

GRACE AND GLORY

Lessons in Corinthians

The Divine Order of the SONS OF GOD

By A. S. Copley

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For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city - Titus 1:5

PROLOGUE

"Whereof (of the Church) I am made a minister, according to the stewardship of God which is given to me for you to complete the Word of God" - Col. 1:25. Of the twenty-one epistles in the New Testament, fourteen were written by the Apostle Paul. His letters occupy five times as much space as the other seven though they were written by four different men - Peter, James, John and Jude. This ought at once to lend weight to Paul's letters. Another very important fact is this, that those four did not write about the Church, nor to her. (The Revelation to John is not included in this contrast; for it stands alone as a different last-day message.) Paul's writings alone contain this message. It is of exceeding great moment to know this fact.

The arrangement, or order of his letters as we now have them is doubtless correct, even of God, beginning with Romans and ending with Hebrews. They comprise the commencement, development and culmination of "the Gospel of God," for this parenthetical age -- the sphere of truth which is transcendently wonderful, deep and glorious, because it is the fullest expression of Divine Grace.

Relation of the Epistle

Romans stands related to the other epistles as a hub to a wheel. All the essential features of "The Gospel" are con-centered in the letter to the Church in Rome. From it radiate all the burning spokes of Assembly teaching. It is the foundation letter of which the other thirteen constitute a grand and beautiful superstructure. Be sure that you have Romans well in hand and in heart. Acts answers to Genesis while Exodus answers to Romans in the Old Testament. First Corinthians answers to Numbers, and Second Corinthians answers to Leviticus. The first is setting the Church in order, even as Moses set up the Tabernacle in the wilderness; and the second is the priestly ministry in the Church, even as Aaron and his sons ministered in the Tabernacle.

There are seven main divisions in the First Epistle.

1. The Divine Scheme - Chapters 1-3.
2. The Divine Stewardship given to Paul - Chapters. 4 - 6. It is exceedingly essential to understand this point and see the place that God gave to him.
3. The Divine Callings, or ranks foreshadowed - Chapter 7.
4. The Divine Foundation, fourfold - Chapters. 8 - 11.
5. The Divine Equipment for the Assembly- Chapters. 12-14. Compare 2 Tim 1:7.
6. The Divine Goal. or the Resurrection - Chapter 15.
7. The Divine Revelation, or Eternal Salutation - Chapter 16.

THE FIRST EPISTLE
FIRST DIVISION
THE DIVINE SCHEME
Chapters 1 to 3

Materials for the Tabernacle were gathered. Likewise the materials for the Assembly of God. Hence, the primary thought in this first grand division is "Gathering." These three chapters fall into three sublime sub divisional -

1. The Gathering Center, One Name, even the Lord Jesus Anointed - Chapter 1.
2. The Gathering Power, One Spirit, even The Holy Spirit - Chapter 2. And
3. The Gathering Purpose, One Temple, the Dwelling Place for God - Chapter 3.

How marvelous that at the threshold of God's New Testament House we see at a glance the three personalities of the Godhead, as the absolute requirement of order in the Church. To start right is to continue and culminate right. "The Name," which we see emblazoned over the doorway of this Epistle of Order, is "The Name of our Lord Jesus Anointed" - Chapter 1:10. Why is God not put first Because

Jesus, not God, is the Head of the Assembly. "The Man Christ Jesus," not Jesus as God, is the One Head of His Body, the Church. See Chapter 11:3. Then the Holy Spirit, the Executor of the Divine will among men, is set forth in Chapter 2 in six aspects as the power necessary to bring men to Christ, and show them the Headship of Christ. Of course, Chapter 3 unfolds the wonderful purpose of such a union of Christ and His people. So that finally it will be said: "The Tabernacle of God is with men" -- Rev. 21:3. But Christ and His people will constitute that tabernacle - Eph. 2:22.

1. The Gathering Center, Christ - Chapter 1. The first three verses are the fitting introduction. Paul addresses all believers, because this is a general epistle, written to all the Church. All believers, because they are believers and are in Christ, are "sanctified in Christ Jesus;" and they are also "called Saints, or holy ones," not called to be saints.

Verses 4 to 9 show the full provision which God has made IN Christ for His people. The reader should study these verses closely till their breadth and meaning grip him. This is not what we have experienced; but what Jesus has for us because of His experience in death, burial, resurrection and ascension. The preposition "by" in verses 4 and 5 should be "in." All the fullness of God's Grace "is given us IN Christ Jesus." "We are enriched IN Him," in all things. His wealth is ours. The favor of God to His Son is also to usward who believe. What He has provided through His Son, what He offers in His Son, that will He make good. "God is faithful" - Verse 9. What a statement! God is back of all the arrangement and arraignment set forth in the following pages of this epistle. If we would be faithful to God, we must first see His provision for us and have a persuasion of His faithfulness to men. Divine fullness of provision and faithfulness meet us on the doorstep. Praise His Name! "The Name of our Lord Jesus Christ" in letters of fire hangs over the archway. Verses 10 to 17 powerfully announce the oneness of Christ, that is, the Christ in mystery, or Christ and His Church - He their Head and they His Body. The supreme question of this epistle is this: "Is Christ divided?"

-- Verse 13. There can be no true Church order if this basic truth is not observed. It is the very burden of the epistle to maintain Christ as the One only Head, and the Church as One Body. The Apostle does not teach us how to make the saints one, but endeavors to show us that we are one, not one apart from Christ by human legislation, but one in Christ, one with Christ, because we are already one in Him. All the troubles of Christendom are outlined in this epistle, even as the cause of all her troubles is announced in Chapter 1:10-13. There is only one authoritative Name, "Jesus Anointed Lord," and only one recognized Body. Departure from these two facts is sure to cause trouble and division. Likewise, trouble and strife and divisions can never be removed by any other means than by returning practically, not in theory, to these relationships. Saints beat the air, beat one another, call councils, adopt rules, boom projects, publish warnings, ignore some, and exalt others, build wood and hay and stubble in massive heaps; but the end they hope to reach flees further away than ever. But to once see Christ as Head and all His people as One with Him because joined to Him, is to see strife vanish before breakfast. Hallelujah!

Therefore, Brother Paul does not put undue stress upon water baptism, because baptism is not the Gospel; it is only a memorial which "faith that worketh by love," gladly observes. We are saved by Grace, not by water; saved by faith, not by baptism. Christ is the Savior; not Paul. Christ is the Head; not Paul, or Peter, or any modern apostle. See Chapter 3:5.

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none effect; for the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God." The remaining verses of this chapter announce Christ crucified as the very necessary basis of Church truth. And how wisely the Apostle thwarts the attempts to preach even the crucified Christ with enticing speech, nice phrases, eloquent periods, popular illustrations, lest the hearers miss the truth and see the vehicle that carries it. Just before Jesus went to Calvary, He advertised the foolishness and offense of His death in saying: "All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered" - Mark 14:27. This is how Divine Grace is so offensive - it declares the absolute worthlessness and sinfulness of the old creation, and the just necessity of putting it to death forever. The Jews stumbled because they, Abraham's seed, God's chosen people, were condemned to die. Their traditions and piety were pronounced filthy rags. Death faced them on every hand. The very heavenly face of Jesus condemned them. But die they would not. And they failed to see that in crucifying the Lord, they crucified themselves.

Here they stumbled. Likewise, the wisdom of the Greeks was declared as the very essence of foolishness by the preaching of the cross. If the Gospel is true, the wisdom of man is false. If Christ is sufficient, then

man in insufficient. If Christ is God's Anointed, then the religious Jew and the wise Greek fall backward and go down in eternal defeat. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men (the Greeks); and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (the Jews).

Wonderful is our God. His Man is the Lord Jesus Christ. God's method is death and resurrection. God's choice is the foolish, the weak, etc. - Verse 27. God's glory is His Son, who was crucified in weakness, but raised in power. Note the conclusion of Chapter 1. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who, out from God is become unto us wisdom, even righteousness and sanctification and redemption."

Man has no righteousness of his own, and of course he cannot live a holy life. But the wisdom of God is displayed in producing a righteousness for fallen man. Christ is God's righteousness for man; hence, he that believeth on Jesus is justified, or counted righteous before God. He stands accepted in Christ, a standing that cannot be imitated, duplicated, or annulled. He is "accepted in the Beloved." However, a just standing, the result of a change of relationship, is not enough to enable one to walk uprightly. Therefore, Christ is become unto us sanctification. He alone is the very life that can live victorious over sin. He lives in the believer. We are not only "holy in Christ Jesus;" but He is our holiness; hence, He is our enabling to live and walk uprightly. "Christ liveth in men," a life of victory over all. But we dwell in a mortal frame, and some day, if Jesus tarries this frail bark must be hauled into port and set aside as worn out. Death and burial are inevitable. Hence, Christ is become our resurrection. We shall not remain in the tomb. "I am the resurrection and the life," said Jesus. Thus Divine wisdom is wonderfully shown forth in Christ being our standing, or acceptance with God; He is our walk throughout life; and finally He is our triumph over death and the grave. Apart from Christ, man is hopelessly sinful, helplessly, weak to live right, and doomed to eternal separation from God. But in Christ, he is freed from sin, made strong in the Lord, and brought into eternal fellowship with God.

2. The Gathering Power, the Holy Spirit - Chapter 2. Here are six salient sayings about the offices of the Spirit in bringing Christ to men, and men to Christ. Paul's private and public ministry was only "in demonstration of the Spirit." God's provision for us and the "deep things of God, "He hath revealed unto us by His Spirit," for "the Spirit searcheth all things." He searches in God and brings forth for us His deep truth, and makes us understand them. And the Holy Spirit only can make known the things of God, for He only "knoweth the things of God." Now we have received the Spirit which is of God - and in no sense the spirit of the world. Hence, the scheme and purpose of the execution and operations of the scheme and in no sense the spirit of the world. Hence, as the scheme and purpose of the execution and operations of the scheme are wholly Divine. Therefore, the natural man, though he be very religious, cannot receive the things of the Spirit.

By some it is claimed that Paul meant by verse 2 that he would teach only the beginnings of the Christian life to the Corinthians, and not the deep things. The above statements, with others in this same epistle, positively prove the fallacy of such a view. His endeavor always was to lead all his readers on into the depths. His contrast in that verse was not with the deeper teachings, but with the wisdom of the world. Compare verse 1. He stoutly resisted the very semblance of worldly things, it's speech, it's wisdom, it's methods, it's spirit. This must have been very important, for he announced the same attitude in Chapter 1:17. That God might get all the glory, not only for redeeming and saving men, but also for making known this great salvation, the Apostle takes the place of absolute dependence upon Him, the very opposite of man's method, and does all things in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit.

"But we have the mind of Christ." What a fine conclusion to this chapter. No man can instruct the Lord; but believers are instructed by Him. And more -- as Christ is our life, so also is He our mind. We may and should take Him for all things. This is weakness; but this is also reliable strength.

3. The Gathering Purpose, a Dwelling Place for God - Chapter 3. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man corrupt the temple of God, him shall God bring to corruption, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" - Verses 16, 17. As

there is but one gathering center, even Jesus Christ, and only one gathering power, even the Holy Spirit, "who worketh all things in all;" so there can be only one habitation for the Divine Presence: and this is termed "the temple of God." Verse 9 announces that the believers collectively "are God's husbandry, or farm, God's building." The oneness of Christ and His people is continually held before our view. "Now he (Paul) that planteth and he (Apollus) that watereth are one; for we are laborers together with God" - Verses 8, 9. How beautiful this all is. In closing the former chapter and introducing this one, the Apostle speaks of three classes of people, viz.: "the natural man," or the unregenerate, "the spiritual man," or he who is walking in the Holy Spirit and growing up into Christ, and "the carnal," or fleshly, that is, believers

who do not walk after the Spirit, but after the flesh. These latter he terms "babes in Christ." They are saved, for they are in Christ; but they are still babes. The proofs of babyhood are four - "Not able to bear meat;" "envying, strife and divisions among you;" "walk as men;" and hold some other one as head instead of Christ. See verse 4 and Chapter 1:12. By this quartette portraiture we know unmistakably who are carnal, or spiritual. Study these four fleshly singers. These fleshly fellows are not necessarily horse thieves, or highway robbers; they are religious, and led by religious workers; but both leaders and people are carnal. They attempt to do supernatural things by natural means; they follow the traditions of men, exploded theories, or new fangled notions of men, instead of God's word; they are guided by human opinions, or reasoning's, instead of the Spirit of God. The written word is too prosaic, too restrictive, too intricate; its policy is too slow, too tedious, too small of results.

God's Building

And this is the kind of religious workers that the Spirit warns us against in this chapter, because they corrupt the temple of God, break it up into fragments, divide it into sects, and precipitate endless confusion. Men will build; and they cannot build without building material. Hence, if they do not employ the simple, plain, written Word of God, which teaching is here termed "gold and silver and precious stone," they will "teach for doctrines the commandments of men," here called, "wood and hay and stubble." Of course they corrupt God's temple; they spoil God's farm. To build according to the Spirit, using the word of grace as the only fit material, is very slow and unshowy, and brings no glory to the builder, except that he is a "minister, or servant," yea, Paul declares him "not any thing" -- Verses 5, 7. Yes, gold and silver and precious stones are rarities, and small in size. But, God be praised, scriptural building lasts and wears; and the builder shall have an eternal reward. He shall not only be saved "as by fire;" but he shall be amply remunerated in a blaze of eternal glory. Thank God for 'the Day, and the judgment seat of Christ," when every man's work shall be tried by the fire of the truth, - Verse 13.

Woodpiles are showy; haystacks are tall and conspicuous, and stubble rustles and sounds like something were doing. Oh, how the carnal in believers clings to see - able things; how ambitious to work for God, if only it can have its own way and to do things that attract the eye and ear of the people. But observe that in this kind of building there is no gold or real Divinity. God is in the background, if He is in it at all. There is no silver or redemption; it is the religion of self-effort, self-improvement. Calvary is at most "weaved as a scarlet thread" through the teaching. There are no precious stones, or sinners made "living stones" through faith in Jesus. It is simply patching up the old man; it is reformation. Such procedure draws the crowd, gets the hearing and the fame and the money, and a loud call elsewhere. But oh, the deplorable outcome. Baby saints are deceived and hindered from growth; the temple of God, that is, the body of believers, is defiled, or corrupted; and the worker himself at last saved as by fire, while his gigantic woodpile and haystack go up in smoke to mock him before God and all the redeemed.

Oh, beloved reader, let us go the scriptural way and walk in the Spirit, even if we see nothing accomplished. We had better see nothing but the will and favor of Jehovah now; we had better have the consciousness of moving scripturally and in fellowship with the Spirit here, than to see nothing but a great conflagration and sky-blackening smoke, and a painful consciousness of utter and eternal failure at the judgment.

SECOND DIVISION

The Divine Stewardship

Chapters 4 to 6

We cannot possibly over estimate the importance of THIS SECOND DIVISION of First Corinthians. In Chapter 4, his stewardship is announced and established; and in Chapters. 5 and 6, it is proven effectual.

A. Paul's Stewardship Established by seven invincible practical proofs. - Chapter 4, as follows:

First, his faithfulness to God and the truth before his stewardship began. "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and stewards, or housekeepers of the mysteries of God; moreover it is required of stewards, that a faithful man be found" - Vs. 1, 2, Gr. In Chapter 1:1, Paul announces himself an apostle by the will of God, and addresses the Church as one having authority, whose words should be received as of chiefest importance. Here he boldly declares his office. By "us" he means Sosthenes (Chapter 1:1) and Apollos and Timothy - Chapter 4:6, 17. Though he is the chief apostle and housekeeper, yet, others are associated with him. Paul's place in the Divine program was intimated in Chapter 3:10 - "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have

laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." Of course, he means the foundation for the Church. That is he preached Jesus Christ, the only foundation, as no others had done before him - V. 11. But our main point here is that God chose one for his housekeeper of the mysteries, who was beforehand faithful to the light he had seen. "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision," he exclaimed - Acts 26:19. And always afterward he walked in the light. Such a one, God chose to be the dispenser of assembly truth. (Compare Gen. 18:17-19.) Hence,

Second, the blamelessness of Paul's labor - Vs. 3-5. "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by man's day; yea, I examine not mine own self." For "babes in Christ," carnal and walking as men (Chapter 3:1-3) to sit in judgment over his work, or to weigh it on the scales of the men of this age, had no influence with him. For three reasons: "I know nothing against myself;" the Lord is my Judge; and there is a day of judgment coming where all our labors will have praise of God according to our just deserving's. How terrible for children to sit in judgment over their parents, and accept the persons and teaching of others instead of Paul's. That is what Corinth did; and that is what Christendom is doing today in her own hurt.

Third, Paul's example of humility. "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that you might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." Though they were apostles by divine choice, and ministers and stewards of the mysteries, wise master builders, laborers together with God, the chiefest messengers with the chiefest message, yet they did not want the saints to regard them as lords, or heads: and if not them how much less should they regard other men with only a kingdom message, as heads. If anyone could be looked upon as "the big fellow," surely Paul could; but he spurned the very thought of robbing Jesus of the glory which belonged to Him. "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, EVEN AS the Lord GAVE to every man?" - Chapter 3:5.

Fourth, his example of suffering - Vs. 7-13. Not only did Paul and his co-workers reject undue honor, but they were deprived of what was really due to them as ambassadors from heaven. And this is where men draw back from Pauline truth and practice. You can discern carnal men, though they have received the Spirit, by the facts that they boast in their experiences and gifts as if they were not God-given. "Now ye are full," of your own sufficiency; "now ye are rich," in your own successes; "ye have reigned as kings without us," that is, you rule over others, lord it over God's heritage, usurp authority over men's consciences, make demands and place restrictions that are utterly unscriptural, though the time to reign as kings has not yet come, and though no one really reigns without Paul. No one can have victory over the world, the flesh and the devil except by means of Paul's gospel; and none will reign with Christ until Paul reigns with Him. No man can have God's best independent of Paul and his immediate associates - Vs. 7, 8. Hallelujah!

And yet, these are the men whom God set forth to be the last victims of death by devouring beasts, being "made a theater unto the world and to angels and to men." Because they are counted "fools for Christ, weak, and despised, or outlaws," they are the last in the arena, and are subjected to the extremest tortures, even suffering "hunger and thirst, and are naked and buffeted and have no certain dwelling place - made as the filth of the world and the off scrapings of all things unto this day." Self-sufficient saints, wise, strong, honorable, full, rich and powerful, never know such suffering with Christ, they deftly shun it; they keep aloof from Paul's "sect which is everywhere spoken against." In short they shun the grace of God.

Fifth, Paul's plea as their spiritual father. How tenderly this man of sorrows and acquainted with grief appeals to his children. "I write not these things to shame you: but as my beloved sons I warn you; for though ye have ten thousand child-trainers in Christ (they really had none apart from Paul), yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you thru the gospel." How could they ever have forgotten that solemn fact? Surely, he had all right to the following - "Wherefore, I beseech you; be ye imitators of me." It is most becoming and fitting for our children to imitate us and accept our instruction. They should regard us as responsible and unselfishly interested in their highest welfare.

Sixth, persistent concern for his people - "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church" - Vs. 17. Paul's language is freighted with conceit, if he is not inspired to write as he does. Behold how he holds his readers to his own teaching and confirms it by his own manner of life. Note that his ways are "in Christ," and he writes of "a man in Christ." The more we ponder his writings, the more are we persuaded that he had, not only a good and great message, but

THE message; to him was given THE revelation.

Seventh, Paul's final visit to Christendom - Vs. 18-21. "I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will. What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and the spirit of meekness?" He is sure to come. Men may try to dodge his gospel; but they will hear it. God is faithful. He will see to it that all His saints hear the word of grace. Compare Tit. 2:11-15. To those who welcome the truth, it comes in love and tenderness. To those who feel their need and fall on God's mercy, Paul comes with outstretched arms of love and hands full of unspeakable wealth even "our riches in Christ." But to those who refuse him and treat lightly his message, he comes with a rod, that is, in judgment. Whether men hear, or forebear Paul's doctrine, he rightly declares: "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to MY gospel" - Rom. 2:16. What then can be wiser than to accept with all the heart all his wonderful doctrine, and swing out into the full enjoyment and power and practice of the same? If we must meet him, why not meet him in full fellowship with his teaching, and as part of his joy and crown? Why not be imitators of his life that we may be sharers of his eternal reward? Why not accord to the Apostle Paul the place and authority that God has given him in Christ, that we may see and come into the place of wealth and power that is already given us in Christ? Why miss anything that Calvary has purchased for us and that a loving Father freely offers to us?

B. Paul's Authority Effectual - a wrong headship and wrong subjection judged - Chapters. 5 and 6.

The root-cause of the divisions and contentions mentioned in chapters 1 and 3 is shown up in this section. The Holy Spirit had intimated in (Chapter 1:13) that they were due to not holding Christ as the one rightful Head; but here this is positively and powerfully set forth. An unheard of sin broke out - "that one should have his father's wife." That is, a man assumed a headship, a lordship, that was not at all his. Of course that caused envy, strife and factions. Covetousness with its sevenfold branches is back of fornication - Ex. 20:17. Covetousness is termed idolatry - Col. 3:5. Of course this develops into railing, drunkenness and extortion - Vs. 11. "Looking unto Jesus" only, depending upon Him alone, insures safety against coveting and its attendant evils in the natural. But this rank outbreak of sin is a figure of a deeper, more heinous, spiritual fornication in Christendom, corresponding with John's description of the "great harlot" and "her daughters" of Rev. 17, 18. Consider it carefully.

What is God's attitude? Study verses 3-5 with verses 7 and 13. Paul had authority from God to turn the offender over to Satan, that he might go the limit after the flesh, so that if he would not learn his lesson (as he really did - 2 Cor. 2:6-8), his spirit would be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

(What a proof here that he that believeth hath everlasting life; even though his career is utterly useless, yet he is saved, as by fire). Note that Paul, "absent in body, present in spirit," judged this fellow; and that judgment holds good down to the present time. Hence, when we heed verse 13 even as they did, and put away from our fellowship that wicked person, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," Paul's spirit is present, in the same sense as John Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elias." We reject unscriptural headships by disfellowshipping brethren who assume to lord it over God's heritage. By "holding the head," (Christ - Col. 2:19) firmly, though lovingly, we judge this false relationship and turn the perpetrator over to Satan, the author of all anti-Christian relationships. Study the end of every man who has taken an organized leadership, whether written or unwritten, and note how he fell into one carnal effort after another, drew back from clear light and imbibed other unscriptural teachings, to his own eternal hurt and that of his followers. And men who were filled with the Spirit, promising publishers of the latter rain, are falling into this same Corinthian snare. Already they are idolizing the movement, railing at those who stand for the liberty of sonship in Christ, drunk with fascinating growth and dimensions of their institutions and extorting finances to boom their enterprises under the guise of trusting God; and vainly persuading themselves that times are different, men have changed, the Church has failed, God has altered His plan. Thank God for a few who believe that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever," and who gladly "go unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." These dare to heed verse 7.

