1 Corinthians

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<u>Key Word</u>: Sanctification

<u>Key Verse</u>: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you have been bought with a price. Therefore, honor God with your body" (1 Cor 6:19-20).

<u>Summary Statement</u>: Paul explains the *proper functioning of the church* in response to reports about the Corinthians' divisions, disorders, and doctrinal difficulties to assure that the church makes its *positional sanctification practical.*

<u>Application</u>: Does your church look "set apart" for God? Or is it plagued with divisions, disorders, and doctrinal difficulties that make it look the same as non-Christian groups?

1 Corinthians

Introduction

I. Title: The earliest title for 1 Corinthians is Πρὸς Κορινθίους ά (*First to the Corinthians*). The a, was added later to distinguish this epistle from Paul's second letter to the church.

II. Authorship

A. External Evidence: Even the most imaginative critics uphold Pauline authorship since the patristic evidence is so early.

1. The early church writers who advocated Paul as author include: Clement of Rome (AD 95; *To the Corinthians* 47), Polycarp (AD 105; *To the Philippians* 11), Irenaeus (AD 185; *Against Heresies* 4, 27, 45), and others, including the 2nd century Muratorian Fragment.

2. Even the radical German critic F. C. Baur and his Tübingen School considered 1 Corinthians as one of the "four undisputed Epistles."

B. Internal Evidence: The book itself argues even more strongly for Paul's authorship as it claims to be written by Paul (1:1).

III. Circumstances

A. Date: Paul makes two comments concerning the Corinthians' giving which indicate that 2 Corinthians was written less than a year after 1 Corinthians (2 Cor 8:10; 9:2). His mention of being about to leave Ephesus (1 Cor 16:5-8) indicates that 1 Corinthians was written in May AD 56. The letter of 2 Corinthians followed later that year in fall AD 56.

B. Origin/Recipients: Paul wrote Corinth from Ephesus across the Aegean Sea (see below).

C. Occasion: Paul's establishment of the church at Corinth on his second missionary journey took about eighteen months from AD March 51-September 52 (1 Cor 3:6, 10; 4:15; Acts 18:1-17). Nearly four years later while in Ephesus on his third missionary journey he received bad news about the church from two sources: (1) disturbing reports from the household of Chloe regarding divisions and disorders in the church (1:11), and (2) news of difficulties from the church itself via letter carried by three men (16:17). Therefore, Paul's letter is actually a response to these three issues, answering the problems of (1) divisions, (2) disorders and (3) difficulties raised in the church's questions.

IV. Characteristics

A. First Corinthians describes the most problematic church situation in the New Testament. It therefore contains a theology of how God responds graciously but firmly to a carnal church.

B. This letter provides more teaching on these topics than any other New Testament writing: church discipline, lawsuits among believers, marriage, Christian liberty, the role of women, the Lord's Supper, spiritual gifts, the nature of love, the gospel, and the resurrection of the body. Without 1 Corinthians the Church's understanding in each of these extremely vital areas would be seriously deficient.

C. This letter, though named 1 Corinthians, was not Paul's first letter to Corinth. He had already written a letter before this (1 Cor 5:9) which is now lost and therefore not part of Scripture.

Argument

The Book of 1 Corinthians records Paul's response to three concerns from two different sources. Each issue concerns the proper functioning of the church. Paul's first answer responds to a report from Chloe's household regarding divisions in the church that he severely rebukes (1 Cor 1–4). Next, he puts the Corinthian church to shame for various church disorders that he also may have learned from Chloe's household (1 Cor 5–6). The final and largest portion of the epistle answers the questions penned in a letter by the church at large on various difficulties they were experiencing doctrinally and practically (1 Cor 7–16). This church letter requested Paul's opinion on certain issues, each of which Paul answers by introducing with the words “now concerning” (7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 15:1; 16:1). His purpose in writing is to assure that the believers operate effectively for the Lord by making their positional sanctification practical (Lowery, *BKC*, 2:506).

Synthesis

Proper functioning of the church

1–4	**Divisions**
1:1-9	Salutation
1:10-17	Problem
1:18–4:21	Misunderstandings
1:18–2:16	Message
3	Messengers
4	Pride
5–6	**Disorders**
5	Incest
6:1-11	Lawsuits
6:12-20	Prostitution
7–16	**Doctrinal Difficulties**
7	Marriage
8:1–11:1	Liberty
8	Principle of love
9:1–10:13	Illustrations
9	Paul
10:1-13	Israel
10:14-30	Idol-feasts
10:31–11:1	Guiding principles
11:2-16	Head coverings
11:17-34	Lord's Supper
12–14	Spiritual Gifts
12:1-31a	Unity/diversity
12:31b–13:13	Love
14	Prophecy over tongues
15	Resurrection
15:1-34	Arguments
15:35-58	Rebuttals
16	Advancing the Gospel
16:1-4	Giving
16:5-24	Teamwork

Outline

Summary Statement for the Book
Paul explains the *proper functioning of the church* in response to reports about the Corinthians' divisions, disorders, and doctrinal difficulties to assure that the church makes its *positional sanctification practical.*

I. Chloe's report of divisions by exalting favorite teachers exhorts the church to mimic humble servants preaching Christ crucified (1 Cor 1–4).

A. Paul thanks God for the church as set apart for God to show that they will achieve ultimate sanctification and to begin his stern epistle on a positive note (1:1-9).

1. Salutation: The way Paul refers to the church in his opening statements is as *people set apart* for God's special purposes (1:1-3).

2. Thanksgiving: The reason Paul thanks God for the church is because God assures that *they will achieve ultimate sanctification* (1:4-9).

B. Problem: Paul rebukes church divisions of competing factions based on their favorite teachers—Paul, Apollos, Peter, and "Christ" (1:10-17).

1. Paul rebukes the church for rallying around favorite teachers: Paul, Apollos, Peter, and "Christ" (1:10-12).

2. Such divisions were contrary to what Paul had taught them (1:13-17).

C. Misunderstandings: The solution to their divisions is to humbly admit their misconceptions of the gospel message and messengers (1:18–4:21).

1. Message: The church shouldn't boast of the "wisdom" of competing teachers because the gospel is not human wisdom but Christ crucified (1:18–2:16).

a) The power of the gospel in Christ crucified—not in human wisdom—is seen in changed lives of the church and Paul (1:18–2:5).

(1) The power of the gospel is in a "foolish" thing–Christ's atoning death–rather than supposedly superior ideas of men (1:18-25).

(2) Two examples of how the gospel (not man's ideas) changes lives are the Corinthians and Paul (1:26–2:5).

(a) The Corinthians themselves had found forgiveness despite their lowly status to prevent their boasting before God (1:26-31).

(b) Paul's simple and non-eloquent message of forgiveness in the cross was the foundation of his preaching at Corinth (2:1-5).

b) The way the Corinthians could be united was to focus on God's wisdom shown in the gospel and given only to believers through the Spirit (2:6-16).

(1) The content of Paul and the apostles' message was the gospel—God's secret wisdom revealed to them but rejected by the world (2:6-10a).

(a) To counter the Corinthian objection that Christianity is irrational, Paul declares that only believers speak God's wisdom (2:6).

(b) God's wisdom is only understood by believers (2:7-10a).

(i) It is a <u>secret</u> or an unrevealed mystery to unbelievers (2:7a).

(ii) It was <u>hidden</u> from all until God revealed it to the apostles (2:7b).

(iii) It was <u>predestined</u> from eternity past that believers would have eternity future (2:7c).

(iv) It is <u>misunderstood</u> as seen in those who crucified Christ (2:8).

(v) It is <u>not even thought about</u> by unbelievers but only learned by believers through revelation by the all-knowing Spirit (2:9-10a).

(a) Those who crucified Christ represent us all who can't see, hear, or conceive of God's plan (2:9).

(b) That's why God had to reveal His wisdom to us through the ministry of the Spirit (2:10a).

(c) The Holy Spirit knows everything (2:10b).

(2) The reason only believers have God's wisdom is because they alone have the Spirit (2:11-16).

(a) No one knows what someone else is thinking (2:11).

(i) This is true of humans–only that person knows his thoughts (2:11a).

(ii) This is also true of God–only the Spirit knows God's thoughts (2:11b).

(b) Since no one knows what God is thinking unless God tells him, he has given us his Spirit to teach us spiritual truth (2:12-13).

(i) Believers have the Spirit in order to understand the salvation they have (2:12).

(ii) Believers don't proclaim godless intellectualism but rather the Spirit's teaching ministry in words of truth (2:13).

(c) There exist two categories of people: unbelievers who don't understand God's wisdom and Christians who do (2:14-16).

(i) The non-Christian thinks spiritual truth is foolish since he doesn't have the Spirit teaching him (2:14).

(ii) The Christian can make intelligent spiritual decisions since Christ instructs him (2:15-16).

(a) He can discern spiritual truth in every area of life (2:15a).

(b) He can make intelligent decisions apart from counsel of other humans (2:15b).

(c) He still can't instruct God but he can be taught by Christ (2:16).

(i) He still can't instruct God (2:16a).

(ii) He is instructed directly by Christ on God's view on life (2:16b).

2. Messengers: Church unity for the selfish Corinthians was by seeing God as the source of its blessings—not its leaders (1 Cor 3).

a) Problem: The Corinthian divisions showed them as carnal and selfish (3:1-4).

(1) The classification of believers in which Paul placed the Corinthians was carnal rather than spiritual (3:1).

(2) The evidence of Corinthian carnality was their selfish lifestyle (3:2-4).

(a) They couldn't understand doctrine beyond the basics like a newborn baby can't understand mature things (3:2-3a).

(b) They fought with one another based on personal rights (3:3b).

(c) They divided into personal-interest groups just like unbelievers (3:4).

b) Solution: The way to unity for the Corinthians was to see that God gave the church blessings, not man (3:5-23).

(1) Leaders–like us all–are only instruments of God accountable to him (3:5-15).

(a) God causes church growth, not leaders (3:5-9).

(b) God will reward each believer's service, including service by Paul and Apollos (3:10-15).

(i) Paul started the church while Apollos built on this foundation (3:10a).

(ii) Every believer's service will be rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ (3:10b-15).

(2) The One who deserves credit in Corinth is God, not any man (3:16-23).

(a) God indwelt the church and will judge individuals with death if necessary (3:16-17).

