required was a **change of the heart** and **behaviour**, a **repentance**, **not an outward ceremony!**

Indeed, some of the Thessalonian church were **walking disorderly** by not working and being busybodies, and Paul wanted a change of their behaviour. He certainly **didn't** recommend more water baptism and Lord's supper to accomplish this.

So when people walk disorderly, as in the case of the church at Corinth, Paul had the authority, and could certainly order them, but instead, as he does in Colossians and Ephesians, he uses the 'velvet fist' approach, gently but firmly, as to sons in a family.

What were the **earlier ordinances** and instructions that had already been delivered to them in the **first ten** chapters? There were **many!** The Corinthian church needed them all as they were a church full of the flesh.

'Ordinances' are the procedures and instructions necessary to **correct and keep right order** in an institution. You will note that Paul doesn't use the word 'ordinances' for any other church.

**Some of Paul's ordinances were - 1:10** no divisions; **1:31** glory in the Lord; **2:13** compare spiritual with spiritual; **3:8** reward for own labour; **3:13-15** take heed how you build; **3:16-17** be holy; **3:20-21** no vain glory; **4:1-2**

be a faithful steward; **4:6** don't be puffed up; **4:16** be followers of Paul; **5:1** no fornication; **5:11** no eating with professing Christians who are fornicators, covetous, idolaters, railers, drunkards, extortioners; **5:12** judge those within; **6:1-8** don't be judged in the world's courts; **6:9-10** no inheritance; **6:18** flee fornication; **7:1-40** marriage advice; **8:13** don't defile the conscience of the weak; **9:7** soldiers worthy to be paid; **9:19** be servant to all; **9:24** run for the prize **9:27** keep the body under; **10: 6-14** cease lusting, idolatry, fornication, tempting Christ, murmuring; **10:32** all things edify not; **10:32** give none offence.

Paul is saying that keeping the symbolic and formal ceremonies of the Lord's supper and water baptism have **nothing** to do with correcting the **out of control behavior** at Corinth.

No, Paul is wanting something more concrete than rituals and ceremonies.

Paul needed ordinances for this sinful and disorderly church.

Paul wanted true repentance and changes in their sinful behavior.

The Church at Corinth was **unworthily** (1 Cor 11:27) keeping up appearances with **many Lord's suppers** and **water baptisms** (1Cor 1:17) as an **outward** show, but what the Lord wanted was a changed heart.

Indeed the Lord reminds us of a similar situation through the prophet Isaiah to Judah (Is 1:10-15), where he calls them Sodom. "Stop the ceremonies! I want true repentance - a change of heart!"

Now in the matter of **headship and authority** (v3), Paul lists the order 1. God 2. Christ 3. Man 4. Woman. Feminists and weak men, 'christian' and otherwise, get all upset over this chapter. The Corinthian church was a church with wrong order - there were women Bible teachers, pastors, healers, mystics and so on. They were running the church **and their husbands**.

The basic meaning is this - women are to look like women with longer hair as this is her covering that covers her head (v15). **Is it about women wearing hats in church?** No. The answer is that if a woman has a crew cut, closely shaved and looks like a man, this is wrong. A man is to have short hair as it is a shame for him to have long hair (v4). But if a woman is shaved or shorn she needs to cover her head with a scarf or something (v6). Deliberately bald women, as we shall explain, are actually saying "Look I'm not as God wants me to be. I thumb my nose at him. Furthermore, I am not under the authority of any man either." It is rebellion. And indeed, the various array, demonstrations and fashions of hats and scarfs can certainly create envy and division among women as they ever-so 'shyly', 'humbly' and 'shamefacedly', or indeed arrogantly 'in your face', sport them about.

Now Paul goes on to explain that because a woman is made for the man, her longer hair shows she is in subjection to the man (v8-9). This is called having power on her head (v19). She is under his authority. The best way to explain **what power on her head** (v10) means is as follows. When a policeman speaks to you in an official capacity, **he must wear his cap! Why?** This shows that he has **the power of the government behind him and all the authority that goes with that**. That's why when you are pulled over on the side of the road, the approaching policeman will always put his cap on before he speaks to you through your car window.