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened; for even

Christ our passover was sacrificed for us." The old leaven is the old lump, the old Adam, who persists in being the head. By the death of Christ for us, and our death with Him, we have become "a new lump," an "unleavened" lump. Else His sacrifice was in vain. Now we have nothing in common with the old creation. We are joined to the Lord. He alone is our head, our life, our light, our way, our truth, our resurrection, our prize. Hence, how precious is verse 8. "Therefore let us keep the feast, or holy day, not with old leaven." Let us not worship and serve God after the manner of men, and attempt to make God move in carnal religious grooves, limiting and circumscribing the Spirit to human regulations. Our feast, or holy day,

whether it be the individual believers, is spiritual, of the Spirit, and can only be free and effectual, and Christ-exalting, by means of the Spirit. And if Christ receives preeminence, there will be no room for "malice and wickedness." Whatever any one's office, we regard one another as members of one happy family, and "servants one of another." Yes, we feed together, in mutual fellowship on Christ, "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Our true relation to Christ is further established in Chapter 6:13-20. "Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body." Christ should have preeminence in our individual fellowship, allowing no other to mar it. Then He will prove Himself sufficient for even our physical body. Likewise, the Church, the Espoused of Christ, must hold Him only as her loving Head; otherwise, she becomes guilty of adultery. No wonder that so many of God's people have to depend upon one another, flattering and fawning one another.

THIRD DIVISION Ranks Foreshadowed Chapter 7

This chapter is of far greater depth and importance than the casual reader suspects. We need to look well into it.

First, note the manner of Paul's address. Though he speaks partly "by permission" (V. 6.) and gives his "judgment," yet, mark verses 25 and 40 - he speaks "as one who obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful," and his finale is: "I think also that I have the Spirit of God." In verse 12 he says: "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord." Nevertheless, who can tell in the verses following this one where Paul ends and the Lord begins? The truth is, the apostle's mind and heart and will were so utterly and delicately yielded to the wisdom and power of the Spirit that he could speak only in the will of God. Hence, this whole chapter has become a valuable portion of the inspired Scriptures. Let us not treat any part of it lightly.

Second, consider the Apostle's motives for writing. He seeks our "good" - Vs. 1, 26. He seeks for us the salvation of our house - Vs. 14-16. He would save us from "trouble in the flesh" - V. 28. He declares: "I would have you without carefulness." "I speak for your profit, that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction" - Vs. 32, 35. He writes with the solicitude of a father for his dear children.

Third, note the pressing argument, which no one would have looked for here - "But this I say, brethren, the time is short" - V. 29. Of what time is he writing? The time we have to live for God here; because the coming of the Lord is nigh. Compare Chapter 1:7. The imminence of Jesus' coming was always emphasized by all the apostles. This is the great impetus for holy living. "Every one that hath this hope set on Him (the hope of His appearing), purifieth Himself even as He is pure" - I John 3:3. And, "so much the more as ye see the day approaching" - Heb. 10:25. Verses 29-31 show the lax attitude we should hold towards all earth relationships and affairs. Wear these present things as a loose garment ready to be cast off any moment.

Fourth, consider the chief verse, which holds in it the supreme thought of the chapter - "Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God" - V. 24. Mark the last three words, "abide with God." Not only in the marriage relation, but in every relation - Vs. 18-22. What a leverage is given for such abiding - "Ye are bought with a price," alluding to slave holders. He has purchased us thru the death of His dear Son. We are His. Therefore, "be not ye the servants of men," in your service, or marrying, or buying and selling. Abide with God, and He will surely abide with you. Study closely the following facts.

1. "Every man hath his proper gift of God" (v. 7); one to remain single, like Paul, another to marry, like Peter.

2. "God hath distributed to every man; the Lord hath called every one" (vs. 17-20); one is a Jew, another a Gentile; one is a servant, another is free. "Let every man abide in the calling wherein he is called," whether married, or unmarried, whether Jew or Gentile, whether slave or freeman. Let God make changes if any are made. Meanwhile, abide with Him, even if He never makes a change. See God in your life; seek Him in all your life; "attend upon the Lord" preeminently; live for His glory alone, "waiting for the coming of Jesus." Such is the burden of the chapter.

Fifth, there is also a typical turn to the chapter, which we do well to consider; for the teaching relative to the Christ in mystery is the ultimatum of all Paul's writings. Hence, here we have their place in the wedding in the air.

Servants. Some saints serve God, and have no higher aspiration or ambition. Indeed, they think that service is the highest, noblest relation to God. Like Martha, they grumble if others are not on the job and jump continually. Though a closer fellowship is offered to them, they refuse it. They are willing to suffer

for Christ; but they shun “the reproach of Christ,” the stigma of walking with Him alone – Heb 13:13. They are content to wave palms of victory here before the Crowned-One; and they will do the same in the glory - Rev 7:9, 15.

Virgins. The Hebrew word “alma,” means not only one unmarried, but also one concealed. Virgins lived in separate apartments, and veiled their faces on going out. Even marriage would not destroy their real virgin character. Compare verses 36-39, with Joel 1:8, also II Cor 11:2. “I have espoused you to One Husband, that I may present a pure virgin to Christ.” Virgin saints are separated, surrendered unto God. The 5 virgins of Matt. 25 are not the Bride of the Lamb. They are “her companions that follow her” - Psa. 45:14; in Rev. 14 we read: “They follow the Lamb.” There is no contradiction here, for the Bridegroom and His Bride are one. So it is evident, that though all bridal saints are of virgin character, that is, pure, separated, concealed, yielded; yet not all the virgin believers will be in the Bridehood.

The Bride. Verse 7. (“every man hath his proper gift of God”) gives verses 1-5 a depth and sacredness most precious. If we remember that the marriage relation and hence marital fervor is Divine, the false shame sin has entailed and the so-called “social purity” that self-righteousness would inflict on believers, will vanish away. “Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled,” wrote the same Apostle - Heb. 13:4. But all this as only figurative of the greater, profounder union, Christ and His Church. Jesus is filled with fervent yearning for the deepest fellowship of His people. This is His “proper gift of God.” His heart will burn on till the last one of the bridal company is brought in. There must be a Bride for Him. There must be a wedding in the air. “It is not good that THE MAN should he alone: I saith the Father) will make Him an help meet for Him.” Any wonder that Mary forgot cooking, house cleaning, baking, laundering, everything? An unquenchable fire in a Greater kindled a flame in her. Any marvel that some souls lose sight at times of conditions and needs around, and are borne away on waves of burning love for One yet unseen? Aye, “My heart is burning with His love,” sings the poet. That flame in the Beloved cannot be in vain. It must find a response; and praise God, it does. “We love Him because He first loved us.” Love answers to love. This bridal burning is the “proper Gift of God” to some saints. Beloved, have your garments caught fire? Do not try to quench the flame. Be willing to be lost in the vortex of His love. Oh, the inexpressible wonder of such a union. Oh the “riches of His grace.” Oh, the marvel that any of us ever heard the summons: “Harken, O Daughter and consider and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy Father's house (the whole Church); so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him” - Psa. 45:10, 11.

THE Four-fold Foundation Chapters 8 to 11

The present section of our tabernacle study, which forms the necessary basis, falls into four great parts.

1. “One God, the Father” - Chapter 8:4, 6
2. “One Aim - The Prize” - Chapter 9:24
3. “One Body - The Church” - Chapter 10:16, 17
4. “One Foretold Union” - Chapter 11:3

The fullness and completeness of this FOURTH DIVISION is very unique and wonderful.

1. “One God, the Father” - Chapter 8. It is a marked and oft-recurring fact that the Holy Spirit continually anticipates error and offsets it at the outset. The worship of many gods, which is always prevalent in heathen countries is here repudiated: and the truth of the unity of the Godhead safeguarded by expressly mentioning two persons thereof, viz; the Father and the Son. “To us there is one God, the Father, out from whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Anointed, thru whom are all things, and we thru Him” - V. 6. In Chapter 12, the three persons of the Godhead are set forth with their respective tabernacle functions. So that it is very clear that the Anointed of God is not the Father, and the Holy Spirit is not Jesus. Each person of the Godhead is distinct from the other two, and yet gloriously one.

The heathen bring offerings into their temples to appease the wrath of their gods. Of course these offerings are not eaten by their gods, because their gods are dead. Someone sold those gifts in the market, if they chanced to be meats. Now untaught believers had scruples of conscience in eating such meats, because they still had respect to their former gods. The Apostle shows that what we may eat does not affect our relation to God. We are not saved, or perfected in Christ, by eating and drinking, nor by not eating and drinking. There is one God. All things belong to Him, for He made all things. As believers, we acknowledge His ownership only. Nothing can be made more sacred by any religious use of it.

The Apostle on the other hand, teaches that we must have respect for weak believers until they see their liberty in Christ. A believer who had knowledge of God and of our liberty in Christ could sit down to a table

where meat was eaten and partake of it that had before been offered to idols in a heathen temple; but for Him to do so in the presence of a weak believer had the effect on him to consider the eating of the meat harmless, not because he understood the truth, but because he was emboldened by another to do what he himself could not do; thus his conscience was defiled.

Hence, Paul says, rather than cause his weak brother to stumble, he should eat no meat forever. The lesson for us in this: that though we have faith for a certain course of action, yet for the sake of a weaker brother we should forego our own liberty. If some one refuses to do the things that we have freedom to do, that party is not made to stumble: but if some weak person does the thing that we do, but goes against his own conscientious conviction, that person is thus caused to stumble.

2. One Aim - "The Prize" - Chapter 9. In this chapter, the Apostle gives as nine arguments in favor of the minister of the Gospel living by the Gospel. These are divided into three groups. First, he puts three questions based on practice of other apostles - Vs. 4-6. Second, three arguments from nature, also put in the form of questions - V. 7. Third, three powerful proofs from Old Testament Scriptures - Vs. 9- 13.

What a rich lesson for us in verse 9, showing that muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn was not forbidden because God cares for oxen, "but for our sakes no doubt this is written, that he that ploweth should plow in hope, and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope." Based upon this citation, Paul brings to bear upon us a spiritual argument in saying: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" - V. 11. He adds also, that he has equal right with others to support for his ministerial labors. Again he refers to the custom of the Levites who ministered in the tabernacle and at the altar, and who had no other sustenance than to eat of the offerings.

"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel" - V. 14. Nevertheless, here the Apostle Paul introduces a new and deep teaching, perhaps the most difficult for ministers to learn, for he says: "We have not used this authority; but suffer all things lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ. I have used none of these things; for though I preach the Gospel I have nothing to glory of." The Lord Jesus Christ gave His life a ransom for many. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. He served others at His own expense, which is the loftiest and deepest priestly ministry. Paul sought to be a whole-hearted imitator of Jesus. He also served at His own expense. He sought a reward with his Lord; therefore, he asks: "What is my reward? Verily this, that when I preach the Gospel I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my authority in the Gospel. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more" - Vs. 18, 19. Furthermore, he states four ways in which he serves others, and concludes with a sweeping statement that includes all manner of service. "I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some" - V. 22. How few there are that follow in his steps. How few who are really unselfish, seeking only and always the highest good of others and that without reward. Now note that this wholehearted service of others is the process for winning the prize. Therefore, the Apostle's words: "Know ye not that they which run in a race all run; but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain." What is the prize? Salvation, or eternal life, is not the prize: getting to heaven when you die is not the prize; for only saved people can run on this race course. The prize is a particular reward given to those who successfully run the race. Saved people are not all running this race, for many believers are satisfied to be saved and get to heaven when they die. On the other hand, some Christians will miss the prize though they run for it because they do not so run that they may obtain. Hence, Paul uses two other figures of speech to illustrate what is necessary to win in the race. He says: "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." He also says: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainty; so box I, not as one that beateth the air, but I keep my body under and bring it into subjection." He means to teach by these different statements that in order to win the prize everything that would slacken our pace or hinder our running must be put aside; as David said, "The righteous shall hold on his way and grow stronger and stronger." The last verse of this chapter confuses some saints, because they think that Paul means that he might be lost, even after he had preached to others. The original reads thus: "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be disapproved." Paul simply made practical what he preached continually. There was no danger of his ever being lost; but there was the possibility of not winning the prize even though he had fervently urged others to so run that they might obtain. If he did not meet every condition, no matter how earnestly he exhorted others, he would be disapproved as a prize-winner at the end of the race.

But what is the prize? The answer is found, in Phil. 3:8, to be Christ himself; that is, Christ as Bridegroom, and here the full conditions for winning the prize are mentioned. "Yea doubtless also, I am esteeming all

things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of the Anointed Jesus my Lord; an account of whom I suffered the loss of all things and count them dung that the Anointed one I may gain and be found in Him." Paul is in the lead of those who shall win the prize." Therefore, he says, "Be ye imitators of me as I imitate Christ."

3. "One Body, the Church" - Chapter 10. The mystical oneness of God and His people is still further emphasized in this tenth chapter. How wonderful that reference is made to God's ancient people, Israel, as an illustration of this oneness. As all Israel were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea (v. 2), likewise "In one spirit we all were baptized into one body" - Chapter 12:13. This is further indicated by the words, "They did all eat the same spiritual meat and did all drink the same spiritual drink." Of course this made them one, for "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them and that Rock Was Christ." Verses 6-10 express five acts of departure from this oneness. The meaning is this: If Christ does not fully satisfy us we will lust after evil things. If He is not sufficient object of worship we worship something else and thus become idolaters. If He alone is not our all sufficient Head, then we will turn to some other person as a head and thus be guilty of spiritual fornication. If we question the presence of the Lord, we tempt Christ as Israel did when they cried; "is the Lord among us, or not?" This gradation of breaking away from full fellowship with Christ, and of course breaking the oneness of the body, will lead to murmuring. The importance of reading the Old Testament is brought out by Paul's words, viz: "All these things happened unto them for types and are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come" - Vs. 6, 11. Assembly doctrine is found in Paul's epistles; but the Old Testament writings contain many practical warnings, cautions and consolations, hence, verse 13: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, etc." "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ? for we being many are one body; for we are all partakers of the One Loaf" - Vs. 16, 17. These are two profound verses. We do well to ponder them. The union and fellowship of Christ and His people is deep and very precious. Of course, in speaking of the cup of the blessing, reference is made to the memorial of the Lord's supper which is more fully amplified in the next chapter.

The remaining 16 verses of the chapter teach us our attitude to God and to one another as believers. Worship God only; depend on the Lord alone. The essence of the first and great commandment is here emphasized - "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Compare Vs. 14, 20, and 22. Finally our attitude to God is expressed in verse 31. Read and heed it. Then we are admonished not to seek our own; but always the good of others, which admonition the Apostle confirms by his experience - "Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved."

4. One Fourfold Union - Chapter 11:3. "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God."

As Christ is subject to God the Father, even so the Church is subject to Christ. This subjection is taught in verses 4 to 12 by showing that the woman is subject to the man. The headship of Christ, which was introduced in chapter 1 is especially emphasized in this chapter. All through the Old Testament man was given the prominent place. Sarah called Abraham, "Lord." Prominent men were usually types of Christ, while women were types of the Bride of Christ. There are two exceptions in the Old Testament to the subjection of woman to man, viz. Deborah, a prophetess (Judges 4:4) and Huldah the prophetess (II Kings. 22:14); but their apparent lack of subjection was because of a departure of God's people from the will of God. It was a sign of failure. There is also one exception in the New Testament - "That woman Jezebel which calleth herself a prophetess" (Rev. 2:20), who assumes to be the teacher of divine truth and thus really takes the place of Christ. In the New Testament only men were called apostles, pastors, teachers and evangelists: this order should still be observed in the Church of Christ. This subjection of the Church to Christ as the Head is expressed in the verses above quoted; therefore, "every man praying or prophesying having his head covered dishonoreth his head;" that is, by covering his head he makes it appear that Christ is not the Head of the Church but is subject to some other man. "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head;" that is, she thereby appears to be the head instead of subject to the Head. "For if the woman be not covered;" that is, if she does not wear a veil or bonnet in worship, "Let her also be shorn;" that is let her wear her hair short like a man. The man is the image and glory of God; that is, he is the visible head of the family and also of the church or the family of God; hence, he must not have his head covered any more than the Lord, because he represents Him as the Head. A further argument that the woman wears a covering is this, that the woman is of the man and for the man - Vs. 8, 9.

Verses 11 and 12 express the mutual equality of man and woman, as is said elsewhere, "In Christ Jesus

there is neither male nor female; but we are all one." Likewise, "the Church is the body of Christ, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

The apostle also argues from nature, that the woman should be subject to the man. Study verses 14, 15. Nature teaches that it is a shame for a man to have long hair; but long hair is a glory to the woman for her hair is given her for a covering. Some saints think that this covering of nature is sufficient as a religious covering; but the Holy Spirit means to teach us here that if a woman's long hair; but long hair is a glory to the natural and shows her reverence to her husband, and man's short hair expressed his lordship in the natural, how much more should woman have her head covered with a veil or bonnet in worship, thereby expressing the subjection of the Church to Christ. We wonder how anyone can object to a woman praying or prophesying in public in the light of verse 5. It does not relieve the difficulty to say that Paul meant that women should pray or prophesy with other women only, for if there were no man present how could she express her subjection by wearing a covering? Furthermore, we know that Phillip had four daughters, which were prophetesses; it was announced by Joel and declared by Peter that in the power of the Spirit women should prophesy - Acts 2:16, 17. "The Lord giveth the word; the women that publish the glad tidings are a great host" - Psa. 68:11. The woman at Jacob's well evangelized a whole city (John 4) - type of woman evangelism for this age. How dare men rise up against such scripture statements and precedents? Sad is that the joy and usefulness of some sisters in Christ is shamefully curtailed; but good it is that some refuse to be hindered by carnal men. The only caution concerning woman's ministry is that she shall not "teach nor usurp authority over the man, but be in silence" - I Tim. 2:12. She is not ordained to be an apostle, or a ruler, or head. Her silence is not required as to teaching, or prophesying in subjection, but when she would assume authority, for example, "Jezebel which calleth herself a prophetess" (Rev. 2:20), whose attitude sets aside the Headship of Christ. Jezebel stands for Catholicism. The church, of which woman is the symbol, claims to be authority. Even among Protestants it is common to hear the bold assertion: "My church does not teach thus;" not once inquiring as to what the Bible teaches. What Paul would "not suffer," the pastor in Thyatira did suffer. Paul gave the needed warning; John gives the sharp rebuke. The church is not the head; Christ is the only Head. He alone is the Authority; hence, by divine ordination, the man is in the place of governor and instructor: but this cannot prevent Miriam (Ex. 15:20) and Deborah (Judg. 4, 5) and Huldah (II Chron. 34) and Priscilla (Acts 18:26 and Rom. 16:3-5) from fulfilling their several missions. Oh, for a balanced interpretation of God's word, "rightly dividing the word of truth" - the pure milk of the word for babes and strong meat for those of full age.

"The LORD'S SUPPER. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread (or loaf), one body; for we are all partakers of that One Bread" - I Cor. 11:16, 17. We have in hand a very interesting, profound and prolific subject, one which has been much abused, because it was not understood. I kindly request the fellowship of the study of this subject as plainly laid down in the Bible. Every point of difficulty concerning it should be made clear.

First, the Title. It is distinctly called "The Lord's Supper," because it was night when the Lord "took bread and the cup." The word "supper" is used by translators because this memorial was instituted in the evening. The Greek word means simply a meal, or the chief meal, and not necessarily the last meal of the day. There is nothing to indicate what time of day the Corinthian Church observed it, nor what time we should observe it. It cannot properly be called "an ordinance"; for the "law contained in ordinances" was nailed to the cross in Christ's death - Eph. 2:15 and Col. 2:14. In chap 11:1, the word "ordinances" is "traditions" in the margin; that is, the things handed down by Paul. The identical same word is employed in 2 Thes. 2:15 and 3:6, where, in view of the advent of Jesus, saints are admonished to "stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether thru a word or thru an epistle of us, and to withdraw from every brother that walketh not after the tradition which he received of us." And the Lord's Supper was one of those traditions; "for I received from the Lord "that which also I delivered (or traditioned) unto you" - V. 23. Because of not seeing the difference between the ordinances, or decrees of the old covenant and the traditions of the new covenant, honest souls have been confused; some supposing that they must observe seasons, keep the Jewish Sabbath, eat and drink according to the Mosaic law, etc., and others that they should not only put those aside, but water baptism and the Lord's Supper also. Water baptism and the Lord's Supper may fittingly be termed "memorials;" the former bringing to remembrance our burial and resurrection with Christ, and the latter Christ's death for us. Compare Lev. 2:2, Num. 5:15. He said: "This do in remembrance of Me."

Second, it's Reality. "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord

Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread, etc.” - V. 23. Is the Lord's Supper scriptural? Did the first Christians observe the memorial of breaking of bread in the assemblies? Did the apostle Paul really give instruction for its observance? We wonder how anyone could expect the answer “No” to these questions. Nevertheless, in spite of the plain utterance of Chapter 11:17-34, saints actually say “NO,” and have discarded both baptism and this precious memorial. Because the Church of England became exceedingly formal and lifeless, imitated Rome in practicing infant baptism, and formally kept up the breaking of bread; the Friends, or Quakers, led by Geo. Fox, discarded them both. They termed them forms and ceremonies, or ordinances which they supposed to have been nailed to the cross. They failed to see the difference between old covenant shadows, which indeed passed away at Calvary (Col. 2:14-17), and new covenant remembrances, or memorials. Their pendulum swung too far to the other extreme. There are few believers today who hold this extreme view. Now without considering the motives that often lie hidden behind erroneous teachings and practices, let us look closely into this chapter. First, in Chapter 10:16, 17, we find that Paul and his co-workers blessed a certain cup and broke a certain loaf, and asked if that was not the fellowship of the blood and body of Christ. And I ask: Did he not mean a real cup of wine and a real loaf of bread? For he immediately compares Israel's eating of the sacrifices as partaking of the altar. And he certainly refers to a real material eating and drinking when he contrasts “the Lord's table, and the table of devils” - V. 21. He shows that meat sold in shambles, or that has been offered to idols, is perfectly harmless: then finally and sweepingly concludes: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” - V. 31. This surely cannot be spiritualized away.

Second, verses 23 to 26 teach with unmistakable clearness and positiveness that the Lord's Supper was a real partaking of real material bread and wine. The apostle declares that he had before “delivered” something to the Assembly at Corinth, affirming that he had “received of the Lord that” something. And the Lord said to him: “This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” The fact of Jesus taking the bread and cup that night is no secret revealed to Paul only; but the twelve witnessed it, as seen in Matt. 26, Mark 14, Luke 22 and John 13: but Paul assures us that he not only learned of it thru the other apostles, but it was given to him as a direct commission from the Lord Himself, as truly as all the truth which was revealed to him. If four writers give detailed accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper and John plainly intimates the same (John 13), how can it be discarded, or spiritualized, or treated lightly? Echo answers, “How?” If two whole chapters are here devoted to showing the nature, purpose, spirit and manner of this memorial, and severe reproofs are written against not observing it (1 Thes. 2:15 and 3:6), how dare we pass it by?

Third, consider the deep, sweet meaning and purpose of the Lord's Supper. “For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He may come.” Brother just look at that. Does it not appeal to you? Do you not wish to announce the death of Him who died for you? Do you not wish to proclaim that He is coming again? Ah my friend, will you not swing your own reasoning under the tender dying request of your Lord? Do not say: “That is what I am doing every day. I am proclaiming Christ's death and His coming every day.” No! No! Do not say that.