(b) God's true wisdom had to replace the members' human "wisdom" (3:18-20).

(c) God would eventually give the church every leader and everything in the world (3:21-23).

3. Pride: The Corinthians should treat Paul and the apostles biblically as faithful, humble servants with a fatherly concern–not pridefully by following certain leaders (1 Cor 4).

a) The church should treat Paul and the apostles as faithful servants accountable to Christ's judgment rather than human opinion (4:1-5).

(1) Apostles were *servants* of Christ (4:1a).

(2) Apostles were to be faithful *stewards* accountable to Christ (4:1b-5).

b) The church should treat Paul and the apostles according to biblical standards rather than pridefully comparing them (4:6-7).

(1) The church should not go beyond scriptural requirements for leadership selection (4:6a).

(2) Being biblical will protect the church from pride shown in comparing leaders (4:6b-7).

c) The church should treat Paul and the apostles as humble men who suffered to lead the church (4:8-13).

(1) The church exalted itself for its wealth (4:8).

(2) Paul humbled himself with the apostles who suffered for Christ (4:9-13).

d) The church should treat Paul as a mature spiritual father who cared enough for them to discipline them (4:14-21).

(1) Paul modeled maturity by admonishing them like a father (4:14-15).

(a) He wrote them to warn them towards repentance rather than shame them so that they would lose face (4:14).

(b) His concern as their spiritual father went far beyond one who merely followed up on his church planting efforts (4:15).

(2) Paul modeled maturity by setting an example of godliness for them (4:16-17).

(a) He exhorted them to follow his example (4:16).

(b) He sent Timothy to remind them of his godly lifestyle (4:17).

(3) Paul modeled maturity by being willing to discipline their unrepentant believers (4:18-21).

(a) Some Corinthians thought Paul only threatened without action (4:18).

(b) Paul promised to visit Corinth to discern if his opponents were genuinely spiritual or only talked that way (4:19-20).

(c) How they responded to Timothy would decide if Paul's visit would be to discipline the unrepentant or reaffirm the repentant (4:21).

II. Chloe's report of disorders in immorality and lawsuits exhorts the church that God gave them wisdom to exercise church discipline (1 Cor 5–6).

A. They needed to discipline an openly immoral man because his immorality had polluted the entire body so the church was proud of its "liberality" (1 Cor 5).

1. The correct response to an unrepentant, immoral man at Corinth was to humbly expel him (5:1-2).

a) The church knew of a member who had illegally and incestuously married his step-mother (5:1; "to have a woman" means to marry her in Matt. 14:4).

b) Paul demanded them to change their prideful attitude by expelling him with grief and humility (5:2).

2. The reasons the Corinthians had to discipline the sinning man were for both his and the church's benefit (5:3-8).

a) Discipline hands a believer over to Satan's dominion to end his hypocrisy in the church (5:3-5).

b) Discipline maintains the purity of the body (5:6-8).

3. The condition on discipline depends on whether or not immoral people are believers (5:9-13).

a) Corinthians could associate with immoral unbelievers (5:9-10).

b) But they couldn't associate with a Christian in habitual immorality (5:11-12).

c) These hypocritical Christians must be removed (5:13).

B. The reasons disputes between believers must be solved by Christians are because they are more competent and will cause less shame to the body (6:1-11).

1. The ones to solve disputes between believers must be Christians (6:1).

a) Paul acknowledges that disputes between Christians do occur (6:1a).

b) Arguments between Christians should not be brought to non-Christians (6:1b).

2. The reasons believers' disputes must be solved by Christians are because of the church's competency and witness (6:2-11).

a) Believers are more <u>competent</u> than unbelievers to solve Christian disputes (6:2-6, 9-11).

(1) Believers will judge even more difficult cases in the future (6:2-3).

(a) We will judge the world in the millennium, so we ought to be able to judge a single church now (6:2).

(b) We will judge angels in the future, so we ought to be able to judge people now (6:3).

(2) Even inexperienced Christians are better judges than non-Christians (6:4-6).

(a) Even non-leadership caliber members judge better than unbelievers (6:4).

(b) Even not-so-wise Christians judge better than unbelievers (6:5-6).

(3) Salvation and sanctification are more important in making judgments than legal expertise (6:9-11).

(a) Unsaved judges are easily led to debauched lives (6:9-10).

(b) In contrast, the church is saved and sanctified–and thus more able to discern between believers (6:11).

b) It's better to suffer a personal loss than for the whole church to lose its witness (6:7-8).

(1) It is better that one Christian *be wronged* than the church be wronged from litigating believers (6:7).

(2) It is better to lose money than to lose ministry opportunities by cheating other Christians (6:8).

C. The reasons the Corinthian believers should avoid sexual immorality with prostitutes were because it harmed their relationship with God, others, and themselves (6:12-20).

1. Immorality harms our relationship with God, who gives the body value (6:12-14, 17, 20).

a) Immorality enslaves us rather than freeing us for God's use (6:12).

b) Immorality misuses our bodies dedicated for God's use now (6:13).

c) Immorality misuses our bodies dedicated for God's use later [after resurrection] (6:14).

d) Immorality destroys our unity with Christ (6:17).

e) Immorality dishonors God's dwelling since the Spirit indwells us (6:19-20).

2. Immorality harms our relationship with others (6:15-16).

a) Immorality misuses our role in the church (6:15).

b) Immorality gives away the oneness meant for marriage (6:16).

3. Immorality harms our relationship with ourselves (6:18).

III. Paul's answers to the church's doctrinal questions enable them to make their sanctification practical (1 Cor 7–16).

A. Paul answers questions about marriage by advocating singleness but allowing marriage and encouraging married people to remain married (1 Cor 7).

1. The Corinthians should be content with the marital, ethnic, and socio-economic state God placed them since each situation has its advantages (7:1-24).

a) The purpose those married should stay married is so their sexual needs can be legitimately met (7:1-7).

(1) Singleness is better for ministry than marriage (7:1).

(2) Marriage has the benefit of pleasing one's partner sexually (7:2-6).

(a) Marriage is God's solution to immorality (7:2).

(b) Husbands and wives have both sexual rights and duties towards one another (7:3-6).

(i) Each spouse is obligated to meet the other's sexual needs (7:3).

(ii) Each spouse has a right over the other spouse's body (7:4).

(iii) Marital abstinence should only be mutual, temporary, and for prayer (7:5).

(iv) Marital abstinence is not commanded but only allowed (7:6).

(3) Life is simpler when single but singleness and marriage are both God's gifts (7:7).

b) A concession is allowed for widowers and widows to remarry if they have unmet sexual needs (7:8-9).

(1) Widowers and widows should stay single like Paul (7:8).

(2) But if they have an uncontrolled sexual desire, they should get married (7:9).

c) The purpose divorcees should remain unmarried is to enable reconciliation with their spouse (7:10-11).

(1) God prohibits divorce (7:10).

(2) If divorce does occur, God says to remain unmarried for the possibility of reconciliation (7:11).

d) The purpose those in mixed marriages should stay married is to be a godly influence on the family (7:12-16).

(1) Believing spouses should not divorce their unbelieving spouses (7:12-13).

(2) A believer can be a godly influence on the unbelieving spouse and children (7:14).

(3) If the unbeliever insists on divorce, the believer has no choice but to let him or her leave since this is an individual choice (7:15-16).

e) Paul's main idea is that <u>everyone</u> should stay in their present marital, physical, and socio-economic state (7:17-24).

(1) Jews and Gentiles shouldn't try to look like the other group <u>physically</u> (7:17-19).

(2) Slaves should willingly stay in their low <u>socio-economic position</u> but can gain their freedom if allowed (7:20-23).

(3) Everyone should be content with the marital, physical, and socio-economic state God placed them (7:24).

2. The reason Paul advocated singleness during the Corinthians' trials was because it has many advantages (7:25-40).

a) The reason Paul preferred the Corinthians to remain single in their perilous times was because singleness has many advantages (7:25-35).

(1) The preference of Paul was for singles not to marry (7:25-28a).

(a) Paul had no direct command from Christ for never-married females at Corinth so he would state his own opinion (7:25).

(b) Paul believed the Corinthian crisis made it best for people to stay in their present marital state (7:26-27).

(i) Marital decisions should be put on hold (7:26).

(ii) Those married shouldn't seek a divorce (7:27a).

(iii) Singles shouldn't seek a spouse (7:27b).

(c) Even still, marriage is not prohibited (7:28).

(2) The reason singleness is more desirable than marriage is because it has key advantages (7:28b-35).

(a) <u>Trials</u>: Singles don't have some troubles that marrieds do (7:28b).

(b) <u>Time</u>: Singles have more time to invest in eternal matters (7:29-31).

(i) Times of persecution remind us that time to do God's work is short for us all as Christ can come at any moment (7:29a).

(ii) Believers shouldn't be preoccupied with worldly things (7:29b-31a).

(a) Married people shouldn't become so preoccupied with their families that they can't effectively serve Christ (7:29b).

(b) Those mourning shouldn't let it interfere with serving Christ (7:30a).

(c) Those rejoicing shouldn't let it interfere with serving Christ (7:30b).

(d) Those shopping shouldn't let it interfere with serving Christ (7:31a).

(iii) The reason we shouldn't be preoccupied with worldly things is because they don't last (7:31b).

(c) Distractions: Singles can serve God in ways that married people can't (7:32-35).

b) The exceptions to remaining single apply both to those never married and to widows (7:36-40).

(1) A marriage concession is allowed for an unmarried man with sexual temptation towards his fiancée who's getting too old (7:36-38).

(a) A man tempted towards sexual sin with his fiancée should marry her (7:36).

(b) A man convinced he shouldn't marry his fiancée shouldn't marry her (7:37).

(c) It's better not to marry in perilous times but it's not prohibited (7:38).

(2) A remarriage concession is allowed for one whose spouse has died but Paul does not prefer this (7:39-40).

(a) A woman's marriage bond is broken by her husband's death (7:39a).

(b) Remarriage to a believer is allowed only after the death of a former spouse (7:39b).

(c) Widows are generally happier if they don't remarry (7:40).

B. Avoid meat sacrificed to idols out of love for a believer with a sensitive conscience and avoid pagan idol feasts to glorify God (8:1–11:1).

