

# 1 CORINTHIANS

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## GOD'S HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS IS AVAILABLE TO EVERY MAN AND WOMAN (1:1-31)

### 1 Corinthians 1;1-9

God calls us in His love to take His Son Jesus as our companion on our journey to the new world.

- We are called by God to share the Jesus life with him. (1)
- Jesus through His atoning work on the cross, set us aside (sanctified us) so that the way was clear for us to enter into His Holy life with Him.(2)
- God chooses everyone in Christ to be imparted with the Jesus quality of life. (2)
- Getting onto the highway of holiness, walking on it everyday on the journey to the new world which is made possible by our forerunner, the Lord Jesus Christ. (2)

God gives His grace and peace to everyone who responds by grace through faith in Jesus as their Saviour and forerunner. (3 & 4)

The Triune God, Father Son and Holy Spirit enriches us with clear thinking and edifying speaking. (5)

What God had called them to live out in the power of the Spirit of Christ, many of them were proving to be true, they were living holy lives. (6)

They were learning to actualize their gifted ministries, and Jesus in them was continuing His ministry through them. They were walking everyday with Him with a growing knowledge that His great day of the revelation of the new world would happen. (7)

They were proving that the power of the Spirit of Jesus in them was faithful in teaching and sustaining them, and their hearts were being kept blameless by His presence and daily cleansing. (8)

God was doing everyday in them what He had promised, He made them holy, kept them holy, and would soon take them into the new world. What had happened through His Son Jesus was happening to them. (9)

The direction you choose decides where you are going. (10-18)

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (18)

To understand what perishing means, we must first of all understand what salvation means. Saved is something only Jesus Christ can do in us, it means changing us from sinners into God’s holy people. It is not merely forgiveness from sins in our lives, it means being saved from everything that being a sinner means, what He does and what he is. Only what Jesus did on the Cross and His resurrection, can do the same for man, man has to die to sin and be recreated through the power of the Holy Spirit into a new man, a holy man, and a follower of Jesus Christ, for only Jesus can lead believers to the new world.

To be living a life that is “perishing” means that the sin principle of death is still active in the life of the individual. Jesus invites all sinners to accept by grace through faith that they have been delivered entirely from this sin principle, and that His Spirit has entirely expelled this principle of death and has filled the life with His Holy presence and power operating now from the basis of God’s love being imparted to him, the believer is now free to grow into a life of growing in holiness. He is now in a holy life and grows and develops as the Holy Spirit teaches and empowers him. He is a Christian and grows in Christlikeness, for only holy people can do holy things. Not only is he saved, but he is being saved, and will, finally be saved, by Jesus, that is why it is so important to keep following Jesus.

We are worried about confusing denominationalism and churchianity with Jesus and Christianity. As Paul the writer asks the Christians who were being deviated from saving truth. These are men’s doctrines which were dividing the fellowship and focusing their attentions on deviations that would lead them astray. It is the message of the Cross only that is the truth, the cross is the place where death to sin took place, it also represents the risen Christ because it is a vacant cross. The sinner has to die as Christ died to all sin and all that sin is, and be resurrected by the Spirit of Christ to be able to live the

holy and sanctified life offered by the risen Christ. All else is only men's ideas, not God's. (10-18)

The Corinthians used the word "ecclesia" which was used by the administration to govern the affairs of the city, they were the ones of standing in the city.

Paul calls Corinthians used word "ecclesia" of God, they are the ones who have chosen to follow Christ to be God's witnesses in Corinth which was a sinful city. Instead of the church showing the way to God, they were allowing the spirit of this evil society to influence them. And this is where divisions stem from, from the different concepts of sin. There were those who believed that a person had to be baptised by water, for in the moment of being immersed is that moment the person's old nature died, and as they arose from the watery grave they arose perfect, for their sins has been covered by the water, drowned to death, it would seem as if they were saying that Paul taught this "baptismal regeneration theory", but he makes it clear that he does not hold to this view, for that would make baptism his saviour and not Jesus. (10-13)

It is God's wisdom alone that solves man's real problem of sin, it is only through Jesus Christ that man becomes righteous before God, holy in quality of life and enjoys salvation to its fullest. (30) Only God working through His Son, Jesus Christ can take a life that is warped, sinful, impure and unholy and recreate it into the image of Christ. God alone can give His Spirit to a person deprived of eternal life. It is the presence of the Spirit of Christ who imparts all the things Adam lost when he sinned, essentially fellowship with our Triune God and eternal life, love and power. Jesus by His Spirit comes to dwell in that dead spirit of man, and resurrect it to eternal life. This is what being sanctified is, He makes the person holy and sets him apart for a holy life and ministry. Also the new person in Christ now starts to follow Jesus on a journey to the new world, where they will live together eternally. Redemption then is the completion and the fulfilment of all God's purposes for us. We are saved to serve Him now and forever in eternity, and that is where we are heading to every day.

Others were teaching that God does not make us holy now, but that we will only be free from sin when we die, for that is when our pure spirits will be released from our sinful bodies. It may have been Apollus who had taught this having been influenced by Greek Philosophers in places where he had been. Peter started believing that God had only chosen the Jews to be His elect and it took some time for him to change, remember God gave him the vision of the clean and unclean animals and instructed him to eat what Judaism had pronounced as unclean. Some might have picked up these teachings from his early days. Some still teach this doctrine of God pre-programming who gets saved or lost, saying that God still only chooses to make the Jews holy, and fit for heaven. Still other saw Christ as the Jewish Messiah who had come to restore the nation of Israel, make Himself their king and rule the world as a mighty conqueror. Only the Jews would be God's chosen holy people who would rule the world. Some believe that this is still going to happen at the return of Christ.

God has called both Jews and Greeks to believe in the wisdom of God as revealed in Jesus Christ alone, and to experience the power of God that is seen in the cross of Christ alone, in His death and resurrection. All this happened to save all men from sin now, by grace through faith in the living Christ. (18-36)

### **Only Believers Experiencing Christ's Saving Power Can Walk On The Highway That Leads To An Eternity With God.(2:1-16)**

Each man is born with the power to reason, to be aware of a higher power and to feel spiritual, but they are spiritually dead until made alive by the Spirit of God, that is why there are so many philosophies and religions, all man's attempts at being spiritual, and becoming part of the spiritual world. Even the Jews tended to separate Jehovah God from anything material, and made Him so holy that He became unapproachable and totally separated, living in his own spirit world. But God came and en-fleshed Himself and became the God-Man, Jesus Christ. He connected the spiritual with the physical, and made it possible for believers in Jesus Christ to become spiritually alive and be made holy, thereby becoming a supernaturally natural people, on the way now to the

new world being prepared for them by God. God has an ultimate purpose for all of His creation including man, and eye hath not seen, and ears have not heard, or mind conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him. (9-10)

When Adam fell into disobedience he became a sinner, he lost contact with God's Spirit, and was deprived of God's presence, God's love, purity and power, bringing his life under the power and control of satan's spirit, which has enslaved his natural instincts and human appetites. Man lost direction and meaning for his existence, and his life is perishing, that means entire failure to be what God intended for man to be, it is taking man further and further away from God and becoming more and more depraved, it is a drifting downwards in spite of all the efforts made to pull himself up. Man is now a sinner. That is what Jesus came to do, utter foolishness as for as his worlds thinking goes, He came to become a sinner in every mans place, to solve the problem and to turn it all around, and then to offer every man His power to get back on the highway that leads to what God has prepared for everyone

Jesus went to the very heart of the problem and removed everything that stood in the way of all men coming back into fellowship with God, so that man can become part of God's plan for all His creation. Just like Paul, everyone who wants to become part of God's saving plan has to be totally committed to following Jesus Christ, and that can only happen when by grace through faith you allow Jesus Christ to change you from a deprived and depraved sinner, into a child of God, with the restored image of God in you (1-16)

### **Chapter 3**

## **Healthy And Growing Christians Have An Appetite For These Truths About Jesus And The New World (3:1-23)**

What is important in the Christian's life is that he is becoming what God has planned for him to be. All Christians are God's building, they are God's new Temple, where God dwells, where He thinks, He plans and wills, and works through. God is taking each Christian somewhere with His specific purpose in mind. He has given each one a certain gift-mix that He uses to continue His

ministry the world, and He imparts His Spirit to empower them to be Christlike in all their relationships. This is what is important, each one becoming the person God intended for them to be as they walk with Him everyday to the new world.. In the process they are growing in character and personality to be the like Jesus. You are not merely saved, you are being changed everyday as you experience His power, and that is what the world cannot do to you, no matter how religious it becomes, it cannot make you like Jesus and prepare you for His new world. You have to keep moving with God everyday, or else you will become unhealthy, and stop growing, and you will have no testimony of Christ's power at work in and through you. Don't get bogged down into defending a theological position, or by being loyal to anyone other than Christ. Also remember that Jesus did not come to make us successful, clever and happy Christians, you can be all that and still not be living holy. He came to make us His Temples, true worshippers who live with Him, and fruitful for Him on our way to His new world. They were to live so that everyone could see who they belonged to, and who their Lord really was,

Christians realize that they are holy Temples who carry their holy God around with them, and He wants all people to meet Him, through them. Miracles will happen through the one who trusts the living Jesus Christ to continue His ministry through them, His body. We are the holiest of all where God lives, we are His Temple, and it is His presence that imparts His holiness. 1-23.

#### **Chapter 4**

### **Constantly Adjust To The Course Being Given By The Captain, The Lord Jesus Christ (4:1-21)**

The power structure, or the controlling leaders in the church at Corinth, had all the answers and their theories about how to live the Christian life, but they were operating from a wrong understanding of sin.. They believed that they were able to solve the divisions and problem in the church by their own learning and philosophical and even theological knowledge. But in so doing, they were ignoring the real problem which was that these Christians were settling for a low understanding of sin, and the sinful nature. This meant that

because they did not lead the people into facing the real problem and teaching them how to be delivered from the sin nature, they were actually solving nothing, because only Jesus can solve man's problem of sin. Only Jesus can expel the sin nature that controls believers,.