Oh, this beautiful memorial! It looks back to Calvary with one eye and forward to the throne with the other. The cross demands the crown; the crown necessitates the cross. We feed on Him who was dead; we shall live with Him who is alive forevermore. We have mutual fellowship one with another in partaking of Christ, acknowledging His Headship and life, and our eternal cut-off-ness from the old creation and from the world around. We unitedly and publicly declare that we have no fellowship with the flesh, with the world, nor with the devil. “Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

Be it inquired as to the difference between water baptism and the Lord's Supper? We answer; This memorial reminds us of Jesus' death for us: baptism recalls our death with Him. The supper implies Jesus' resurrection: but baptism plainly symbolizes our resurrection together with His. We are baptized only once, because Jesus and we died only once and were raised only once: but we eat and drink the memorial often because He is alive forever, and we feed on Him continually. The passover lamb was killed one night only; but Israel feasted on the unleavened bread, type of Christ's resurrection life, for seven days. We are baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, because He, the Man Anointed, died for us. Likewise, this remembrance is not God's supper: but just as stated; “the Lord's Supper;” that is, Lord in the sense of Head or Bridegroom, not as God; even as chap 10:3 makes clear - “I would have you know that the Head of every man is the Anointed One; and the head of the woman is the man; and the Head of the Anointed One is GOD.” Therefore, what high honor we confer upon our glorious Lord, or Head; how we rejoice His dear heart, when we keep adoringly the breaking of the bread; and how we enjoy mutual fellowship one with another in the Spirit, because we thus boldly confess our profound and inseparable

union one with another, and that there is no individual partaking of the body and blood of the slain LAMB. The whole Church as one man acknowledges one all-sufficient sacrifice for all, and all-together as one man eat and drink the memorial, thus together feeding on Christ. Those who repudiate this last loving love-token of our departing Lord, grieve His heart and rob themselves of an in-expressible inward delight. The latest puzzle in this connection is this, that some believers accept water baptism, but reject the Lord's Supper. They treat the former as a literal requirement, but attempt to spiritualize the latter. In fact, that is outwardly acknowledging our death and resurrection with Christ, but not outwardly admitting His death for us, and that our life is dependent upon Him. The one which is recorded only twice in the gospels (Matt. 28:19 and Mark 16:16), and to be observed once by each individual as expressive of an individual relation to Christ, is punctually observed but the one which is mentioned in all the gospel records, and delivered to us to be kept as a perpetual memorial, not only expressive of our personal relationship to Christ, but much more, as expressive of a deeply united relationship with Him; this one is ignored. How can anyone accept the lesser, but repudiate the greater? The fullness of the purpose and meaning of the Lord's Supper certainly far exceeds that of water baptism. Paul wrote: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel;" but he never wrote thus of the Lord's memorial Supper. Let us then be imitators of him as he was of Christ.

Finally, The Manner. "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another; and if any man hunger, let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto condemnation" - Vs. 33, 34.

Underneath all that the Apostle wrote concerning this memorial feast, lies the great truth launched in the first chapter of this epistle and made to sail with flying colors thru-out it - viz; THE ONENESS OF CHRIST. This is the burden of the first sixteen verses of chapter eleven. The accusation of "divisions among you" (v. 18) has for its root the opposition of this truth. There were some who made Peter their head, some Apollos, and some even Paul - Chapter 1:10-18 and 2:3-5. Of course if a woman attempts to recognize more husbands than one, there will be trouble; but that is just what a body of saints do when they do not hold Christ only as their one and only Head. This results in "heresies, or sects," elsewhere termed "sects of perdition" (II Pet. 2:1), which breaks the fellowship of the body as a whole. But God allows this "that they which are approved," that is, those who hold Christ as the Head and themselves as all members of the one body, "may be made manifest among you." Furthermore, these instructions are given to comfort the approved ones and to reprove and correct the erring ones. How we should praise God for the lucid teaching and faithfulness of the apostle Paul. This spirit of division and selfishness became more rampant when the assembly met for the breaking of bread. If anywhere, people show their carnality, it is in eating and drinking. The Spirit rightly calls them "gluttons," saying that they "make a god of their belly." Shame that such a charge must ever be brought against saints. And more strange that saints would show their carnal greed at "the Lord's Table." But so they did.

"Therefore when ye come together in one place; it is not the Lord's Supper to eat; for each one his own supper takes first in eating, and (hence) one is hungry and another satiated" - Vs. 20, 21. The language of these two chapters indicates that those saints brought more than simply a small quantity of bread and of wine; that there was an attempt to imitate the passover feast. Else how could some of them make a meal of what was there, and even overeat? If there were more loaves than one, they were to be regarded as "one loaf," even as all the lambs of the tents of Israel were regarded as "IT," or one lamb, pointing to "the Lamb of God." They were instructed to "kill IT," and "eat IT"- Ex. 12:6-9.

Note now that there is no reproof for eating and drinking as if it were a feast unto the Lord; but they are reprov'd for gratifying their fleshly appetites without even considering that others may be hungry. The house of God, the Lord's Table, was no place for such. Verse 20 simply means this: By your not waiting one for another, you show that you do not come together to enjoy mutual fellowship in the Spirit over the Lord's Body, but to fill your stomachs. Hence, Paul searchingly inquires, "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and put to shame them that are poor?" He steadfastly insists that the Church of God is ONE, and that the poor have an equal place in this oneness. Their conduct divided the Body of Christ, making some more worthy than others. It argued that Jesus died for individuals, and not for all the Church as one. They became "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Therefore they "ate and drank unworthily," because they came not in the merit of Christ alone. If they had, they would have "discerned the Lord's Body," that it is "ONE BODY," each member being as worthy as the other. If Christ is our merit, our worthiness, there can be no distinction. "We are all one in Christ Jesus." When saints see this glorious truth with the eye of the heart, they gladly "wait one for another," and one on another, never seeking their own, but the other's good - Chapter 10:24. They will seek the Lord's Table, to sup in mutual communion with all saints; and frankly and freely and frequently

symbolize the oneness of God's people and their oneness with Him. Of course, they will live this unselfish life daily, "looking on the things of others," as always members of Christ's one blessed Body, the Church. To live six selfish days in view of one symbolic hour of unselfishness is unthinkable. But do not some live that way? Reader may it not be so with us. QUERY. Is not the above selfish, physical feasting a symbol of a worse religious feasting in our midst today? And have not some staggered at this and lost respect for the Lord's Table because of such religious selfishness? We hear of "closed communion," so-called. But do we read of such in the Book as approved of God? Some gather with saints in open communion, so to speak, but in a "closed-communication" spirit. They say: "I will not break bread, if he does." It may not even be expressed outwardly in words or conduct; but if you do not see your brother in Christ, as accepted in Christ, you are bringing this spirit of division into the meeting. You are saying: "I am worthy to feast; but he is not." Let us bear in mind that the condemnation heaped upon communicants is, that they do one thing - break the oneness of the Body of Christ, however that may be done. It is thus that saints "eat and drink judgment to themselves." It is those that are "weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." The maintenance of the oneness of the saints insures physical and spiritual strength and health, and is a positive preventative against spiritual decay and premature physical death. They who hold this oneness, "scrutinize themselves that they may not be judged."

Therefore, as all Israel as ONE man offered one sacrifice, as if all were guilty of the same sin; and then they ate as one, of all those lambs as one lamb, and of the unleavened bread as of one loaf; so let us eat and drink the Lord's Supper as one people, nay as one body feeding upon one life, and live every day leaning upon one Staff. God's Word, and counting upon the sufficiency and efficiency of one Man, the Man in the glory for us, and entertaining one blessed hope, the sure coming of our heavenly Bridegroom: "for as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do announce the Lord's death till He may come."

The Assembly's Equipment - I Cor. 12 to 14. These 3 chapters must be studied together to get a full, clear grasp of the truth they contain. They are closely related. Therefore, read them through again and again side by side. Become familiar with them. They constitute a very important portion of New Creation doctrine.

The Gifts Distributed - Ch. 12. The first three verses of chapter 12 indicate that there are satanic spirituals and divine spirituals. In Ch. 2:13 the Apostle is "comparing spirituals with spirituals;" and in Chapter 3:1 he contrasts "spirituals" with "carnals." In Ch. 14:1 he exhorts you to "earnestly desire the spirituals," but "that ye may excel to the edifying of the Church" - V. 12. (See v. 37.) "Spiritual wickedness" in Eph. 6:12 is literally "the spirituals of the wickedness." These are typified by Egyptian magicians - Ex. 7:11, 12 and 8:7. See also Acts 8:10, 11 and 16:16 and 19:13-16, concerning Simon the sorcerer, the divination damsel and the "vagabond Jews, exorcists." Theosophy, Spiritism, Christian Science and all occult religions of our day are "the spirituals of the wickedness," polished, refined and reaching their highest form of development. They will climax in the anti-Christ and his satanic body even as the divine spirituals will climax in Christ and His perfected Body.

Hence, verse 3 contrasts with verse 2. As in the natural, a man was carried away and led into idolatry by evil spirits (Ch. 10:20, 21, and Acts 17:22, R. V.); so in Christ, a man carried away and led by the Holy Spirit cannot call Jesus accursed; even as no man in the natural can say that Jesus is his Lord. For "the carnal mind is enmity against God." It rejects the Lordship of Jesus Christ, which is the distinguishing mark of divine spirituals. Contrast Ex. 5:2 with Acts 2:13 and I Pet. 3:13, R. V.

In vs. 4 to 6, the triune God is seen operating and controlling the divine spirituals, through the various ministries of the Lord as Head and through the various gifts of the Spirit as Distributor. The gifts of the Spirit - vs. 7 - 11. "God hath set some in the Church; first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of hearings, supports, governments, kinds of tongues" - V. 28. Here it is declared that the gifts and offices have been permanently placed in the Assembly. This is also proven by allusion to the members, which "God set in our natural body as it hath pleased Him" - V. 18. If our natural members and their functions are to continue with us throughout life, should not the gifts and offices of Christ's Church, which is His Body, continue throughout its earthly career? Shall the symbol be more permanent and perfect than the great spiritual organism thus symbolized?

If one member of our natural body is wanting, the body is considered mutilated and deficient. How then about the Assembly of God? Chapter 1:7 announces that there is a provision "that ye come behind in no gift." And verse 13 of this chapter, indicates the time and process of that provision. "In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free. All Jewish and Gentile believers, typified by the "two wave loaves" (Lev. 23:17), were sovereignty and provisionally baptized into "one body" on the day of Pentecost. There is only "one loaf" now (Ch. 10:16, 17, R. V.), as there was but one

baptism. Therefore, we never read of another baptism in the Spirit. The "one baptism" of Eph. 4:5 refers to Pentecost. The Gentiles were included in that, though in actual experience it was about ten years later - Acts 10:47. As in this case, so elsewhere, the Spirit "fell on them;" they were "filled with the Holy Spirit;" they "received the Holy Spirit" - Acts 8:15, 9:17 and 19:2. The individual experience is called an "anointing." "God anointed Jesus" (Acts 10:38); and so "He hath anointed us" - 2 Cor. 2:21. John wrote later of "the anointing which ye have received" - 1 John 2:27.

Now, when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, He brought all the assembly gifts and offices with Him and instituted the Assembly. If He is here in the Church of Christ today, then all the gifts and functions of the Church must be here also. She is Christ's Body. And just as truly as our natural body is deficient if one member is missing, so is the Assembly deficient as to her career on earth, if any of her functions are missing.

"Childish things" (Ch. 13:11) does not mean tongues, prophecy or knowledge. Chapter 14:19, 20 show that Paul had reference to the childish use of the gifts. "Be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye babes, but in understanding be full grown." He does not say that the gifts have ceased; but they shall cease and be done away when that which is perfect is come. "The path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day" - Prov. 4:18. Has that day yet come? Had Paul reached it. No! He declares plainly: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect" - Phil. 3:12. When will we reach it? When God shall "present us without fault before the presence of His glory with exceeding great joy" - Jude 24. Till then, all the gifts and offices continue in the Church.

Note exactly the Apostle's language. "Now," since "I became a man," and "put away childish things; now we see through a glass darkly and know in part; but then, face to face, and as I am known" - Chapter 3:10-12. He exhorts plainly to "covet earnestly the best gifts," "covet earnestly the spirituals" (Ch. 14:1), "covet earnestly to prophecy, and forbid not to speak with tongues" - Chapter 14:39. Then he gives a sweeping endorsement from personal experience: "I thank my God more than all of you, speaking in tongues" - Ch. 14:18, Gr.

THE GIFTS ARE DISTINCTLY called severally "the manifestation of the Spirit" - Ch. 12:7. How, then, shall we have such a manifestation without a gift of the Spirit? Or, do some saints not want His manifestation? Or, do they want only such manifestation? Or, do they want only such manifestation as they deem wise? Just as consistently let me pluck out your eyes and cut off your arm and clog up your brain and thus stop some manifestation of your natural body. That is what people do who decry the gifts and offices as God set them in His glorious Assembly, the Body of Christ.

The gifts are "divided to every man severally as He, the Spirit, will" - V. 11. "As He will" proves the sovereignty of God here. Just as He set the members in our natural body "as it pleased Him," so in the spiritual body. God has already set them, but we are to covet them for His glory; then the Spirit will manifest Himself through them. Can there be any room to glory in having a gift? "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" - Ch. 4:7.

"The manifestation of the Spirit." That is what each gift is called. Generally, people think that shakings, shootings and prostrations are the manifestations of the Spirit. That is not correct.

Those are only incidental and secondary. There is often an unnecessary waste of energy because of ignorance. Every motion, operation and manifestation of the Spirit is "to profit" and "edify all." Now when saints feel like shouting and jumping, usually if they conserve that inward power and yield their brain and voice to the Spirit, presently He will cause them to speak to edification, either in a tongue, or in their own native language. The speaker himself, or some other may have the interpretation of the strange tongue. There is much shouting and speaking in tongues because of the good feelings they bring. That is a waste of time and energy. God wants us to "bring every thought into captivity to Christ," and yield every member and emotion to Him for use to the edification of the Assembly. Or this otherwise waste-energy may sometimes be suddenly turned into a torrent of intercessory prayer. "The Spirit maketh intercession for the saints" - Rom. 8:26, 27.

GIFTS SEVERALLY CONSIDERED

1. "A word of wisdom," "a word of knowledge" - V. 8. These are possible because the Holy Spirit is "The Spirit of wisdom and knowledge" - Isa. 11:2. These two are at the head of the list, evidently to guard, guide and control all the others. There is too often a sad, wreckless rushing past them to the other seven. Now the Spirit does not give us either "a word of wisdom or of knowledge" in fullness, except we obtain a knowledge of God's Word wisely learned. Ignorance and lack here is why so many prophecies, messages in tongues and interpretations have not proven true. Honest souls get impressions, think them to be

words of wisdom or knowledge, or revelations and give them out as such; but they fall powerless upon the hearers (at least upon those who know the Word), and soon come to nought.

Jesus and all the apostles and New Testament workers and writers spoke words of wisdom and knowledge as "moved by the Holy Spirit," but by constantly referring to, and quoting from the Old Testament. Again and again they said, "As it is written." Half of Peter's first message under the anointing with the Spirit was quoted from Joel, the Psalms and Zechariah - Acts 2. Jesus said,

"When they deliver you up, it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" - Matt. 10:19, 20. But note the fulfillment of that word in Acts 4:1-11. The apostles being arrested, "Peter, filled with the Spirit," exclaimed, "This is the Stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the Head of the corner," thus referring their adversaries back to the Old Testament declarations: And so all through the Acts, the word of wisdom and knowledge given was always based upon knowledge previously obtained. You may have the Holy Spirit, have an experience, be filled with enthusiasm, and speak much and fluently, and yet not speak "a word of wisdom, or knowledge." Dear Student, look well to this. Knowledge and wisdom come by diligent search of what God has written. The use of them depends upon your holding them subject to the Spirit's control.

2. "Faith to a different one" - V. 9. This faith is a gift for some particular case, or event. Or it may be continuous along some certain line of service. The gift of faith may hold the assembly together continually. It may obtain victory for a service. It may precipitate a revival, hold a difficult case of healing, or hold the enemy in abeyance for some troubled soul, or for an assembly. "It is by the Spirit as He will."

Joshua's successorship to Moses and Paul's apostleship to the Gentiles are examples of a continuous gift of faith. George Muller's life work is a present day example of a continuous gift of faith. Joshua's faith to stop the sun and Paul's raising Eutychus to life at Troas are examples of a gift of faith for a particular case. They did not continue stopping the sun and raising the dead, however.

3. "To another gifts of healings" - V. 9. "In Him (Christ) all the fullness was pleased to dwell" - Col. 1:10. Hence, all the gifts were in Him. As the coming King, He gave the twelve power to heal the sick and work miracles (dynamics) - Matt. 10:8 and Mark 6:13. At the close of His ministry here, Jesus gave them a larger commission, naming five signs that should follow to confirm the Word - Mark 16:17-20. That was especially for the Kingdom. When the King was rejected, the Holy Spirit having come, the above two gifts - healings and miracles - were transmitted to the Assembly and others also were introduced. The Spirit brought the full equipment for the Church. According to James 5:14, 15, "the elders of the Assembly" are expected to possess the "gifts of healings." Carefully compare Mark 6:13. This need not preclude others from having them. It is always "as He, the Spirit, will." We must not expect too much from such elders. "Let your expectation be from the Lord." There can only be with them "the proportion of faith" (Rom. 12:6) according to the faith of the sick one. Mark this well. This was the experience of Jesus who, in His own country, "did not many mighty works, because of their unbelief" - Matt. 13:58. And when Paul saw that the lame man "had faith to be healed, he said, Stand upright on thy feet" - Acts 14:9, 10. Why did the Apostle leave? "Trophimus at Miletum sick" - I Tim. 4:20? The Lord had some lessons for him that could be learned in no other way. Furthermore, the trial and development of faith, which come with the delayed answer, are worth more to God and to us than the answer itself. The gifts of healings would be more manifest and potent in some assemblies if the saints had not such unscriptural notions about them, and were really expecting them.

4. "The working of miracles" - V 10. The literal rendering is "working of powers, or dynamics." The word miracle" is translated "mighty work" (Mark 6:5), "mighty deeds" (II Cor. 12:12), and "miracles" - Acts 2:22 and 8:13 and Heb. 2:4. In the last three references, it is associated with and distinguished from "signs and wonders." Acts 8:7, 13 with Mark 9:38, 39, shows that casting out demons is termed a miracle, or work of power. And "God wrought extraordinary dynamics thru the hands of Paul," in healing the sick and casting out demons by aprons and handkerchiefs being brought from his skin and laid upon them. Nothing is said about anointing with oil here. In most instances, the word miracle in the A. V. should be sign as in the R.V. Every healing and miracle is a sign; but not every healing is called a miracle, though everyone is miraculous in the sense of being supernatural.

The purpose of hearings, signs and miracles are to "confirm the Word" (Mark 16:20 and Heb. 2:4), show forth the glory of Christ (John 2:11) and that men may believe Acts 8:6, 7. How illogical and unscriptural then, to attempt to keep these gifts out of the Church. How foolish to cry, "The age of miracles is passed." Miracles, or works of power, seem to have been less frequent locally. They followed chiefly with the ministry of apostles and evangelists. Healings with them also, but being more needed locally, they come

more constantly under the ministry of pastors and elders than do miracles.

5. "Prophecy" - V. 10. This word literally means, "speaking for another." In Ch. 14:3, it is defined as speaking to "edification and exhortation and comfort." What a splendid definition! Therefore, telling past events is as much prophecy as foretelling future events. The Old Testament prophets always combined the two, declaring what God had done and what He would do. This is bestowed upon some as a permanent gift. But one who has not the gift, may utter a prophecy on some special occasion. "Is Saul also among the prophets?" - I Sam. 1:24. Apostles and evangelists of necessity had this gift. Be it ever understood that prophecy is always based upon, and in full accord with the written Word of God. Any prophecy, or revelation super-added to the Bible is spurious and devilish and has the curse of God pronounced upon it - Rev. 22:18. This gift is also conferred on the sisters. The evangelist Philip had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" - Acts 21:9. Paul writes to "every woman that prayeth, or prophesieth" - I Cor. 11:5. "The Lord gave the Word and the company of women that published it was a great host" - Psalms 68:11. Preaching and teaching are prophesying.

6. "Discerning of spirits" - V. 10. This means just what it says. What many people call "discernment" is simply criticism, or misjudgment, springing from ignorance, or envy, or self-seeking. This gift is a divine instinct, or intuition, a "quickscent" by the Spirit - Isa. 11:3. It is bestowed upon some for the protection of the Assembly, or cause of God. As with the other gifts, it is not the possession of every one. For this reason, John says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world" - I John 4:1. One who has not the gift of discernment must try, or prove strangers. It is not safe to accept everyone who claims to be a Christian, or a prophet of God.

The gift of tongues and interpretation will be considered in the study of chapter 14.

UNITY OF CHRIST ILLUSTRATED

"For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ" - V. 12. "For as we have many members in one body and all the members have not the same office; so we being many, are one body in Christ and every one members one of another" - Rom. 12:4, 5.

This phrase, "So also is Christ," is a profound statement. That former saying, "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit" (Ch. 6:17) shows our personal union with Christ. But these words announce the oneness of the whole Church with Christ and declare Him and Her inseparably to be the Christ in mystery. Literally, "So also is the Anointed One." "The Assembly is His body, the fullness of Him" -

Eph. 1:22, 23. This is how God regards the entire Church - "one body in Christ." Because "in one Spirit we all into one body were baptized." That occurred on the day of Pentecost. That was the "one baptism" - Eph. 4:5. Hence, we do not read of another baptism. God constituted all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, "one body;" He made "the two wave loaves" (Lev. 23) "one loaf" - I Cor. 10:17. With Christ, the Assembly is one. That baptism was His sovereign provisional act at Pentecost. And that was experience to those only who were there, because they received the gift of the Spirit.

"And have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Literally, "were all given to drink," or "were watered" as in Ch. 3:6, or irrigated. God "poured out His Spirit," or irrigated "all flesh," as He had promised; but only those who personally receive the Spirit come into the fellowship of the oneness and into the power and joy of the watering. The farmer waters his cattle; but only those that drink derive any benefit. The baptism and watering were God's part. They were sovereign, once for all, and independent of our attitude. But the drinking is our part. It is personal. Hence, the question: "Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" - Acts 19:2. When we drink, we receive the Spirit. We do not receive the baptism. (See our tract, "The Holy Spirit.") Verses 15 and 16 refer to believers who are tempted with discouragement because they have a lower or less prominent place in the body. They are none the less members. They are not responsible for being such members, for "God set them in the body as it hath pleased Him" - V. 18. Verses 21-24 continue the comparison, showing that the stronger, more honored, more comely members, as "the eye," or "the head," cannot glory in being what and where they are. Nor can they speak flippantly, or domineeringly of less honored members. "Our comely members have no need." We never dress up, beautify, or cover up the eye, or nose. God gave them "more abundant honor," by giving them a prominent place, though they be delicate, tender, sensitive. But how painstaking we are with the hands and especially the uncomely feet. Others "seem to be more feeble." But they are necessary. And some, "we think to be less honorable, and uncomely." "The members have the same care one for another." The

eye sees; the nose scents; the ear hears; the hand gathers; all for the body "to profit withal" - V. 7. The feet carry the body; the heart gives it life; the head gives it wisdom.

"Now ye are a body of Christ, and members in particular" - V. 27. That was said to the Assembly in Corinth. But this is God's voice to each Assembly, as is indicated by Rom. 12 and Eph. 4, each local assembly representing the whole Church, "the Assembly of first born ones, registered in heaven" - Heb. 12:23.

"Ye are members." "All members have not the same office;" "having then gifts differing" - Rom. 12:4, 6. Study these three statements together. In the Church the officers, such as apostles, prophets, helps, and the gifts are not the members. Some members have offices, or gifts. Some may have more than one. One member may have the offices of apostle, prophet and elder, as, e. g., Peter - I Pet. 1:1 and 5:1, with Acts 2. He also had the gifts of wisdom and knowledge, and the gifts of hearings and dynamics.