1. Avoid food sacrificed to idols (and other amoral areas) out of love for a believer with a more sensitive conscience (1 Cor 8).

a) The guiding principle in the idol food debate is that love is more important than knowledge (8:1-3).

(a) Love is more important than knowledge about eating food sacrificed to idols (8:1).

(b) God accepts those who love more than those who think they know a lot (8:2-3).

(i) Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn't really know very much (8:2).

(ii) But God accepts the person who loves him (8:3).

b) Some believers defile their conscience if they eat idol foods because they do not realize that there really are no gods behind idols (8:4-8).

(1) Since there is but one God, there really are no gods to which people can offer food (8:4-6).

(2) Eating idol food has no spiritual effect, but some have a weak conscience here due to their lack of knowledge (8:7-8).

c) Love over idols means we should never eat idol meat in a pagan temple if it hurts a weaker brother's conscience to sin against Christ (8:9-13).

(1) Never exercise your freedom if it hurts a weaker believer (8:9).

(2) The results of insisting on the right to eat in an idol's temple are terrible (8:10-12).

(a) This strong brother will likely cause his more sensitive brother to sin by also eating in an idol's temple (8:10).

(b) The weak brother could even give up his faith (8:11).

(c) The strong brother sins against his brother and against Christ (8:12).

(3) Knowing that Paul's eating habits can cause weaker brothers to sin made him even willing to be a vegetarian (8:13).

2. Paul relinquished his rights as an apostle but Israel misused of its privileges as examples of Christian liberty and God's judgment for selfishness (9:1–10:13).

a) The reason Paul willingly gave up his rights was to win others to Christ (1 Cor 9).

(1) Paul proved his right to financial support from those to whom he ministered to show he did have rights (9:1-14).

(a) Paul was an apostle who had many rights, including the right of financial support (9:1-6).

(i) Paul was free in Christ not to be bound by anyone else's conscience (9:1a).

(ii) Paul fulfilled key requisites to be an apostle by personally seeing Jesus Christ and by planting the church at Corinth (9:1b-2).

(iii) Paul lists some rights he and Barnabas had as apostles (9:3-6).

(a) They had the *right to be paid* with food and drink for their teaching ministry (9:3-4).

(b) The *right of marriage* was claimed by Peter and the half-brothers of Jesus (9:5).

(c) The *right not to need to work for a living* shouldn't be imposed on Paul as other Christian teachers were paid (9:6).

(b) Financial support is customary for all "secular" workers (9:7).

(c) Financial support is scriptural for both oxen and people (9:8-11).

(d) Financial support is claimed by fellow teachers but not by Paul and Barnabas so as not to hinder the gospel (9:12).

(e) Financial support is the universal pattern for religious workers—Jewish and pagan—so why not Christian workers too (9:13)?

(f) Jesus ordained financial support for those who serve him (9:14).

(2) The reason Paul relinquished his rights was to have the reward of preaching the gospel without charge (9:15-18).

(a) Paul never clung to any apostolic right (9:15).

(b) The reason Paul relinquished his rights was to have the reward of preaching the gospel without charge (9:16-18).

(3) The guiding principle of Paul was to give up every right to win people to Christ (9:19-27).

(a) Paul gave up different rights to win various people to Christ (9:19-23).

(i) He *accepted voluntary slavery* to everyone else's conscience so none of them would be offended (9:19).

(ii) To evangelize Jews, he followed Mosaic law (9:20; circumcision [Acts 16:3], vows [Acts 18:18) and temple offerings [Acts 21:20-26]).

(iii) To evangelize Gentiles, Paul accepted Gentile ways (9:21; perhaps different foods as in Gal. 2:11-21).

(iv) To those with weak consciences, Paul did nothing to offend them (9:22a).

(v) Paul's motive to give up every known right was to avoid a stumbling block for some to believe and Paul to be blessed (9:22b-23).

(b) We must also give up any right that hinders winning people to Christ like a runner's or boxer's self-denial to win a temporal wreath (9:24-27).

b) The Corinthians can avoid judgment like Israel for its evil practices by humbly accepting God's warnings and help when tempted (10:1-13).

(1) God's judgment fell upon nearly all the Israelites who had received God's blessings (10:1-5).

(a) ***All*** Israelites with Moses in the desert had the same blessings (10:1-4).

(i) ***All*** Israel was delivered from the sun's heat and from drowning in the Red Sea due to being with Moses (10:1-2).

(a) ***All*** had guidance by God through the cloud each day (10:1a).

(b) ***All*** were saved from the Egyptians at the Red Sea (10:1b).

(c) ***All*** delivered by cloud or sea identified with Moses (10:2).

(ii) ***All*** Israel received nourishment in the desert from Christ (10:3-4).

(a) ***All*** ate the manna miraculously provided from the sky (10:3).

(b) ***All*** drank miraculous water from a rock through Christ (10:4).

(b) Despite having God's blessings, the Israelites still indulged in pagan practices, earned his displeasure, and died in the desert (10:5).

(2) We can escape the same judgment Israel had for evil practices if we humbly accept God's warnings and help when tempted (10:6-13).

(a) One purpose God judged the Israelites for their evil practices was to warn us of his judgment for similar practices (10:6-10).

(i) God judged ***idolatry*** as an example to us (10:6-7).

(ii) God judged ***sexual immorality*** as an example to us (10:8).

(iii) God judged ***testing God*** as an example to us (10:9).

(iv) God judged ***grumbling*** as an example to us (10:10).

(v) Israel's judgments for these sins warn us of like judgments (10:11).

(b) The way to escape God's judgment for idolatry is to humbly accept God's help when tempted (10:12-13).

(i) Judgment from pride should teach us to be humble (10:12).

(ii) God never allows us to be tempted without an escape route (10:13).

3. Eating idol-meats is consistent with Christian liberty if it edifies others but inconsistent if it is part of a pagan idol feast (10:14-30).

a) The reason the Corinthians should avoid an idol feast is because it is demonic just as the Lord's supper is godly (10:14-22).

(1) Flee from idolatry (10:14).

(2) The Lord's supper is a corporate communion with Christ (10:15-17).

(a) The communion cup signifies forgiveness in Christ's blood (10:15-16a).

(b) The communion bread signifies unity with others partaking (10:16b-17).

(3) Never eat at a pagan idol feast as it is a corporate communion with demons just as OT sacrifices were a corporate communion with God (10:18-22).

(a) Old Testament saints worshipped God when they sacrificed (10:18).

(b) Pagan idols are harmless in and of themselves but do not take part in idol feasts as such ceremonies worship demons (10:19-20).

(c) We can't worship both God and demons without tempting him to judge us (10:21-22).

b) The exception to the church's freedom to eat all foods is if it hinders the good of others (10:23-30).

(1) The general principle for idol foods is freedom to eat but only if it doesn't hurt others (10:23-24).

(2) Believers can eat all food since God created it all (10:25-26).

(3) But believers shouldn't eat food even privately if it violates another's conscience (10:27-30).

4. Paul's guiding principle on Christian liberty is to do everything to glorify God by not pleasing self at the expense of others (10:31–11:1).

C. Wives at Corinth must cover their heads in public prayer or prophecy as a cultural way to show their submission to their husbands in a culture that blurred sex roles (11:2-16).

1. Wives and husbands at Corinth must follow God's authority structure and act in worship in a way that was not <u>shameful</u> in their culture (11:2-6).

a) Paul commended the Corinthians for holding to many good traditions to start his following rebuke on a positive note (11:2).

b) God's authority structure is submission from wives to husbands to Christ to God (11:3).

c) Men who pray or declare revelation publicly with a head covering <u>shame</u> Christ as their head (11:4).

d) Wives at Corinth must cover their heads in public prayer or prophecy to show submission to their husbands since not to do so was <u>shameful</u> in Corinth (11:5-6).

(1) Women who pray or declare revelation publicly without a head covering cause shame to their husbands as their head (11:5a).

(2) Women not wearing a head covering in such situations is as shameful as having short hair or being bald in that society (11:5b-6).

2. Corinthian wives must show submission to their husbands with a head covering during public prayer or prophecy to show a husband's authority since creation (11:7-12).

   a) Men should pray with uncovered head because man was first to be made in God's image—not woman (11:7).

   b) Corinthian women should pray with a head covering because wives have always been led by their husbands (11:8-10).

      (1) Woman was created from man—not vice versa (11:8).

      (2) Woman was created to be man's helper—not vice versa (11:9).

      (3) Women's submission reminds angels that they too function under authority (11:10a).

      (4) Women praying with a head covering at Corinth show they were under their husband's authority (11:10b).

   c) Men and women have been dependent on each other since creation but God is life's ultimate source (11:11-12).

      (1) Christian men and women are dependent on each other (11:11).

      (2) Men and women are actually the source of each other (11:12a-b).

         (a) Eve was created from Adam (11:12a).

         (b) All subsequent men came from their mothers (11:12b).

      (3) Ultimately God is the source of life (11:12c).

3. Corinthian wives should wear a head covering during public prayer or prophecy to show proper sex distinctions in Corinth where they were blurred (11:13-16).

   a) Society saw a female praying with her head uncovered as improper (11:13).

   b) Nature teaches that men should have short hair but women long hair, which can serve as her covering (11:14-15).

      (1) The timeless, transcultural order understood by all is that it is shameful for men to have long hair (11:14).

      (2) The timeless, transcultural order understood by all is that it is appropriate for women to have long hair as her head covering (11:15).

         (a) Women take pride in their long hair (11:15a).

         (b) Women's long hair serves as their head covering (11:15b).

   c) Churches followed the cultural norms so as not to be a stumbling block (11:16).

D. The Corinthians can celebrate the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner instead of selfishly when they look outward, back, forward, and inward towards oneself (11:17-34).

1. The way to celebrate the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner is to look outward (horizontal aspect) for others in the body (11:17-22).

2. The way to celebrate the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner is to look back (vertical aspect) at Christ's death for you (11:23-25).

3. The way to celebrate the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner is to look forward by proclaiming Christ's second coming to enact the New Covenant (11:26).

4. The way to celebrate the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner is to look inward in self-examination or suffer God's judgment in sickness or even in death (11:27-34).

E. Spiritual gifts should benefit the entire body in orderly worship and selfless love rather than selfish pride (1 Cor 12–14).