So similarly when a woman has long hair this is a sign that she is **under**, and indeed **has**, the authority of her husband. It is a glory for a woman to have long hair (v15). Why is long hair a sign to the angels? (v10). Simple, when the sons of God, angels, came down from heaven and had physical intercourse with women, they grievously overstepped the mark (Gen 6:2, 4). This was a gross perversion in God's eyes. The women were rebellious and had short hair. How do we know this? The pattern for women to have longer hair and men to have short hair, had been set forth by God with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden.

Now for God to flood the whole earth 1500 years or so after Eden, means that in that time frame the world had completely rejected God's prescription for the hair distinction between men and women. Obviously, one would think that men had become more effeminate looking with long hair and women looked more like men.

So it would seem that God endorses his Edenic rule that women are to have longer hair, and this it will be a sign for all eternity to both men and women, that women are subject to earthly men and not to heavenly angels.

It's like today, working women, for whatever reason, have to spend too much time on their hair looking after it. And here's the problem, as families split up and divorce, women are forced out to work. Women have to 'become' men, look like men, act like men in order to succeed. But this is all against what God ordains and wants.

And Paul makes it very clear to all "If you don't like this rule, then please feel free to leave as we have no custom or dealings with you (v16).

Next he says that there **must** be **heresies** in churches. Now this seems an odd thing to say until one realises that those who labour in word and doctrine will become evident and be the approved ones in the church (1 Tim 5:17).

Now another problem was that people were treating the Lord's supper as an excuse to 'pig out', eat to excess and ignore others with their bad manners (v20-22). These events had food and drink for all. They certainly weren't the chopped down bits of crackers we have today. He says that they had missed the meaning of the Lord's supper altogether. First of all, it wasn't to have a big meal (they should do that at home v22) and secondly, it was to examine yourself (v28).

Not to examine yourself is the sin unto death mentioned later by the apostle John (1 John 5:16). People were treating the Lord's supper lightly and were getting weak, sickly and dying (v23-34). If they would examine themselves, they would not bring themselves unto condemnation (v34).

## Ch 12 = Spiritual gifts

Now chapters 12, 13 and 14 have become the stumbling block for many as "... *they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*" 2 Pet 3:16.

Oh yes dear reader, it's that bad in churches around the world today as **lives are ruined, divorces are common and faith destroyed through misunderstanding and misinterpretation of these chapters.**

First, it should be noted that this epistle of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, was written about one year **BEFORE** Paul writes the epistle to the Romans. When comparing the gifts of the Spirit in both accounts, **the list in Romans seems positively 'dull and dreary' to those who would wrongly misuse the Corinthian gifts for worldly and personal gain!** It would seem that God had 'thinned out' and reduced down the Corinthian gift list to only include **prophecy** as contained in the Roman list. Furthermore, Roman list has been **greatly expanded to over thirty in number** to include gifts not mentioned in the Corinthian account.

Look at the following table:

<b>GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT</b>	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Cor 12:8-10</b>	<b>Rom 12:6-21</b> (written one year later than 1 <sup>st</sup> Corinthians)
<b>"gifts that could be open to the misuse of spectacular, showy and worldly demonstrations"</b>	<b>"Of course on the other hand, this list of apparently more 'humble' gifts, can be abused by those who would exhibit their 'proud humility' called 'voluntary humility ... vainly puffed up by his fleshy mind' (Col 2:18). Yes, the flesh and the devil never let up.</b>
<p><sup>8</sup> For to one is given by the Spirit the <b>word of wisdom</b>; to another the <b>word of knowledge</b> by the same Spirit;</p> <p><sup>9</sup> To another <b>faith</b> by the same Spirit; to another the <b>gifts of healing</b> by the same Spirit;</p> <p><sup>10</sup> To another the</p>	<p><sup>6</sup> Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether <b>PROPHECY</b>, let us prophesy according to <b>the proportion of faith</b>;</p> <p><sup>7</sup> Or <b>ministry</b>, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on <b>teaching</b>;</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Or he that exhorteth, on <b>exhortation</b>: he that <b>giveth</b>, let him do it with simplicity; he that <b>ruleth, with diligence</b>; he that sheweth <b>mercy</b>, with cheerfulness.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> Let <b>love be without dissimulation</b>. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> Be <b>kindly affectioned</b> one to another with brotherly love; in honour</p>