Doubtless, apostles and evangelists possessed all the gifts, since it was their mission to fell the forests and break up the soil, found assemblies and foster them, "plant, water and build." Local elders, shepherds, or overseers (Acts 20:28), may not have the gifts of dynamics, but that of hearings, because they are more constantly needed - Jas. 5:14.

"According to the proportion of faith" - Rom. 12:6. This is an important phase of the truth. The gifts and offices are according to God's sovereign grace. But the healthful and useful exercise of them is according to the proportion of faith. You cannot have faith to speak "a word of wisdom, or knowledge," simply because the need seems great. Paul did not have faith till after "many days" to rout the demon from the damsel - Acts 16:18. And when "he saw the lame man had faith to be healed," he bid him arise - Acts 14:9. "The proportion of faith" requisite, therefore, for each specific occasion depends either upon the faith of the people, or the sovereign will of God, or upon both. OFFICES in the Assembly. "And God did set (permanently place) certain (gifts and offices) in the assembly: primarily, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; then dynamics; then gifts of healings, supports, governments, kinds of tongues" - I Cor. 12:28. In Ephesians 4:11, which was written five years later, we find two other offices mentioned, viz., "evangelists" and "pastors." The words "first," "secondly" and "then" do not refer to time, but to relative value. God set them all in the Body at once. But the office of apostle is most important and has more authority. Hence, in New Testament history, it is always to the front. The offices and gifts of prophecy and teaching come next, because an apostle is of necessity a prophet and teacher. The superior importance of these first named is proven by Eph. 4:11, where we have recorded the five offices especially needed "for the perfecting of the saints," viz.: apostles' prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers." Man has eliminated most of these gifts and offices, leaving those only that suited his fancy, unbelief, or convenience. Hence, how mutilated the Body of Christ appears. The office of apostle has been entirely cut out. It is declared by Bible expositors that the twelve apostles and Barnabas and Paul were the only apostles; and that the apostolic office ceased with them. But the Word itself contradicts all this. Paul writes of "Epaphroditus, your apostle" (Phil. 2:25 R. V. margin), and of "the apostles of the churches" - II Cor. 8:23 R. V. marg. In the Greek, this word "messenger" is the very word elsewhere translated "apostle." Now if seeing the Lord is the great distinguishing mark of an apostle, as is claimed, pray tell when did those "messengers," or Epaphroditus see Him? And what are "the signs of an apostle," but "authority over all the power of the enemy" - "demons, serpents and scorpions" and "all manner of sickness and disease?" - II Cor. 12:12. Did not the "other seventy" have this authority? - Luke 10: 17-19. A patient study of the use of the word apostle will remove the vagueness and strained views that men have about the office. In Matt. 10:5, we read: "These twelve Jesus sent forth." In Mark, He "appointed twelve that they might be with Him and that He might send them to preach, etc." In Luke 10:1, 3, He "appointed other seventy also and sent them two and two." The verbs "above," "sent forth," "might send" and "sent" are exactly the same Greek word from which comes the noun "apostle." That is the word apostle means one sent away, or literally, apostled. Accordingly, Barnabas and Saul were not termed apostles (Acts 14:14) till after they were chosen from among the "prophets and teachers in Antioch" and separated and sent unto the work to which the Spirit called them - Acts 13:1-4. Mark this well. Those men had the gifts of prophecy and teaching. "There were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas and Saul." Now they are called to the widest field and most responsible office.

There is a difference between "the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. 21:14) and "the apostles of the churches" - II Cor. 8:23. The former pertain especially to the kingdom, and the latter - Paul, Barnabus, Epaphroditus and others - to the Church. The seventy of Luke 10 were strictly speaking apostles, for Luke says: "The Lord sent, or apostled other seventy also." Jesus' words of commission to them was, "Go your

ways; behold, I send you forth (or apostle you) as lambs among wolves.” They also had the “signs of an apostle” - II Cor. 12:12.

Authority of Apostles. The twelve for the Kingdom of God, and Paul for the Assembly of Christ had authority and power not delegated to others. In the Church, Paul had authority over evangelists, and evangelists have authority over elders. Paul left Titus “in Crete to set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city” - Tit. 1:5. And his letters to Timothy prove this authority. The twelve were in a position above the seventy. They raised the dead. They will “sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” after Jesus comes - Luke 22:28-30. And Paul held a place above Barnabas and the other Church apostles, and distinct from the Kingdom apostles, being “appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles” - II Tim. 1:11. He says, “A stewardship is committed unto me,” “the stewardship of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward” - I Cor. 9:17 and Eph. 3:2 and Rom. 15:18-21. The twelve apostles filled their mission in introducing the kingdom. They will consummate it when Jesus comes - Rev. 22. Paul filled his course in introducing “the mystery of Christ” and the divine order for the Church.

We certainly should expect the teaching of the mystery and the original Church order to continue. And none the less should we expect the perpetuation of the office of apostle of the Barnabas and Epaphroditus rank. There should still be “the brethren, the apostles of the churches, the glory of Christ” - II Cor. 8:23.

Someone exclaims: “It is presumption to assert that the offices of apostle, prophet, etc., are in the Church today.” To this we reply that it is presumption to eliminate what God has clearly ordained, and to substitute human offices, ordinations and titles. What scripture authority is there for a pope, for cardinals, diocesan bishops, vicars, etc.? What right, or propriety is there for the titles reverend, doctor, M. A., D. D., LL. D., etc.? “Be not conformed to this age” - Rom. 12:2. The Lord has given us His plan and pattern through Paul, just as they were given to Israel through Moses. Is that not enough? When we depart from God's order, we assume responsibility. But when we keep in His order, He bears all the responsibility. “He has the care.” Then, with bounding hearts, we may constantly expect His faith, His power, His presence and His sanction and blessing. Victory and prosperity are sure.

“Helps and governments.” The word rendered “helps” literally means “those who seize hold of and support.” It means more than “minister,” or “attendant” as in Acts 13:5. It refers to steady, sturdy, firm members in the Body who hold up the assembly by their believing prayers and means. These “helps” correspond with the bones in our natural body. The word “governments” is “wise counsels” in the revised version. Literally, “steerings, pilotages, those who hold the helm, guides.” These two officers of course have the gifts of wisdom and faith, if no other.

The Divine Love. Chapter 13 announces the possible use of the gifts without love, the superiority of love to the gifts, the brief duration of the gifts and the perpetual duration of love. The old and new creations are both declared possible here in the same person.

1. The Love Magnified - Vs. 1-3. The gifts are by the Spirit and are conferred upon the new creation. He does not distribute His gifts to sinners. Jesus said, “These signs shall follow them that believe” - Mark 16:17. But the self-life usurps the use of these gifts which belong only to the Christ-life. This is as true as it is astonishing. Men can actually speak in tongues, even angelic tongues, prophesy, move mountains; in short, use all the gifts without love. And the analysis of love that follows shows that they do so from envy, or self-seeking. Reader, do you see why there has been religious wreckage by means of these glorious gifts of love? Ishmael has employed for his own gain what were given to Isaac for God's glory.

God counts the old man dead. He utterly refuses to credit the new man with any good that the self-life may do, or any fruit he may bear. Therefore, when self displays a gift, the new man must exclaim, “I am become brass sounding, or a cymbal clanging; nothing I am, nothing I am profited.” What solemn truth is this! Others may be benefited by my carnal service; but the Lord allows it not to be any credit, or profit to me. Service in the Spirit, “the labor of love,” and the “fruit of the Spirit,” the fruit of love, are alone acceptable fruit to God.

2. The Love Analyzed - Vs. 4-8. Here are sixteen statements about the love. This is double the new creation number. Hence, eight of these are negative and eight are positive. “Suffering” heads the list. Christ Jesus brought in this new creation through suffering. “Never fails” concludes the list. Literally, never falls out, is never banished, or hissed from the stage. Hallelujah! This is true of Christ.

Hence, all the other fourteen qualities are also true.

Now when we receive the Holy Spirit, He pours out into our heart this divine love - Rom. 5:5. He also

brings the gifts with Him, "dividing them severally as He will." Then as we count the old man "yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto God; there will come "the manifestation of the Spirit" in the gifts, and this sixteen-lobed manifestation of love which will actuate and control the exercise of the gifts. Thus it will be "to profit withal." The one using the gift, the Assembly and God will be profited.

3. The Love Abiding - Vs. 18-31. The gifts of the Spirit are granted to the assembly for signs to the unbelieving and for the building up of the Assembly. They should continue with it as long as it exists. "When that which is perfect (or full-grown) is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." The gifts and offices will be discontinued when they have served their purpose, when "we all may arrive into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God, into a man full grown, into a measure of stature of fullness (or completeness) of Christ." Five offices are distinctly given - "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, with a view to the perfecting of the holy ones" to bring about the full growth of the Church, or Body of Christ" - Eph. 4:11-13. Therefore, in Revelation, the book of consummations, we read no more of the Church, or Body of Christ after the fourth chapter. Then she will have come to full growth. Her mission on earth as the Church will have ceased. The "perfect day" will have come. She will hear a voice from heaven; "Come up hither." Until that day, all the offices and gifts, brought to her on the day of Pentecost, should continue with her. But the love which contrived this wondrous plan and fills the Church shall abide forever; for "God is love." Hence, the admonition, "Pursue love."

Prophecy and Tongues Contrasted. - Chapter 14. In chapter 12:7, we saw that "the manifestation of the Spirit is given for profit." In the last verse of this chapter, we are admonished to "let all things be done becomingly and according to order." The burden of the chapter is expressed in verse twelve - "Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." The significant word "edify," or build up, occurs eight times in this chapter. Let us keep these facts in mind and we will see what the Spirit means to teach us here.

The word translated "speak" in these three chapters is peculiar to this section. It is employed scarcely anywhere else. The word means to prate, chatter, babble; to chirp, or twitter, as birds. It properly means to make inarticulate sounds; for example, "The thunders uttered their voices" - Rev. 10:4. "The blood of sprinkling speaketh" - Heb. 12:24.

Observe seven facts about speaking in a tongue without the interpretation "He speaketh unto God;" "he speaketh mysteries;" "he edifieth himself" (vs. 2, 4) "but the other is not edified (v. 17); "tongues are for a sign to the unbelievers" (v. 22); provokes needless ridicule (v. 23); and is termed childish, confusing and unbecoming - Vs. 20, 33, 40.

Observe seven facts about prophecy - "exhortation," "comfort," "teaching," "conviction," "judgment," "heart secrets manifested" - all culminating in that one grand result, "edification," or building up the whole assembly. Hence, prophecy is of more value than tongues and "he that prophesieth is greater (as to office, or gift) than he that speaketh in a tongue." But he that speaks in a tongue and interprets his message is the greatest of all, because he has three gifts, viz. - tongues, interpretation and prophecy. Thus, speaking in tongues has great value when accompanied by these two other gifts. Every message in a tongue is a "mystery" - V. 2. But the interpretation of it will be the "revelation" by "prophecy" of some new fact, or it will be the expounding of "knowledge" by "doctrine," or teaching - V. 6. Such revelation is never some new doctrine. That would be adding to the Holy Writings - Rev. 22:19. It is always in perfect harmony with the Word already given. Revelation is bringing to light something that is covered; exposing the cause of defeat as with Achan in Israel; or announcing some special favor, or judgment from God's hand. According to his usual custom, Paul produces a powerful argument from nature against unintelligible speaking in tongues. Note here that the words "sound" and "voice" are exactly the same. First, he shows that playing on a pipe, or harp without a tune, or blowing a trumpet meaninglessly, as only a child would do, is to no profit. Just so is speaking in tongues without interpretation. Then, he goes further and says: "There are, it may be, many kinds of voices (or languages) in the world; and none of them is inarticulate. Therefore, if I know not the meaning (lit. power) of the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh a barbarian unto me." This last statement, the Apostle afterwards experienced on the Island of Melita on his way to Rome - Acts 28. God came to his aid and caused him to speak to those barbarous people" in their own language. He preached the Gospel to them and healed their sick.

God has not promised the Church the power to speak to the heathen in their native language. But He does it sometimes sovereignty. The hundred and twenty speaking fifteen different languages at Pentecost was wholly Israelitish. Some dear saints have met with defeat and discouragement since "the latter rain,"

because they did not understand this. It may please God to repeat that power when the Spirit resumes His work upon Israel after the catching away of the Church. Instruction about Tongues. The individual speaking should pray (while speaking) for the interpretation. The whole assembly should not speak in tongues at once. Only let two, or three speak and one interpret. It is not at all likely that these restrictions apply to sudden outbursts of tongues which last only for a few moments; but rather to prolonged speeches. Our praying, praising and giving thanks as well as speaking should also be with the understanding, or in our native tongue, as well as in another tongue - Vs. 13-19.

Verses 22-24 at first seem to be contradictory. They are not so, however. Two facts are emphasized, viz: "Tongues are for a sign," and that "to unbelievers;" "prophecy is for building up;" and that of "believers." Verse 23 suggests that the on-lookers "are uninstructed," because they "are unbelievers;" while verse 24 suggests that the individual visitor is "an unbeliever," because he is "uninstructed." The first will not be convinced by the sign - "and yet for all that they will not hear Me saith the Lord" (V. 21 and Luke 16:31); nor benefited by prophecy - "the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" - Heb. 4:2. The believer does not need a sign. He that comes in unbelieving, or uninstructed, on being instructed by direct prophecy, or by tongues and interpretation, is convinced, judged and converted. He becomes a believer.

Verse 26 indicates the indecorous conduct of the Corinthian Church. "Every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, etc." The Holy Spirit gently reproves and corrects them. Hence, verses 26 to 33 show the proper order of the use of these more prominent gifts. Observe the seven "lets" in these eight verses. The first one is the most important - "Let all things be done unto edifying." This governs the teaching of the whole chapter. Verse 33 intimates that such disorder was not common in the other assemblies.

Woman's Place in the Assembly. "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" - Vs. 34, 35.

"Every woman that prayeth, or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven" - Chapter 11:5. "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence; for Adam was first formed, then Eve" - I Tim. 2:11-13.

Women's proper place in the Church is easily ascertained by considering these citations together. The words "silence," "obedience," "subjection," "teach," and "usurp authority" give the clue to the situation. We saw in chapter eleven that woman has the right to pray and prophesy, not in company with her own sex simply, or in private, but also in the Assembly; else what sense is there to the command to "pray and prophesy with head covered?" If there is no man present, how can she show her subordination?" In I Tim. 2:8, 9, Paul exhorts, "I will therefore that men pray in every place lifting up holy hands apart from wrath and reasoning; in like manner also the women (should pray lifting up holy hands) in guise seemly, etc." But as there was disorder, indecorum and tumult in the Assembly in regard to tongues and prophecy, so also there was a manifest indecorum on the part of the women in their relation to the men in the Assembly. Some sought to teach the men. Some sought to usurp authority over the men. They were not in subjection. They were not teachable. They were not silent in obedience to the men whom God had set in the lead. They spoke in tongues, had revelations, visions and dreams more than the men and pushed these things on the Assembly in a spirit of insubordination. The following questions and reflections are in point:

Furthermore, the Greek word "esuchia," rendered "silence," is rendered "quiet" in verse two. In Luke 23:56, the same word is translated "rested," and in Luke 14:4 and in Acts 11:18, it is "peace," and in Acts 21:4, "ceased." Therefore, the word silence here does not mean absolute cessation of speech, but cessation of anxiety, of carnal, unwise and untimely activity, or of officiousness, as in I Cor. 14:33 - "He is not the God of confusion, but of peace." It means to be at rest, gentle and yielding, not officious, nor insubordinate. Also note the phrase "usurp authority." That does not rob woman of all authority, nor deprive her of holding some spiritual office that belongs to another. (I wonder if some men should not take this home to themselves.) Authority is granted to women scripturally as truly as to men. And a man who "usurps authority" is in just as bad a case as if he were a woman. Indeed, male usurpers are doing more harm today than the women; for a "legion" of fellows, because they speak in tongues, or have license from some sect, or are glib talkers, assume authority which God never gave them, nor intended that they should have. On the other hand, some modest women have proved, by their spiritual prowess, that they were authorized from heaven to minister God's Word to others.

May the women have the gifts? How could Priscilla be Paul's "fellow worker;" and how could Tryphena and Persia the beloved all "labor in the Lord" if they had not some gifts? - Rom. 16:3, 12. Had not Priscilla the gift of teaching if she could "show Apollos the way more accurately?" - Acts 18:26. She was evidently more prominent than her husband; for the Holy Spirit mentions her first in their labors with Paul (Rom. 16:3 and II Tim. 4:19), even as Paul is mentioned first with Barnabas after he becomes by the Spirit "the chief speaker." And did not "the Elect Lady" have the gifts of wisdom, knowledge and teaching? How else could she keep "her children walking in the truth?" - II John. It is distinctly declared that "Philip had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" - Acts 21:9.

Objections to Tongues Answered. Verses 36 to 40. There were some in the Corinthian Assembly who opposed the speaking in tongues; hence, the Apostle writes: "Forbid not to speak in tongues." Some set themselves up as authority against the teaching of the Apostle, as if they only were prophets, or spiritual, or as if that Church alone had received the truth, or were alone capable of sending out the light. Therefore, Paul declares very boldly: "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." "But if any man be ignorant (lit. a know-nothing), let him be ignorant." If any man will not be instructed, let him be a know-nothing.

1. Tongues were for the beginning of this age, but not for now, is the claim of some. People quote Paul, saying, "Tongues shall cease." But Paul said also, in the same verse, that "prophecies and knowledge shall be done away." When? He answers, "When that which is perfect is come;" that is, when Christ shall call us to glory. Not till then should any of the three manifestations cease. The 120 "began to speak in tongues," which implies that it should continue. Jesus had said, "These signs shall follow them that believe" (Mark 16:17), and tongues was the second in the list. Paul wrote that "tongues are a sign." God be praised, the signs did follow and they did continue. Ten years after Pentecost, the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his friends, speaking in other tongues -- Acts 10:46.

About twenty years after Pentecost, speaking in tongues began in Corinth - Compare Acts 18 with I Cor. 2 and 14. Over twenty years after Pentecost, the Spirit fell in Ephesus, and the recipients "spoke in tongues and prophesied" - Acts 19. And there is not one syllable in the New Testament, which indicates that such a phenomenon should be discontinued. The apparent proofs that men produce against speaking in tongues come from their brains, but not from the Bible. They do not seem to understand that such objections are Satan's cunning scheme to keep the supernatural out of the Church. He even helps folks to be religious and put on pious airs as long as they sail clear of the Bible pattern. But the more we conform to the Simple Word of God, the more the devil and reasoning men become arrayed against us.

2. Paul said nothing about tongues in any of his epistles except one, and in that one, he gave them a very small place, is the fling of still others. This argument is too silly for words. Why should he write to the other assemblies what he wrote to Corinth? All the letters were for the whole Church, though addressed to individual congregations. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches" (Rev. 2:7), is no doubt God's voice concerning Paul's letters also. Why not condemn the Apostle for not writing a symposium on the Holy Spirit? But Jesus gave us such a symposium in John 14, 15 and 16. The epistles were written to people who had been initially filled with the Spirit, instructing them how to walk in the Spirit, how to gain victory over sin, how to grow up into Christ, and showing them their place and wealth in Christ and their glorious and eternal goal and reward.

We repeat that Paul's letters were written to build up the saints, who had been initially filled with the Spirit. What is the order in a properly arranged house? The cooking utensils are nearby, or on the stove, not in the parlor. The dishes are in the cupboard, not in the garret. The beds are in the sleeping rooms, not in the kitchen. The dining set is in the eating room, not in the basement. A place for everything and everything in its place is the sensible order in natural things. How much more should we look for such wise arrangement in supernatural and divine things. But men's critical brains and unbelieving hearts reject plain statements and treat the Bible as if it were a ludicrous jumble. They do not consider that the apostles walked in the Spirit for years and grew in grace and divine knowledge - grew out of babyhood into manhood - before they wrote the epistles. Men and women pose as teachers in their spiritual babyhood before they are capable of unfolding

God's Word; hence, they spoil it, disarrange it and muddle it to the hurt of honest hearts. It requires diligent, close and prolonged study of the Word in order to divide it accurately. And such students must be anointed with the Holy Spirit.

3. Men object to speaking in tongues as the distinctive sign of the fullness of the Spirit. They say that the Apostle asked, "Do all speak with tongues?" - I Cor. 12:30. But that question is no proof against it; for he had no reference to the initial filling, or anointing with the Spirit. He does not say, Did you all speak in

tongues when you received the Spirit? He knew they had; for otherwise, they would have had only what the fathers had under the old covenant. Bezaleel was filled with the Spirit of God (Ex. 31:3); the Spirit came upon Gideon (Judg. 3:10); He came mightily upon Samson (Judg. 14:6) and Simeon came into the temple by the Spirit (Luke 2:27): but no one under the Old Covenant was filled with the Spirit after the Pentecostal pattern. They did not have what Joel foretold and of which Peter exclaimed, "THIS IS THAT." Nay, for speaking in tongues is a distinctive new covenant blessing - Isa. 28:11, 12 and Mark 16:17. Even healing and miracles were not new.

Paul meant, Do all members of the assembly speak in tongues as a gift? Do all members of the body have the same functions? The entire twelfth chapter is "concerning spiritual gifts; for "there are diversities of gifts" - Vs. 1, 4. The other six questions convey this meaning, and no other. Apply the critic's reasoning to them and you will land in a theological muddle. Are all teachers then? I am following the logic of the opposer of tongues as the distinctive sign of the personal anointing with the Spirit. If he makes Paul ask the question concerning speaking in tongues when they get filled, he must make him ask the other six questions also concerning the same time. If the others have no reference to our initial filling with the Spirit (and they do not, most emphatically), then neither does his query about tongues. If the other six questions are about gifts, distributed as the Spirit wills to profit the assembly withal, then do also his questions about tongues and interpretation refer to gifts, and not to the initial filling with the Spirit.

"Wherefore, Brethren" - for all these foregoing reasons - covet earnestly to prophesy and forbid not to speak in tongues. Let all things be done becomingly and according to order."

Sixth Division - The Resurrection

Chapter 15

"Moreover, Brethren, I declare unto you the glad tidings, which I preached as glad tidings unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye have stood, thru which also ye are being saved, if ye keep in memory a certain word which I preached as glad tidings unto you, unless ye believed in vain" Vs. 1- 2.

Each of Paul's epistles teaches some vital truth, which necessarily associates with it some other vital truths. Each one has a solid beginning, gives a clear and full unfolding of that particular truth, and ends in a glorious consummation. First Corinthians, setting forth Assembly Order, of necessity furnishes us the fact and fashion of the resurrection of the dead in Christ. Hence, before us lies a majestic and sublime of doctrine. The book would be far from complete without it. First, the fact of the resurrection of the saints is established by seven invincible arguments - Vs. 3 to 32. Second, the manner, or fashion of the resurrection is grandly set forth, beginning the resurrection of Christ and ending with the last believer raised at the end of the millennium - Vs. 35 to 58. The Resurrection Established, Verses 1 to 32.