1. The church is spiritually gifted with unity and diversity like a human body for every member to play an important part and benefit the entire church (12:1-31a).

a) The importance of the Corinthian's diverse spiritual gifts was seen in their praise of the united but triune God (12:1-6).

(1) The understanding of spiritual gifts begins with seeing Christ as God (12:1-3).

(a) Paul didn't want the Corinthians to show ignorance of their God-given abilities [by praising themselves] (12:1).

(b) Whereas idols can say nothing, Corinthian Christians with spiritual gifts praise Christ as God (12:2-3).

(i) They used to follow idols that couldn't speak at all (12:2).

(ii) Now they follow the Holy Spirit who affirms the deity of Christ (12:3).

(2) The diversity of the spiritual gifts is united in the triune God (12:4-6).

(a) God the Spirit gives various types of spiritual gifts (12:4).

(b) God the Son appoints various places the spiritual gifts are used (12:5).

(c) God the Father gives the power to use the spiritual gifts (12:6).

b) One evidence of the Spirit's work in the life of each Christian is that person's spiritual gifting (12:7-11).

(1) The purpose of spiritual gifts is to benefit the body of Christ (12:7).

(a) An evidence of the Spirit in a believer's life is a spiritual gift (12:7a).

(b) The purpose of a spiritual gift is to benefit the body of Christ (12:7b).

(2) The source of the various gifts is the Holy Spirit (12:8-11a).

(a) The gift of message of wisdom comes from the Spirit (12:8a).

(b) The gift of message of knowledge comes from the Spirit (12:8b).

(c) The gift of faith comes from the Spirit (12:9a).

(d) The gifts of healing come from the Spirit (12:9b).

(e) The gift of miracles comes from the Spirit (12:10a).

(f) The gift of prophecy comes from the Spirit (12:10b).

(g) The gift of distinguishing of spirits comes from the Spirit (12:10c).

(h) The gift of tongues comes from the Spirit (12:10d).

(i) The gift of interpretation of tongues comes from the Spirit (12:10e).

(3) The one who decides the spiritual gift each believer has is the Spirit (12:11).

(a) Each believer has received a spiritual gift from the Spirit (12:11a).

(b) The Spirit decides which spiritual gift each believer receives (12:11b).

c) The reason "behind-the-scenes" and "up-front" believers need each other is because both are needed for a healthy functioning church (12:12-31a).

(1) The different parts of the human body illustrate the diversity of gifts within the universal Church (12:12-13).

(a) A single human body has many varied parts (12:12a).

(b) The universal Church is also varied but still baptized with one Spirit into one body (12:12b-13).

(2) The "behind-the-scenes" believers shouldn't feel unneeded because without them the church couldn't function as a diversified body (12:14-20).

(a) The church has many people with different gifts (12:14).

(b) Believers with less honored gifts shouldn't feel unneeded (12:15-16).

(c) Diversity in the church makes it more effective (12:17-20).

(3) The "up-front" believers shouldn't feel proud because they need "behind-the-scenes" believers for a caring church (12:21-26).

(a) Believers in more honored positions shouldn't pridefully say they don't need those with less honored roles (12:21).

(b) The reason "up-front" believers should shun pride is because we especially honor "behind-the-scenes" believers (12:22-24a).

(i) Weaker gifts are indispensable (12:22).

(ii) Less honorable gifts are honored (12:23a).

(iii) Gifts never to be seen are guarded with modesty (12:23b).

(iv) Yet the "up-front" believers need less acknowledgment (12:24a).

(c) The result of God giving different gifts and greater honor to "behind-the-scenes" believers is a caring church (12:24b-26).

(i) God has given different gifts and greater honor to "behind-the-scenes" believers (12:24b).

(ii) God's diversity of gifting and greater honor to serving gifts results in unity and mutual care in both suffering and honor (12:25-26).

(a) God's diversity of gifting and greater honor to serving gifts results in unity and mutual care (12:25).

(b) Suffering is shared (12:26a).

(c) Honor is shared (12:26b).

(4) The reason all believers need each other is because none of them individually can make a diversified church (12:27-31a).

(a) The church is composed of different members (12:27).

(b) The hierarchy of members shows that they all are not supposed to have the same gifts (12:28-30).

(c) Yet the gifts that edify the most members should be most emphasized (12:31a).

2. Love is superior to and essential for beneficial use of gifts as love is superior to gifts, benefits others, and outlasts gifts so believers should act selflessly (12:31b–13:13).

a) The best way to use spiritual gifts is the loving way as opposed to emphasizing the gifts which edify the most members (12:31b).

b) One reason love is indispensable for beneficial use of gifts is because <u>love is superior to gifts</u> in what it produces (13:1-3).

(1) A <u>sign gift</u> without love like *tongues* used to the full in every human and angelic language is worthless and *produces nothing* (13:1).

(2) One who uses any gift to its ultimate degree without love *is nothing* (13:2).

(a) A <u>speaking gift</u> like *prophecy* without love is worthless to edify (13:2a).

(b) *Wisdom* of all hidden doctrines without love is worthless to edify (13:2b).

(c) *Knowledge* of all facts without love is worthless to edify (13:2c).

(d) *Faith* that moves mountains without love is worthless to edify (13:2d).

(3) A serving gift like *giving* to the ultimate degree without love *gains nothing* (13:3).

(a) Giving all my assets to the poor without love gains nothing for me (13:3a).

(b) Giving my life itself in martyrdom by burning as the most horrible death possible without love gains nothing for me (13:3b).

c) Another reason love is indispensable in using gifts is because love benefits others in contrast to the Corinthian misuse of gifts for self-edification (13:4-7).

(1) Love ***benefits*** others passively and actively (13:4a-b).

(a) Love is passively patient by not reacting to others (13:4a; 6:8; 11:21-22).

(b) Love is actively kind by serving those who do harm (13:4b; 10:33).

(2) Love ***doesn't hurt*** others in seven negative ways (13:4c-5).

(a) Love isn't inwardly *jealous* of others' gifts (13:4c; 3:3-4; 12:14-17).

(b) Love doesn't outwardly *boast* of its own gifts (13:4d; 12:21).

(c) Love isn't inwardly *prideful* (13:4e; e.g., of its clique [4:6, 18], tolerance [5:2), and knowledge [8:1]).

(d) Love doesn't behave *improperly* (13:5a; e.g., in engagement [7:36], sex roles [11:17-22], and worship [11:26-33]).

(e) Love isn't *selfish* (13:5b; e.g., in financial [6:7] and debatable matters [10:24]).

(f) Love isn't *irritable* (13:5c; e.g., as in initiating lawsuits [6:1]).

(g) Love isn't *unforgiving* (13:5d; e.g., in offenses [6:8], in withholding marital sex [7:5], and by insisting on rights [8:11]).

(3) Love ***gets happy about the right things*** (13:6).

(a) Love doesn't *rejoice in wickedness* (13:6a; e.g., as in delight over incest [5:2]).

(b) Love does rejoice with the truth (13:6b).

(4) Love ***doesn't give up*** on others (13:7).

(a) Love *protects* the shortcomings of others (13:7a; e.g., as in those who misuse their gifts [12:14-26]).

(b) Love *believes the best* of others (13:7b).

(c) Love *hopes* in God (13:7c; e.g., that church problems will be resolved).

(d) Love *perseveres* (13:7d; e.g., when personally wronged by courageously waiting for marriage [7:9], food [11:21], or a chance to speak [14:27]).

d) Another reason love is indispensable for beneficial use of gifts is because love outlasts gifts (13:8-13).

(1) Love is eternal and complete (13:8a).

(2) Gifts are temporary and partial (13:8b-12).

(a) Prophecy, tongues and knowledge are *temporary* (13:8b-d).

(b) Prophecy and knowledge are *partial* (13:9-12).

(i) Prophecy and knowledge will cease because they give only part of the whole truth of God before the church is complete (13:9-10).

(ii) Two illustrations show how prophecy and knowledge are partial (13:11-12).

(a) Gradual human maturity shows how these gifts lasted until the Church matured at the canon's completion (13:11).

(b) Bad mirror reflections show prophecy and knowledge as partial in contrast to full knowledge at Christ's return (13:12).

(3) The result of the superiority, benefits, and permanence of love is that love will not only outlast gifts but even faith and hope (13:13).

3. Orderly worship ranks prophecy over uninterpreted tongues and imposes speaking limitations on both (1 Cor 14).

a) We must emphasize prophecy over uninterpreted tongues because prophecy better edifies both believers and unbelievers with understanding (14:1-25).

(1) Public worship must prioritize love and the most critical gift of prophecy (14:1).

(2) The reason to emphasize prophecy over uninterpreted tongues is because prophecy edifies both believers and unbelievers (14:2-25).

(a) Prophecy is better than tongues by benefiting other believers while uninterpreted tongues only encourages the speaker (14:2-5).

(i) Prophecy is better than tongues because others understand it while only God understands tongues (14:2-3).

(ii) Prophecy is better than tongues because it edifies the church while tongues only edifies the speaker (14:4-5).

(b) Prophecy is better than tongues because uninterpreted tongues are incomprehensible (14:6-19).

(i) Tongues benefit no one unless they reveal God's will (14:6).

(ii) Like musical instruments lacking clear notes don't communicate, so tongues without interpretation doesn't communicate (14:7-9).

(iii) As the languages of tongues are clear only to those who understand them, so we must emphasize understanding in prophecy (14:10-12).

(iv) Prayer and singing with the mind is superior to activities not understood as comprehension edifies oneself and others (14:13-17).

(v) A little understandable prophecy is better than a lot of incomprehensible tongues (14:18-19).

(c) Prophecy is better than tongues because prophecy has a superior purpose, audience, and results (14:20-25).

(i) The church should act maturely rather than childishly in the use of their gifts (14:20).

(ii) Prophecy is better than tongues because of its superior purpose and audience (14:21-22).

(a) The purpose of uninterpreted tongues is to authenticate God's work for unbelievers (14:21-22a).

(b) The purpose of prophecy is to edify believers (14:22b).

(iii) Prophecy is better than tongues in its superior results (14:23-25).

(a) The result of uninterpreted tongues will be revolting for unbelievers in the assembly (14:23).

(b) The result of prophecy will be conviction, repentance, and worship for unbelievers in the assembly (14:24-25).

b) The way to achieve orderly worship is to impose speaking limitations (14:26-40).

(1) The way public speaking can edify the church is for speakers to be orderly by taking turns (14:26-35).