Paul says that they only thought that they were experiencing the power of the Spirit while in fact they were under the control of sin's power, and were living under the control of Satan's spirit, not the Spirit of Jesus. They had been blinded by their own pride of thinking that they were superior in knowledge and abilities, while in fact they were powerless. The way they thought so highly of their own abilities, the manner in which they had become their own judges, and the sinful things they turned a blind eye to just proved how un-spiritual and devoid of God's truths and power they were. They certainly were not in a position to give counsel and guidance on how to walk on the road of holiness, and to keep on the course being set by Jesus.

When Paul had used the word "minister", he meant "an under rower". In Paul's time ships were manned by galley slaves, two rows of men under the lash of an overseer, three different levels of decks, and the lowest deck was usually rowed by slaves chained to the deck, they were the under rowers. Paul says that what he is, as he follows Jesus, he is under the complete control of His Lord.

Is it not amazing how people are far more scared of holiness than they are of sin. They will come up with all sorts of explanations, rationalizations and even invent theologies to excuse or cover sin, but when the gospel of full deliverance from the sin nature is preached it is like disturbing a hornet's nest. The man who chooses to believe and live with Jesus as his saviour and sanctifier must be prepared to be misunderstood by those whose lives are under the control of the nature that is not subject to God's will. There is only one way to solve these problems and that is the truth that Jesus can save a man from inbred corruption as well as from the sins of daily life. Every day Jesus is out on the highway that leads to the new world, and you are either following His truth or trying to invent your own, and that is a sure way to lose your way. (4:1-2) Keep your hands clean, your heart pure and your feet firmly planted on the highway of holiness, as you follow Jesus. (4:1-21)

## Chapter 5

### Take A Strong Stand Against Sin, But Keep Loving The Sinner (5:1-12)

Paul's advice is when the body is meeting in the name of Jesus, and the power of the Lord is present, hand the rebellious sinner over to satan, so that the sin nature may manifest itself. The influence of the sin nature controlling the willing sinner spreads through the whole fellowship, stealing it's power and the believer's testimony for Christ, and reducing his power to a laughing stock. Get rid of it and allow the Holy Spirit to expel satan's nature. As satan unleashes his full power over them they will become desperate and repent and come back to God. By being gentle and accommodating with sinful selfishness you eventually paralyse the church.

Notice that Paul does not say that the persons own body or himself will be destroyed, for God's Spirit will continue to draw him back, it is the "flesh", the sinful nature, the nature under the control of the fleshly, sinful desires that will be destroyed, and that is what salvation really is. (1-13).

"Purge out the old leaven, that there maybe a new lump, as ye are unleavened. Therefore let us keep the Passover feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (5:7-8). There is the dynamic of the Holy Spirit at work all the time, taking believers back to the Cross to face themselves in the light of what Jesus did, He died to expel sins and sin. To allow error to spread, is to bring the judgment of God upon the church, in order to keep it clean. The Spirit of the Lord sets boundaries as to how far the influence of sin can go, and then He brings judgment upon those refusing to acknowledge their sin and to repent, that is why He gives insight to hand over those refusing His holiness, in order that the sinful nature they are protecting will do its work in them, until they cry out in desperation to the Lord, and if they still refuse they actually bring on their own judgment for they will die spiritually and in everyway, and if they repent at the last minute they will enter the new world by the skin of their teeth. Sin's power is death, and it does not lose its power just



because the person believed, he has to stay committed to God by grace through faith.

“Do not associate with sexually immoral people”, does not mean that we are not to rub shoulders with our world, but it means, do not get squeezed into their world of thinking and living. We cannot change people, only God can, through the power of the Gospel, that is why we must be faithful in sharing the truth of God’s Word with them.

Beware of those within the fellowship who try to persuade you to be easy on sin, to accommodate their low living, your attitude must never leave wilful sinners from feeling secure in their sinful living, love them, but take a clear stand against all forms of sin.

If someone returns to willful sin and to defending it, then the collective church must face him, for his restoration and their own continuing on the highway of holiness with God. Sin is not only an individual problem it eventually affects the whole body of Christ, and Jesus died and shed His blood to keep this body cleansed from all sin, all the time. Jesus can only use clear channels, and once sin is allowed it pollutes the church, that is why Jesus not only offers to forgive from all sins, but also to cleanse from all sin and expel the sin nature from His children.

Remember that he is on a journey, and has to keep on the way to reach the right destination. People do not break God’s laws of life and holiness, they break themselves and run aground, and become shipwrecked because they do not stay on the Captains course. Jesus gives each one “grace time” to adjust to His course., and that time is now, there is no guarantee for another day.

It is easy to resort to pop theologies. Which teach once saved always saved, as if Jesus will do everything to save a person in their sins, when the Truth that He reveals is that He will save His people from their sin, but they also are responsible to walk in obedience to Him to stay being saved. Others cling to a text out of context, like “no one shall pluck them from my hand:,” but He is talking about those who willingly accept His salvation by grace through faith and following Him with sincerity and honesty, this verse does not mean that

God protects sinners who deliberately defend and cling to their sinfulness. Many people believe and are born again, but due to wrong teaching and believing are allowing the sinful unsaved world to influence them, they get weaker and weaker spiritually and eventually die. Beware of those who teach that once born again, you cannot be unborn, remember sin can still kill you, it even killed Jesus.

## **What Are Your Rights As A Follower Of The Lord Jesus Christ** **. (6:12-20)**

We have every right to be our true selves in Christ, but this means our saved and sanctified selves. To many Christians listen to this World that says that we must look within ourselves, and discover ourselves and do what pleases us, because we belong to ourselves. There is one thing wrong with this philosophy, unless you are a sanctified believer, washed in the blood of Jesus, you will only discover a self centred and selfish, a sinful self and it is dangerous to live by only your own laws. The sin nature in man is the nature deprived of spiritual life, love and power, and glorifies only the self first life. Christians cannot live this way, they have to have this self first principle expelled by God' Spirit, and then be filled with God life, love and power, and then only can they be their true human selves, spiritually alive, and able to control their human selves to live holy. This is the right God gives to redeemed men and woman, the right to live with His love and power operating in their lives. To be joined to Christ, gives us the same Holy Spirit that is in Him, living in us, teaching and empowering us. But if we join ourselves to that which is of the sinful nature, we become one with this sinful spirit, satan's spirit that makes the sinner get worse and worse, because it has one aim, to make us slaves of sin, and lead us to death, spiritually and eternally. Sin things are so that once practised they enslave the person and destroy his character, and eventually his life.

You have the right to choose, God gives you that gift, and He has given it to everyone. You can choose to turn from sin to deliverance, from the power of satan to the power of God, from the principle of death in you to the power of God's life in you, from a sinner to being a saint, and do not let anyone tell you,

that God chose you to be as you are, a sinner on your way to hell. God has chosen everyone to be saved in Jesus Christ and through the preaching of the gospel He calls all sinners to believe. You have the right to choose Christ and to be delivered from the power of sin and death. That is what the cross means.

Also you have right to learn to be and act Christlike in every life situation. The devil has no right to accuse you or even to tempt you, for you belong to Christ, he can only do what God allows him to do, but he cannot force you to choose to obey him, not ever.

You have the right to resist the devil and as you yield yourself to God when you do, He has to flee from you, for you belong to King Jesus who has totally defeated him.

Because you have been bought with the blood of Jesus, you belong to Jesus Christ, lock stock and barrel, therefore you have the right to invite the Holy Spirit to live in your body and make it the Temple of God. You have all the rights at being a co-heir with Christ, now.

But this means that as holy children of God we do not have the right to do as we like with our bodies, we have to live within the boundaries set by God's Holy Spirit, but knowing them we live honestly and sincerely for we want to grow in His will for us. Even when we are tempted to do something natural, we first bring it under the Spirit's, guidance and if allowed, it becomes supernaturally natural living. When we are transparent and natural with Him, He imparts to us His wisdom and knowledge and we know what is wrong and what is right. We are our own judges. The problems they inquired about becomes child's play to those who belong fully to the Lord, there was something wrong with their spirit that is why their spiritual facilities were not operating efficiently, they were living under the control of the sinful nature. They were not honouring God, but trying to honour themselves, they would not allow God to control His church, they were the controllers . (6:12-20)

Because we are all created in the image of God, and even though we have sinned, this image within us has not been completely erased, we do know what is wrong and what is right, more so when we are no longer under the

control of the sin nature, for His image is restored in us. Especially Christians know when they are sinning against their own bodies, for the Holy Spirit convicts them and even chastises them to keep them growing.

Man's problem is sin, and when he defends it, or makes excuses for its presence and control, he is open to do a lot more, and this is where things must be changed.

Man knows that if he sleeps around, or lives on lust level, he cannot live a holy life pleasing to God, also when he does things that enslave him in anyway, he is conscious that he is not living disciplined and victorious, but to delude himself that this is normal because he is only human, is dangerous living, for the wages of sin is always death. Unmarried people, especially virgins have to be transparent and learn to control themselves, for God has provided a way for all human desires and natural appetites to be satisfied in a holy way.

#### **(7) Respect The Counsel Of Spiritual Leaders As Well. (7:1-39)**

Just as Paul himself admits, he has some of his own ideas which are helpful to a believer's growth to share, but they are based on what God has said and revealed about the sanctity of sex within the marriage bonds. All relationships require natural respect and the keeping within boundaries and the one that God has emphasized is one partner marriages. Unfaithfulness is sin and will bring the sinner under judgement and the chastising of God, for He always has the bigger picture in mind, that we are getting ready to live in an eternal world with Him. Only under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and living free from the self-first, sinful nature can holy relationships work and grow, and only operating from the principle of His love in us, can both partners grow in Christlikeness. Even God allows that when partners are unwilling and unfaithful to their vows the innocent party is free to break the relationship for the sake of being free from the downward pull of the controlling sin principle in the one partner's life. Naturally everything must be done to bring about repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation, but when this fails the innocent party is free to leave.