Proof One. Paul reviews the message he had before announced - Vs. 1-4. This message, the very foundation truth of the gospel, and called in verse two, "A certain word" (Greek), is four-fold - "Christ died our sins; was buried; rose again and was seen." He reminds his readers that their faith in this fourfold announcement brought them an experience of salvation. Some of them were accepting the doctrine of the Sadducees, and saying that there is no resurrection of the dead - V. 12. This occasioned the writing of this chapter. And this accounts for the phrase in verse 2, "unless ye have believed in vain." He does not mean to intimate that you may be saved now, and be lost at last: but if there be no resurrection, our faith is vain. See verses 14, 17. The original is very rich and full. Paul announced the glad tidings. If there were no resurrection, his preaching was not glad tidings; but believers are of all men most miserable - V. 19. Hence, the death of Christ, as the necessary substitute for guilty sinners, is the greatest and most august event in history. Likewise, His resurrection is the most stupendous miracle ever wrought.

But what is that to Almightyness? "God raised Him from the dead." And bear in mind, this gospel is "according to the scriptures," or Old Testament writings. The Bible agrees with itself and proves itself from beginning to end, and from end to beginning.

Proof Two. Christ was seen after His resurrection by six companies at six different times - Vs. 5-8. These appearances were made known to Paul especially, as having official value. Those recorded in the Gospels are chiefly historic, though none the less valid. Hence, Jesus was seen first by Peter, to whom He first announced His Church, and to whom He gave the keys of the Kingdom - Matt. 16:18-19. Next, He was seen of the twelve; therefore, the election of Matthias to the apostleship was clearly of the Lord - Acts 1:21-26. Paul was destined to be the leading apostle of another school altogether, for a distinct purpose altogether. The phrase, "all the apostles" (v. 7), doubtless includes the "seventy" of Luke 10; for they too were called apostles. See the Greek. "And last of all, just as by the abortion, He was seen also by me" -

V. 3. Israel had nationally rejected Christ, in which rejection Saul participated, and expressed it by holding Stephen's clothes while his enemies stoned him – Acts 7:58. Therefore, there was no hope for him until the threatened period of blindness (Rom. 11:7, 25) should be lifted. But Sovereign grace revealed the Messiah ahead of the time appointed for the Christ rejecting nation. Thus his spiritual birth was as if by abortion, or premature.

Here we must call attention to the wonderful typical teaching of these six appearances of Christ, which correspond with the different companies mentioned in Revelation. We suggest for study the following. Viewed officially, Peter corresponds with the four living creatures; and “the twelve,” with the twenty four elders; since twelve is the number of Divine rule (24 being twice 12) - Rev. 4. As the twelve shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel; even so John saw 24 elders sitting on 24 thrones in heaven. The 500 to whom Jesus appeared, remind us of the great company of tribulation saints of Rev. 7. James suggests the “Two witnesses” of Rev. 11. As he was distinctively a witness to Israel, so will they be. And they will be taken up to heaven. “All the apostles,” the 12 and the 70, foreshadow the 144,000 of Rev. 7 and 14. Finally, as the Lord was seen by Saul enroute for Damascus, so He will be seen by His people Israel as He is revealed from heaven. This is exactly Paul's meaning. His salvation by sovereign grace at the beginning of this age is an earnest of the salvation of his own race at the end. And if Jesus' appearance to him is a fore gleam of His appearance to Israel; then also are His other appearances mentioned above, typical of His final appearances to other saints. The first five groups are all seen by John in heaven; the last will be on earth. Be it also remembered, that these appearances of Christ are recorded in this most significant chapter about the resurrection. Why so, if they are not full of typical teaching? Echo alone answers: “Why?”

What an unanswerable evidence of the resurrection of the dead. Christ was seen by six different companies, who were only an earnest of six other larger companies, many of whom are now in their graves, who must also see Him; for the Head and the Body, the Church, must be brought together in one place, and God's covenant promise to Israel must be fulfilled.

Proof Three. Abundant sovereign grace bestowed on Paul - Vs. 9, 10. The apostle declares that his salvation, his apostleship and his achievements were absolutely of grace. If the other brethren were meant to be called apostles because they never resisted the light, Paul felt that he was not; because he “persecuted the Church of God.” Peter had a claim on Jehovah, even His covenant promise to Abraham; but Saul had none. Peter accepted the promise; Saul rejected it and was blinded. Saul's self-sufficiency and rejection of God's All-sufficiency, even Christ the only Redeemer, made him “the chief of sinners.” Therefore chiefest grace made him chief in service - “I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” Only those who see and choose the place of abject weakness and utter helplessness can appreciate the above. Now he brings forward his gracious call and mission and message as an invincible evidence that the dead shall be raised; for if there be no resurrection, all this is vain.

Proof Four. The other apostles also preached the same gospel, including the resurrection - V. 11. “Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach; and so ye believed.” If he were in error, so were the other apostles, and so were the Corinthian believers.

Proof Five. Christ's resurrection necessitates absolutely that of His people. Six arguments are advanced for its support - Vs. 13-19. The positive statement is this: “if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.” They did not deny that Christ was raised; but His people. Such a view makes His salvation imperfect; for redemption must go as deep in its recovery as sin has gone in its ruin. The whole man was ruined; the whole man must be redeemed. Death is the result of and penalty for sin; redemption must offset both; hence, death must be swallowed up of life. Furthermore, Christ is the Head of a Body called the Church. How can He be in heaven and His people be forever in the grave? How insane such a thought. How that would stamp redemption with blushing weakness. How Satan would forever rejoice. The mystery of Christ would be a dwarfish defeat. Old Testament prophecies would fail of fulfillment. Jesus' resurrection demands absolutely our resurrection.

1. “Our preaching is vain” if Christ be not raised. Paul and the other apostles had been preaching for years.

2. “Your faith is vain” if Christ be not raised; for “he was raised on account of our justification” - Rom. 4:25. We cannot be saved if Christ be not raised. There is no salvation in a dead Saviour. Saving faith is in the risen, living Saviour. “He is able to save to the uttermost, seeing He ever liveth.”

3. “We are found false witnesses of God” if Christ be not raised. We give God the lie; for if there be no resurrection, then it is not true that God raised Christ from the dead.

4. "Ye are yet in your sins" if Christ be not raised. "He put away sin (for us) by the sacrifice of Himself;" but He puts away from us the consciousness, or guilt of sin by His life. We were reconciled to God by Jesus' death; but we are saved by His life. - Rom. 4:10.

5. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" if Christ be not raised. Not only are the living believers still unsaved; but the dead are lost forever; there is no hope of again seeing the Lord if Christ be not raised.

6. "We are of all men most miserable" if Christ be not raised... for faith in the historic Christ only can save no one. Only the crucified, buried and risen Christ can save. Hence, if we believe that Jesus saves us, we are occupied with a false claim and hope, a hallucination from which the unbeliever is free, if it is true that Christ is still in the grave.

Is it any wonder that Russellism knows nothing of an experience of personal salvation, present and joyous? For it holds that the body of Christ was never raised. Any wonder that blinded Jews do not accept our Saviour? If they believed that He was raised from the dead, they would have to acknowledge that He is the Son of God. And is it any wonder that so many believers have no real joy and victory, no comforting assurance of present salvation? The resurrection is only a tenet of faith, a doctrine of their creed; it is not to them a living, vital reality; it is not to them the stupendous miracle upon which their very existence, salvation, safety and destiny depend. Many confess the resurrection of Christ with their lips, but deny it in their lives. They attempt to live by their own efforts, and not by the risen life of the Lord.

Proof Six. The Consummation - Vs. 20 to 28. These verses show the utter impossibility of separating the resurrection of the saints from that of Christ, and that the consummation of all things is bound up with both, as one great resurrection, called "The first resurrection." Hence, with one dash of his holy pen, the Apostle sweeps thru from the raising of Christ to the end of the Millennium.

"Christ is the first fruit of those having fallen asleep; for since through a man the death came, through a Man, comes the resurrection of dead ones; for as in Adam all die, so in the Christ shall all be made alive." There is no reference here to the resurrection of the wicked dead, as some suppose. This chapter tells all about the first resurrection, in which the wicked have no part. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection" - Rev. 20:6. Though, all men died in Adam, yet only those who believe on Christ are in Him and can be made alive in Him. The word rendered "coming" verse 23, is "parousia" and means presence. They that are Christ's will be raised at His presence which will continue thru the millennium. Hence, the first resurrection must include the last sleeping saint at the end. See verses 26 and 54. "Then the end," that is the end of Christ's millennial reign. Paul does not inform us of the duration of this reign; but John does - Rev. 20:4, 6. During His 1000 years reign, "all things are put under Him." Joseph's reign over Egypt is a beautiful type of Christ's reign. As he was the great man on the throne, even in Pharaoh's stead; so Jesus as a Man, will reign as God. That will be the rightful, scriptural deification of man, which Satan is continually endeavoring to counterfeit. Matt. 28:18 will then be fully fulfilled; also the latter part of Isa. 9:6 - "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Age-Lasting Father, The Prince of Peace; but not now as some foolishly teach. The distinct personalities of the Father and Son are here as everywhere maintained. "It is manifest that He (God the Father) is excepted" in the subjection mentioned. God is not subject to His Son; but He puts all things under His Son, who shall reign as God, for the thousand years. Then after His glorious reign of peace and holy conquest, the Son Himself shall be subject to the Father, "that God may be all in all."

Do you see, beloved that this Divine program could never be carried on if the dead be not raised? How terrible to question for one moment the purposes and plans and promises of God. Men would do away with the supernatural.

Proof Seven - Water Baptism. Otherwise what shall they do who are baptized for the dead if dead ones are not raised at all? And why are they baptized for them?" - V. 29. This supposedly difficult verse brings to us the far-reaching meaning of water baptism. The same meaning is taught in Rom. 6:5 - "For if we have become planted together in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be (raised in the likeness) of His resurrection." Water baptism not only symbolizes the death of our old man and the springing into life of the new man; but it also foreshadows the actual burial of our bodies and their coming forth in resurrection power and glory. By baptism, we declare that we believe in the resurrection to come. We are regarded as being "baptized in behalf of the dead," all the dead in Christ as "one body" that is, "planted together," not simply planted as individuals in death. We all died together in the death of Christ. - "OUR old man," not simply MY old man. We died as one in the first Adam: we were raised as one in the Last Adam; hence our physical resurrection will be one. Therefore, my baptism is not simply in my own behalf, but in behalf of the whole body of Christ which is in the tomb.

Verses 30 to 32 complement this culminating argument. If there be no resurrection, "why stand we in danger every hour?" Why jeopardize our brief lives if there is no hope of a future life and rewards?

"Every day I die by your boasting, which I have in Christ Jesus." Chapter 4:8 explains the carnal boast to which Paul refers. They were self-sufficient; but Christ was his sufficiency. The sufficiency that they claimed to have in themselves, he possessed in Christ. He gloried in Him. But their carnal glorying occasioned suffering in him, equal to dying. He fully develops this daily dying experience by referring to a rare conflict he had with Satan at Ephesus - II Cor. 1:8. Remember that, it was at Ephesus, where only we really have combats with his satanic majesty. Saints who never reach Ephesus, never know the devil and his power, and hence, never reach the culmination of victory - Eph. 6:12. Ephesus represents the heavenlies.

"If according to man, I fought with a beast in Ephesus." Who was that "beast" but the devil? What was that fight but a contention against Satan as if against the antichrist? Him who will prevent the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living if possible; yea still more, he will especially try to hinder the out-resurrection and the out-translation, for which Paul was boxing.

The adversary "pressed him out of measure, above strength," and made his to "despair even of life." A premature death, a death at Satan's hands, the Apostle resisted; for that would rob him of the prize which shall fall to the full-overcomers. How did Paul gain the victory? "But we had the sentence, or answer of death in ourselves," pronounced on Calvary and symbolized by burial in water, "that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead," symbolized by the baptizer raising us out of the water. Hallelujah! I tell you friend, in Corinth Paul was withstanding sadduceanism, or no resurrection of the dead; but in Ephesus he was contending against anti-Christ, the author of "no hell" and of "no resurrection." Paul proved the fact of the resurrection of the dead in that deadly duel with Satan. He trusted the God of resurrection; and that God met his faith, delivering him even "from so great a death."

I tell you this was the climaxing argument in favor of the resurrection. Paul had the glory of Christ's resurrection in his spirit; but here he experienced the resurrection power in his body. The former was an inward evidence, largely unseen to others; but here was an invincible, visible proof. What he desired in Phil. 3:10, he experienced here.

Therefore his culminating interrogatives. If there be no resurrection, what shall the baptized do, and why are they baptized in behalf of those who look for such a glorious loosing from death? Why endanger ourselves every day? Why contend for our place in the heavenlies with Christ? Why "wrestle against principalities and powers, against organized forces of wickedness in the heavenlies" if there is no resurrection?

How vastly different from this is the dark Romish and Mormon heresy that some living person is baptized for one who has died. That is antichrist. It makes the baptized one the saviour of the dead one; then Christ is not needed. It teaches salvation after death. It is simply one of the items of the damnable religion of works. It makes water baptism a saving medium. Christ alone is the saviour, but a beautiful, and glorious and comprehensive symbol is baptism when fully understood.

Proof Eight. The manner of the resurrection illustrated - Vs. 35-50. Verses 36 to 41, setting forth undeniable facts in nature, are replete with minute teaching concerning the fashion of the resurrection. Study them closely. They answer the puzzling questions of verse 35. Of course the resurrection is life out of death. This at once staggers reason. How can life ever again appear in a form that has turned to stinking corruption and unidentifiable dust? But nature's answer is: "Foolish, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The farmer knows this to be true of a grain of corn, or wheat, or pumpkin seed. Though he cannot understand how it can be that life springs out of a decaying seed, yet he never hesitates to sow, even though he is a professed infidel about spiritual things. Here we are informed as to how it can be - "God giveth it a body, (Paul does not let nature have the glory of producing its own kind) as it hath pleased Him." Exactly so does He in raising the dead; for the phrase, "so also is the resurrection of the dead," refers to every item mentioned concerning natural things. God gives each sleeping saint a body as it hath pleased Him. Yes, "and to every seed its own body." Wheat springs into wheat; corn into corn; etc.

This language about certain bodies coming from certain seeds, and the comparison of four kinds of flesh (V. 39), indicate that in the resurrection the bodies of believers will differ in their state and appearance. Still keep in mind verse 42. The racer for the prize in Philippians expects "the body of our humiliation to be transformed into the likeness of the body of His (Jesus') glory" - Phil. 3:21. But according to verses 40, 41, not every glorified body will be thus transformed. "There is one glory," of the sun and another glory of the moon, etc." Some saints will share with Jesus in the highest, or "sun glory;" and their bodies, like His,

will radiate that transcendent glory. Their bodies will be like the body of His glory, not simply like the bodies of "moon glory," or "star glory." Though they are all incorruptible, they differ in brilliance. For example; gold is brighter than silver, and a diamond brighter than gold.

The resurrected body will be incorruptible, glorious, powerful and spiritual. The reason for all this is shown by the contrast between the two federal heads - Vs. 45-49. The first Adam was never spiritual; but only natural and soulish. He was subject to sin, and hence to decay. To see this is to lose all hope of ever improving the old creation, or of simply purging it from sin and restoring it to Adam's state before he fell. What profit in that? He could fail and fall again. But the Last Adam came, not only a living personality, but a life-giving spirit. Adam transmitted life; but Jesus gives life where there is none. He was heavenly; Adam was earthy. Jesus was spiritual; He moved by the Holy Spirit. Adam moved by his own volition. Likewise now, to be spiritual is to be moved by the Spirit of God instead of natural impulse. And yet, spiritual people are not thinking every moment of the Spirit, but being occupied with the Lord and for His glory, they are swayed by a happy, holy, heavenly instinct. Therefore, "as is the Heavenly One, such are they also that are heavenly ones." Then of course follows the next verse - "and as we have borne the image of the earthy one," weakness corruptibility, dishonor, "we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly One," incorruptibility, glory, honor, spirituality, power.

Verse 50 corresponds with Rom. 14:17 - "The Kingdom of God is not in eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." And as it is not revealed by flesh and blood, but by God Himself (Matt. 16:16); so by Divine power we are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col. 1:13), which is the first and important translation. We come into the kingdom by the new birth, not by the old creation inheriting it; and these born ones "inherit all things."

B. The Final Mystery. "Behold, I shew you a mystery - We shall not all fall asleep; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye." Of all New Testament writers, Paul informs us of the mysteries - "the mystery of inquiry, the mystery of godliness, the great mystery", the Bridehood.

Here is the culminating mystery. The doctrine of the resurrection was not new. It was plainly taught in the Old Testament - Isa. 25:8; Ezek 37:12; Dan. 12:2. But that "all shall be changed," whether they die or not, was new. Some saints will be alive when the trumpet blows, and that very blast will change their bodies into immortality, power and glory at the same moment changing the dead into incorruptibility, similarly as Ezekiel said: "The Spirit entered into me as He spoke unto me, and set me upon my feet" - Ezek. 2:2.

The resurrection of all believers is called "The first resurrection," in distinction from the resurrection of the wicked dead, or "second resurrection" - Rev. 20:14. But not all believers will be raised at exactly the same moment, or twinkling; "but every man in his own rank." The phrase "last trump," requires that there shall be more than one trumpet blast. The appearance of Jesus to different companies at distinct times (vs. 5-8) and the distinct visions that John had at successive times of distinct companies in heaven agree with this view, and demand the resurrection to take place at different stages. Paul's yearning for "the resurrection out from dead ones" (Phil. 3:11) and the warning of I Thes. 5:4-8 teach the same stirring truth. The "last trump," of necessity sounds at the end of the millennium. "This corruptible and this mortal" of verse 54 includes believers on earth during the millennium, at the end of which, "death is swallowed up in victory." Compare Isa 65:20 with 25:8. The triumphant question of verse 55 (Hos. 13:14) cannot be sounded out till the last trumpet sound has died away in eternal victory. When there is actually no more sin, there will be no more death.

"But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory thru our Lord Jesus Christ." The Apostle is not teaching by this verse that we now have immortal bodies, which some people erroneously call eternal life. He means to teach that we now have victory over sin in the flesh and the effect of sin in our bodies. Immortality comes with the advent of Jesus from heaven, and not till then. We are amazed that any one claims to have incorruption as long as he has weak eyes and deaf ears and wrinkles on the face and white hair on the head and is compelled to eat and sleep and is subject to sickness and death like other people. Beware of those. Our bodies are "earthen vessels," from which we "groan to be delivered," that we may be "clothed with our house (glorified body) from heaven" - II Cor. 5. We now have bodies of humiliation till then. We are amazed that any one claims to have incorruption as long as he has weak eyes and deaf ears and advent of Jesus from heaven, and not our bodies. Immortality comes with the after Jesus comes, we will have bodies of glory - Phil. 3:20.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." What a victorious conclusion. The phrase "in vain" occurs six times in this wonderful chapter. If there is indeed a resurrection of the bodies of believers, our faith is not in vain, our preaching is not in vain, grace bestowed upon us is not in vain,

and finally our abundant sufferings and toil are not in vain. Nothing in the Lord is in vain. A sure reward from the Just Judge awaits us upon our arrival in heaven via translation or resurrection, since indeed Christ arose and there is a glorious resurrection of all His people.

SEVENTH DIVISION
The Glorious Advent
Chapter 16

“And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes” - Chapter 4:6. Likewise this chapter is full of typical teaching. Paul's coming to Corinth was a forecast of the coming of Jesus. The collection for the saints should not only be ready for Paul to gather up and take on to Jerusalem, but it should all be in when Jesus comes. How many saints will have to regret their penuriousness, or carelessness concerning the use of their wealth, or its misuse, the “wet day” for which they are laying up never comes. The words of Jesus should never be forgotten - “Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth” (they who do so are not full overcomers); “but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.” The measure of our giving is “as God hath prospered.” “But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost” - V. 6. This verse together with verse 19 indicates that the Apostle wrote this letter from Ephesus. The rich forecast of the verse is, that the Pauline doctrine will continue with the people of God, even after the rapture of the full-overcomers, reaching on to the pouring out of the Spirit on Israel, which Ezek. 39:29 announces. You will be surprised at the frequent references to Ephesus. It will greatly repay the reader to look up and study all the citations thereto. Ephesian saints need to know all about Ephesian truth, so as to be brought into Ephesian victory and Ephesian hope. Too many saints tarry at Pentecost, but never reach Ephesus - they know something of the power of God; but never learn the deep things of God, never know the mysteries hidden in God.

“Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear; for he worketh the work of the Lord as I also do: let no man therefore despise him” - V. 10. Timothy or Timotheus means “honored of God.” The young man, who was such a great comfort to Paul, was to return to Corinth with Paul's Gospel that the saints there might become “rooted and grounded” in the love of the truth. Corinthian saints everywhere abound! That is, such as are only “babes in Christ, and walk as men,” having among them “envying and strife and divisions,” “full and rich” in their own conceits, and “reigning as kings without us” (Chapter 3:3 and 4:8); that is, they are sufficient and soaring without Paul's Gospel. Hence, they need Timothy; they need to hear him whom God honors, and who is that but he who declares fully and heartily the Gospel of grace and the mystery of God, even Christ in all his fullness? Exactly this is what God is doing now. He is sending him “whom God honors,” with Paul's glorious message, or the Gospel of grace and the Gospel of the glory to Corinth. Dear Reader, remember that Paul's voice is the voice of the Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that is saying: “Receive him; despise him not; conduct him forth in peace.” He must come from you with fruit that will abide, and abound to the glory of God. Reader if you want an inheritance, you must receive Timothy; if you wish to grow, if you wish to labor “not in vain,” if you wish to “build gold and silver and precious stone,” you must receive Paul's message at Timothy's hands. “For I look for him with the brethren,” shouts Paul. He expects “whom God honors” to be raptured with the full-overcomers. Paul expects all such to arrive in his rank. Hallelujah! Amen.

“Apollos' will was not at all to come at this time” - V 12. Apollos means “one who destroys.” Any wonder that he was not willing to go to Corinth? They were not able to bear strong meat, and the destructive blows of Apollos' eloquence must wait till Timothy goes ahead and prepares the soil for him. “But he will come when he shall have convenient time,” even in the perfect order of the Lord. Look for him too.

Note how tenderly and yet how firmly the Apostle draws his children on into full development - “Watch ye; stand fast in the faith; quit you like men; be strong” (V. 13); as if to prepare them for the coming of Timothy and Apollos, and thru them, prepare them for the coming of Jesus. Verse 15 contradicts Rom. 16:5 in the common text. There could not be two parties; each called “the first fruit of Achaia.” Epenetus was the first fruit of Asia” - R. V.

“If any one love (Philei, Gr.) not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed; the Lord cometh” - V. 22. This is a remarkably interesting statement, when understood. It has special value at this point. The word for love is not “agapao,” or Divine love, but “philei,” human love, or friendly affection. A study of Lev. 5:11 will help us to grasp the scriptural use of this word love, which also occurs in Jesus' interview with Peter just after the former's resurrection - John 21:15-17. Lev. 5:11 says. “But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering.” All those Levitical offerings referred to Christ in some aspect of His

character, or His substitutionary death for us. From God's viewpoint, no one can be saved except upon the basis of the death of another. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" - Heb. 9:22. Hence, a lamb, or goat, or at least a turtledove had to be brought and offered up to make atonement for the transgressor. God said to Israel: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Now some people's conception of Christ and His atoning work is so meager that they see Him only as a beautiful character, a lovely man. His death for them does not seem to impress them. Yet they believe on Him, accept Him as their Saviour, and love Him. To them, Christ is only a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, or "a meal-offering." God saves them upon their confession of faith in Him, though they bring no blood, because He sees the blood which His Son shed. This is the meaning of the love expressed in the above verse, by the Greek word "philei." This is the meaning of Peter's love for Jesus when he said to Him: "Thou knowest that I love (philo) thee."