(a) The motive of all verbal messages in church services should be to edify the church (14:26).

(b) The way for tongues messages to be orderly and edify the church is by speaking in turn and with interpretation (14:27-28).

(c) The way for prophetic messages to be orderly and edify the church is by speaking in turn and with evaluation by other prophets (14:29-33a).

(d) The way for women's questions to be orderly and edify the church is by them asking their husbands these questions at home (14:33b-35).

(2) The penalty for disobeying Christ's speaking limitations by following one's own guidelines is church discipline (14:36-38).

(a) The Corinthians shouldn't pridefully think that God caused their worship abuses since Paul's limits were actually from Christ (14:36-37).

(i) The Corinthian worship abuses weren't from God (14:36).

(ii) The limitations Paul imposed were actually from Christ (14:37).

(b) Defying Christ's speaking limits must lead to church discipline (14:38).

(3) The solution to disorderly worship at Corinth was to emphasize prophecy without totally excluding tongues (14:39-40).

(a) The church should eagerly allow genuine prophetic messages (14:39a).

(b) The church should not forbid genuine tongues messages (14:39b).

(c) The general guideline for all worship is that it be orderly (14:40).

F. Christ's resurrection is the basis of the Corinthians' faith so they must reinforce belief in their own resurrection to confidently serve Christ now (1 Cor 15).

1. *Historical Argument*: The <u>resurrection of Christ</u> was a key part of the gospel that the apostles preached and the Corinthians believed (15:1-11).

a) The importance of the gospel was so vital that the Corinthians' faith was founded on it (15:1-3a).

(1) The message the Corinthians received for salvation was the gospel (15:1-2).

(2) The gospel Paul received from tradition and preached at Corinth was the most important doctrine the Corinthians knew (15:3a).

b) The content of the gospel that Paul preached at Corinth had three major elements: Christ's vicarious death, burial, and resurrection (15:3b-8).

(1) Christ's death as Isaiah 53 prophesied proved he bore our sins rather than his own (15:3b).

(2) Christ's burial proved that he really died (15:4a).

(3) Christ's resurrection and appearances proved him to be the Messiah prophesied by the Old Testament (15:4b-8).

c) The result of the gospel preaching of God's grace was the salvation of Paul and the Corinthians (15:9-11).

(1) Paul was saved by grace through the gospel (15:9-11a).

(2) Paul and the apostles preached this gospel message (15:11b).

(3) The Corinthians believed the gospel message (15:11c).

2. The result of Christ's resurrection will be the <u>resurrection of believers</u> in new bodies (15:12-57).

a) *Logical Argument*: The great implications of Christ's resurrection should shame Corinthian believers who doubted their own resurrection (15:12-34).

(1) Some Corinthians doubted the resurrection of believers despite having heard preaching that Christ arose (15:12).

(2) The implications of Christ's resurrection should shame believers who doubt their own resurrection (15:13-34).

(a) One result of Christ's resurrection is hope (15:13-19).

(i) Our resurrection and Christ's resurrection stand or fall together (15:13).

(ii) If Christ is still dead, Christian preaching and faith are useless (15:14).

(iii) (15:15-16) If Christ is still dead, preachers are liars.

(iv) (15:17) If Christ is still dead, living believers are not forgiven.

(v) (15:18) If Christ is still dead, dead believers are doomed to hell.

(vi) (15:19a) If Christ is still dead, our hope lasts only for this life.

(vii) (15:19b) If Christ is still dead, Christians should be pitied more than anyone else.

(b) Another result of Christ's resurrection will be our resurrection and his reign to subdue every power until the end of the millennium (15:20-28).

(i) Christ's resurrection gives hope that millions of others will also rise at his return (15:20-23).

(ii) His return will result in his reign until he subdues every power (15:24-27a).

(iii) Christ will then hand his kingdom over to the Father so that the Triune God will be shown sovereign over everything (15:27b-28).

(c) Another result if Christ's resurrection is false is meaninglessness in baptism and persecution (15:29-32).

(i) If Christ is still dead, new Christians baptized in the name of believers who died do so in vain (15:29).

(ii) If Christ is still dead, persecuted Christians may as well live for pleasure (15:30-32).

(d) The Corinthians who doubted the resurrection through false teachers should feel ashamed and return to their senses (15:33-34).

b) *Theological Argument*: The resurrected bodies of believers will be far superior to our present earthly bodies (15:35-57).

(1) Since the resurrection is true, the question arises as to its nature (15:35).

(2) The superiority of resurrected bodies is seen in three examples from nature (15:36-41).

(a) Plant life shows that the first body (the seed) is far inferior to the second body—the grown plant (15:36-38).

(b) Animal life shows that the flesh of each species is unique like a believer's resurrected body will be better than his mortal body (15:39).

(c) Inanimate objects on earth (mountains, canyons, seas?) are inferior to heavenly bodies (sun, moon, stars) in their glory (15:40-41).

(3) The resurrected body's superiority over the earthly body is like exchanging temporal bodies like Adam's for an eternal body like Christ's (15:42-57).

(a) The superiority of resurrected bodies over earthly bodies is shown in the need to replace weak and sinful bodies with new bodies (15:42-44a).

(i) Mortal bodies will be raised as bodies that will never die (15:42).

(ii) Sinful bodies will be raised as bodies that will never sin (15:43a).

(iii) Weak bodies will be raised as powerful bodies (15:43b).

(iv) Physical bodies will be raised as spiritual bodies (15:44a).

(b) The superiority of resurrected bodies over earthly bodies is shown in Christ's superiority to Adam (15:44b-49).

(i) As Adam brought physical life into existence, so Christ will give spiritual life to men (15:45).

(ii) Adam's physical life had to precede Christ's spiritual life (15:46).

(iii) Adam was from earth but Christ was from heaven (15:47).

(iv) As Adam spread physical life, so Christ will spread spiritual life (15:48).

(v) As Adam passed on his sinful likeness to all men, so Christ will pass on his sinless likeness to all believers (15:49).

(c) The superiority of resurrected bodies over earthly bodies is shown in the need to defeat death at the Rapture to live with God eternally (15:50-57).

3. *Experiential Argument*: The result of God's promise of the believer's resurrection should be <u>confident service</u> for Christ now with assured reward (15:58).

a) Believers must show their faith in the resurrection in three ways (15:58a-c).

(1) We should never stop believing in the resurrection (15:58a).

(2) We should never let anyone or anything shake our faith (15:58b).

(3) We should serve Christ wholeheartedly (15:58c).

b) The reason believers should serve Christ wholeheartedly and without wavering is because God will reward this service (15:58d).

G. The way the Corinthians could advance the gospel until Paul returned to them was by giving and teamwork (1 Cor 16).

1. One way the Corinthians could advance the gospel until Paul returned to them was by giving to the needy Jerusalem saints (16:1-4).

a) Paul's advice to Corinth on giving matched those he gave to the Galatians (16:1).

b) Offerings proportionate to their income should be collected each Sunday so that the church would have sufficient funds before Paul arrived (16:2).

c) Reliable men should bring the gift to Jerusalem after Paul came to Corinth (16:3).

d) Paul left open the option of himself accompanying the men (16:4).

2. Another way the Corinthians could advance the gospel until Paul returned to them was by teamwork (16:5-24).

a) The way the Corinthians could help their leaders was by financial support, encouragement, and understanding (16:5-18).

(1) The church can help Paul financially after more ministry in Ephesus, his summer preaching in Macedonia, and an extended visit to Corinth (16:5-9).

(2) The church can encourage Timothy with compassion if he comes (16:10-11).

(3) The church can understand that Apollos felt he should stay in Ephesus despite Paul's strong urging to accompany the letter (16:12).

(4) The church can submit to all of their spiritual leaders by heeding the exhortations of the letter (16:13-18).

(a) Guard the faith by following the basics: watchfulness, steadfastness, courage, and moral strength (16:13).

(b) Do everything in love (16:14).

(c) Submit to spiritual leaders (16:15-18).

b) The way the Corinthians could help their relationships was by imitating Paul's people-priority shown in greeting others (16:19-24).

(1) Paul sends greetings from those with him in Ephesus (16:19-20).

(2) Paul curses those who do not love the Lord but sends love to those who do (16:21-24).

Corinth First Church

CORINTH FIRST CHURCH

Corinth, Greece—Rev. T. Carswell Maximus

What if the Corinthians Answered Paul's Letters

TO: Paul, Apostle
FROM: Corinth First Church
Corinth, Greece

Dear Paul,

Well, my friend, a few days after we got your two letters, we had a board meeting at Corinth First Church. Let me tell you, it was a rough go-around.

Your letters caused no little stir here, believe me. Like, we're talking heavy, Paul. Most of us—Brother Earnest and Sister Emily Grandbucks included—feel that you're being a little too rough on us.

Standards are fine, Paul, but let's face it: we're all living in this town together, and we have to get along. Bending the rules a little seems the prudent thing to do. Besides, you know who, though he may be living (so you say) in "sin," does tithe. And our treasury would sorely miss him. Besides which, it's a personal family matter—and we feel the church here in Corinth has no real right to butt into personal matters. After all, what our members do on their own time is their own business, wouldn't you agree?

Regarding the funds you asked us to send you—the Disbursement Committee (having no other time to do so) meets Wednesday night in our new Grandbucks Fellowship Hall during service. Consequently, this extremely important group of our members missed the general membership vote on your fund request; and, not having their essential input, well, we had to table the issue, thereby keeping the funds in 11-percent C.D.'s for another year. You'll agree, I'm sure, that this is great for the building fund.

Here's the good news. We have our eye on a piece of property across town that we think we can get down-zoned since one of our members is on the Corinth City Council. And, dear brother, Grandbucks is on the Corinth National Bank's board—so the financing will be no problem.

I'm quite enthusiastic about our building program, dear Paul. We're up to three services on Sunday mornings, and we hope to exceed 10,000 in attendance on Easter. Incidentally, we have four elders set to dress up like giant bunnies and hide gaily colored eggs in the choir loft for the kids. How God blesses.