There is good advice here for every unmarried person, whether single or widowed, do not rush into any relationship and keep a hold of your emotions,

for happiness is not a good guide, only what is holy is certain to be a blessing. Too many are led purely by their emotions and personal human desires, but they cannot replace the direction that comes from prayer, and with counselling and giving God time to reveal His will and He always does. Be prepared to do what you understand as His will only, even if it means going against some happy and thrilling moments, and strong desires, and keep in mind that marriage is for a lifetime, and broken vows only bring guilt and heartache to the extended family not only the couple involved. Be certain to work with a Christian Counsellor who can give wise counsel in the difficult times, and over all that keep the Lordship of Christ as paramount. (1-39)

**(8) God teaches us to respect our weaker brothers and sisters and to assist them on their journey as xxxx (8:1-11)**

In Paul's day people could buy different cuts of meat from animals that had been offered to idols at a cheaper price. Naturally even Christians got in on the bargain. There were some who were saying that Christians should not buy meat that had been offered to idols, and it was a stumbling block to the people they were trying to win to the Lord. Others saw these Christians as still sharing some connection to this form of worship, but many Christians believed that because those idols had no power of life, it meant nothing to them to buy and eat cheaper meat. Paul agrees with those who see these idols as having no spiritual power, but recognizes that others do associate them with supernatural power, therefore he advises that it is better not to buy this meat, because of the connotation being given it by some. Paul wants nothing to hinder weak Christians from growing, or being a hindrance in any way to those whom they are trying to win. For the love of Jesus sake, it is better to get their meat elsewhere, and if they are free from this self first principle they will gladly do so. This is true of anything that would hinder the flow of the love of Jesus through His body, the Church, and once again it is a body of Christs decision, for they know the culture and the norms where they are living and working. Also there must be ongoing teachings to new believers coming from these backgrounds where many of their practices even though not bad, but not allowed by Christians because of a law of God as they understood them were

not practised because of the connotations attached to them by those outside of the fellowship, All Christians must be taught how to dress in modesty, how to eat and drink in such a way that cannot be misunderstood to be anything else but what it is. Even the Christian's standard of living should point to good stewardship and never to waste and extravagance, they should be involved in community projects to improve everyone's standard of living, and show by example what the true values in life are. They must also be given and helped at every turn, so that all people can improve their value and worth as individuals and be given opportunity to be the best.. God gives some the gift of giving so that they can make money in order to give to others, on this basis no Christian should go to bed hungry and cold. (1-13)

**(9) You have to see Jesus working through the gifts mix that He has imparted to you 9:1-27)**

We are not to be judged by what people see as success or even by the positions that we hold in our work. (9:1-27)

In the first place any so-called success never comes from us, it comes through Jesus working in and through us, He must always receive the glory, and we must be honest with ourselves in giving Him all His glory, we cannot steal what is His. Even through the gifted ministries resulting in changed lives through us sharing His Gospel, prove that He is at work in and through us, it is nothing of ourselves.

When we are transparent with the Spirit of Jesus, and He knows it, He will perform all sorts of miracles through us, and we will personally know that it is not through our own power, for the results of His work will make things happen that we know we could never bring about. We have to witness His power through us, humbling us, and without being conscious of what is happening, we will be surprised, because we know deep down that we cannot make happen what He makes happen.

Even though we have certain rights to use some of them for ourselves, it is a wonderful thing to give them back to Him and allow Jesus to use them for greater miracles, and so it goes on and on. To place in His hand what we would rightly keep and to watch it multiply is to realize each time that the living

Christ is alive in you, and working through you, what a way to live, it is never a dull moment. That is what being “blessed” is all about. It became a natural yet supernatural way to live, for Jesus is alive in you working through you everyday. There are no blue Mondays. Even in the difficult times of suffering, His will and plan are being worked out, and you realize afresh that you are never travelling alone, He is always doing something new in and through you, to His glory. Many have learned that He is so faithful that they give what they do not even have, and in many cases they even pay to do their ministry. What they soon realize that you cannot out-give Him, and His will is full of surprises and blessings.

In reality then everything we are and possess, is not ours, it all belongs to Jesus, and it is all available for Him to use as He wills, because we know that we are blessed, travelling with Him. (1-27).

### **(10) Faith is a growing trust in the faithfulness of Jesus to work through you everyday (10:1-33)**

Beware of making an “idol” of the living God in your heart, it is easy to do. The Israelites under Moses witnessed the living God passing over their homes, that had the blood on them. They witnessed the waters dividing the Red Sea allowing them to escape Pharaoh, and they saw daily miracles of His provisions and care, but when they had to have faith to cross the Jordan River and enter Canaan land, they chose not to believe God, and wandered for forty years in the in the desert where they worshipped God as if He was an idol. In fact while Moses was on the Mountain receiving the ten commandments from the living God, they were bowing to a dead idol made of gold, and it cost them dearly.

God has imparted to every man the faith to respond to Him as His only living God, and continuing faith to walk in obedience to His Commandments, this every man can do, through the work of Jesus on the Cross and through the power of His resurrection, not one person has an excuse not to do so.

It is the sin of not believing in the living God that makes Him nothing more than an idol to some believers. They feel saved because of some theology

that tells them that through once believing they are born again and cannot be unborn, but this is a very dangerous way to believe.

You have been born into God's family to walk the road to the new world everyday with His Son Jesus, and to allow the Spirit of Jesus to work in and through you, cleansing you from all sin all the time as you walk in the light of His truth. Jesus makes you holy and keeps you holy, by grace through faith. When tempted you have to yield yourself to God in faith, and then resist the devil and he has to flee from you, For this is God's will.

It is so easy to be tempted not to believe God when He says you are to be holy, and to say "I do not believe anybody is holy because we are always sinners, saved by grace," and "I can never have a ministry for God has not given me any Spiritual gifts," and on and on it goes, just treating God as if He was an idol. It takes continuing faith to keep walking and obeying God, and believing that you are living much more than a mere natural and human life, you are living a supernaturally natural life in the power of the Holy Spirit of Jesus in you.

When we go to a worship service on the Lord's day it is so easy to slip into an "idol worship mode," where we give praises to the idol we call God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, but do not put our faith in Him to make us holy by His presence and to live in us every other day of the week, and allow Jesus and His Spirit to continue His ministry through the fruit He produces in us, and the ministering gifts He imparts to us. Not to enter His Holiest place because of unbelief is to treat Him as if He was an idol. When partaking of the Lord's supper at Communion, it is a declaration of faith in the living Christ, that we are all part of His body and are living in the light of His cleansing blood every moment. We are not merely remembering something that was done by God. Jesus is alive in us now, and we know it. It takes faith to live free from sin and the fear of demons, and the consequences placed by unbelievers on obeying their gods. It is faith in Jesus that enables me to be my real self in all situations for Jesus has made me a real human being, so I can be human and not sinful wherever I am. (1-33)



Some Christians in places like Africa grow up to fear the power of demons and even power given to ancestors, but none of them are greater than God. To fear anything is to show a lack of faith in the one and only and all powerful God. Just like the Israelites of the Old Testament who feared the giants in Canaan, and also the power given to gods by their faith in them. Even if there is some power at work in this fear of their gods, the true God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit alone are able to expel all his evil fear and to cleanse from this evil principle of unbelief. The Lord will give me the wisdom to help those people being in fear by living amongst them with faith in the living God only...by faith in Christ as or forerunner on that highway to the new world, we are part of the new Exodus being led by one so much greater than Moses, who himself did not enter the promised land. Jesus is our mighty deliverer and what He has promised he has the power to make it happen, so we can trust Him to change us to be able to live eternally in the new world He is preparing for us. Faith is available to everyone, the weak and the strong all the time and can be placed in Christ everyday through grace being given to us (1-33)

**(11) Learning the rules of the highway to heaven is an ongoing process. (11:1-35)**

No one knows all there is to know about growing in holiness. We do not grow into holiness, we are made holy in one divine moment by Jesus, but we are like babes, in that we need to eat and grow in character and personality to become a spiritual adult that is why we must bring ourselves under the authority of those whose ministries are given to feed us, shelter us, protect us and to help us to grow up to be able to take our place of service for King Jesus as well.

Therefore his time was set aside to visit ministers and teach the churches how to become the ministering body of Christ. The first rule of the road is that we have to learn to bring ourselves under the kings business, all of the time , for we are subjects in His Kingdom. He reigns in our hearts and lives, therefore He must be made King and given permission to expel anything within us that resists His will, especially the sinful nature that controls all men, and babies in Christ. The second rule of the road is to find your place of ministry and service within the body of Christ. You will never

actualize God's will unless you discover your rightful ministry, and unless you are taught how to use the fruit of the Spirit in building redemptive relationships with others. Teachers must live out what they teach, and when respected they will have authority and acceptance. Those things have to earned by being good examples, they cannot be demanded by those holding an earned position. The teacher has to set himself apart to point out the way for others to follow, and he must be pointing to Jesus Christ alone.

You will recognize a truly sanctified teacher straight away because he does nothing to glorify himself, everything he does and says glorifies Jesus Christ as Lord and King. A growing teacher under the reign and authority of Jesus Christ continually evaluates himself by asking five questions and applying them to himself; These are, Am I doing this because I want the best for those whom I am teaching or am I trying to steal glory for myself? Am I really set aside by God to do His will or am I stealing someone else's ministry? And lastly "Do I use this ministry as part of my own growth in obedience to His will for my life?" Everyday I must align myself to living transparent before God and others, in order to have a growing effectiveness in my ministry.

### **(11)Observing authority strengthens us to learn to live within the boundaries that protect us. (11:1-33)**

Man is born with a sinful nature that soon takes control of his life and teaches him to become demanding and self-centred. This has resulted from man's representative, Adam choosing not to bring himself under God's authority, bringing himself under the authority of satans nature which does not recognise God's boundaries.

God's boundaries are there to help us to form our characters, and to become strong in our will power and wont power. A person who is not disciplined and taught to respect authority soon becomes a problem person doing and acting out what his sin nature is controlling him to do.

A child coming into this world, knows nothing except what he is taught by what he hears, sees and feels, and the other senses also teach him and shape him.

The child is taught to have faith and respect for his parents, who by example should build love and security into his life. A good father figure helps him to respect his fathers rule, and to grow up believing that he is loved, because he is always provided

for. The mother's role brings tenderness and care, and love that only a woman can bring, teaching him to respect the woman's role in his future life. Other family members teach him to show, how to build healthy relationships and to bring the balance of fun and laughter into his life. Family times of suffering together teach him that he is not an island, and that he has a part to play within the family. Here too he will find himself as related to the family and the extended family, and the greater world. He will be sent to school and learn to expand his mind and how to make his contribution to society in a way that helps him and others. Finding his faith in Jesus, and his place of service in the body, he will find meaning by preparing himself for life's journey to live in eternity with Christ. He should learn how to follow the example of those who are following Christ. This means that every young Christian should be given those opportunities at growing up to be whole persons in Christ.