Peter did not have the proper conception of the death of Christ before He was crucified; hence, his rebuke of Jesus - "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee" - Matt. 16:22. He could not see the necessity of Jesus dying for mankind. He could not offer Christ as a lamb, or goat - a sin offering, but only as a handful of fine flour, a meal offering. Peter loved Jesus as a man and as the Son of God. Jesus corrected Peter's carnal pity, showing him that it was satanic. This wounded the Apostle's feelings; and he followed Him afar off. After our Lord's death and resurrection, He enquires of Peter if he still has only a human love for Him, if he still sees Him as a meal offering only? Twice He asks: "Do you love me with a divine love?" To which Peter both times replied: "I love you with a human love." Then the third time, Jesus asked: "Do you indeed love me only for my holy character, and not also for dying in your behalf?" Peter not yet seeing the grace of Christ which He displayed in His death for others, still insisted, "I love you with a human love; I see you only as a meal offering."

How fitting that this tender mercy of God, this smallest view of the Saviour should be placed at the close of this epistle. If any one does not love the lovely, holy character of Jesus Christ as God's dear Son; if he does not bring Him to God as a small part of an ephah of fine flour; if he does not trust his case in His hands, the curse of God must inevitably be upon him - Though men may not see Him as Paul always preached Him - "Christ crucified," yet, because God sees Him as such, if they receive and love Him, there is no curse for them. "Maranatha" means, "the Lord cometh." The curse of God, due to every sinner, fell upon His Son on Calvary. He who bore the curse once, cometh as the eternal Blessor of all them that believe on Him.

"My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen." This is a peculiar benediction. It breathes the father heart of the Apostle, who said before (Chapter 4:15): "Ye have not many fathers." What a deep yearning he always maintained for the highest welfare of all his followers, and for all the saints.

LESSONS IN CORINTHIANS

THE SECOND EPISTLE

Introductory

"I have written of the grace that is given to me of God that I should be a public servant of Jesus Christ at my own expense for the Gentiles, administering as a priest the glad tidings of God, that the oblation of the Gentiles may be well-pleasing, having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit" - Rom. 15:16.

As stated in the notes on First Corinthians, which set the Church in order as God's present day Tabernacle; so Second Corinthians exhibits the true servant of God filling his priestly functions in the Tabernacle. The verse quoted above from Romans is very beautiful and full of meaning in connection with our present study.

"Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy a brother." Contrast this salutation with that of 1st Corinthians. There we read: "Paul called an apostle." He speaks of himself as they view him. First he was called an apostle; but after they knew him and appreciated him, they recognized him as indeed an apostle by the will of God. Reader, how do you view this "vessel of election?" - Acts 9:15. Sosthenes was associated with Paul in writing the first letter; but Timothy in writing this one. Sosthenes means "saviour" and as such they first preached Christ to the Corinthians, and could write little more than elementary teaching in the first letter - but there are hidden depths which the Spiritual babes and carnal Christians cannot receive; as Paul said, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat" - I Cor. 3:2. Silvanus, "considering," and Timothy, "honored of God," were with Paul on one tour preaching to them - V. 19. Observe that this letter is addressed, not to saints in Corinth only, but to "all the saints which are in all Achaia," or to all who are in affliction; therefore, it is for you, Suffering One. Hence, how fitting the

tender ascription of praise - "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort." Divine "all comfort" is set over against all trouble at the very threshold of the letter. Accordingly, we read of the direst distress, but also of the divinest deliverance in the very first chapter.

OUTLINE OF THE EPISTLE

Following the thought of priesthood, the letter falls beautifully into the accompanying framework.

- I. The anointed priest offering himself up - Chapter 1.
- II. Such a priest a sweet savor unto God - Chapter 2.
- III. The priest ministering within the veil unto God, exceeding glorious - Chapter 3.
- IV. The priest ministering unto men, exceedingly powerful.
 1. A new, heavenly life, the risen life of Jesus - Chapter 4.
 2. A new, heavenly tabernacle; both based upon the fact of Christ having become a trespass and a sin offering for us - Chapter 5.
- V. Such a priestly ministry affects:
 1. Separation from all things Chapter 6.
 2. Separation unto God, inward and deep - Chapter 7.
 3. Fellowship in distribution, or communication - Chapters 8 and 9.
- VI. -The suffering and glory of such a priest - Chapters 10 and 12.
- VII. The priest's source of power - Chapter 13.

We recommend a careful examination of the above outline, and then a thoughtful reading thru of the epistle itself several times, to derive the greatest benefit.

DIVISION ONE

The Anointed Priest Offering - Chapter 1. The tribulations incident to a victorious Christian life call forth the writing of this tender epistle. Therefore, the word "comfort, or consolation" occurs ten times in this first chapter. That God who instituted the Church and set in order as indicated in I Corinthians, here announces Himself to be "the God of all comfort" for all saints under all conditions. The basis for the hope of such unspeakable encouragement is this that our beloved brother Paul, God's authorized first assembly priest, offered himself up to God for us, not to make atonement for sin, but "to fill up that which is behind of the tribulations of the Anointed One for His Body's sake." His afflictions were of a particular character, because to him it was "given to complete the word of God" (Col. 1:24, 25); but all who choose to share with him in this priestly ministry, like Timothy, Titus, etc., will also share in priestly tribulations. Doubtless this is especially the Bride company. If we suffer conjointly with Christ, we shall also reign conjointly with Him. As truly as our Lord Jesus had to suffer as a transgressor and "bear our sins in His own body on the tree;" so truly must some of His devotees suffer that others may be saved and be built up in the faith. The unselfish, sacrificing spirit of the Apostle is expressed in verses 12 and 24, and Chapter 2:4-13. "Dying daily" and "poured out" of others is the normal manner of the life of a New Testament priest. "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead" - V. 9. Not only did the Apostle receive this sentence at the moment that he was pressed out of measure, above strength and despaired of life (v. 8); but he refers to Calvary where the death sentence was pronounced upon the whole old creation. Hence it is safe only and always sufficient to trust the God of resurrection. It is folly to rely upon our well bodies, or bright intellects, or victorious experiences; nor need we despair when all flesh fails us, for He who raiseth the dead will always deliver us until our race is run.

"There is no want to them that fear Him." There is no death to them that trust Him; death is only counted a sleep. Satan, sin and sickness were conquered at Calvary. They cannot have dominion. "Whether we die (fall asleep) we die unto the Lord; whether we live, or die, we are the Lord's" - Rom. 14:8. "As thy day thy strength shall be."

Now He who establishes us with you unto Christ and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" - Vs. 21, 22. Here are four fundamental things which God does for His own. The first is continuous; the other three were once and forever. Hence, Paul never admitted defeat; neither do we if we believe that we are anointed with power. He never questioned the certainty of his destiny and reward; neither can we if we really believe that we were "sealed unto the day of redemption." He rejoiced in hope of having a body fashioned like unto the body of Christ's glory. So do

we. See also Chapter 5:5. With him there was no going back, no letting down, no losing out, no growing cold. Neither is there with us; for we too are being established with grace. As we stated before he never dealt out negatives to the people. "Our preaching to you was not yea and nay; but in Him was yea; for all the promises of God in Him (Christ) are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." God said what he meant and meant what He said. Paul believed it all without wavering, declared it all without toning it down, practiced it all without flinching or compromising. God's word was all "yea" to him. And so is it to us today who dare to be out and out for God's will. Those who know and really believe the truth become like Paul, who was characterized with a modest boldness, and uncompromising gentleness, and invincible faith. They act and speak like God, because they are from God, and know it; being more and more established, or confirmed in and by the truth.

DIVISION TWO

The Priest A Sweet Savor To God - Chapter 2. "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you" - V. 4.

A priestly service flowing from such a fountain is sure to become a sweet savor unto God - V. 15. Such a one always and only seeks the highest good of the saints by pointing them to Christ as the one only Head, having before pointed Him out to the sinner as the one only Saviour. The man mentioned in 1st Cor. 5, symbol of everyone who assumes unscriptural authority over the saints, seeking "dominion over your faith" (Chapter 1:24), caused Paul grief. This is the great grief today that men assume the place and authority which belongs to Jesus Christ only. They rob Him of His Headship and make divisions; for there are as many divisions in Christ's body as there are heads, whether self-appointed, or appointed by others. The Apostle and the Assembly "put away that wicked person" from their fellowship - I Cor. 5:13. That proved effectual. He repented. Therefore, Paul adds; "Sufficient to such a one is this rebuke, which was by the majority." - V. 6. He beseeches them to forgive and encourage him lest he be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. He refuses to leave an opportunity for Satan to drive the offender to despair, or to cause hardness toward him among those who were harmed. He also assures them that he stands with them in this attitude of full forgiveness.

Will our brethren, who are guilty of spiritual fornication, robbing Jesus of His honor and directorship, repent of their assumptions and pride? Very few will, until the majority of believers throw off this yoke by disfellowshipping such conditions. Saints are continually admitting the wrong and yet condoning and fellowshiping it. "Particeps criminis" is pronounced against us if we encourage the very conditions that cause schisms in the body. If others "set bounds" and eliminate us, we are not to blame. The blame is with them. Let us be outspoken and outstanding for the truth that holds Christ as Head, makes for the oneness of Christ and keeps men free. "When I came to Troas for the glad tidings of Christ and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no ease in my spirit because I found not Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went into Macedonia" - Vs. 12-13. Why? He was far more concerned for the welfare of those already saved, than to precipitate another revival. To build up a meeting already founded is much wiser than to leave it to the wolves and start another for wolves to destroy. Hence, how the Apostle was lifted up and comforted on meeting Titus - Chapter 7:6, 7. The importance of feeding and establishing the saints is shown by the fact that all the epistles by all the apostles are written to and for believers. Men make the conversion of sinners the vital thing; but God makes the "care of the churches" the vital thing.

"But to God be thanks who always leads us in triumph in the Anointed One, and the odor of the knowledge of Him makes manifest thru us in every place; for we are to God a sweet perfume of Christ, in those being saved and in those perishing" - Vs. 14, 15. What an exalted ministry is our priesthood in Christ! How sacred to God Himself! He protects it and makes it effective. The faith of

God fills and emboldens the faithful priest; for he is continually offering himself to God for service, or sacrifice, and offering Christ to needy men. Looking at himself, he exclaims: "For these things who is competent?" Immediately he looks and again exclaims: "Our competency is out from God." He is conscious of not "making gain by corrupting the word of God," as the many do. He fearlessly declares: "But as of sincerity, but as of God, before God, in Christ, we speak." This is a rare ministry - this unselfish priestly service, which is wholly from God and for God, which is consciously "in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God" (Chapter 1:12), which is manifestly in Christ and all for His glory. Only a few are experimentally in this line. Did you note that it is stated that "the many corrupt the word to make gain?" They seek to gain numbers, applause, ease and wealth, and that at the

expense of Divine truth, and of course at the cost of the welfare of the Church of God. Oh, how great the need for Christ-like pastors and teachers, who can instruct others also, and who will do it wholly for the Body of Christ and for His glory. As to numbers, the true priestly line is a "feeble folk," but thank God, they are builded on the Rock - Prov. 31:26.

DIVISION THREE

The Priest Ministering To God. - Chapter 3. "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some, letters of commendation to you, or of commendation from you?"

In this chapter, the Apostle is contrasting the ministration of the new with that of the old covenant. In the first six verses, he announces himself and his associates to be the divinely called and equipped ministers of this new covenant, and intimates what constitutes their credentials. The phrase, "as some," in the question above, shows that some workers needed letters of recommendation to the Church at Corinth, else they might not receive them, or letters from that Church if they wished to be received elsewhere. So it is today. Ministers have a mania for credentials. For this there is a cause. But Paul and his co-workers needed no such credential to Corinth for they knew them. They needed no such commendation from Corinth to other churches; for he could well say: "Ye are our epistle, written in your hearts, known and read of all men." The fruit of their labors was their recommendation. Those men preached the word of grace in the power of the Holy Spirit, the essential message of the new covenant. Their hearers everywhere were saved thereby, if saved at all, without any mixture of works whatever. The Pauline ministry was sharply defined that it was clear, under whose ministry their people were saved. The Corinthian Assembly was "manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered (by no other, but) by us," Paul adds. And further "written not with ink," (no self-effort, wholly apart from works); "but with the Spirit of the living God;" their converts were wholly supernatural and began spiritual; "not in tables of stone (like the ten commandments), "but in fleshy tables of the heart," invisible, inward, spiritual, unerasable. And such saints were the sufficient letters of commendation in behalf of the apostles of the churches.

If others needed credentials, it was because their message and ministry were not wholly scriptural, or because they "corrupted the word of God for gain" - Chapter 2:17. The same facts are true today. If preachers have Paul's kind of credentials, they will need no other. If they are satisfied to announce "the glad tidings," "our gospel," "not shunning to declare all the counsel of God," they will have abundant epistles of commendation. They will be able to say further with Paul, and say it gladly: "And such trusts have we thru Christ towards God." The eye of faith sees and counts Him sufficient and needs no broken reed of man's recommendation. Those who are self sufficient, issue letters of commendation for such as are neither self-sufficient, nor divinely sufficient. But Paul exclaims "Not that we are competent from ourselves to reckon anything as from ourselves; but our competency is from God, who also hath made us competent ministers of the new covenant." Thank God, they who do not find their competency in themselves, nor in any others, truly find it in the all-competent Jehovah. Then the fruit of such competency becomes the all- sufficient commendation. Under a deep sense of human weakness, the Apostle cries, "Who is competent for those things? - Chapter 2:16. But here he records the ample answer. It is "from God." What business have men to try to preach, if they have not found God enough? What cruelty for them to palm off on the people their uncertainties, their frailties, their excuses, and call that "serving God." What a crime for men, having self-imposed authority, to issue so-called credentials to men and women who cannot intelligently and scripturally instruct a sinner how to be saved. Any wonder that God has to inscribe "Ichabod" over some meetings? - I Sam. 4:21.

If you want to see another clause in the apostolic credentials, consider the 28 pronounced items in Chapter 6:4 to 10. Those are invincible commendations. The Two Ministrations Contrasted. Paul's ministry was distinctively "not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth; but the Spirit giveth life" - V. 6. By "the letter" is meant the law; "the Spirit," of course means the Spirit of the Lord (V. 17), as indeed "the Spirit of grace" - Heb. 10:29. Observe the six points of contrast.

1. The law is "the ministration of condemnation" - V. 9. It hunts down and arraigns the guilty sinner before the judgment seat of a holy God. This is why legalists never show any pity, but are stern and rigid, hard and frigid. There is no glad tidings in their mouth, except for the fellow that can do right, as they claim, in his own strength, or possibly by Divine help. But the ministry of the Spirit is "the ministration of righteousness" (v. 9), not self-righteousness, which is of the law; but it is absolutely the righteousness of God imputed to the unrighteous one who believes on Jesus. Though the former was glorious because it justified God; yet the latter exceeds in glory because it displays God's goodness and love. Remember

that this is the only righteousness that God accepts.

2. The law ministers dimness of vision the meaning of "Moses putting a veil over his face," which means that the very law that they hoped would give them light, only veiled their eyes from beholding God's grace. But the ministry of the Spirit brings "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (Chapter 4:6); "we all, having been unveiled, behold the glory of the Lord." The people of grace are the only people who see as God sees. The eyes of grace are indeed "Dove's eyes," or the eyes of the Spirit. Only those whose eyes are enlightened by steadfastly looking into "the exceeding riches of His grace," can understand the gross darkness and terrible bondage that legalists are in. Compare verses 13, 14, 18.

3. The law is "the ministration of death" - V. 7. Of course, the ultimatum of condemnation is death, the result and penalty for sin. "The law was not made for a righteous man" that is, to keep him righteous, or perfect him, "but for the lawless and disobedient, etc." - I Tim. 1:9. The law could not make a man righteous nor give him life - Gal. 2:21 and 3:21. The righteous man does not need the law; and the law can do nothing with the unrighteous, but execute him. On the other hand, "the ministration of the Spirit" is transcendently glorious because it gives and sustains life. It begins with life; it feeds that life; it protects that life; it perfects the growth of that life; and crowns it with an eternal reward.

4. The law was "done away in Christ" - Vs. 11, 14. The law was never given to the Gentiles; and the most it could do for Jews was to be to them "a schoolmaster until Christ," not "to bring up unto Christ" as the translators wrongly make Paul speak; but the law sought to curb its pupils that their sin and the weariness of the law to save might be made more manifest, so "that they might be justified by faith." "The law entered that the offense might abound" (Rom. 5:20), but not to save the offender. Only abounding grace can do that. Therefore, "after that faith is come (thru Christ), we are no longer under a schoolmaster; for ye are all the children of God thru faith in Jesus Christ" - Gal. 3:24-26.

Hence, when saints who are still under the law really see this truth, they throw off the galling yoke of the schoolmaster, and shout their freedom in Christ. Hallelujah! But the ministration of the Spirit "remaineth" (v. 11), because Christ as the great High Priest "continueth ever and hath an unchangeable priesthood" - Heb 7:24. "He ever liveth to make intercession for" His own. There is no room for fear of failure or defeat. "He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Such a prospect provokes boldness of utterance - V. 12. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

5. The law ministers bondage. It knows no freedom. It stands with a stern face and with a lash in hand, setting limitations, making demands, giving cold orders, and promising nothing but "fiery judgment" for violations. But the ministration of the Spirit is one of liberty, even "the liberty of the glory of the sons of God." Verse 17 is a remarkable statement. It explains what Spirit is meant all thru this chapter. "Now the Lord is the Spirit," that is, the Spirit referred to here. The following words confirm this fact - "and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," It cannot possibly be rendered "where the Spirit is Lord, there is liberty," for the word Lord is in the genitive, or possessive case. The same is true of verse 18. Back of this truth lies the sonship of Jesus Christ. He is Lord because He is God's Son. We are free because we are sons, even in the line of sonship with the Lord Jesus, thru whom "we receive the sonship" - Gal. 4:4-7. Hence, where the Spirit of the Lord is (not the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the third Person of the Trinity); but where Christ's own Spirit rules apart from law, there is unbound liberty to approach into God's presence, "within the veil," because we are sons. We have the privileges of sons and obtain the authority of the faith of sons and "come boldly unto a throne of grace." This is not license to commit sin, but freedom to demand ample power against sin and Satan. This is no excuse for sin; for with such provision, we are left without excuse forever. Of course, this is thru the enabling of the Holy Spirit, who executes the will of the Father and of the Son. Titus, "we all, having been unveiled, behold the glory of the Lord in His face as in a mirror.

6. And "into the same image we are being transformed from glory into glory even as from the Spirit of the Lord." There can be no such transformation to the lawkeeper. The veil covers his face, as it does Israel to this day. When they turn to Christ, the veil will be lifted - V. 16. By steadfastly beholding the face of our glorious Lord, thru faith in His word, which James calls "a mirror" (Jas. 1:23), this transformation goes on from day to day till we shall "be like Him and see Him as He is," and with Him, be "covered with light as with a garment" - Psa. 104:2. Oh, what a priestly ministry is ours to sound out such glorious tidings that saints may be brought in experience into the liberty of the glory of sons, and actually grow up into redolent, radiant, partakers of Christ's glory here and enjoy the "riches of His glory" with Him forever. In view of such an unspeakable consummation, Pauline credentials (Chapter 6:4-10) are a pleasure; for "if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him."

DIVISION FOUR

The Priest Ministering To Men - Chapters 4 and 5. "Therefore seeing we have this ministry as we have received mercy, we faint not." By "this ministry," the Apostle means the ministry of the new covenant described in Chapter 3, where we learned of the priest's liberty to come into the holiest place by faith, which is the necessary preparation for his ministry unto men as outlined in these two chapters. Having gone in and been warmed and refreshed and empowered thru fellowship with the Father and the Son, we come forth to pour upon men all that we have drunk within the veil. Of course, "we faint not."

"But we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, or shame." The kinds and character and amount of religious dishonesty are appalling. Men hide their purposes and motives by a cloak of make-believe piety and pretensions to knowing the truth; claiming to get revelations, taught arbitrarily by the Holy Spirit: while in it all, they are seeking their own, either money, place or fame. They "falsify the word of God, corrupt the word of God for gain." All this Paul boldly shunned; "but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." He and his, declared the truth, all the truth, and put it into practice. They lived on the fare they offered in their market. This credentialed them to their hearers. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid from them that are perishing, in whom the god of this age blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving, so as not to beam forth to them the illumination of the gospel of the glory of the Anointed One, who is the image of God." Who is the god of this age, elsewhere termed, "this present evil age" - Gal. 1:4. Not our God; for He is here on a visit only, "to take out a people for His name" - Acts 15:14. Eph. 2:2 informs us that it is Satan. Oh, how little we should have to do with the things of this age, whether they be national, educational, or religious; for this trinity of reformation combines to fix mankind up, independent of the redemption of Jesus Christ. And these are the veils by which Satan covers men's eyes from the saving truth of the gospel. They are here; we cannot change them. "We are in the world, but not of it." We can only "shine as luminaries in the world;" thus some are led to believe on Jesus and be saved out of these conditions.

"For not ourselves do we proclaim, but Anointed Jesus (to be) Lord, and ourselves your bondmen for the sake of Jesus." Some men announce themselves to be lords or heads, and assume unscriptural authority. Not so with the real servant of Christ. God has not commanded us to be lords; but "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness" (when creating the world), "shined in our hearts for an illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Anointed." First, we are to be light-receivers; then we are to be light-dispensers. Christ only is Head, or Lord. Most men darken counsel, becloud the vision, obscure the knowledge of God, hence; veil His glory, which beams forth from the face of Christ. Therefore, it becomes us to announce Christ as the glad tidings; then men will behold His face, and in that face, they will behold the glory of God what a glorious priestly ministry is ours! Nor does the gospel stop with initial salvation thru faith in Jesus, in the beginning of the gospel of grace; but it culminates with "the gospel of the glory." See verses 4, 6 R.V. This is one of the neglected themes. Not only is our gospel a "glorious gospel," but it climaxes with the "exceeding riches of glory" - Eph. 1:18. Compare also I Tim. 1:11 and Tit. 2:13, R. V. Reader have you ever heard a message, or lesson on "the gospel of the glory?"

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the superabounding of the power may be of God, and not out from us." By the treasure is meant the light, the life, the glory which we have from God. By the earthen vessels we are ever reminded of the frailty of our human body, or body of humiliation. "Troubled, perplexed, persecuted, cast down," expressions of the weakness are of the vessels. This is the "dying daily" (I Cor. 15:30-32), which people generally misinterpret as dying to sin, because they do not understand that Paul died to sin once when he died with Christ on Christ's own cross. If saints do not see this wondrous truth and agree with God and reckon themselves to be dead indeed to sin, they will continually attempt to commit suicide of the self-life, and actually think they are "crucifying self," or "dying daily," "dying out to sin." Verses 10 to 12 explain this more fully. "Always the dying of the Lord Jesus in the body bearing about, that also the life of Jesus in our body may be manifested." This has no reference to Jesus' death on the cross; but to his perilous life on earth. He was daily in jeopardy; his enemies were full of murderous intent, and several times sought to kill him. Satan sought to drown him in the sea by a tempest. Such is the meaning of his "dying in the body." And that dying we bear about by being in daily danger and physical suffering (not sickness) from every side because we pour out our lives for the truth, even beyond strength.