As to your plea for "walking around" money—please forgive me, but are you truly being an effective steward? Watching those pennies? Perhaps you could follow our lead and have a garage sale. We made more than $126 last month with one, and it kept 375 of us busy, busy, busy—for the Lord, of course. I must say, Paul, I disagree entirely with your admonition to avoid using the courts. We have initiated a lawsuit against First Church of Laodicia for the recovery of a certain letter which we know they have and which they say they've misplaced. In your letter, your warning to avoid lawsuits—well it's reasonable to assume that civilized people would behave in a civilized way . . . Hence, we must disregard your warning and hope the courts will straighten out this tiff we're having within the brotherhood. Good common sense has always proven effective in matters such as these.

Our "bus ministry" is going fine. We have come up with the idea of hiding little packs of bubble gum under the bus seats. The kids get on the bus for the bubble gum, then—zap! We close the doors and "spirit" them off to church. We're calling it our "Kapture the Kids for Khrist" program. We have 238 kids at each Sunday service now. I must admit, though, with all of them blowing bubbles, it gets rather hectic at times.

Speaking of hectic, your friend, Timothy, whom you sent to us, is causing problems. Frankly, it seems he's a bit of a fanatic. Now Paul, we both know that too much of a good thing can be too much, if you get my drift. Nough said.

As to your proposed wintertime visit—sure, we look forward to seeing you but, next time, please give us a little more warning when you plan on dropping in. Since we're in the midst of a building program, we really don't have the time for any lengthy speeches. Our motto: Let's get the job done and get it done now!

Well, old and trusted friend, I'll close now. And please, take my advice and go to a qualified ophthalmologist about the problem you're always complaining about.

Yours, and trusting entirely in Him,
I remain,

Reverend Doctor T. Carswell Maximus
D.D., Ph.D., L.L.B.A.

By Robert J. Hensler
"The Door" magazine
From Issue #88/December, 1985–January, 1986

From Issue #108/November–December, 1989

Corinth in the Time of Paul

Bible Visual Resource Book, 235

The city of Corinth, perched like a one-eyed Titan astride the narrow isthmus connecting the Greek mainland with the Peloponnese, was one of the dominant commercial centers of the Hellenic world as early as the eighth century B.C.

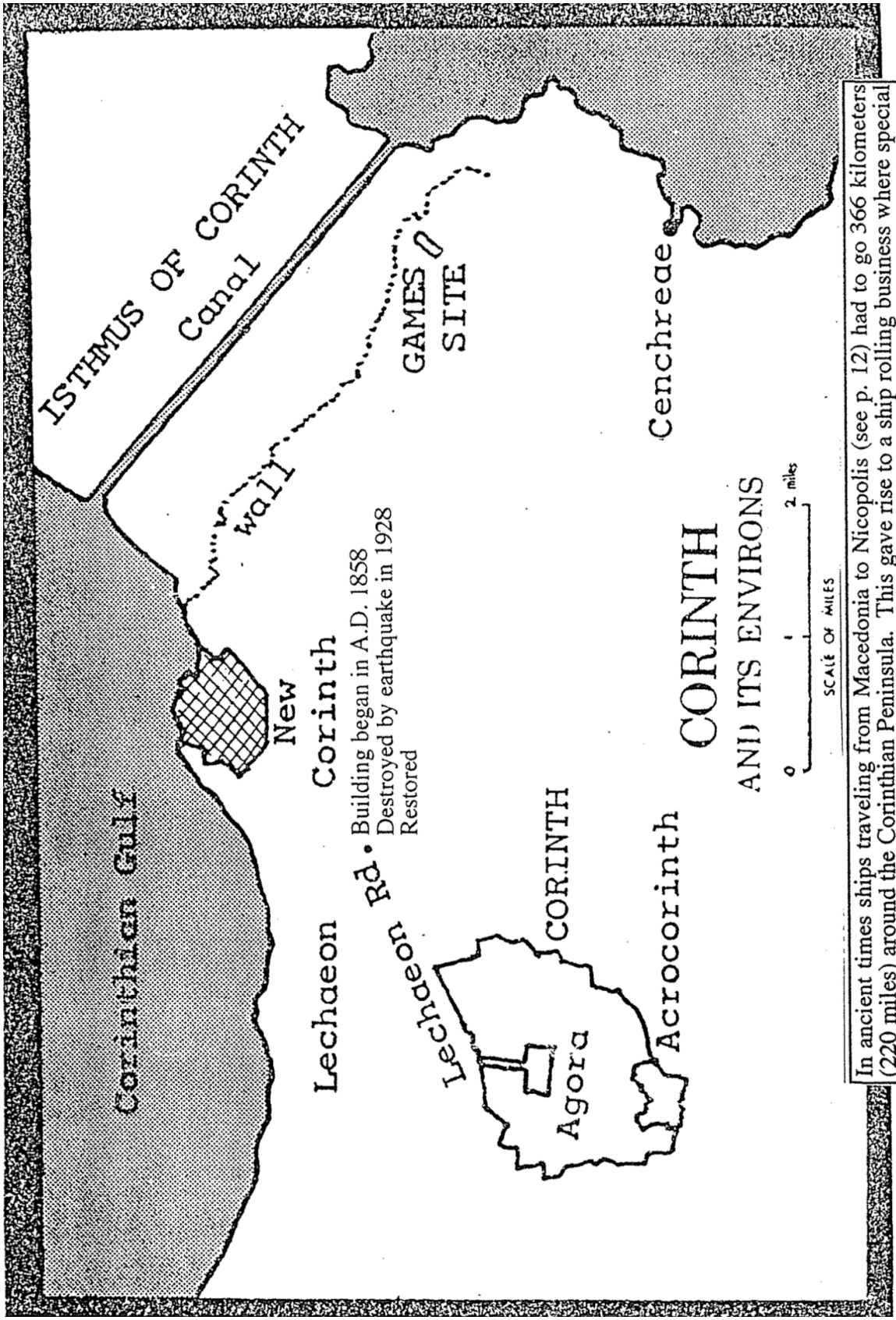
No city in Greece was more favorably situated for land and sea trade. With a high, strong citadel at its back, it lay between the Saronic Gulf and the Ionian Sea and ports at Lechaion and Cenchrea. A *diolkos*, or stone tramway for the overland transport of ships, linked the two seas. Crowning the Acrocorinth was the temple of Aphrodite, served, according to Strabo, by more than 1,000 pagan priestess-prostitutes.

By the time the gospel reached Corinth in the spring of A.D. 52, the city had a proud history of leadership in the Achaian League, and a spirit of revived Hellenism under Roman domination following the destruction of the city by Mummius in 146 B.C.

Paul's lengthy stay in Corinth brought him directly in contact with the major monuments of the *agora*, many of which still survive. The fountain-house of the spring *Peirene*, the temple of Apollo, the *macellum* or meat market (I Co 10:25) and the theater, the *bema* (Ac 18:12), and the unimpressive synagogue all played a part in the experience of the apostle. An inscription from the theater names the city official Erastus, probably the friend of Paul mentioned in Ro 16:23.

Corinth and Its Environs

Source Unknown



In ancient times ships traveling from Macedonia to Nicopolis (see p. 12) had to go 366 kilometers (220 miles) around the Corinthian Peninsula. This gave rise to a ship rolling business where special crews rolled ships on logs for seven kilometers (and 100 meters up a hill!) towards or from the Corinthian Gulf. This freed up the sailors for several days to visit nearby Corinth. And where did they go in Corinth? They supported the 1000 prostitutes in the temple of Aphrodite, thus adding to the already depraved state of the city. But why didn't they simply use the canal above? The canal wasn't built until 1880-1893!

1 Corinthians 13:8-13

NOTE: The next two pages may be the most technical in this entire book as they deal with some very difficult passages. So, hold your hat! They are essentially a summary of Robert L. Thomas, "Tongues…Will Cease," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 17 (1974): 81-89.

1 Corinthians 13:8-13 indicates that the "partial" (spiritual gifts of prophecy, knowledge, and tongues) will be done away with before the "perfect" (NASB) comes. However, what is meant by the "perfect?" This word (*to teleion*) can mean "complete," "perfect" or "mature" so three major views exist, viewing *to teleion* as:

Crucial Questions	**Canon (Bible)**	**Rapture**	**Body (Church)**
13:8 What is the nature of:			
a) prophecy & knowledge? b) tongues?	revelatory confirmatory	non-revelatory non-confirmatory	revelatory confirmatory
When do these gifts cease?	with canon	at Christ's coming	with canon
13:10 What is *to teleion*?	the "complete" (the canon)	the "perfect" (Christ's coming)	the "mature" (the body)
13:11 What does growth to manhood represent?	before and after completed canon	before and after Christ's coming	before and after body's maturity (indicated by canon)
13:12 What are partial and full sight and knowledge?	before and after completed canon	before and after Christ's coming	before and after body's maturity (completed by *parousia*)

1. **The Canon View** sees *to teleion* as "the complete, the totality," referring to "the completed Scriptures." Therefore, prophecy, knowledge and tongues ceased before the New Testament was finished and are not existing today.

Strengths

a. Revelational knowledge context (vv. 8-9).

b. Confirmatory nature of tongues (cf. 14:22).

c. Contrasts with partial nature of prophecy and knowledge.

d. *to teleion* often means "complete."

e. "Complete" best contrasts "partial" (v. 10).

Weaknesses

a. Irreconcilable with Christ's coming (the *parousia*) in verse 12.

b. The context does not refer to a completed New Testament. It's also doubtful that Paul ever envisioned one.

c. "The whole" (*to ek pantos*) better contrasts "partial" than *to teleion* in that both are quantitative.

2. The Rapture View sees *to teleion* as "the perfect" (as opposed to "the complete" above), referring to the coming of Christ at the Rapture. Therefore, prophecy, knowledge and tongues will cease only when Christ comes and exist today as legitimate gifts.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
a. Adequately explains "knowing fully" in verse 12.	a. Inadequately explains the gradual maturing development of verse 11.
b. "Face to face" (v. 12) well describes seeing Christ at His coming (cf. 1 Cor 1:7) and has OT parallels to seeing God personally.	b. Fails to recognize the distinctions between the revelatory nature of prophecy and knowledge and the confirmatory nature of tongues (cf. 14:22).
c. "Perfect" well describes the condition at the *parousia* (Rapture).	c. Paul never uses *to teleion* as "the perfect" in the absolute sense.
d. *to teleion* often means "perfect" in secular, philosophical Greek (e.g. Plato) as well as James 3:2.	d. "Perfect" (a qualitative term) poorly contrasts "partial" (a quantitative term, v. 10).