The followers become confused when those values are mixed and confused, and eventually the whole body becomes confused as the church in Corinth had become, so people were losing their way, and were not growing in God's will and plan. Now everything was out of order and small things had become major.

Although Jesus and the other persons of God, The Father and the Spirit are equal and function in perfect harmony with each other, each one is subject to the others agreed upon role of functioning.,\_ The Father gave His Son to die and did not interfere with Christ's saving work, His suffering and death the Father and the Holy Spirit stood aside ready to perform their role once Jesus the God Man had fulfilled His role. So it is with Christ and man, Christ is the head of the body, and the father is the head of the home, and has to fulfil His role as the husband/father in the home, operating from the same principles of love and respect. But in the same vein, just as Christ is equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit, so the husband and wife, and all others in the family are equal, but as they fulfil their roles, they are respected within their areas to function with the Lordship of Christ who is LORD of the whole body.

Boundaries help us to understand our roles in life, and make us accountable to our responsibilities within these boundaries. We learn how to function within the family and beyond. There is nothing worse than a child who has not been taught boundaries for they become a law unto themselves and make everyone unhappy. Children from small on have to be taught how to socialize and to live within defined boundaries for them. Here they learn to respect those in authority and to find their ways of working

in the defined roles. This builds personality and strong character, and results in good self-image. These things cannot happen without discipleship and teaching, for there is within everyone the sinful nature to please self first.

Discipline has to be exercised at every level of our lives as seen here in those teachings given by Paul about the communion service.. He suggests that we examine ourselves as whole people. We are to look backwards and remind ourselves at Christ's saving work on the Cross where His body was broken and His blood was shed to save us from sin. This is not just a historical exercise, it has the present dimension of me being honest and asking myself, "Am I being saved from all sin at this moment." Also it has the forward look of not only did Christ provide salvation which I am experiencing at this moment by grace through faith, but I am living everyday in the expectation of His return as King to bring in the new World. This also involves the inward look, and facing my conscience in the light of His presence in me now. The upward look has to do with learning to adjust and appropriate all that Jesus is making available to me. It is learning how to see the world through His outward look, it is a harvest field ready for reaping. The forward look sees Him ever before us as our forerunner, we have to be ever learning to keep following close to Him. There is also the downward look, where we are aware of all those things and influences that try to hinder us from being all that Jesus has planned for us in His will.

We are to be totally be involved with Christ our Lord, so we as His Body have to keep allowing Him to lead us. This is living history, we have to appropriate His past work for us. We have to do His history in the present, and we have to learn to understand and choose to be involved with His-story in the future.

### **(12) The Spirit of the living Jesus is our energizing and our sustainer of His journey. (12:1-31)**

This chapter is not so much about the gifted ministries, as it is about the giving of the gifts for ministry. This is where they as the church were making a big mistake. They were ignorant about the workings of the spiritual gifts in their lives. They were distorting the truth about the gifts and as a result were throwing the whole church off alignment. They were measuring their spirituality against the one of seven of the twenty nine gifts listed by Paul in the New Testament, and they were doing it incorrectly.

First they imagined that they could claim the use of any gift they wanted, and Paul corrects this wrong teaching by explaining that the Holy Spirit distributes the gifts as God wills. Not every Christian can speak in tongues or prophesy. Secondly these gifts operate under the Lordship of Christ as head of the Body, and not of random or personal choice. Thirdly there is a balance of gifts within the Body, so that Christ can continue His ministry through these gifted ministries to the world.

The reason His church was so messed up was because they were emphasizing the use of these gifts for self edification and personal; spiritual; measurement instead of for the benefit of the whole body as it was involved in missions. Also because of the lack of true teachers the doors were open to all sorts of erroneous influences and teachings from the gentiles past lives.

They needed to start recognizing that God appoints those to be involved in the five fold ministry to bring this order into the church so that they can learn to function correctly. They need to bring themselves under the authority of the God called and equipped ministries, Apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, and evangelists , (Eph 4:11) and they were not to allow any voices in (different languages) to influence them in their choices. God gave them gifts so that Christ can function as Lord through His Body to a lost world. These were the gifts that they needed to first put in place. A growing and ministering church always glorifies Christ never itself. (1-31)

### **(13) God's gift of love becomes the mirror in which I face my real self.**

As we gaze at God's love, (agape) we see who we really are, whether we really love or not, and why we do and think as we do. Looking at our real selves in His light helps us to know if we are really loving or not. If we are not operating from the principle of His love in us then we are living false (pseudo) lives, for this is one of the greatest errors with the church, that we can be Christians, but sinners who still love self first.

This is where we have to start, we have to measure how much we are allowing the Holy Spirit to fill us with God's love. We know that as sinners we

operating from a principle of self- love that puts us first, that is the sin principle. But we have to believe that God will completely expel this principle of sin from our lives filling us with His love. Once being filled by the Holy Spirit with this new quality of life, holy and loving, the Spirit teaches us how to use this love everyday. First we learn how to make Jesus Lord of our lives, learning how to please Him and to keeping growing in this love for Him. We also learn new ways to bless those within the Body and others outside in the world. The fruit of the Spirit, imparts the graces of His love which is joy, peace, and the others. The gifts for ministry are the manifestation of this ministry of love to others. That is why Paul writes in this chapter that unless we are operating from a basis of His love, all these gifts are meaningless. Loving does something to my relationship to God, and my attitude to others and the way I think about myself. It is not just a standard or idea that I am trying to measure up to, it shows me where I am and who I am, and what I am believing.

A Christian is growing everyday because he is believing the experiences that he is choosing to have.. To choose experiences of love made available by the Holy Spirit keeps me growing in Christlikeness. God does not force anyone to do His will, but there are also consequences for those who fool with God and His will for their lives, and no man can change those consequences. (30)

It is best to use those grace moments to examine ourselves before the Lord, and to judge ourselves and put right all that we see as wrong, and to continue abiding by faith in His light and cleansing, it is the safest place. Worship is giving God true worth-ship, and all the glory for what He has done and is doing. It is loving Him, others and being ruthlessly honest with ourselves.

\*\*Everyone in Corinth had become right in His own eyes, and those eyes where self- first focused. The real problem was that were placing their faith and focus on things and not on Jesus. Paul says that he prays that they will remember what he has taught them about focusing on Jesus and obeying the rules of the highway of holiness. (2) To ignore the rules of God is to play god with your life, and that kind of living is always disastrous as Adam discovered.

This is the reason why God gives boundaries to live within, for our own benefit and growth. Experience by itself is not a good teacher, for the person might be

making the same mistakes over and over again, and really leaving nothing constructive. Even to think that something is good because it feels so right, is also dangerous living, because a lot of things that feel right at the moment can be so wrong when put in the big picture of God first, others next yourself last.

That is why we have the Christian family unit with its God given boundaries, the father role as breadwinners and protector, the mother role of respecting the father, and assisting in keeping the family fed and clothing clean and secure, but most of all loved. Young people want to be free to do as they like, and kick hard against the rules, but the parents have to stand united, and be responsible in teaching discipline and building character, so that the whole family comes to respect authority roles in the home, and grows up secure and mature and .learns obedience as a result.. When those boundaries are removed for whatever reason, and each one does as he desires and brings stress and division and disrespect into the home, this disintegrates into selfishness and sin.

One sees this happening even to adults who do not respect the husband and wife roles revealed by God, they do not mature and start operating from a basis of immature feelings, and saying things like, "I don't love you anymore", and they open themselves to the attention of others who they convince themselves will provide there needed attention and unfulfilled physical desires. It might seem right and even feel right, but the ends thereof are the ways of spiritual death.

Operating from God's love, which quickly forgives and wants the good will of the other, it chooses to face the problems, chooses to do what is right and put God first, and when this is done God will bring His blessings into there relationships.

God has to make it possible for the rebellious nature in man to be expelled in a moment of grace by faith in Jesus Christ, thereby making it possible for man to submit to the will of God in his life, in all things.

The man must submit himself to Jesus as Lord and King, and also love his wife from this position, it is much more than just having her love and respect, as he becomes one with Christ, so he must realize that he is one with his wife. It is much more than physical oneness it is oneness of flesh, of spirit, of emotions and mind, it is the whole man and the whole woman sharing their intimacy under the blessing of God at that moment. It is a sacred and holy union, the way God willed it should be, and it is the most exciting and thrilling intimacy human beings can ever experience, joined to God as one in a beautiful holy moment, which is true worship.

Imagine moving from this beautiful oneness of intimacy and respect, to about whether or not the woman should cut her hair, and wear a covering, to show her submission to her husband.

The only reason why Paul would even broach the subject would be to protect the beauty of a Christlike woman from being seen as a prostitute, for the only woman in Corinth who went through the streets unveiled were the prostitutes. So it is something he advises to protect the beauty of the truly fulfilled woman. It did not merely show that women were subject to men, but it really showed that they revered the God of their husbands who was sharing His love and blessings with them, so they gladly submitted to the observance. There are different things in the different cultures that are put there to protect their society, and when they become part of the true meaning of showing respect and loyalty should be encouraged, but when used to treat someone as an inferior, and to bring them into bondage they cannot be blessed by Christ as the Body.

Some men have used some of these traditions to hold their power of being the boss over the woman, and even over his family, some even hurt their families and wives and think that it is permissible because they are in control, but that is a wrong motive, for the man must be willing to submit to Christ as his Lord and King and operate from this basis. God never gives anyone permission to operate from a sinful basis, in fact He brings judgment upon those being this way. God will chastise parents who do not operate from the basis of submission to His will.



So the real issue is not what to wear or eat, but to be rid of the rebellious nature and to do God's will, which involves giving value and worth to all members of the family, allowing this to work through everyone, that is why we must be willing to live and move and have our being in Him, in what He allows and what He condemns. (1-16)

The same problem of the sinful nature in man even raises its ugly head during the communion service when the Body of Christ gathers together to share the Lord's Supper. There are those who have never learned those values and mutual respect and have never learned to discipline themselves to be restrained even while participating in sacred things, like communion. Even in the worship times there should be those who are looked to as respectful teachers to give guidance in worship so that everything be done in such away as to give all glory to God and none to man.