As further stated, "for always we who live, unto death are delivered on account of Jesus, that also the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh." Those only who actually count the old man dead and

Christ only to be their life, know anything of such an experience. Self-crucifixionists are too busy trying to kill themselves or praying for more love, faith and power, and for gifts, to really engage in the Pauline priestly ministry for others. What a relief to know that we have absolutely nothing to do with the old man but to count him dead, and with sin, but to shout "Sin shall not have dominion;" so that we are forever free to serve God in the beauty of holiness and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Such a life angers the enemy to the uttermost, because it is Christ living His life over again in us. Thus the life of Jesus is put on exhibit in our mortal flesh. We, the vessels, are not seen except as weak, dependent; but His life, the treasure, is shown because our flesh is still mortal, or subject to death or decay. "Death worketh in us;" the true servant of God would die multiplied times if Christ did not stand up in him and renew him. "But life in you;" our life of sacrifice brings life, health, comfort and victory into other lives. But there is never any praise to the vessels; but "the excellency, or the superabundance of the power is from God" alone. No room for boasting that we prayed, we fasted, we had the gift of healing. "Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also thru Jesus and present us with you." This life of Christ thus manifested in us, is His resurrection life, the new creation life. What a safeguard against falsely so-called "Unity" and "Christian Science," which simply attempt to imitate Christ, but deny His atonement. This life exhibited in our mortal bodies is the sure earnest and guarantee of a glorified body when our Saviour returns to complete His salvation - Rom 8:11, 23, 24 and Phil. 3:20, 21. Of course Christ's resurrection is solid basis for present faith in the constant manifestation of His life. To know this truth is to have "the same spirit of faith" that David and Paul had - V. 13. Wonderful! And all these things are for the sake of the saints and for the glory of God - V. 15. If brother Paul had believed in present immortality, as some today foolishly claim to do, he could not have written of "the outward man perishing" - V. 16.

This chapter climaxes in uttermost triumph. It begins with grace introducing light, unfolds into life, develops into unspeakable power, and culminates in a climactic weight of glory. These, insignificant when compared with what they produce, are working for us while we consider the invisible things above. Three small items are contrasted with five incomparable items to come. The worker for us is "tribulation," which is termed light and momentary. Study Paul's recital of stripes, imprisonments, deaths oft, perils by land and sea, for perhaps 30 years. But these were all working together for his good unto an unwordable reward. Oh, how tame is language to express what the heart's eye sees. He terms it "GLORY;" nay, "a WEIGHT of glory;" nay more, "an ETERNAL weight;" ah vastly more by a multiplied Greek hyperbole, "kath hyperbolen into hyperbolen," which the Spirit alone can interpret to our hopeful hearts. Our common text gives it as "far more exceeding;" the Diaglott renders it, "excessively exceeding," or "according to an exceeding on an exceeding;" still another expresses it as, "excessively surpassing;" the R.V. has it, "more and more exceedingly."

The verb from which "hyperbolen" is derived, is "hyperballo," which means "a throwing beyond, an overshooting, superiority, excess in anything." Ballo is the strongest Greek word for throw, or hurl, or cast out. It is used four times in Rev. 12, where the dragon "was cast out of heaven;" also Rev. 19:20 and 20:3. Now consider that the Apostle exclaims "a throwing beyond into a throwing beyond," and your spirit may grasp something of his extreme hope. My own spirit gives it thus: "Our momentary light tribulations are working out for us an unsurpassingly unsurpassing, eternal weight of glory." We may illustrate it by an inverted cone, the apex below representing the tribulations, and the broad open expanse above, the weight of glory. "If we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with Him." What transcendent radiant effulgent dazzling exceedingly surpassing splendor will envelope the throne and those who sit conjointly with Christ therein! The brighter our vision of the glory, the lighter will be our sense of the afflictions. With such unspeakable and unbounded prospects ahead, will we shun to fulfill to the uttermost our priestly service? Will we shun to "declare all the counsel of God?" Will we not gladly "spend and be spent" that God may be glorified?

Future Conditions. "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" - Chapter 5:1, 2. The first eight verses of this chapter properly belong with the preceding. We have here abundant positive proof against the wild heresy of present immortality, that is, for our body. The Greek word rendered immortality in Rom. 2:7; I Tim. 1:17 and II Tim. 1:10, is "aphtharsian," which means incorruptibility, or that which cannot possibly be corrupted. The first and last of these three citations does not refer alone to our human body, but to all that is incorruptible, as the seed, or word of God, the crown, etc. The second refers to God only.

Jesus Christ "only hath immortality" - I Tim. 6:16. "This mortal must put on immortality" - I Cor. 15:53, 54. These are the only two places where the Greek word, "athanasian," or immortality, occurs in the New

Testament; these refer to the body only, and in no sense to the soul, or spirit.

Therefore, the phrase, "immortal soul," or "immortal spirit," has no scripture foundation. Let us give heed to "sound words," and never misapply a citation to prove our doctrine, though it be the truth, which is weakened by a bad support. A wrong pedestal is worse than no pedestal. Note thoughtfully the following nine plain points in this section against the claim of present immortality.

1. Our body is called "an earthy house," and an "earthen vessel," which is subject to trouble, perplexity, pain, etc.

2. It may be "dissolved." Christ body was never dissolved, nor could it be, because there was no sin in it. His body would never have seen death and the grave if He had not taken on Him our sins - Acts 2:24-27.

3. In this one, "we groan;" a thing unthinkable in an immortal state; for pain, weakness, blindness and hunger will never be known then.

4. This temple is distinctly called, "our mortal flesh," and "mortal," in which we groan to have swallowed up of life.

5. Here we "walk by faith." Our physical condition is no basis for hope of salvation; we are saved and kept by faith alone in God's word. Even the greatest healing does not bring any one immortality. The healed ones invariably die.

6. Yes, we have "a building, a house not made with hands," but not here: it is still "in heaven."

7. Now we are absent from the Lord; but in our "house from heaven," we will be present with the Lord, because His presence will bring it, and it cannot be an earth dwelling tabernacle. Jesus' post-resurrection body stayed here only 40 days, and it was continually hidden. Mortality, or deathliness and immortality can never dwell together in the same place, or on the same plane.

"Death will be swallowed up of life;" not swallowed down, but up to heaven.

8. Endeavoring to be accepted," will be forever past in our immortal state; for it is our physical infirmities that necessitate us to watch and pray and ask others to pray for us. Jesus never requested prayer for Himself; but Paul did.

9. Here "we are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh." This was Paul's own experience to the last. He died without immortality. How can you think that he possessed immortality, when he expressed on two occasions his "desire to depart and be with Christ, absent from the body;" - Vs. 6-8 and Phil. 1:20-23. How could he have expected death in a glorified body? How can you expect immortality in a fragile, earthly tent? Paul knew, and so does every sane believer know, that we must wait the coming of Jesus to obtain "our house in heaven, who will transform our body of humiliation for it to be conformed to the body of His glory" - Phil. 3:21. When the translation trumpet shall sound, "we shall all be changed," whether dead or living; "this corruptible," the body in the grave, "must put on incorruption; and this mortal," our living body, "must put on immortality."

Some saints seem to be confused about immortality and eternal, or everlasting life; and confound the two. Immortality refers only and always to the body; it never refers to the soul or spirit. (See paragraph one of this section). Life, eternal life, everlasting life, refers to the heart, the spirit. This we obtain thru faith in Jesus, who is "the Life." When we believe, we are "born of God, born of the Spirit" (John 1:12 and 3:5), "born of incorruptible seed" (I Pet. 1:23), and hence possess a sinless life, which is eternal because it flows from the Eternal One. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" - I John 3:9. Of course he who is begotten of God has a non-sinning, sinless and everlasting life, because it is the life of Him who begat him. Like begets like. "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" - I John 5:11, 12. But this is not immortality; it is "the treasure," deposited in our mortal flesh. Nevertheless, this treasure has the promise set before us in our present chapters of a house suitable for this eternal life, or heavenly treasure, even an immortal body. Praise ye the Lord! Read John 3:16. In Christ, we are "a new creation." As to the heart, or spirit, we are "saved by faith" (John 5:24 and Rom. 10:10); but as to the body, we are "saved by hope" - Rom. 8:23-25.

The Judgment Seat. "Wherefore also we are ambitious, whether being at home or absent from home, to be well pleasing to Him; for we all must be manifested before the judgment seat of the Anointed One, that each may receive the things thru the body, according to what he did, whether good or had" - Vs. 9,

10. For two things, the Apostle Paul was "ambitious" -

1. To preach where Christ was not named (Rom. 15:20); and

2. To be well pleasing to God (v. 9); and -

3. He exhorts the saints to be ambitious to be quiet, to do their own business, etc. - I Thes. 4:11. These are three vital matters in view of a just judgment.

The Scriptures speak of seven judgment scenes upon mankind –

1. The expulsion of the first sinners from Eden;
2. The Noachian flood;
3. Israel's double captivity;
4. The judgment of all men in the death of Christ;
5. The subject for our present study;
6. Judgment of this age (Rev. 14-19);
7. The great white throne judgment - Rev. 20.

"We all," does not include sinners; for only believers will appear on the fifth judgment scene, or at the judgment seat of Christ. This is by no means a judgment of destinies, but of rewards, and that only of believers. Every man's destiny is determined by his attitude to the one greatest judgment of all the seven, viz, Calvary. If he accepts the judgment that passed upon Christ for him on the cross, by believing on Jesus, he will be brought before this judgment seat for the examination of his works as a believer; but he will never "come into condemnation, or judgment" with the wicked as in Rev. 20:11-15. Rather it will be his part to join with Jesus in judging the world and angels - I Cor. 6. When legalists exclaim: "I will meet you at the judgment;" they simply expose their ignorance. By that expression, they mean to say that we are wrong, that the judgment will prove us wrong, and hence, we will be damned. If our destiny depended upon our walk or works, then might that be true; but it depends upon Christ's finished effort for us on Calvary and our attitude thereto. Our reward alone is determined by our walk and work.

"The Day shall declare it" (I Cor. 3:13), that is, the day of judgment here mentioned. If "our ways be in Christ," and not after the flesh; if we build "gold, silver and precious stone;" if we teach and preach scripturally, not corrupting the word of God, we shall be fully rewarded. For example, a man wrote recently that the Church is founded on the baptism in the Holy Ghost, which is not true. To the extent that saints read and believe that statement, the body of Christ is corrupted. That teacher to that extent will be brought to corruption - his works will be burned. But he who teaches with Paul that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST," and that Paul, not some modern apostle, laid that foundation, shall receive a due reward. At the judgment seat of Christ it will be shown that the former's deed was bad; he will be saved as by fire because he accepted Christ as his Saviour; but his toil will go up in smoke; he will suffer loss. The latter will be saved, both he and his labor. Do you say that I am severe, that I am judging? Nay! I am only declaring the truth. Men will see when it is too late the sad folly of pushing their own reasoning's and imaginations and other men's unscriptural teachings on the public. God says that their works shall be burned. This is why Paul was "ambitious to be well pleasing to God." He was teaching, toiling and suffering for a reward.

"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences." The terror here mentioned is the severe judgment of our works referred to above, and not to the wicked. The candlestick Examiner of Rev. 1-3 is seen "girt about the paps with a golden girdle," walking in the midst of the seven churches with flaming eyes and burning feet and thundering voice, discovering even now the deserving's of each believer. At the judgment these findings will be announced.

"For the love of the Anointed One constraineth us, having judged this, that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all that they who live, no longer to themselves should live, but to Him who died for them and was raised again" - Vs. 14, 15. This is why Paul was always real and never gloried in appearance. This is why he was sometimes beside himself so filled was he with the sense of God's goodness; hence, his hilarity was to God; and he so longed to make others know and understand the wonders of grace, that before men he was sober. We can only instruct others by speaking deliberately, collectedly, calmly, thoughtfully, sensibly. Some people imagine that there is no power in, such a ministry. There is edification in it at least. It builds up. There is no power (what some consider power) in a good, well-prepared, old fashioned farmer meal; not much noise in eating it; the eaters often take a nap afterwards: but the work done later proves that the slow, quiet eating and rest were not in vain. He that will not eat, cannot work. Who accomplished the most for God, but he who ate well all the revealed will of God by continued diligent study of God's word? - "I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" - I Cor. 15:10.

It is a criminal fact that most supposedly spiritual workers today do not know the Bible, and are content to be ignorant of it. They do not know, and of course cannot teach the fundamentals of present day truth, a

vital part of which is given in these verses, viz; that all men died with Christ of Calvary. The love which constrained Christ to identify Himself with us and thus carry us up to the tree, constrains those who believe it to publish it far and near. What a rest it brings to believe that "our old man was crucified with Christ," and hence, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me." This is the beginning of victory, rest, happiness, usefulness and hope. Deny it who can. Such truly live unto God, for God lives in them. No marvel that verse 16 follows: "Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh;" that is after the old creation or on a natural plane.

"Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now no longer know we Him thus." We do not try to imitate Christ in His walk and work on earth; but we take His resurrection life to dwell in us, and we "walk in newness of life," each distinct from all others, as led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. We view all men and all things from the viewpoint of a new creation; sinners are not in it till they are born of the Spirit. We see all believers as a part of this new creation, and seek to bring them into the full knowledge and enjoyment of it. We reckon and declare the following: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, a new creation, the old things passed away, and lo, all things have become new."

The remaining verses of this chapter announce the foundation for this new creation. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning their trespasses unto them." It does not read: "God was Christ;" but God was in Christ, or the Anointed One, in the same sense as father Jones, living in Chicago, is in his son John, doing business in Detroit. They are together engaged in one enterprise. They are one in nature, in spirit, in purpose, in business; but distinct in personality and office. Father Jones is not the son; neither is John Jones the father. The three Persons of the Godhead are here all seen co-operating in redemption. Christ, or literally the Anointed One, is Jesus anointed with the Holy Spirit; hence the frequent phrase: "Jesus Christ." Jesus was not Jesus Christ in reality till after the Spirit came upon Him at Jordan - Luke 3:22.

Hence, Jesus is not the Holy Spirit; nor is the Anointed One, or Christ, the Holy Spirit; but Jesus anointed with the Spirit is Christ, or the Anointed One. God was in that Divine-human being, called Jesus, anointed with the Holy Spirit, reconciling the world unto Himself. God was all the while in heaven, even as father Jones is in Chicago; and Jesus Anointed was on earth even as John Jones is in Detroit. John, not his father, does the buying and selling in Detroit. So Jesus Anointed, not God the Father, died and was buried and rose again. The Holy Spirit did not die; but the Holy Son Jesus in the power of the Spirit died. Note verse, 21. God was not made sin; neither was the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was made sin for us. Nor did He make Himself sin; but God made, or counted Him sin for us. "The Lord hath made the Iniquity of us all to light on Him" - Isa. 53:6. The insanity of jumbling the three Persons of the Trinity into only one Person grows more insane as we consider its senselessness and unscripturalness. Eight things are here predicated of God; three in verse 18, three in 19, one in 20 and one in 21. Not one thing is predicated of Christ: but God employs Him as His agent - "reconciled us unto Himself thru Jesus Christ;" uses Him as the purchase price - "made Him to be sin for us;" and hides us "in Him." His ministers are sub-agents - "He hath given to us the ministry, and put into us the word of reconciliation."

Be it remembered, that God has done the reconciling; we are only to announce it. God no longer reckons men's sins to them, because He once for all counted them over on His dying Son. He reproveth men for only one sin - "that they believe not on Him" - John 16:9. "We are ambassadors for Christ," to tell men the glad tidings, viz; that Jesus Christ was made sin for all - He was indeed the "sin-offering;" and that if they believe, they will be "made the righteousness of God in Christ." Not only are we accounted righteous by partaking of His righteousness; but we become actually by God's reckoning "the righteousness of God;" but it is in Christ. This is grace, wondrous grace. What a text for evangelists are these last eight verses! What a message have we! What a high, priestly ministry is ours! Oh, friend, not one preacher in 500 grasps the meaning of his service and place - a holy ambassador from high heaven to men of low estate to lift them into freedom and victory and glory.

DIVISION FIVE

This Priestly Ministry Effectual - Chapters 6 to 9. "We then as workers together beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain" - V. 1. This sixth chapter expresses the outward separation which the New Testament priestly ministry effects. First, it is illustrated by the 28 powerful planks in the apostolic credentials - Verses 4 to 10. Second, it is distinctly taught by five piercing questions and seven gracious promises - Vs. 14-18. Paul gives these items as a leverage for the entreaty of the first verse.

Pauline credentials. Today men imagine that they cannot serve God if they do not have some certified document from some officially recognized and legalized body of religious men. All sorts of arguments are

advanced to prove that this is necessary. How different were the apostolic credentials - "Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed;" their doctrine and methods and spirit were above criticism because Christ lived in them: "but in all things commending ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distress etc." These were their letters of recommendation. Study and ponder these seven verses. If candidates for the gospel ministry would consider them, there would not be many floating, flaunting, incorrigible, heresy-publishing, lounging workers in the field. The Apostle uttered a stern rebuke - "All seek their own, not the things that be Jesus Christ's."

True separation. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." This does not refer simply to secret fraternities, or to pleasure gatherings, or marriage relations, but to religious fellowships. Either of five words here given will determine whether we should fellowship certain people - "unrighteousness, darkness, Belial (worthlessness), infidelity (vs. faith), or idolatry." Put every religious man and every religious crowd under the exposing lens of the Word of God; if you find any or all of these, turn away from them. Bear in mind that it is the devil's trick to trip people up and blind them by religion, even mixing much truth with it if necessary to accomplish his purpose. If Christ crucified, risen and glorified, is not the center and circumference of a man's religion, it is dangerous, no matter what his claim may be.

Oh, what sufficiency, what safety, what comfort in the seven-fold offer of verses 16-18. Though I did not know their depth, yet these were a great stay to me in my early Christian career. But note that the last three are conditioned upon our three-fold attitude to God - "Come out; be separate; touch not." No wonder saints are weak, have no victory, remain useless, cannot trust Jehovah, cannot enjoy their sonship; they stay in the place of defilement; they have fellowship there; they handle the unclean. Brother, you cannot keep clean in a packing house, or in a smoke-house. Even if you do not work there, if you only visit the place, you carry away the foul odor in your clothes; and you may become so used to that repulsive smell that you do not know it; but to others your perfume (?) is unbearable. The same facts are more emphatically true of believers. You cannot attend all kinds of religious meetings and keep undefiled. Oh, why not be satisfied with the fellowship of God alone?

Inward Separation - Chapter 7. "Having these promises therefore, dearly beloved, we should cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." The Apostle alludes to the promises just mentioned before. Separation as before exhorted is the method of cleansing from fleshly defilement and then the reading of the Word in faith cleanses from defilement of spirit. Verse eight indicates that by his former epistle to the Corinthians they were pierced and pained. Hence, here he beseeches them to receive him, assuring them that he has moved every step in the will of God and for their good. All his writings prove that this is true.

No spiritual person, can find any flaw in Paul's life or doctrine or labor. How he loved the saints! How he longed to hear of their welfare! Verse 5 agrees with Chapter 2:13, whose notes see. Of course he rejoiced greatly on hearing of their earnest desire after him.

"The grief according to God works out repentance unto salvation, not to be regretted; but the grief of the world works out death." This is not a text primarily for sinners; for a person must be saved before he can experience godly sorrow. Believers learn the meaning and depths of repentance long after they are saved. Yes, the sorrow of the world shortens life, often ending in despair. But to sorrow from Divine chastisement, is to be eternally profited. The seven items of the heart attitude, wrought by Paul's letter (V. 11) show the deep effect of godly sorrow and indicate the reality of an inward separation from all that contaminates. "In every way ye proved yourselves to be pure in the matter;" that is, as an assembly they heeded the counsel of I Cor. 5:13, and "put away from among them that wicked person." Again he expresses his care and that of Titus for them in verses 12 to 15; and expresses his confidence in them.

Fellowship In Distribution. Chapters 8 and 9. "But we make known to you, brethren, the grace of God which has been given in the assemblies of Macedonia, that in a great trial of tribulation the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." This is the "second benefit, or grace" mentioned in Chapter 1:15. It is the Pauline compendium on the rise of our money. It will pay every saint eternal dividends to acquaint himself with this document. Observe that it is termed a "GRACE;" the word grace occurring eight times in the two chapters. It is therefore not a natural gift, which might cause its possessor to use it unwisely, prompted by human sympathy, etc.; it is "the grace of God bestowed." And to encourage all, we read: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you" - Chapter 9:8. The Grace of Christ is the supreme argument advanced for liberality - "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye thru His poverty might be rich" - V. 9. As the eternal Son of God, His wealth was incalculable. He was equal with God, was in the form of God, shared in the Father's glory; all things were made by Him

and for Him and by Him all things hold together. But He divested Himself of all this wealth of honor, wisdom and might, and took on a human form, became weak and poor. The depth of His poverty is expressed by His tasting death for every man. He died, not only without a reputation, but as counted sin and a transgressor. He passed out under reproach, even hanging between the two worst outlaws of that hour. Jesus Christ lost absolutely all - all for your sake and mine. Why? That thru His poverty - think of it, beloved, not thru His strength, or learning, or cunning, but thru His poverty we might be rich. This amazing exchange is set before us to provoke us to giving. How can we withhold anything from such a Saviour?

The liberality of the Macedonians is brought forward as an incentive to the Corinthian Assembly to give; and thereby prove the sincerity of their love. The way they become liberal in practice is noteworthy. "They first gave their own selves to the Lord and unto us by the will of God." If you really give yourself to Him, He will get your means too. One of the most precious promises was made to the Macedonian believers because they gave so freely and abundantly of their substance to the Lord. Here it is. "My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" - Phil. 4:19. Giving to God is simply depositing in a never-failing savings bank, it will be there for future use. Some of them had promised portions which they had not yet fulfilled. To them he exclaims: "Now therefore perform the doing of it."

Timothy and Erastus are probably the two brethren mentioned in verses 18 to 22. See Acts 19:22. The importance of the grace of giving, and of making up that particular bounty for the needy at that time is evident from the fact that four trusty men were engaged in looking after it. That two whole chapters of 39 verses are devoted to the subject certainly stamps it as a vastly momentous subject. "Whether our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the Churches" - V. 23. The Greek for messengers here is apostles, as also Phil. 2:25. Therefore we find eight assembly apostles distinct from the 12 kingdom apostles - I Cor. 15:5. These are Paul and Barnabas, (Acts 14:14), Apollos (I Cor. 4:6, 9), Sylvanus and Timothy (I Thes. 1:1 and 2:6), Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25) and Titus and Erastus - II Cor. 8:23 with Acts 19:22. There may have been others; but it appears evident concerning these. (See our notes on First Corinthians and Ephesians for a full explanation of apostles).

Giving is not to be regarded as a duty, but rather as a privilege, hence, it is indeed a grace, a gift. Paul says: "I speak not by commandment" - V. 8. He would not have us give of necessity, or grudgingly, or as a burden, or as extortion, but freely, cheerfully, bountifully - "every man according as he purposeth in his heart; for God loveth a cheerful giver" - Chapter 9:7. Now here are two powerful incentives. 1. "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." Verses 8 and 24 teach that the way our money is used indicates the measure of love we have for the truth and for Christ. The sowing is not simply the giving; but "there must first be a willing mind" - V. 12. The widow who gave all she had, all her living gave only two mites; but back of her small gift was a great heart, a heart swelling out with unselfish love for the cause of Christ. Jesus declared that she gave more than they all who gave their abundance into the treasury; because the offering is "accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not" - V. 12. Therefore, he who has little and gives it all, or gives largely of his penury, in God's sight sows bountifully and of course will reap bountifully. The reward will be according to the bountiful heart rather than according to the amount given. The Macedonians were willing beyond their power (v. 3); they will be rewarded beyond their actual giving. Wonderful! Glorious!