<p><b>working of miracles;</b> to another <b>PROPHECY;</b> to another <b>discerning of spirits;</b> to another <b>divers kinds of tongues;</b> to another the <b>interpretation of tongues:</b></p>	<p><b>preferring one another;</b> <sup>11</sup> <b>Not slothful</b> in business; <b>fervent</b> in spirit; <b>servng the Lord;</b> <sup>12</sup> <b>Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation;</b> continuing <b>instant in prayer;</b> <sup>13</sup> Distributing to the <b>necessity of saints;</b> given to <b>hospitality.</b> <sup>14</sup> <b>Bless</b> them which persecute you: bless, and <b>curse not.</b> <sup>15</sup> <b>Rejoice with them</b> that do rejoice, and <b>weep</b> with them that weep. <sup>16</sup> Be of the <b>same mind one toward another. Mind not high things,</b> but <b>condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.</b> <sup>17</sup> Recompense to <b>no man evil for evil. Provide things honest</b> in the sight of all men. <sup>18</sup> If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, <b>live peaceably</b> with all men. <sup>19</sup> Dearly beloved, <b>avenge not yourselves,</b> but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. <sup>20</sup> Therefore if thine enemy hunger, <b>feed him;</b> if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. <sup>21</sup> Be not overcome of evil, but <b>overcome evil with good.</b></p>
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**And why would that be? Could it be that the Lord was reducing the number of spiritual gifts of the Corinthian church because of their misuse?** Could it be that the Corinthians were using the gifts for all the wrong reasons of showing off, personal gain, different factions attracting followers to themselves, showing they were more spiritual than others and this led to creating divisions, lusting, idolatry, fornication, tempting Christ and murmuring – all those things mentioned in chapter ten (10:6-10). Could it be that God puts a brake on all these 'showy' gifts? Why? They were meant to profit the congregation as a whole, to profit **withal, all to profit!**

As the scripture says "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, **that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,** which is your reasonable service. (Rom 12:1). Could it be that God was seeing the misuse of the Corinthian gifts as bringing church services into the realm of a three-ringed circuses?

Is Paul saying to the Roman church "Look dear ones in Rome, we've just had dreadful stuff happening in the Corinthian church and I'm sure you've all heard about it with factions, immorality, lawsuits, meats offered to idols, Lord's supper abuse, false apostles, divorces, marriage problems, disorderly conduct of assemblies, lack of ministry support, self-promotion, women running the church, resurrection heresies and the list goes on. They are carnal babies. Now we don't want you to turn out like them. So God is taking away the **word of wisdom, word of knowledge, gifts of healing, working of miracles, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues** and the **interpretation of tongues.** Hopefully all churches can settle down a bit as these eight gifts are causing all sorts of self-promotion and gain. Now in their place God is substituting more 'humble' gifts to profit the church withal?"

But indeed as you study the scripture, we do find these 'more humble' gifts mentioned in another part of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians. They are not as emphasised but if your 'read between the lines', they are there.