Jesus took the bread and He breaks it, and gave each of the disciples some to eat, as a symbol that they were partaking of His Body broken for them, and also because they were all eating from the same loaf showing that they were all the one Body of Christ. They ate it together showing that Jesus was ever present with them, and that when His Body met together, collectively they were a powerhouse of His power and holiness and love. It was as much a spiritual happening as it was a memorial they were all believing that Jesus was alive in them, cleansing them and teaching them accepting their worship.

When He took the cup containing the juice of the crushed grapes and offered them the wine to drink, He was showing that His blood was shed to bring cleansing from all sin, and as they drank together each one was confessing that everything that sin meant to them was being cleansed away by His blood. It meant that they were free from all that is sin, because of what Jesus did on Calvary and they were testifying that He was cleansing them at that moment from all sin, again it was really happening it was not just history. The church starts out by discovering and using these five fold ministry gifts, but first must examine themselves by looking into the mirror of God's love as a basis for operation.

Even if the church could speak in languages from heaven, it would not prove that they were spiritual, for without God's love operating in them they would just make a lot of noise about themselves, in fact that is what they were doing. So much that is nonsense is ascribed to prophesying, when it is nothing more than man guessing, and an overemphasis on man's faith, prosperity and miracles as proof of spirituality., Even great sacrifices, unless made for God's love to reach others is a waste of good energy. God's love is moved by grace, it gives and asks nothing in return, it gives even the people are totally undeserving, and it does it in a manner that is kind. It never draws attention to the good it is doing for others reaching inward. It is forgiving and with the best for the those it helps. It has faith in the prevenient grace of God and is willing to help others to trust God's faithfulness, it has a drawing power, and protects the rights of all. It keeps on growing and lifting and hoping for change, it wants to bring everyone under the blessings of God.

This love actually goes much further than so called prophesying which in some cases is nothing more than fortune telling.. Love is so much more powerful than mere words, it brings real change and hope into peoples lives. When so called tongues (heavenly language) is used only to parade spiritually it really is useless in bringing about the truth about change in Christ it is supposed to convey. It is only when geniune gifts are practiced within the boundaries of this love that they bring Christlike change.

As these Christians, gaze into the mirror of Christ's perfect love, they will start seeing how childish the spiritual games are that they are playing at, and they will be given real knowledge of truth by God's Spirit.

The perfect way is the most excellent way, it is not something to come in the future, it is here in Christ at this very moment, and when seen and faced, and the time for love is now. To hand oneself completely over to the Lord of love, is to experience the infilling of His perfect love, which is the starting point to being in His love. (1-13)

Calvary is the greatest experience we can ever find of what real love is, there God gave His innocent Son to die in the place of all sinners for all time, just imagine the suffering of the Trinity. The Fathers heart was broken to have

leave His Son to die alone, Jesus the Son of God chose to embrace the thing He hated, sin, and pay by dying in every sinners place, alone and forsaken by the Father, and the Holy Spirit paralysed and standing helpless not being able to do anything to save Jesus, imagine having all that power, but being unable to step in . Only love would allow all this to happen, and God did. Here we are looking at perfect love in action, and we are all united to this same quality of love imparted into our hearts, so that we can learn every day how to appropriate and operate from this principle. Compare this with man's attempts at being holy, obedient and spiritually powerful. Gifts are only meant to be used by those able to operate from this love of God in them. So many think that they are spiritual because of the size of their faith in their own little faith basis, while others use other gifts to measure themselves. When we are honest and see ourselves in the mirror in His perfect love, we come to realize that we have only started on this journey of His love in and through us.

A church can be very talented and yet not operating as a spiritually gifted church. Talents are what we are born with and can improve upon, but spiritual gifts are what we are given by the Holy Spirit when we believe in Jesus Christ. Naturally the Spirit can add the spiritual dimensions to a talent and it becomes supernaturally natural and can be used in ministry. We can be talented in an area and also spiritually gifted in an area that is not associated with our talents. But everyone of us has been gifted with a spiritual gift-mix that must be discovered, for it pushes us in a direction of our ministries. But gifts are not what we are, and to find our identity in a ministry can be a heartbreaking experience simply because these gifts are His, and Jesus will use them when and how He chooses, we cannot monopolize them, and force Him to perform when and where we want, He is the head and we are the body. That is why we cannot force Jesus, or command Jesus, or demand from Jesus, we can only make ourselves available to Him and allow Him to do His ministry through us, and He always does what is best.

To teach that we claim by faith for this and that to happen, is to say to Jesus that He is not Lord, we have to learn how to operate as His Body and He has given clear guidelines, how this is to happen. It is not the size of our faith that

performs miracles, it is our small faith in our Big Jesus who does things His way, in His time, in His way through us, and all the Glory belongs to Him.

It is strange how much is made of faith and even hope, but so little is made of love, this perfect love, is fact Christians will tell you that no-one can love with His perfect love, but it is perfect because it is God's love not mans, but it can be imparted into our hearts now by the Holy Spirit. Faith is a gift from God given to all men so that they can believe that God is, and then believe in God, and then place their faith in Jesus as their Saviour, and continue using that faith to follow Jesus everyday. So it is that God invites every believer to open their hearts to be filled with His love, so that thereby their faith and hope will also grow.

We grow in His love, but never into His love, it is by grace through faith that God expels the sin nature and fills us with His Holy love. God does not believe because He knows everything all of the time, also God does not hope because He possesses everything, but God is love and He loves all the time, there never is a moment that He is not loving, and He chooses to love the world and His church, the body of His Son Jesus. That is why love is contrasted with gifts and compared with the graces given to us, all these will go away, but love will go with us into the next world, and imagine what it will do in and through us. What role are the gifts supposed to play in our lives, nothing but what love the love of Christ wants to use them for, they have no value whatever on there own. To try and make some outward evidence of the Spirit's work, is unspiritual and deluding, and leads to the confusion that they were experiencing in the church of Corinth.

The gifts are given for ministry, but have to be operated by God according to what He wills in love. They are not luxury gifts, but have a definite purpose that fits His will (1-13)

#### **14. Operating from a love basis Paul teaches them how to solve problems and not hit people. (14:1-30).**

God has a plan for the church to operate from a basis of His love ministering, worshipping, and fellowshipping Body of Christ. Only then can the church fulfil

the reason for its mission, that at sharing God's love with everyone everywhere. What they needed at Corinth were more prophets clearly edifying the church and teaching them the purpose and meaning of these spiritual gifts. They were not to waste time with those who cannot edify them, they were to leave them to follow what they believed about speaking in heavenly languages. They were not to judge these men, but not to place them up as special messengers either. They did not understand what they were saying themselves, so they were not giving any real help to those on the journey to the new world.

Paul himself could speak in many different languages, but he only used the languages that they understood for just parading gifts and abilities only brought more confusion. When you love people you always want the best for them. Also it was wrong to look up to those who seemed super-spiritual when they were not helping anyone. Christianity is not mysticism, it is a love happening that improves everybody. Even in the case when foreigners visited the church, and interpretation must always interpret what he says, or else he would only be talking to God and himself, even though it helps him to feel accepted by the fellowship he is not edifying them. Just because a person could speak in many languages, did not make him special if he could not speak a language that people understood he was to keep quiet.

Many of those speakers were not using any special gift, they had learned to speak in those languages. Naturally there were those who would be gifted to speak in the languages they had not learned and usually they were set aside for outreach ministry, but everyone must use his gift to build up the church.

Some were claiming to be praying in the Spirit, and even though they did not understand what they were praying, in some sort of ecstatic language, Paul says that he wanted them to do it with there understanding also, so that they could be a blessing to everyone. Others were singing in ecstatic language that they claimed carried some mystical power that was being given by the Spirit, as if this was some proof of it being spiritual while this was insufficient to communicate with God, Paul does not accept this either and says that God communicates in a way that all people understand, and that all the gifts are for the common good of building up the church.

It would appear that Paul who knew the difference between the gifted languages and the learned language, acknowledged that God does give the gift of a language that enables the believers to communicate the message of truth in a manner that he had not learned, to edify the body of Christ. This had happened three times in the Book of Acts, and he has no reason to see why this giving of gifts should be changed. Here they were copying what was being done in heathen circles, of Delphi when the oracle used a divine language that needed special divine interpreters to interpret what she was saying. Paul was not willing to have this happening in the church. Again he does not hit the person, but the problem.

God had changed things at Pentecost for His Spirit empowered them to speak in so called unclean languages, fourteen are named, called “other” languages, not unknown for though not learned by the disciples, they were gifted to speak in these strange tongues so that the Gospel could be heard by all nations, not simply Jesus, and they started from Jerusalem, the so-called holy city.

It would appear that some in all sincerity believed that what they were doing was speaking in some divine language, like was happening some thirty miles away, and Paul wants them to see that they are not helping anyone, least of all themselves, for it would cause them to think of themselves as being super-spiritual. He had just told them that not everyone speaks in God given understood prayers, and now some were making out as if they had a special way at being spiritual by speaking, praying and singing ecstatically accrediting it to a special blessing, others were saying that these are the signs that followed those who had faith, but Paul does not buy into this, he does not say that they are of the devil or attack their characters, he treats them with love, but firmly disagrees with their practices that do not bring clear and understood teaching.

We must remember that he is dealing with a church riddled with problems and wrong teachings and practices, so when he outlines the order of service for them, it is for this church and not a pattern for all worship services for all times.

There must have been very little control being experienced in this church, for he advises very strong measures of control. Of course God was present by

His Spirit in this church, but they were allowing enthusiasm and competition amongst themselves, to run loose in the church, and with the result there was very little teaching and learning taking place, they did not respect the authority of leaders and teachers, and were concentrating on the use of a few gifts. Because they had missed the whole need for the five-fold ministry, they had made the way open for the sinful nature to control their worship to glorify self, this could not bring glory to God, worship to Jesus or openness to the love of the Spirit. (1-25)

The service must be run in an orderly manner, led by Spirit possessed believers who understood the worship of the gifted ministries, to ensure the strengthening of the church as they brought worship to God. There are celebration services, when the body honours the presence and the guidance of the living Lord Jesus Christ as their Head.