3. The Body View sees *to teleion* as "the mature," referring to the maturity of the body of Christ. "It pictures the Christian church collectively, growing up as one body, beginning with its birth, progressing through different stages of development during the present [relative maturity, v. 11] and reaching maturity at the *parousia* [ultimate maturity, v. 12; Thomas, 86]." By using the ambiguous term *to teleion* Paul left open two possibilities, the church being: (1) relatively complete at the completion of the New Testament or (2) ultimately complete at Christ's return. This view ultimately comes to the same conclusion as the Canon View.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
a. Parallel 1 Cor passages contrast *to teleion* (meaning "mature") with "babes, child" (νηπίος 2:6 & 3:1; 14:20; cf. Heb. 5:13-14).	a. "Mature" (a qualitative term) poorly contrasts "partial" (a quantitative term, v. 10).
b. Consistent with both the relative maturity of v. 11 and the absolute maturity of v. 12.	b. Assigns a double sense for *to teleion* which may be unlikely.
c. Best fits the "body and gifts context" of 1 Cor 12-14 and the striking similarity to Eph. 4:1-16.	
d. Has the same strengths of a., b., & c. in the Canon View.	

Implications of the Body View: While this is a difficult issue, it seems that that the Body View has the most to commend it. There is no NT evidence that Paul knew which would come first: Christ's coming or the completion of the canon (as the OT was complete). His use of the somewhat ambiguous term *to teleion* therefore would allow room for either possibility: the completion of the canon or the Rapture.

However, Paul *did* know that the church would progress in maturity in the period of direct revelation and miraculous authentication (represented by childhood in v. 11a) until the completion of the canon (represented by the body's maturity in v. 11b). Thus, the church would continue to grow until the time of the *parousia* when maturity will be complete, with the body of Christ collectively mature and conformed to His image. Since the canon was completed *before* Christ's return this means that while some gifts would continue, prophecy, tongues and knowledge ceased when the canon was finished in the first century.

Temporary Foundational Gift

Prophecy
Prophesying, Inspired Utterance

In Lists: Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 29; Ephesians 4:11
Greek: **propheteia** (προφητεία) comes from **pro** "forth" and **phemi** "I speak" i.e., speak forth.

"In the Septuagint [the 250 BC Greek translation of the Hebrew OT], ['**prophetes**,' the noun form of '**prophetia**'] is the translation of the word '**roeh**,' a seer; 1 Sam 9:9, indicating that the prophet was one who had immediate intercourse with God. It also translates the word '**nabhi**' meaning either one in whom the message from God springs forth or one to whom anything is secretly communicated" (Vine).

Prophets spoke an uninterpreted message of God (2 Pet. 1:20-21), some OT prophets not even fully understanding what person or time their message indicated (1 Pet. 1:10-12). NT prophets spoke divine revelation on the impulse of sudden inspiration to exhort the church (1 Cor 14:29-31), as contrasted with teachers, who systematically instructed hearers in a better understanding of the Scriptures (Acts 28:30-31).

Definition: "The special ability...to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His people through a divinely anointed utterance" (C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, 228).

Characteristics of those with the gift of prophecy:
1. Spoke both predictively ("fore-telling," Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-14) and proclamation or preaching ("forth-telling," Acts 15:32; 1 Cor 11:4-5), but always from divine origin (2 Pet. 1:21).
2. Received messages by divine revelation (1 Cor 14:26, 29-30; Eph. 3:5).
3. Did not interpret God's message, but just declared it (2 Pet. 1:20-21).
4. Declarations were 100% accurate, totally free from error (Deut 18:14-22)—the implication is that after weighing it for truth, it should be rejected if any error is taught (1 Cor 14:29).
5. Generally directed messages to believers (1 Cor 14:22) for exhortation (1 Cor 14:3), edification (1 Cor 14:3-5, 26), consolation (1 Cor 14:3), and teaching (1 Cor 14:19, 22, 31).
6. Could have evangelistic results for unbelievers in a church service (1 Cor 14:23-25), though not its main emphasis (1 Cor 14:22).
7. Served as the second most important gift in the Church (1 Cor 12:28; Eph. 4:11), to be emphasized especially over tongues (1 Cor 14:1, 5, 29).
8. Differs from *non*-inspired proclamation by teachers (Rom. 12:8) or pastor-teachers (Eph. 4:11).

Scriptural Examples: Agabus (Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11), Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Paul (Acts 13:1), Philip's four daughters (Acts 21:9), Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32).

Temporary Nature: Prophecy was foundational to the Church (Eph. 2:20). Revelation 22:18-19 closes the Scripture with a warning to never add to His completed revelation. Jude 3-4 also seems to indicate that the canon is closed and that God no longer speaks prophetically. However, two future witnesses are yet to come during the Great Tribulation who will both prophesy (Rev. 11:3). If true prophesies which add to God's revelation do not exist today, the warning "do not despise prophetic utterances" (1 Thess. 5:20) cannot be disobeyed except in reference to disobeying biblical commands. Prophecy is equal in authority to the Bible, for it is God's inerrant word in spoken form rather than written form.

Other Viewpoints:
1. Preaching: Revelational prophecy ceased with the completion of the canon, but today "prophesying has come to mean the proclamation of the written Word of God..." (Leslie Flynn, *19 Gifts of the Spirit,* 53; Earl Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ; Billy Graham, 139-141; John MacArthur, *The Church*, 139; Alan Redpath, *The Royal Route to Heaven*, 142-43; C. K. Barrett, *1 Corinthians*, 316).
2. Exhortative Preaching: Non-revelatory prophecy exists today as powerful extortive-type preaching (Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 5).
3. Revelational prophecy exists today (Charismatics, Wagner—see definition above, 228).

4. Any Christian involved in "telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind" (Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophesy: Scripture Encourages Us to Seek this Gift yet Today," *Christianity Today* [September 16, 1988]: 29; cf. Grudem's 1988 book, *The Gift of Prophecy*). His article is reproduced in my Spiritual Gifts notes, 124-28.

   Since Grudem's view has gained the greatest following recently in both charismatic and non-charismatic settings it deserves closer scrutiny. His main points are dangerous—if you believe Grudem then you must believe the following:

   a. OT prophets have their counterpart in NT apostles (not NT prophets) in their authoritative function of writing Scripture.

      Response:

      1) It is true that both wrote Scripture, but this does not lower the value of NT prophets. It only affirms that NT apostles received revelation directly from God. It does not indicate the NT prophets also did not receive divine revelation.

      2) NT prophets are ranked second only to apostles (1 Cor 12:28) and thus had very high status. In fact, they formed the foundation of the church along with apostles (Eph. 2:20).

      3) Continuity between OT and NT prophets is affirmed by Peter who noted that NT prophecy was of the same nature (Acts 2:17-18; cf. Joel 2:28).

      4) "The apostles were a very restricted group who existed during one period of time. They were promised that they would be on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28) and their names will be on the foundation of the heavenly city (Rev. 21:14). The Old Testament prophets are promised none of these things. Everything about the apostles shows their uniqueness" (Edgar, *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit*, 62).

   b. OT and NT prophecy are different in nature. OT prophets spoke with absolute divine authority but "this ordinary [NT] gift of prophesy had less authority than that of the Bible, and even less than that of recognized Bible teaching in the early church" (p. 30). There exist two kinds of NT prophecy: infallible "apostolic" prophecy and fallible "congregational" prophecy.

      Response:

      1) Grudem's argument begins with a broad, secular definition of prophecy meaning "one who speaks on the basis of some external influence" (p. 30). Scripture often uses secular Greek terms but attaches more specific meaning (e.g., for logos, agape, etc.). We do not determine the nature of OT prophecy from secular usage but only Scripture; the NT (not secular Greek usage) is also our guide for determining the nature of NT prophecy.

      2) Identical terms for OT and NT prophecy are used (cf. LXX), so we should assume these are of the same nature unless good exegetical grounds can be shown for a difference. Would God use the same terms with completely different meanings, leading to confusion?

      3) We should test and not despise prophecies (1 Thess. 5:20-21), but this hardly argues for less authority than OT messages. In fact, it is identical to the OT requirement that true prophecies must be tested to make sure they come true under penalty of death (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:14-22). Only the death penalty is not reiterated in the NT. The parallel of "Thus saith the Lord" is still used in the NT as "The Holy Spirit says" (Acts 21:11).

      4) Paul's disregard for the Spirit's warning to avoid Jerusalem (Acts 21:4) is not "fallible but inspired" prophecy, as Grudem claims. It may indicate a fallible Paul. He felt compelled by the Spirit (20:22-23) but maybe he was mistaken. Perhaps God wanted him to live longer than he did. Apostles sometimes erred in practice (e.g., Peter withdrew from Gentiles in Galatians 2; Paul struggled with sin in Rom. 7:14-25), but they did not err in doctrine.

5) Grudem says, "If prophecy had equaled God's word in authority, [Paul] would never have had to tell [the Thessalonians] not to despise it" (p. 30); but this statement shows great ignorance of the massive rejection of OT prophets (Matt. 23:37; Heb. 11:33-40). People reject God's inspired word even today despite His warnings.

6) The stipulation that prophets were to "weigh what is said" (1 Cor 14:29) is interpreted by Grudem as "sift the good from the bad" (p. 31). But is this the intent of Paul? The discernment was to judge whether the *message itself* was from God, not to pick and choose which parts were good and bad. This is why God provided the gift of discernment (1 Cor 12:10), for false prophets could be within their midst (12:3).

7) The stipulation that prophets were allowed to interrupt one already speaking (1 Cor 14:30) does not indicate fallibility in their messages as Grudem claims (p. 31). Why can't God stop one person from declaring an inspired message when enough has been said? "A prophecy which is truly from God is evidenced by an orderly and rational manner of presentation" (Farnell, 86). True prophets remained in control of their mind in contrast to pagan ones. This verse says nothing at all about the content or reliability of the prophecy.