<b>1 Cor 12:28-31</b>	<b>Rom 12:6-21</b> <b>These are the gifts of helps and governments</b>
<p><sup>28</sup> And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, <b>HELPS, GOVERNMENTS,</b> diversities of tongues. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? <sup>30</sup> Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? <sup>31</sup> But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more</p>	<p><sup>6</sup> Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; <sup>7</sup> Or <b>ministry,</b> let us wait on our <b>ministering:</b> or he that teacheth, on teaching; <sup>8</sup> Or he that exhorteth, on <b>exhortation:</b> he that <b>giveth,</b> let him do it with simplicity; he that <b>ruleth, with diligence;</b> he that sheweth <b>mercy,</b> with cheerfulness. <sup>9</sup> Let <b>love be without dissimulation.</b> Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. <sup>10</sup> Be <b>kindly affectioned</b> one to another with brotherly love; in honour <b>preferring one another;</b> <sup>11</sup> <b>Not slothful</b> in business; <b>fervent</b> in spirit; <b>servng the Lord;</b> <sup>12</sup> <b>Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation;</b> continuing <b>instant in prayer;</b> <sup>13</sup> Distributing to the <b>necessity of saints;</b> given to <b>hospitality.</b> <sup>14</sup> <b>Bless</b> them which persecute you: bless, and <b>curse not.</b> <sup>15</sup> <b>Rejoice with them</b> that do rejoice, and <b>weep</b> with them that weep. <sup>16</sup> Be of the <b>same mind one toward another. Mind not high things,</b> but <b>condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.</b> <sup>17</sup> Recompense to <b>no man evil for evil. Provide things honest</b> in the sight of all men. <sup>18</sup> If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, <b>live peaceably</b> with all men.</p>

excellent way.

<sup>19</sup> Dearly beloved, **avenge not yourselves**, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

<sup>20</sup> Therefore if thine enemy hunger, **feed him**; if he thirst, **give him drink**: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

<sup>21</sup> Be not overcome of evil, but **overcome evil with good**.

Can you see that? 'Helps' and 'governments', listed as gifts in the Corinthian column, are in fact **the bulk of the Roman list**. What had happened was the fleshy Corinthians had down played, and indeed quickly forgotten, what the gifts of **helps** and **governments** really were. So God reminds them one year later in the expanded Roman list.

**'HELPS' AND 'GOVERNMENTS' WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT GIFTS AFTER ALL! THESE WERE TO PROFIT WITHAL! THE CHURCH WOULD GET MOST BENEFIT FROM THESE LESS OBVIOUS GIFTS! (1Cor 12:7)**

Of course concurrent with that was the fact that miracles, healings and tongues were swiftly disappearing from the landscape, having served their purpose to impress unbelieving Jews in the congregation (1Cor 14:22).

## Ch 13 = Charity

Paul outlines a more excellent way in this chapter. It is self-explanatory for most of the thirteen verses. The chapter is book-ended with two amazing statements (v1,13) that leave us in no doubt as to the importance that God places on one Christian's love for another. As Paul says if you think yourself a prophet or spiritual (I Cor 14:37) ponder a little while on this chapter thirteen.

If ever a Christian was called to self-examination, this is certainly the chapter in the Bible that should put all Christians on notice. Who can say they have ever vaguely fulfilled God's requirements and commandments of this chapter?

Now for those who would say that Christians are exempt from God's commandments and laws, we are to be soberly reminded of Paul's injunction in chapter fourteen "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.**" 1 Cor 14:37. The law indeed is the school master to take us to Christ (Gal 3:24) and now under the law of liberty (James 1:25; 2:12) we are taken back to the laws that govern Christian living. These are the laws that would have the Christian saying "Mmmm! I know I am made free (Gal 5:1) but what would please God in this situation that I may serve him out of love?"

It's called charity and this is the exclusive special term of love that Christians should show to other Christians. Christians may show love to the unsaved in the world but are not required to show and demonstrate charity to it. Charity falls into the category of fervent love (Rom 12:11; 2Cor 7:7). The greatest of faith, hope and charity is charity. You may not have great faith or have enduring hope, but all may have charity (v13). The person that seemingly has no 'talents' in the Lord or those confined to sick beds and wheelchairs, can be the ones most rewarded in heaven through their demonstration of charity to other Christians and through their fervent prayers (James 5:16). Our physical limitations are no barrier to God's economy of effort and reward (Is 55:8-9).

## Ch 14 = Tongues

If there would be one chapter and one topic in the Bible that was seemingly irrelevant and inconsequential for Christians to waste time in discussion, the one on **tongues** might qualify.