Any foreign visitors must be allowed to speak through an interpreter, but only up to three or else they will monopolize the service. Then the prophets, usually preachers of the truth will bring God's message, to bring instruction and encouragement. There might be those whose message cannot be interpreted, they must be made to feel part of fellowship, and even though keeping quiet speak to God and add to the spirit of oneness of fellowship.. Those receiving special revelation during the services, can be given opportunity to add their insights, all of this seeks to strengthen and edify the body.

Woman coming from a gentile cultures would tend to clash with the woman of a Jewish culture, but they must learn to be subject to the decision of the leaders, which because of the practices of the church worked through the husbands.

They should always be open to the message coming through the prophets and through those speaking in other languages, using the measuring sticks of how it affects the body.

15. Notice how Paul operates from the love basis in all his expositions and sharing of truth, he does not allow himself to get bogged down with arguments or trying to prove his point of view. He is a Gospel man, all the time he is

taking them back to the Cross, the empty tomb and the risen Christ, and also to the coming new world.

Even when answering those who say that they do not believe in a physical resurrection, meaning that they believed that the good soul/spirit will leave the sinful body in grave to decay, but as living souls they will live eternally. Paul then shows how some of their practices do not fit their own theology, for if Jesus did not rise from the dead as a whole new man, with a glorified body, then even their understanding of the resurrection to a living spirit has no basis, for in fact it meant that the resurrection of Jesus as witnessed to, was meaningless. If the soul/spirit is eternal without a resurrection, then why was Jesus raised from the dead? The resurrection of Jesus from the dead was a fact, well attested, it was not something that Paul invented, Jesus really died and really rose again, and was the first fruits of what all believers will be like.

The real problem with these people in Corinth was their sin natures, they were still being sidetracked by the sinful one who controlled their thinking and choosing through his nature in them, they needed to visit Calvary again and become crucified with Christ, and become holy, (read more 33). “Do not be misled, bad company corrupts good character, come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning, for there are some who are ignorant of God, I say this to your alone,” “Because they were still under the control and influence of the nature that would not believe that the saving work of Christ could expel all sin from their lives, Paul realizes that they will never admit to their need. It is as if he is saying don’t argue, but pray for them, and keep living out the truth for them to see, but the living Lord Jesus Christ loves them through you, but keep the Gospel clear, so that they understand clearly the message of full salvation, which includes living eternally in a resurrected and glorified body.

Paul takes us back to trusting in God’s faithfulness, God invented and introduced the principle of death, resurrection and new fruitful life. Even nature has been created by God to multiply as this life and death principle, now plant a small seed, it is buried, but it is changed into something quite different and multiplies itself . So it is with man, he lives , he dies, and is buried, but will rise again changed into a whole new existence. Jesus is a living sample of His death and resurrection and glorification plan of God, and



we follow Him as our forerunner into an eternal future with Him, this our part of our faith in Him.

Also just as God has created everything with a body specially designed to live on has He planned, and to be able to do as He created it to, so the new man in Christ has a body designed by God for him to live in a eternal world prepared for him by his creator. Paul calls this a spiritual body, and by this he does not mean a spirit body, but a body that is both stuff and spirit, a glorified body, just as Jesus had after His resurrection and glorification. A whole spirit/physical man, as Paul says, a heavenly body. It is imperishable, it is glorious, a powerful body, a new kind of stuff altogether. The human body has been changed into this brand new creation which was specially created for him. Those who are still alive at the coming of Jesus will also be changed in the same way, they will be raptured and everyone will be recreated into a whole new eternal and immortal being and be taken to the new world prepared for them. This will be the sign that Jesus has finally overcome and destroyed the death principle once and for all. Paul says then as a High Priest who has finished the saving from sin and death, Jesus will fill God's hands with this new creation, new people, new heaven and a new earth, and then God together can get on with the plan He had for man before he fell.

Here are the truths we must be willing to die for, and to live for, all these other problems really mean nothing in the light of the new world which is coming, Jesus has gone to prepare it all, so keep your focus on Him. (35-58).

Don't get sidetracked, stay on course, for the evil one has placed many detours to get you off track, and they are dead-end streets, beware of the sign posts that say, "Intellectuals," or "Signs and wonders," "Free style worship", "Old fashioned legalism", "New age prosperity", "Positive faith healing", and "Guaranteed prosperity", stay on the "Golden Highway of love and holiness."

**16. The fourteen ingredients of love became our measuring stick to check where we are. (16:1-24)**

These fourteen ingredients of love are listed in 13:4-7, the chapter on love. It is only fair that we examine Paul's life to see if he was living out what he was teaching, for if he was able to then so is everyone.

a). Love suffers long. Even when someone has been wronged they are patient and silent, like Jesus was, it refuses to strike back. We see that even though Paul attacks the problem he never attacks the person, he points out the real problem that they are still carnal without tearing them down.

b). Love is kind, even when it seems that he had the right to close the door of mercy, he kept pointing them to God's grace . Love is grace in action, it always hopes that the person will change and works toward that end.

c). Love envies not. It does not begrudge the privileges of another's position and it respects authority. He never tried to steal the authority of another person.

d). Love vaunteth not itself, it does not choose to always be in the lime light, as the centre of attention. There is no showing off in love. Paul could have used his post to show off, but never did

e). Love is not puffed up. It is never arrogant, but humble. Jesus and Paul never showed contempt for others.

f). Love does not behave itself unseemingly, it is not rude or ill mannered, but courteous. It is always learning to be a gentleman.

g). Love seeks not its own. This is the greatest proof that the believer has been cleansed from the " I am number one" sinful nature. Like Jesus and Paul, their lives were lived under the principle of God's love first in everything.

h). Love is not easily provoked. Notice love can be provoked it will become provoked when it sees sin hurting and breaking the lives of others, and it can act in a "tough love manner, but it is never looking for a fight, it is not easily resentful. It is always controlled and hits the problem and not the person.

i) Love thinks no evil. Of course bad thoughts are always trying to enter our spirit causing us to harbour them and allowing them to influence our

behaviours, but the moment they reach our wills we reject all thoughts that are not Christlike because they get measured by His love in us, and because we have nothing in us that reacts to the control of the sin nature, we reject these thoughts in the power of the Spirit and it eventually becomes our life style. Even as things resurface from our unconscious minds from our pasts, they pass by us into the pool of God's love and forgetfulness, where they no longer have any power over us, and when we do remember them, we remember when we forgave all those who caused them.

j). Love rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth. Love feels the heartbreak of others when they get hurt by sin. In fact it does what it can to restore that person through forgiveness and acceptance. To watch others living in error, is painful to those who know truth, especially when they rebel and reject truth, and choose to live under the principle of sin and death, It will strongly oppose everything that hurts people especially when it is wrong teaching.

k). Love bears all thing. While dying condemned and under the curse of God, and suffering all the pain and rejection of others Jesus prayed, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do," and Paul in prison, in chains wrote the Gospel of rejoicing, and sang songs chained in a prison at midnight.ing. Even when fac being beheaded, he portrays a faith that is rejoicing at being in the Lord's presence.

l). Love believes all things. This does not mean that love is blind or naïve, but it is free from suspicion of others, it really builds loving and trusting relationships, like Jesus it is not a condemning attitude, it keeps the door open for that one to confide and trust in them. It builds trust. Jesus was always a friend to sinners; Paul too did not walk around as an army general giving orders to everybody, showing suspicion and unacceptance, he too was a friend who built acceptance and trust in Jesus. Paul always saw beyond the present circumstances to what the person could become in Christ, that is why he believed all things. He knew how God had changed him, and he believed that Jesus died because He wanted all sinners to be changed.

m). Love hopes all things. Even when things that looked like going right, still went wrong, Paul kept his faith in the living Jesus Christ, who was always working to make things right,. He always hoped because he always believed that God can do the impossible.

n). Love endures all things. There is nothing that can conquer love, especially Gods' love, for it conquered sin, death and the devil, and Jesus promises that He conquers the sin principle in the lives of His children. Nothing can stop Gods' love from entering your heart, nothing can stop His love from expelling the sin principle from your live, and nothing can stop the Holy Spirit from filling your spirit every moment of your life, if you invite Him to do so, but you have to do so, and can do so at anytime, even now. When this love comes in and changes us, we are in a position to change our lives, because it is the power of His love doing it not us.

They were in a mess in Corinth, not because things had to change, it was because they had to be changed, their real problem was that their lives were under the control of the sin nature, they needed to be cleansed and made holy. They were to do everything in love, (13), but they needed to accept the infilling of Gods' love by grace through faith in Jesus. Holy people can greet each other with a holy kiss, that is what holy people do. So they were to be genuine for the traitors kiss caused Him to die under the curse, the principle has not changed.

## II Corinthians

### 1:1-22. We Share In One Church, One Community, One Saviour And One Gospel.

Paul calls them the “The Church of God in Corinth, Together with all the saints throughout Achaia.”

There is only one Church, one people of God, only one Body of Christ, and no matter where the “Church” is, it is the Church of God. It does not belong to any one denomination or group, the Triune God is the founder, teacher, owner and sustainer of His Church. It does not belong to any group, any bishop or General Supt. Our leader, it belongs to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, God lives

in His body as the Father. The living Son-Jesus and the powerful Holy Spirit. The truth of God for His Church was revealed through the Word of God, both the spoken and His mighty actions.

The Son of God, Jesus the God-Man who acted out saving truth of God; It was this living truth that is the “power of God.”

The Corinthians were missing this understanding of truth through “power worship”, which did nothing more than elevate prophesying, and our unhealthy desires of supernatural and heavenly things that hindered the flow of God’s love (1Cor 1:3) and caused many division the body.

Some of the leaders were acting as superior asif they were the possessors of all truth and revelation and power and were causing division. They were claiming special authority and revelation, under the so called “anointing of the Holy Spirit” that did nothing to help the church on its journey to the new world. Their whole emphasis was on personal positions and power and recognition.

Because of being not of fellowship with the church teachings and practices of Paul, they were angry to make him out to be a false teacher.