2. Another incentive. "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work" - Chapter 9:8. The last flimsy excuse is swept from beneath our feet. God challenges us to draw on Him. He does not chide us because we are naturally stingy, or covetous; but He offers us the privilege of cooperating with Him in the greatest financial enterprise extending worldwide and which will render everlasting dividends, and He will furnish all the capital - "make ALL GRACE ABOUND." Are you not astonished at this verse, at the alls - "all grace, always, all sufficiency, all things, all good work?" How can anyone refrain from taking out stock in such a business? This is no speculation. There are no risks. There will never be a boom followed by a collapse. Nay but "according as it is written, He scattered abroad; He gave to the poor; His righteousness abides forever" (Psa. 112:9). "Now He that supplies seed to the sower and bread for eating, may He supply and may He multiply your sowing, and may He increase the fruits of your righteousness" - Vs. 9, 10. This prayer for the saints is based upon the unbounded provision expressed in the next verse - "in everything, being enriched unto all bountifulness (or simplicity, or liberality), which works thru us thanksgiving to God." This takes us back to I Cor. 1:4, 5, the announcement of the unmeasured fullness provided for us in His Son. The Apostle exclaims: "I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God that was given you IN Christ Jesus that in everything ye were enriched IN Him, in all utterance and in all

knowledge.” And here the same abounding provision obtains in the matter of the use of our carnal substance for eternal gain, both to us and to God.

Again I say, how can anyone refrain from taking out stock in such an enterprise? Every provision is made: every impetus is set behind us; every enticement is set before us; and every encouragement continually envelopes us; for note the three final powerful promptings to unstinted giving. First the praise to God that it provokes - “Because the service of this self-supporting high priestly ministration not only is completely filling up the deficiencies of the saints, but also is abounding thru many thanksgivings to God.” The recipients give God all the glory for remembering their needs and for so wonderfully supplying them. Their cries of distress are heard; and the faithfulness of God is established; and your subjection to the gospel is shown to the glory of God.

Second, prayer by the recipients for the donors is provoked. They glorify God “in their supplication for you, longing greatly for you, on account of the surpassing grace of God upon you.” The giver has not only the joy of giving and the Father's sure reward for his liberality; but the reward of answers to unknown prayers in his behalf. And this glorifies God. His Name be praised! Third, all reverts back to the original Gift, who includes all other gifts, all gifts in One - “Thanks be unto God for His indescribable free-gift.” As we are “justified gratuitously (that is, without any cause in us) by His grace” (Rom. 3:24); so our liberality is based upon and flows out from God's gratuitous Gift, Jesus Christ, who was given without any cause, or merit in us; hence, all honor and praise for our greatest sacrifice in giving is forever due to the God of all grace. We never can; we never will lose sight of God's indescribable Gift to men.

DIVISION SIX

Obedience, Suffering and Glory of the Priest - Chapter 10 to 12. “Now I Paul myself, who in bodily presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you, beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.”

In the next three chapters, the Apostle is contrasting himself and his ministry with some saints in Corinth and with certain workers whom he styles “false apostles, deceitful workers.” Evidently there was nothing in Paul's outward appearance to commend him to the public, or to give him prestige as a public speaker. The people acknowledged that his “letters were weighty and powerful;” but they said “His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible” - Vs. 1, 10. He had a pitiful infirmity in his eyes - Gal. 4:13-15. Many people today, if they had the weakness of bodily appearance and utterance of which Paul speaks, would never open their mouths in teaching or testimony. They would be ashamed of the very things in which he gloried. See Chapter 12:9, 10. The natural man wants to appear well.

Some in Corinth, “think of us as if we walked according to the flesh” - V. 2. It is always so; carnal believers cannot discern real spirituality. They misjudge the most deeply spiritual. But Paul's answer is: “Though we walk in the flesh (we are still in a weak earthen vessel), we do not war after the flesh;” and adds that our weapons are not fleshly, but spiritual, hence, powerful thru God to overthrow strongholds, or fortresses; viz, the fortresses of the devil, which are expressed in verse five - “imagination, or reasonings, and heights and thoughts.” In I Cor. 1:19 and 3:17, 18, the Apostle speaks boldly against the “wisdom of the wise, the wisdom of this age,” intimating there how it is opposed to the gospel of Christ. Note that this trinity of fortresses is directly against “the knowledge of God.” I Tim. 3:6 shows us that Satan is the source of the wisdom of men. Therefore, our great warfare is evident - “overthrowing reasonings, heights and thoughts;” hurling down every opposition of the mind against the knowledge of God; yea, and leading into captivity every thought, or design, making a bond slave of it, to Jesus Christ. Our spiritual weapons are named in Eph. 6:13-18 and I Thess. 5:8, chief among which is “the shield of faith.” We cannot fight thoughts and overthrow reasonings by gritting our teeth and setting our wills against them; but by believing what God says. “Fight the good fight of faith;” “with the heart man believeth;” “by faith we understand.” Saints fight effectually with the heart, not with the head; hence, our chief weapon is faith. Therefore, the Bible throughout arraigns men for their unbelief. “Faith is the victory that overcomes the world;” also the devil and his fiery darts of reasonings. Thus by simply accepting God's Word for its face value we level every high thought of Satan, and compel our very minds to obey Christ in their cogitations. We come to think as God thinks; of course then, we speak as He speaks.

“And having in readiness to avenge, or punish all disobedience, when your obedience may have been fulfilled” - V. 6. Doubtless, the Apostle refers to the disobedience of false apostles mentioned in Chapter 11:12-23. He could not deal with their detrimental ministry in Corinth until the Corinthian Church fully obeyed the Word of God as Paul preached it, and took a firm stand against the false teachers. He was fully obedient to the truth he declared; and he expected them also to obey. Then as the steward of the

Church he could by faith bring the scathing word of judgment against their enemies. Obedience to Christ of our very thoughts and imaginations is therefore the theme of this chapter.

“For we dare not rank among, or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves; but they measuring themselves and comparing themselves with themselves are not intelligent” - V. 12. Reader, do you know any who do that today? Do you thus compare and measure yourself? Oh, this is the bane of Christendom. Israel compared themselves with the nations; hence, cried: “NAY, but we WILL have a king.” “God gave them a king in His anger, and removed him in His WRATH.” Or rather do you choose with Paul? He declares, “And we will not boast unto the things unmeasured; but according to the measure of the rule which the God of measure divided to us to reach even to you.” The unwise measure short because of a wrong standard; but Brother Paul measures full, not too short, nor too long, because the rule of the God of measure is his standard. The perfect will of God was his supreme aim. He never swerved from that. He went to Corinth in God's will; no one could take the credit for it. Nor did he boast in the labors of others beyond measure. He gloried only in the Lord. And he hoped thru them by the increase of their faith, to announce the glad tidings beyond them, all the while giving God the praise for it all. They would publish the message to others. Thus our ministry of the Word of grace does not end with those directly addressed; but it continued by them to others. Paul is enriched by our receiving his message; likewise, we are enriched by others receiving his message from us.

Finally, “he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord; for not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.” Paul knew that he possessed overwhelming proofs of Divine approval of every kind; for he knew that he lived and moved in the will of God and altogether for His highest honor. We too, by the same Holy Spirit, may live the same life and have the same Divine approval.

The Suffering of the Priest. - Chapter 11. “Would to God you could bear with me in my folly; and indeed bear with me” - V 1. This verse sounds like a contradiction of Paul's exhortation just before to glory only in the Lord; but it is not. Instead, there were some who termed his kind, or method of boasting to be “folly;” because it is so contrary to the natural man to boast in what he did. Hence, in these three closing chapters we find on the one hand the sharpest sarcasm and on the other hand the tenderest and deepest solicitude.

“I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present a chaste virgin to Christ.” Here the Apostle's view of the Church as one and Christ her Head is again expressed, even as he did at the very gateway of his Church order - I Cor. 1:10. As God purposed and provided for this, so Paul, the steward of the Church, sought to bring it to pass. He saw only “one body;” and he saw Christ as not only the one Saviour, but he says further. “But I fear lest as the serpent deceived Eve in his craftiness, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is toward Christ.” How did the serpent deceive Eve? He induced her to eat the forbidden fruit by promising her that thus she would be “wise, be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

In other words, she would not be dependent upon God. She broke the simplicity of the marriage tie by hiding the voice of another instead of turning to her divinely ordained head, her husband. She usurped authority over him by so doing, hence, “was deceived and became in the transgression” - I Tim. 2:11-14. “The simplicity which is toward Christ” insists on one only Head, even Christ, as the one all-sufficient Source, Support and Director of the Church, with the love and tenderness of a true Husband; and the oneness of the Body, or Church - an undivided body, having but one life, even the life of the resurrected Christ. The importance of maintaining the oneness of Christ and His Church is continually emphasized in Paul's writings. Finally in Colossians we learn the horrible absurdity of any other view. Colosse means “monstrosity” and “correction;” the former necessitating the latter. A body without a head is a monstrosity; hence, to the extent that the Church does not give Christ His place as her Head, her only Head, she is a monstrosity in Gods sight. The epistle to the Colossians was written to warn against four errors which would result in such a monstrosity. “For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached; or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received; or another gospel, which ye have not accepted; ye might well bear with” my folly. A deviation from the doctrine of the oneness of Christ, that is from holding Christ as the one only Head of the Church as one only Body, is turning from the simplicity of Christ, and is the beginning of preaching another Jesus. From this deviation, all other essential errors flow. As we trust Jesus Christ and depend upon Him absolutely and alone, we are kept from self-help, self-improvement, worldly wisdom, and from all occult religions, as Christian Science, etc; because we are wholly dependent upon one only other, even the Right One, who never can fail those who trust Him. Of course, to receive another Jesus is to receive another spirit, the spirit of the devil, and another gospel, which is not at all glad tidings. If there were no possibility of missing the Bridehood of Christ, if all the

Church will constitute the Bride, no matter how her members live, or what they believe; why does Paul express a fear that they might miss it? If there were no danger of any kind, warnings would be mockery. The Apostle continues his glorying by saying:

"For I suppose I was not a whit behind those preeminent apostles." He proceeds to give seven powerful proofs of this statement. He was not "rude in knowledge" - V. 6; he abased himself by preaching the gospel without charge that the Corinthians might be exalted - V. 7. If they were inferior in their privileges to other churches, it was only in this that other men charged for their service; but Paul did not - Chapter 12:13. Other churches supported him while he ministered to Corinth, which he terms robbery (verses 8, 9), because they owed him their support - I Cor. 9:1-14. Paul was of the same national lineage, being a Hebrew, an Israelite, etc - Vs. 21, 22. He cites twenty-four tremendous evidences that he was a minister of Christ, not only as others were; but "more" - Vs. 23 to 28. As stated in Chapter 8:4-10, these were his credentials. Then he emphasizes his "care of all the churches" - V. 28. If the things the Apostle is here calling on the stand to witness for him were not true, he was the most gigantic impostor. If they were true, and they certainly were, then he commands our profoundest respect, and his teaching demands our heartiest acceptance, even as the Word of God. Finally, in spite of some accusing him of "being crafty," and catching them with guile, he assures them that he did not make a gain of them; but wholly and only sought their highest welfare - Chapter 12:16-19. The student will find great profit in studying these seven citations on this point.

False Apostles. "But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion, that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we" - Chapter 11:12. The next eight verses record some unthinkable facts, which this verse introduces. He writes of "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." I say, that this is unthinkable that men dare to pose as Christ's apostles, yet knowing that they are not. Of course, such have no fear of God. But our Apostle gives the explanation, saying: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness." Bear in mind that these false, deceitful workers are not confined to Christian Science, Spiritism, Russellism, Seventh Day Adventism, etc.; they come nearer home; they are among the so-called orthodox churches, many of whose pastors are not born again. Yes, they are I fear, among Pentecostal circles. There are those who, though saved and anointed with the Spirit, yet are false and deceitful in their teaching and toil. They yield to the self-life in themselves and others; they seek their own ease and glory. Thus far they become servants of Satan. They "glory according to the flesh;" that is, in their own abilities, gifts and successes. Following are earmarks of such workers - they bring others into bondage; they devour them; they rob them; they exalt themselves - V. 20. Do Christians act thus? Yes, but that is not Christian; that is flesh; that is satanic. And why? Because they refuse to listen to Paul. He and his associates bring liberty; they feed, but never devour, they add to, and never take from; they exalt Christ only and always. And as it was then, so now. Some saints "suffer these things, suffer fools gladly," because they themselves "are wise" in their own conceits (v. 19), or because they are in ignorance and fear.

I declare boldly; the number of such workers "is legion." The waning power, the distracted saints, the disintegrating of assemblies, the scattering of sheep, are appalling evidences thereof. Already we can see that "their end shall be according to their works" - V. 15 Every trip I make to other cities deepens my conviction of the confused conditions, and that the only remedy is Paul's message wholeheartedly received and lived by. Even Paul's message put forth halfheartedly and theoretically is far from being sufficient. Hence, he wrote: "Be ye imitators of me as I am of God." "If I must need glory, I will glory in the things which concern mine infirmities" - V. 30 The weakest thing, the last thing that others would boast in was this, that "thru a window in a basket was I let down by a wall; and escaped his hands" (the governor's hands) - V.33. He was so cast on God, so utterly without friends, so separated from this world that the most menial method had to be employed for his safety and escape. Apparently his God was either weak, or indifferent, or foolish. Compare I Cor. 2:23-25.

Now what was back of all this with the Apostle? "He suffered the loss of all things, and counted them dung, that he might gain Christ and be found in Him." The very path that others despised, was the one by which Paul reached the greatest results here and the highest honors and rewards hereafter. Shall we follow in his steps? Therefore, follows The Glory of the Priest - Chapter 12. "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory; I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord" - V. 1. Apparently, he regrets what he had written in the two preceding chapters; but if he had not been assured of writing in the Spirit, he certainly would have destroyed those portions. Instead in this chapter he brings his glory to a climax, and all in the will of God.

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago." How long he delayed telling this vision. Dreamers and visioners today do not wait that long, be assured, because for the most part they are not of God; if they were, they would be in harmony with Scripture and would come to pass. Note the rare modesty of the Apostle; he relates it as if it were another person, and not of himself. He always sought to keep people's eyes upon the Lord; never on himself, or his marvelous experiences. The essential fact in this vision was, that he "knew a man in Christ." That is a choice fellow, "a man in Christ." There are multitudes of "babes in Christ;" but "a man in Christ;" find one. And Paul declares, "I knew" him. Though he was that man, yet he allows fourteen years of trials and toils to pass by to prove it; and then only lets us infer it. And yet, men assume to know God and to be of great importance in Christendom, the meanwhile being not conformed to Paul's gospel, neither in doctrine nor practice; rather actually turn away from it and oppose it.

It was "a man," not a babe, who was seen "caught away to heaven;" "a man in Christ." Any wonder that modern dreams are so cheap, seem so unreal, and have so little value? They are baby dreams. But here a man had a vision about a man in the Man of glory. Its value is expressed by the fact of its repetition. There were not two visions; but one vision recorded twice. It makes known to us three facts:

First. Paradise is in the third heaven, whence Jesus "led a multitude of captives," when He ascended on high - (Eph. 4:8);

Second. The spirits of saints ascend on high when they fall asleep in Jesus, even as expressed also in Phil. 1:23 and in Chapter 5:8. Reasoning men labor to prove unproveable things, as for example when they say the Greek reads, "Caught away," and not "caught up," endeavoring to establish that horrible error, soul-sleeping. Grant that he was "caught away," but where to? To heaven. Is heaven not up? Be assured, no one sleeps in heaven.

Third. "He heard unutterable sayings, which it is not permitted to man to speak." Wonderful indeed! One man at least never told all he knew. God forbid him doing so; in fact it was impossible to do so. And other "men in Christ" doubtless have similar experiences; but like Paul, they keep them in their hearts.

"Of such an one will I glory." Observe that he glories in the "man in Christ caught up;" but not in the vision, or unutterable words heard. How few have such a theme of glorying. How the masses of believers boast in their dreams, visions, gifts, supposed revelations, successes, etc., etc., but who boasts of "a man in Christ?" Evidently the Spirit restrained Paul from relating any more visions; for he had said "I will come to visions and revelations;" but now having related only one, he exclaims, "But now I forebear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me." Hence, we do not read of another; though he must have had many. Instead, he adds: "And lest I should be over-exalted by the transcendency of the revelations, a stake in the flesh was given to me, a messenger enemy, to buffet me that I might not be over-exalted." Now, pray find another man that will boast in such a thing. Yet, this is the particular weakness in which "the very chiefest Apostle" boasted, even that God should use an enemy to hold him down, and refuse to hear his cry that the stake might be removed. God's answer to his prayer is profoundly full of meaning - "MY GRACE is sufficient for thee; for MY STRENGTH is made perfect in weakness." God is jealous for His grace and for His strength. The first half of this answer is frequently quoted; hence, apparently well known but not one in a thousand really know it practically. Therefore, none can say, "Most gladly will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may spread over me like a tent." People are always concerned to know what was "Paul's thorn;" many articles have been written advancing various theories about it; but how very few have learned, or cared to learn the meaning and purpose of the thorn. "My grace" and "My strength," God's interests should be our chief concern.

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong." This is indeed strange language to the flesh, which clamors to be strong, to be honored, to be self-sufficient and never know a need, to be commended to be at ease and in comfort. To endure the above five unfortunate experiences is one thing; but to be well pleased with them, to welcome them, to boast in them; that is victory; that is power: for when I am weak; when I cannot get along without God anywhere; when I must bear the insults of men till God delivers me; when I dare not ask for help, or use my brain and strength to supply my needs, or those of my suffering family, and hence suffer want; when persecutions flame high, and straits press me above measure; so that I am as nothing: then, if I have learned the Source and Supply of unfailing strength, I am strong. (In Paul's case there was no if; for he had learned it.) I am "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." Any strength other than that is an abomination to the Lord; because it robs Christ of His place in us. Any dependence upon money, men, methods, manners, movements, managements, multitudes, anything

whatever, is not an attitude of weakness; hence, God's working and power are hindered, the Spirit is grieved, and Christ is circumscribed and veiled. People get anointed with the Holy Spirit because they feel weak; but no sooner they are filled, they start out in their own strength, guided by their own judgment, prompted by their own impulses, thinking to use the Spirit, or His power, to do what they think ought to be done. They do not go to the Word in study, and to God in worship, depending upon the new Instructor and Guide. What follows? Defeat, depression, discouragement, despair and a wasted life.

"I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you." Corinth should have published of him what he was writing of himself. It seemed foolish to do so; but it was necessary for the truth's sake. Hence, he continues his boasting - "For in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing;" and he announces verse 12 to prove it. The following verses are certainly prophetic. "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you." Oh, that the Church today, for it is truly Corinthian in character, would read these tender, yet faithful entreaties and exhortations of Paul; for his message is coming to the front. Paul laid the foundation for the Church (I Cor. 3:10); he set the Church in order; by his gospel saints are established (Rom. 16:25); by his message of grace, saints are built up and obtain an inheritance (Acts 20:32); and according to his gospel men will be judged - Rom. 2:16. Hence, Paul's coming to Corinth the third time was not limited to a visit by him in the flesh or body; but doubtless it means that his gospel of grace and glory must be heard by the Church today; all believers shall have the privilege of accepting the fullness of the word of grace, and thus be prepared for the highest enjoyments of the glory of God. If saints receive this gospel with all the heart, "continue in faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel," they will be presented "perfect (full grown) in Christ Jesus" at Jesus' coming - Col. 1:23, 28. On the other hand, the result of turning from his message is expressed in 2 Pet. 3:16, 17 - "Our beloved brother Paul wrote some things hard to be understood, which the untaught and unestablished wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction" (instead of construction by believing them).

The Priest's Source of Power - Chapter - 13. "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, try your own selves, whether ye be in the faith" - Vs. 3, 5. Verse four and the latter half of verse three are a sort of parenthesis, which we must observe to get the full force of the Apostle's argument. Chapter 12 really ends with verse 2 of this chapter. Now to assure his readers of the authority and importance of his sayings, he declares that Christ is speaking in him. Verses 3 and 4 are unfathomable statements. Study them. First. How few workers are wholly given up to the highest will of God and so abandoned to the dear Holy Spirit as to venture to say "It is no longer I that speak; but it is Christ speaking in me." And why not, if it is no longer I that live; but Christ liveth in me? Beloved, let us learn who we truly are, and what our rights truly are in Him. Then he adds: "Christ speaking in me is not weak toward you," as ye would make it appear; "but is powerful in you." And he shows them why.

"For though He was crucified thru weakness;" that is, though Christ used none of His strength to resist the foe, to deliver Himself; but was wholly left to the persecution and cruelties of the wicked, both by Himself and by His Father: "yet He liveth by the dynamite of God." Christ's weakness is expressed in Matt. 11:11 - "He that is least in the kingdom of the heavens is greater than" John the Baptist. It is Jesus, the greatest by virtue of His holy nature, who became the least by taking the place of abject weakness, and dependence upon His Father. Paul announces the same thing of himself in Eph. 3:8 - "to me, the less than the least of all saints, was this grace given." Then follows the other extreme - "Yet, He liveth by the dynamite of God." The chiefest channel for the mightiest dynamite of God; hence, "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul" - Acts 19:11. This is all very wonderful. Even today, Jesus as the Man in the glory, the Great High Priest, does not live by His own power (though He is the only one who could do so); but emphatically, "He liveth by the dynamite of God;" for the Holy Anointing Oil (the Holy Spirit) is still upon Him. The Apostle continues.

"For indeed we are weak in Him;" that is, Paul chose that place of utter helplessness and dependence upon God (see again Chapter 12:9, 10), persistently repudiating his own strength in every way. This is why some of his own spiritual children did not appreciate him. They wanted a father, a teacher, in whom they could boast as being strong - able bodied, good looking, eloquent in utterances, learned in language, of high repute among men. These always appeal to the carnal.

Reader, you can easily discern whether you are carnal, or spiritual. Finally, he adds: "But we shall live with Him by the dynamite of God toward you." Paul learned to live, not by his own strength, but by the strength of Jehovah; therefore, he could exclaim, "I can do all things (all the Father's will) thru Christ my Strength." Jacob was disabled, and went limping, knowing by experience his helplessness; but seven years rolled around before he learned the "God Almighty" was there all that time to make him "fruitful and

multiply.” Seven years after hearing that he was no longer called Jacob but Israel, he really believed it - Gen. 32:28 and 35:10, 11. Reader, have you learned your own weakness? Are you glad or sad about it? Have you learned that Christ is your Strength? So that you can rejoice in the sufficiency of Another? If the latter, you are beginning to be fruitful. A Fatherly Conclusion. “Finally, brethren, rejoice; be perfected; be of good comfort; mind the same thing; be at peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” How similar is this finale to the opening words of I Cor. The Apostle never needed to utter any regrets; there was no change to be made in his doctrine; no apologies to make for his conduct and service. Christendom is shut up absolutely to accept his teaching and imitate his walk. The benediction is unique. This is the only place it occurs just this way. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Anointed and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.” It is no small fact that these letters written to set the Church in order, to correct all manner of errors and give direction as to the spiritual priesthood and ministry of her people, should end by boldly and clearly declaring, as if for the last time, the three distinct personalities of the Godhead. How good and wonderful is our God!