Questions:

1. "What do you think about a giraffe trying to fly thinking it's a bird?" "**Ridiculous!**" you say.
2. "What about a brick layer entering a block of concrete in a cake making contest?" "**Fraud!**" the judges cry.
3. "Did you hear about the porpoise trying to climb a tree?" "**Never in 6 trillion years!**" says anyone with some common sense.
4. "What about the leper walking into a synagogue?" "**Imposter!**"
5. "What about 'bahshah-boomba-dala-sho-deeda' is the language of angels and means "Oh my wonderful people, you will be soon mightily blessed with money, cars and real estate." "**Yes, that really makes sense!**" exclaims the 'tongue' speaker
6. "Do you know that they've discovered an ancient Egyptian dialect that says 'koora-doola-ababa-dow-ray-mebee' which when translated means "Hold the faith all who believe, your time of trouble will soon be at an end." "**Mmmm! Powerful message!**" agrees the 'tongue' speaker.

**Are Christians that gullible? Apparently so!** Anyone can spot the first four but the next two?

For all the hubbub, tumult and uproar that the topic of tongues has caused, it only serves to illuminate and highlight the very thing that Paul writes about to this wicked and fleshy Corinthian church. Self-promoting factions were seeming to be more spiritual with their misuse of unknown tongues. In the case today, the seemingly spiritual are lauding their **'self-given gift' of mouth noises** (and that's all they are - they are not unknown tongues) to the alienation of those less spiritual than they.

In both cases, the Corinthian **unknown tongues speakers** and today's **'bathroom-baby-babblers'**, we see a group professing 'gnostic, deep and hidden' knowledge, eagerly putting themselves on their own 'tower of Babel pedestals' to the envy, chagrin and alienation of the spiritual peasants that surround them. Indeed, they even feel pity for them.

A definition should suffice to end all discussion in Christian churches about this topic, however we will devote a large space to examining most verses to show what the Bible says about this topic.

We **marvel** (Paul in Galatians 1:6) as to how Satan can use the flesh to side track Christians, as the phrase says, to **major on the minor**.

**THE BIBLE DEFINITION OF A TONGUE IS ONE OF THE 17 LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT PENTECOST**  
(Acts 2:11-14)

1. At Pentecost there were seventeen **KNOWN languages** – there were the **seventeen tongues**. If anyone claims today that they speak in tongues, the Bible clearly list what they are. You can say to them "Oh you're tongues speaker then? Which one of the seventeen is it? You know tongues were for unbelieving Jews only from one of the seventeen regions (Acts 1:8-11)? Furthermore, if you are saved, they aren't for you anyhow! (Acts 14:22)"
2. Now in a meeting, if one the **seventeen languages** was spoken and was **not known** to anyone in the meeting, it was termed an **unknown tongue**.
3. Today, what is uttered is **never** one of the seventeen languages (Acts 1:8-11) – it is simply **RANDOM MOUTH NOISES**.

Put it this way, we have three classes:

<b>Class 1</b> = one or more of the <b>17 languages &amp; known</b> by someone in a meeting	<b>Paul only knows about these</b>
<b>Class 2</b> = one or more of the <b>17 languages &amp; unknown</b> by anyone in a meeting	

<b>Class 3</b> = <b>being made up frauds, todays random mouth noises are never mentioned at Pentecost</b>	<b>Do you reckon Paul would have a good chuckle?</b>
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So you can see that on this basis how futile it is to go further in discussion. But we will.