Some of the genuine Christians were troubled by all these happenings and so Paul opens his letter by encouraging them to stand firm, for God is head of His Church, (3-11)

Paul had written and spoken in a language that was clear and understandable, warning them that they must not be taken in at all these claims being made by the so called “anointed prophets”. Speaking in unknown languages that needed special interpretation,

This walking in truth does not need any “special instructions to make them more spiritual, for they already had the anointing that God gives to all His children.

“now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranty what is to come”. (12-22)

When the church becomes divided it is a sure sign that wrong teaching and practices are present, and these must be corrected. Added to this it must be

recognized that here under the sway of the sin nature will be tempted to glory in position seeking, and to feel superior through thinking that they are being given special anointing

“For we do not write you anything that you cannot read or understand and I hope that as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully...”. (12)

### **2:1-17. We Are All Part Of The Same Triumphal Procession Of Christ On His Journey.**

Paul will not allow himself to stoop to in-house arguing and fighting that is unproductive and divisive. One of the reasons why he did not visit them was that the timing was not right, he wanted to see if there were more serious and responsible Christians amongst them, and there were, so he chooses the correct time to visit them and to get them refocused. He found no joy in painful confrontation, even if he could prove his point, the real issue was that God’s love and power were not flowing. So while he is waiting he does “Jesus things”, he prays, he forgives and seeks place for restoration and understanding, so that he will be properly prepared at his visit.

In fact he wants them to get the bigger picture, that whether we are speaking or acting or prophesying we are all on the same journey of victory, with Christ leading the procession as our victor. The victorious Christ is head of the church, and He is taking us further along the way; and closer to the new world every day. We cannot allow unproductive things to hinder us on the journey, we have to keep moving with Him..

It is the flow of His love and His truth that goes through us and affects all who see and hear us, it is His mission, His church, His gospel, His power, not mans. This is what they must want and experience the same power that every follower of Christ is enjoying. The world needs to see God’s love and faith in action through us. (1-17)

### **3:1-18 All Christians Have The Same Holy Spirit.**

There is only one Holy Spirit of God. There is not one spirit for Charismatic churches, another Spirit for evangelical churches, and yet another Holy Spirit for

traditional churches. And not one church has the monopoly on the Spirit, He works whenever sinners choose to act by grace through faith in Christ, wherever they are. The Spirit is the Spirit of God,. He is not monopolized by any person or group. He reveals truth clearly and always makes it clear that is, is because of love of the Father and the obedience of His Son that we enjoy everything God has planned for each one of us.

The Holy Spirit distributes God's gift mix to whom He chooses. Unfortunately all His works can be abused and counterfeited, but they cannot produce anything productive or saving without His power and authority. The Holy Spirit operates from His principle of God's love as revealed and appropriated by Jesus Christ, to His glory that is why it is easy for Christians to discern the false and the truth, when coming to spiritual things, as Paul was able to do. As we see in 1 Corinthians 3-1,4 Paul measures all outcomes by the love of God, the cleansing of the sin-principle and a clear authority of understanding and edification for the whole church.

Bbeing filled with the Spirit of Wisdom and power brings life to individual Christians and the church, not division, living in sin, is a hindrance of God's love, and this love cannot flow through the Body of Christ.

There is no longer a veil that hides the newest believer from understanding the truth, for Christ has created new spiritual eyes for each one to see. There is no need for further revelation, or secret message from heaven for us to know the way to the new world, for all we have to do is to follow Jesus Christ our forerunner. The Holy Spirit is the other self of Jesus and that is why we have authority to live bodily in the presence and to speak to Him directly and Him to us directly. (1-16)

There is nothing mysterious about God, Jesus and Holy Spirit, for they are one and all open on how God's saving plan works. We do not have to seek gifts, or signs, or miracles, or anything else for we need no evidences of His presence or His power, for we follow Him and trust His faithfulness and those things follow us , because He makes them happen along the way. This ts the true and new covenant, it is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. (17-18), it is how we are living everyday on our journey, that determines our growth in becoming like Jesus Christ our head.

#### **4:1-18. Our Triune God Is With Us Every Inch Of The Way.**

When Paul says that we have all these treasures of God in vessels of clay, he is not saying what most Christians are saying today, "Well I only human after all"; meaning that they are still sinners. What he is saying is that God has added to what we cannot do naturally no matter how spiritual we are, for it is the Holy Spirit alone who adds the spiritual dimension, in the beginning we were created from clay, but clay that was originally planned to be holy as we can now be now. . We still live at a level that gets old, weak, and will face death, but we already by grace through faith are beings with eternal life, who expect to be changed by Christ.

We are no longer sinners in Christ, but new creations, Children of God with the seeds of glorification already planted in us, starting germination in Christ, planted in decaying earthly bodies, which will soon burst forth into a whole new existence. This is the light from God that has penetrated into our hearts and minds. (5) God has not waited until we reach the new world to reveal this to us, it is knowledge he already given to us. Also the power of His Spirit in us to keep us saved and holy and victorious is all the proof we need, His presence and power (7-15). This is; not merely believing, this is a life that we are living in our present condition even before we are glorified, and even when all around us, and even in our bodies we see decay, we look beyond all this to the day when the invisible will become visible. (16-18)

We need never lose heart on this journey because, we are carrying the living Christ in us every moment, He is our most valuable treasure. (7). Also because the Holy Spirit is always sustaining and protecting us, we have all the power we need to become overcomers. (7-10). Every day we are growing spiritually stronger and being renewed heading to the moment when it will all culminate in a moment of being totally glorified, to be like Him. But then there is the entrance into the new world with Jesus and all His saints what a day that will be. (14) Our Triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are with us every inch of the way, we never travel alone.

#### **5:1-21. We Are Heading To Our Home In The New World.**

Paul believes that dying is not leaving home, but going home. So many people think that spirit and physical are so far apart that they never meet. But remember it



was the Spirit who breathed into the clay, and a new creation was born, man belongs to two worlds. It was Adam disobedience that separated them by death, he died spiritually and eventually died physically. But here again we see God the Spirit breathing into clay of man, and a new being is born, a new man able to live in a new world. Jesus in John 14 made it clear that He is preparing a new home for all new creations.

Think about it, The Son of God (Logos: Word) became man without ceasing to be God, a God-Man, called Jesus, and after His resurrection and glorification became the first sample of a new race of people, all believers in Him. He is going to change them to be like Him, eternal, glorified and able to live in a new world this is where all believers in Christ are heading, this is the journey they are on at the moment. (1-17).

This is the Gospel message that we as Christian are to share with our world, that God wants to be in fellowship with all men everywhere and take them to the new world that He has prepared for them (12-21). This is what love does, it empowers Christians to tell the story of God's love in Christ, thereby opening the door of the new world for anyone to enter in. This is God's plan for all men, to come to Christ, to be part of this world. So then anyone who believes in Christ is recreated to be a new man living in God's new world.

### **11 Corinthians 6:1-18. No Obstacle Must Be Allowed To Hinder Anyone From Following Christ.**

Those of us who are Christians and servants of Jesus must never allow any obstacle from hindering people from coming to God.

We have to see who we really are, we are fellow workers with God, we must pay any price to make the way clear for people to be reconciled with God.

The Christian must be prepared love the lost, at all times we must learn to appropriate the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives, starting by operating from God's love which is the principle of all the other fruit.

The time to live out a holy life and thereby invite others to Christ is always "now." We have to use the weapons of righteousness that means the right things at the right time, and God will teach us and help us. Like Paul who stood for the truth, there were

those who did not like him, but he went on to find ways to show them his love, so we too must learn how to operate from God's love. This is what holy living is all about.

As we see we will be tempted to defend ourselves when we are wrongly accused, but our love is to be actualized and we must live in love. We cannot take advice from the message sent out by the world that tries to squeeze us into its world, we have to choose to do Jesus things, thereby being changed in Christlikeness.

Jesus lives in us, He talks and acts through us, we listen to Him, and obey Him at all times, and the more we listen Him the more like Him we are becoming. God is not calling us to exclude ourselves from being in the market place, but taking Him with us wherever we go, and allowing His values to penetrate the world through us. We are His light to bring wisdom and understanding to the world and we are His salt, to preserve the qualities of love, respect and dignity for all His creation. (14-18).

### **7:1-16. All God's Promises To Us Are Actualized By Grace Through Faith In Jesus Christ.**

Nothing contaminates a person like a sinful heart, which is not subject to God's will and places self on the throne of our life. It contaminates both his spirit and his body because normal bodily appetites are brought under its influence and power, the person actually becomes a slave to his own body.

There is a cleansing, a deliverance that God offers to all believers,(notice that Paul is writing to the Christians,) those whom he called "carnal": there is a work of grace in which all Christians believers are sanctified in Christ, but here God invites all Christians to be cleansed from all sin, all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit, enabling them to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

We cannot act spiritually without grace and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in fact we cannot actually cleanse ourselves in this manner, it is really God's Spirit who cleanses us from all sin and keeps us clean, but this is a faith experience. We have to bring ourselves by faith and give ourselves completely into His hands and ask Him to cleanse us from all sin, and He promises to do..

In verse 9 Paul speaks of being so sorry for our sinful condition that we repent of it, that means that we are so sorry that we separate ourselves by faith from everything that is sin especially this sin of unbelief. This is what he calls godly sorrow, in other words we look at every form of sin as God sees it, it has to be expelled completely and the life is to be filled with the love, light and power of God's Spirit. This is an experience with no regrets, it brings joy. Sanctified people operating from God's love basis show a respect and love for others, they go out of their way to build redemptive relationships with others, there is something refreshing about a fellowship that chooses to share Jesus qualities in all their relationships. (1-16)

### **8:1-24. When We Give Ourselves For The Lord To Be First, We Soon Desire To Bless Others Through Our Giving.**

This is a principle that flows from God's heart to our hearts and into the lives of others. Followers of Christ become aware of the needs of others and desire to give to them to help them along their journey. It is the Spirit of Christ.

Christ gives us everything we need freely for us to complete the journey to the new world, and as we share the journey with them, we find it within ourselves to want to make their load lighter as well. In fact Paul felt that there should be equality in giving, by this he meant that here must be equality in relieving the needs of the poor, the burden must be equally shared by the whole body, and then each one giving as he is led by God. If the church followed this principle very few poor would be burdened (13,14). This giving to help the poor along the way, is not to be substituted for the gift of giving which defines the ministry of giving. God gives some the gift to make money so that they can give generously, we need these ministries of giving working in the church, for it is the way Jesus uses the gifted ministries to extend His Kingdom through His Body.

Christians who love Jesus, and walk with Him on the 'Highway of Holiness' soon finds themselves reaching out to help their brothers on the same highway, for we are all heading to the same destination. (1-24).

### **9:1-15. Giving Is A Principle To Be Applied To Both Rich And Poor, For It Is A Christian Way Of Thanking God For Giving The Lord Jesus Christ.**

It is so easy to think that only the so called rich must give to the poor, but God's principle is that every Christian must find a way of giving to God, thereby saying thank you to Him for sending Jesus; God is not saying that Christians must give to get multiplied returns from God, that is a wrong motive. A Christian must give because he is already on the receiving end of God's blessings. When a Christian gives it is a way of sharing what God has already given to him. Paul goes so far as to show that the law of harvest already applies to all of us, because it is God who invented it, and put it into operation. If you sow sparingly you reap sparingly, and if you sow generously you reap generously, it is a law that God has made to operate that way. He is not saying, give a lot and expect a lot in return, for God chooses the way to bless, we give because we are so blessed to give, and we are already blessed by God, and that is why we are blessed.

It is a way to choose to live, "I am going to share what God gives to me," and may testify that it seems as if God gives them more so that they can give more. As we give away love we get love in return, and we give away peace, joy, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and self control, we grow in them and we get others giving back to us. Even when giving money, we don't necessarily get more money in return, but our circle of fellowship grows, and our influence grows, and we witness Christ more at work in and through us, our ministry grows, some of us, after fifty years of giving are not rich in money, but we cannot count all the blessing of God through over giving. The older we get the more we are thankful for all his blessings, but most of all for giving us his inestimable gift of Jesus, whom we are loving more and more. What a privilege is ours to give ourselves first to God and then everything else we have, so that He can continue His ministry through us.

He is not here talking about giving to our organization to make it prosperous, our giving to a church project that is an end to itself, but giving so that other people on the journey with you will be as equally blessed by God as you are. If one were to take all the money given to build the universal church buildings that stand nearly empty today, and are filled with tourist attraction the amount to trillion of rand, and all money that has been given by Christians, if it was all sold and given to help the poor, we probably would not have any poor Christians left.

What about all the money given to thousands of church organizations in the name of Christ, that are totally unproductive in helping others, if it were given to the needy. Add to this the trillion and trillions of rand spent by so called Christian countries in wars, that have brought no peace, and added to the amount. So Christians be wide awake when giving, you must be able to see how it is being used by Christ for the purpose of helping His people along the journey of holy living reaching toward the new world.

### **10:1-18. Everything We Say And Do Has To Be Measured With The Truth That The Holy Spirit Gives To The Church.**

As I read these next four chapters, I think that they were the letters that Paul had written previously and which got lost somewhere. The contents would fit before this letter, and thinking this does no injustice to the interpretation of the scriptures, for we do not change the message in anyway, but there is a message here from a truly holy man, to a group of people unwilling to be delivered from the sin principle controlling their lives.

Paul recognizes the real problem in this church, the power structure is under the control of satan, and he knows exactly how to deal with this problem and he now meets it head-on. He has given those men every opportunity to repent and to be cleansed from this sin controlling principle in them, now he takes the whip, just as Jesus did in the Temple, showing that Holiness is tough on sin.

He now draws the Sword of Truth, and was going to strike deep into the real problem facing them. He was also going to draw on God's mighty power, the Holy Spirit to convict them and to bring the fear of God's judgment upon all sinners, and he was in the Wisdom and Knowledge of God's Truth going to make even their rebellious thoughts to be subject to Christ's truths, and justice would come. Paul is determined to build up Christ's church in Truth and Holiness. He will not resort to normal weapons of argument and cleverness, but turn them over to God and the results will be there for all to see. God is going to face them with truths, revealing constantly and continually their errors and because they do belong to Christ, He is going to overcome all their resistance, because He understands their bondage. Paul is going to go on with his journey, speaking truths, loving all people including them,

and everyone is going to see who is being commended by God, for be sure the devil will soon reveal himself and everyone will see where the real problem is, Paul believes in the faithfulness of God's grace to give them time, and the faithfulness of God's Truth to get through to them. Paul acknowledges that he can only point out the way, but he cannot force people to walk it.

They were opposing the message of holiness, and were pointing to all the good things they were doing, trying to substitute those for going onto perfection. They were measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves. This is so true of a church that sets its own theology. They were pointing to all the externals, the prophecies, the tongues, the so called miracles, those who were rich as if riches are measurements for blessing. But Paul cuts deep into the real problem of sin controlling them. The divisions, the jealousy, the position seeking, the importance on superiority in performing miracles, signs and wonders, the "super apostle" complex. But they were stealing glory that belonged to God.

### **11:1-33. The Goal Of All Ministry Is To Present Christ With A Pure Church.**

These carnal Christians were allowing themselves to become stones of the devil, who was trying to destroy Paul and his ministry and also the church. Now they were saying that Paul was a coward and that he would not face them face to face, also that Paul know that he would lose in a power contest for they seemed to have become masters of producing signs that proved to the people that they were super apostles, they expected to be rewarded and said that Paul did not accept support because he knew he was inferior. They claimed to have a faith in Christ that performed miracles that Paul could not make happen. They made fun at Paul's appearance and also his presentation, it would seem that he was not a charismatic kind of personality; probably he was a very short man.

Also his thorn in the flesh might have been bad eyesight, so that he needed assistance of some kind. Also they referred that Paul boasted about his own achievements and could not live up to them. (10:7-8, 11:6).

Paul was convinced that they had even introduced another Gospel based on personal achievements and abilities of the apostle, the sign of a super apostle, was he had a super faith and was able to do great miracles and prophesying mysteries that need special interpretations.

Paul points to where his faith really is, certainly not in his own achievements of which he could boast in comparison to them. He lists the things that really happened to him and he could parade them around, but he chooses to show the part that Christ played in his life, and that is what he trusts, the faithfulness of God in all these situations, just as he is trusting God to act in their lives, which He will do. So in essence they are criticizing what Jesus was doing in and through Paul. This in itself was God using His truths to get through to them, and it was not over yet, God was working. (1-33).

### **12:1-21. God's Real Power Is Demonstrated In How God Prepares A Man For The New World.**

These carnal Christians were using visions and revelations to back up their proof of being superior Christians. They were intimating that they were superior to Paul, and that their prophecies should be believed. They were lifting up these experiences as if they were coming from superior anointing(s).

It is easy to claim a superior faith when one is well, over those who were suffering like Paul, who had asked three times for healing and had been denied by God. Some people have a very strong faith in their own faith, and override all things as evidences of this faith. They had become spiritual exhibitionists, glorifying themselves.

Paul had been transported by God to paradise where he heard and saw things that he refused to talk about, because he could not claim it was by his faith, if he still had a thorn in the flesh. All these things were done by God, and Paul had learned to give Him all the glory, and to accept His will in all things, and continue to trust in His worship and faithfulness, and God always did the best in all things. God takes the things even sent by satan and uses them to perform His will in our lives. (4-7).

In 11-21 Paul lists the things that should not be allowed in the fellowships, for they will hinder the flow of God's love, the wanting of the Spirit's power, and the Wisdom and true revelation of God's will for His people. They are contentious, usually born out of a power struggle; jealousy, which is born out of a desire to please and gratify the self first. Outbursts of wrath because one is not getting his own way. Selfish

ambition: a life style that uses any means to gain control of a situation. Backbiting with the view of making others to think less of the person being targeted. Whispering and gossiping to make others suspicious of another person's influence and power. Pride, and puffed up demanding recognition. Causing disorder, so that one can step in and act as if they are superior enough to be in charge.

Paul was willing to be humble and to be Gods' messenger, for it was Christ alone who was powerful enough to bring full salvation and healing. (7-20).

It would have been easy for Paul to pull rank and take charge at the church, and solve all the problems by excommunicating the willful sinners, and those who were deliberately out of destroy his reputation and his character. But he keeps himself in check and refuses to solve spiritual problems with worldly means. They did not need to be argued into believing in holiness, they needed to experience the cleansing from this wilfull and stubborn, sinful nature. Seeing holiness in action in Paul's life would there ever be any hope of them coming into this blessing. This was the real problem, and Paul had the only solution for sin, faith in the cleansing of the blood of Jesus. He says, "I want you," meaning I wont give up on you, I will use my love on you, in fact everything we do is for you, we want you to be free from sin and strong in the Lord, even when it looks like things are getting worse, I will not lose faith in Christ to reach you with His sanctifying truth. (1-21).

### **13:1-14. Everyone Of Us Has To Examine Himself To Test Where He Is In The Faith.**

The faith is not something we have decided on our own to be in; it came by grace from the heart of God who is love. He has planned that everyone (all of) us be in the faith. It is the truth that God so loved the world the He gave His only Son Jesus to save us, by His grace that enables us to respond in faith in Jesus as our saviour from all sin. It is the faith that follows Jesus from this planet now, into an eternity with God to a new world that He has prepared for us to live in. It is a faith that believes that we will be raised and glorified to be as Jesus is now. It is faith that believes that God through the atoning work of Jesus saves us now from all sin, keeps us saved, and will completely save us from all consequences of sin when Jesus returns to take us to our new home. It is the faith that we have that Jesus is alive and lives in us now,



imparting to us His life, His purify, His power and His light, restoring in us image of God in which we were first created, it is the faith that Jesus lives in us thereby making us the 'True Temple' of God so that we can be in constant worship of Him as our King and High Priest, and as Lord allowing Him to continue His ministry through us, and as King extending His Kingdom through us. It is all of these and so much more. It is the faith that keeps us on the highway of holiness following Him each step of the way as our forerunner, because we have the witness of the Holy Spirit in us, that our faith is real.

When we see Jesus at work in and through us we know that He lives in us, and is working through us. We know that only the Holy Spirit can make us Jesus people, and only He can make Jesus things happen through us, and we give him all the glory. We know what is waiting for us, for we already have Him in our hearts and minds.

It is exciting to live by grace through faith in Jesus and to know that everyday is one step nearer home. (1-14).