<p><b>1 Corinthians 14:1-33</b></p> <p><sup>1</sup> Follow after charity, and desire spiritual <i>gifts</i>, but rather that ye may prophesy.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> For he that speaketh in an <b>unknown tongue</b> speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth <i>him</i>; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men <i>to</i> edification, and exhortation, and comfort.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> He that speaketh in an <b>unknown tongue</b> edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> I would that ye all spake with <b>tongues</b>, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater <i>is</i> he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with <b>tongues</b>, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with <b>tongues</b>, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?</p> <p><sup>7</sup> And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?</p>	<p><b>Class 2</b></p> <p><b>Class 2</b></p> <p><b>Class 1</b> <b>Class 1</b></p> <p><b>Class 1</b></p>
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<p><sup>8</sup> For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?</p> <p><sup>9</sup> So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them <i>is</i> without signification.</p> <p><sup>11</sup> Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh <i>shall be</i> a barbarian unto me.</p> <p><sup>12</sup> Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual <i>gifts</i>, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.</p> <p><sup>13</sup> Wherefore let him that speaketh in an <b>unknown tongue</b> pray that he may interpret.</p> <p><sup>14</sup> For if I pray in an <b>unknown tongue</b>, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.</p> <p><sup>16</sup> Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?</p> <p><sup>17</sup> For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.</p> <p><sup>18</sup> I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:</p> <p><sup>19</sup> Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that <i>by my voice</i> I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an <b>unknown tongue</b>.</p> <p><sup>20</sup> Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.</p> <p><sup>21</sup> In the law it is written, With <i>men of</i> other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.</p> <p><sup>22</sup> Wherefore <b>tongues</b> are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying <i>serveth</i> not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.</p> <p><sup>23</sup> If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with <b>tongues</b>, and there come in <i>those that are</i> unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?</p> <p><sup>24</sup> But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or <i>one</i> unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:</p> <p><sup>25</sup> And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on <i>his</i> face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.</p> <p><sup>26</sup> How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a <b>tongue</b>, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.</p> <p><sup>27</sup> If any man speak in an <b>unknown tongue</b>, <i>let it be</i> by two, or at the most <i>by</i> three, and <i>that</i> by course; and let one interpret.</p> <p><sup>28</sup> But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.</p>	<p><b>Class 2</b></p> <p><b>Class 2</b></p> <p><b>Class 2</b></p> <p><b>Class 2</b></p> <p><b>Class 1</b></p> <p><b>Class 1</b></p> <p><b>Class 1</b></p> <p><b>Class 1</b></p> <p><b>Class 2</b></p>
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You see? It's a useless exercise if you try and shoe-horn **Class 3 Random Mouth Noises** without meaning into the discussion.

It's like a size fourteen foot attempting to cram itself into a size six shoe! Totally out of place! It doesn't fit!

**Well what about prophecy?** Surely that hasn't finished? Yes it has and here's the reason. At the time of Paul writing this epistle, there are **another 20 New Testament books to be written** – they were 2 Corinthians, Mark, Luke, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Acts, Titus, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Jude, Hebrews, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, John and **Revelation** being the last one. You see Paul is not so arrogant and puffed up to say that what was yet to be written would not contain prophecy. Of course, the book of Revelation is exactly that – John foretells the future! But the Babblers misunderstand when they think they speak with the tongues of angels like Paul (1Cor 13:1). No they don't. Paul doesn't. He is saying "I don't, but **if I could** speak with the tongues of angels ...". Furthermore, the tongues of angels are not one of the seventeen languages at Pentecost.

Now the **woman's role** the last part of the chapter (v34-35) is very clear and to get the complete picture, we add other scriptures (1Tim 2; I Tim 5; Titus 2; Eph 5)

## Ch 15 = Resurrection denial

Some in the church were denying the body resurrection of the Jesus Christ (v3-22; v12) and this was destroying one of the reasons for being a Christian, and that is, to bodily have a home in heaven (v35-58). Paul also clearly states that there is no substitution baptism for the dead (v29). "Uncle Bob's died. Look, I'll stand in his place and you can baptize me as his substitute, and that way we know he'll get to heaven." Mmmmmm! Wacky stuff, but that's what was going on in the Corinthian churches.

## **Ch 16 = Travel arrangements**

For the poor saints in Jerusalem Paul was taking up a collection (v1-4). His travel plans (v5-9). Very stern warning of anathema of a ban, curse and rejection (v22-24).

By Harley Hitchcock.

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