8) The idea that early church prophets had less authority than teachers is erroneous (cf. Grudem, 34). True, elders were to teach, but even this emphasizes the *high* standing attributed to prophecy, with which few (if any) elders were gifted. In fact, prophecy appears first when listed with teaching (Acts 13:1), indicating prophecy's prominence. The spiritual gifts are listed in order of importance in 1 Corinthians 12:28 with prophets *ahead* of teachers. Surely if the gift included erroneous material inspired by the Holy Spirit it would not be given such priority! The high place ascribed to prophecy is clear in that it is the only gift mentioned in each gift list in the NT (cf. Spiritual Gifts notes, 6). Please see the other contrasts between prophecy and teaching on page 161h.

c. <u>God is the author of error</u> since He brings things to believers' minds but they mess it up in the transmission of the message.

Response:

1) Grudem amazingly accuses the Holy Spirit of error (called "inaccuracies of detail") when Agabus prophesies that Paul would be bound by *Jews*, though it actually happened by *Romans* (Acts 21:10-11, 33). But the Jews *caused* the riot which resulted in the Romans binding Paul (21:27f.), so the Spirit was not wrong in His message through Agabus.

2) Agabus also prophesied that the Jews would hand Paul over to the Gentiles (21:11b). The fact that they preferred to kill him in no way argues for "inaccuracy in detail" by the Spirit as Grudem alleges, for in fact the Jews did hand him over, though involuntarily.

3) Grudem essentially teaches that a message can be inspired but erroneous, which is incredible to imagine. Will God really author error? If so, what about our Bible? This is similar to saying Scripture is inspired but not inerrant in the original manuscripts. While there have always been false (erroneous) prophecies from Satan, it is incredible that evangelicals now actually believe in "inspired but erroneous" messages from God himself!

4) If NT "congregational prophecy" was "simply a very human—and sometimes partially mistaken—report of something the Holy Spirit brought to someone's mind" (Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy…*, 14), who can determine the authoritative (accurate) from the non-authoritative (mistaken) messages of God?

d. Prophecy may be exercised by any Christian. As defined earlier, this new view on prophecy is simply "telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind" (Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophesy," 29). Since any Christian can share something that the Lord has impressed in his/her mind, prophecy can be exercised by any believer.

Response:

1) "Are all apostles? Are all prophets?" (1 Cor 12:29). The obvious answer is "no" since God distributes the gifts as He wills (12:11, 18) and therefore has not given the potential of the same gift to every believer. Thus, this verse is clear that not every Christian should or can have the gift of prophecy.

2) "Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy" (1 Cor 14:1; cf. v. 39) does *not* exhort each individual believer to prophesy. If it did, it would contradict 1 Corinthians 12:29 (quoted above) which says that it is not God's will for all to prophesy. Rather, this is written in the second person plural ("all of you") encourage the church *as a whole* to promote prophecy over tongues. This is consistent with Paul limitation of no more than three prophets speaking per service (14:29).

3) Grudem supposes that even the discernment of prophecy can be exercised by any believer (*The Gift*…, 60-62; cf. 1 Cor 14:29), but the most logical antecedent of "the others" is the "prophets" noted in the first part of the verse. Paul used *allos* ("another of the same kind") rather than *heteros* ("another of a different kind"; i.e., not a prophet). Grudem notes, "Especially hard to believe is the idea that the teachers, administrators and other church leaders without special gifts of prophecy would sit passively awaiting the verdict of an elite [prophetic] group" (p. 62). But is this so hard to imagine? "Inspired spokesmen were in the best position to judge spontaneously whether a new utterance agreed with Paul's teaching… The responsibility of New Testament prophets to weigh the prophecies of others does not imply that true prophets were capable of giving false prophecies, but that false prophets could disguise their falsity by occasional true utterances" (Farnell, 84-85).

Summary of Prophetic Views

Grudem's View	Biblical View
Prophecy is declaring anything (true or false) that the Spirit brings to one's mind	Prophecy is declaring God's inspired and inerrant revelation to others
The above definition was invented in 1988 by Wayne Grudem	The above definition has been the teaching of the church for 20 centuries
OT prophets are parallel to NT apostles	OT prophets are parallel to NT prophets
God changed the definition of prophecy from the OT to the NT	God kept the meaning of prophecy consistent between the two testaments
God gives some prophecies with errors	God gives all prophecies without errors (2 Pet. 1:20-21)
Any believer can prophesy	Only those with the gift of prophecy can prophesy (1 Cor 12:29)
There's two kinds of NT prophecy (fallible and infallible)	There's one kind of NT prophecy (infallible)
Fallible prophecy can be inspired	Fallible prophecy is false prophecy (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:14-20)
God sometimes lies	God always tells the truth since He cannot lie (Heb. 6:18)

Prophecy versus Teaching

Since both prophecy and teaching communicate God's Word, is there any difference between them? Grudem says one key difference is that "prophecy has less authority than teaching" (Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophesy: Scripture Encourages Us to Seek this Gift yet Today," *Christianity Today* [September 16, 1988]: 34). The following cites more biblical contrasts:

	Teaching	Prophecy
Value	Inferior: Teaching is listed after prophecy in the leadership structure of the church at Antioch (Acts 13:1)	Superior: Prophecy has a long OT history of declaring an uninterpreted word of God (2 Pet. 1:20-21) whereas teachers must interpret it
Relation to the Other Gift	A less important gift: listed after prophecy in the priority of the gifts (1 Cor 12:28)	The second most important gift, superseded only by apostleship (1 Cor 12:28)
Authority	Less authoritative than prophecy since God's written word must be interpreted by the teacher	More authoritative than teaching since the spoken word is divinely inspired and uninterpreted (2 Pet. 1:20-21)
Source of Truth is …	God's Word (Col. 3:16)	God's Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21)
Revelatory Nature	Uninspired explanation of already revealed truth (Acts 15:35; 11:12, 26; Rom. 2:21; 15:4; Heb. 5:12)	Inspired foretelling the future or "forthtelling" (declaring doctrinal truth) received by revelation (1 Cor 14:19, 26, 29-30; Eph. 3:5)
Style	Systematic	Spontaneous (Acts 11:28; 21:4, 10-11)
Limitations	No limitation on teaching is given in church services	Two or three prophetic messages in each service (14:29a), speak in turn (14:30-31), weigh what is said (14:29b, 32)
Leadership Requirements	Required of elders (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; Tit. 1:9) since the church needs continued teaching of truth through its history	Not required of elders as this would provide too high a standard; also, revelation need not continue after the canon is complete (Rev. 22:18-19)
Foundation for the Church	Not foundational in nature for the Church—the foundation is not in interpreted messages but in divinely spoken and written messages from God provided by apostles and prophets	Foundational for the Church along with apostleship (Eph. 2:20), which means that it need not continue through Church history since the foundation is provided once-for-all (e.g., no apostles today)
Cessation	No hint is given in the NT that this gift has ceased or will do so in the church age	The gift will cease by someone other than self: passive voice (1 Cor 13:8a; cf. Spiritual Gifts notes, 29)

Note: I believe this chart provides a more credible contrast between the two gifts than offered by Grudem on page 34 of his article cited above. While he rightfully upholds the value of teaching, his biblical examples do not actually contrast teaching with prophecy. Rather, they only show the great importance that teaching had in the early church.

Temporary Sign Gift

Speaking in Tongues

Speaking with Tongues, Strange Tongues, Tongues, Speaks in a Tongue, Speaks with Other Tongues, Tongues of Men, Various Kinds of Tongues

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 30
Greek: *glossa* (γλῶσσα) "tongue," "language" (BAGD 1., 2.)

The word *glossa* has three different meanings in the New Testament:
1. The tongue as an organ of speech (Mark 7:33; Rom. 3:13; 14:11; 1 Cor 14:9, etc.)
2. Something shaped like a tongue, such as forked flames of fire (Acts 2:3)
3. A language:
   a. Understood by the speaker (1 Cor 14:10; Rev. 5:9)
   b. Not understood by the speaker (Acts 2:4; 10:46-47; 19:6; 1 Cor 12:10, 28; 13:1, 8; 14:1-40)

Speaking in tongues is only in Mark 16:17 and Acts and 1 Corinthians (cf. 3b above). Some teach a fourth *glossa* as an "ecstatic utterance" (emotional speaking not in a foreign language). They seek to support this based upon Romans 8:26 ("…the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words"), 1 Corinthians 13:1 ("If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels...") and 1 Corinthians 14:2 ("...one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God… no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit"). They say Acts *glossa* are "languages" but 1 Corinthians *glossa* are "ecstatic utterances."

This interpretation fails on several accounts:
1. Romans 8:26 says that it is the *Spirit* who speaks, not us—and He does so with *inaudible*, *nonuttered*, internal groanings (Edgar, "Cessation," 384).
2. 1 Corinthians 13:1 does not teach that anyone *can* speak an angelic language, but only that *if* one could speak any earthly or heavenly language, this ability would be useless without love.
3. To "speak mysteries" (1 Cor 14:2) means the speaker and others cannot comprehend the foreign language he is using; it does not indicate that the tongue is not a known language (cf. v. 10).
4. The *only* description of tongues speaking in the NT (Acts 2:4-11) is in real human languages.
5. Paul uses *glossa* three other times (Rom. 3:13; 14:11; Phil. 2:11) outside of 1 Corinthians, each time referring to intelligible speech, so *glossa* in the NT always refers to known languages.

Definition: A God-given ability to speak divine revelation in a foreign language unknown by the speaker as a sign to unbelieving Jews in their language that a gifted interpreter can translate to edify the church.

Characteristics:
1. Unique among the spiritual gifts in the following respects:
   a. The only spiritual gift with restricted use (except 2-3 prophets per service, 1 Cor 14:29):
      1) Only to be spoken by 2-3 people at a church gathering, each in turn (1 Cor 14:27)
      2) Only to be exercised if an interpreter is present (1 Cor 14:28), although each speaker should pray to able to interpret his message (1 Cor 14:13). This is not a command to pray for the *gift* of interpretation (ability to understand *others'* tongues messages)!
      3) Only to be spoken by men in the church, never women (1 Cor 14:34-35)
   b. The only gift in which the believer uses a language unknown to him (1 Cor 14:2, 11)
   c. The only gift ever given to *groups* of people—on three unique occasions (Acts 2, 10, 19)
   d. The only gift ever over-emphasized in a New Testament church (1 Cor 14)
   e. The only gift ever said to be misused in a New Testament church (1 Cor 14).
   f. The only gift mentioned as gradually ceasing in and of itself (1 Cor 13:8b; see below)
   g. The only gift which is useless for edification when exercised apart from another spiritual gift, i.e., the gift of interpretation of tongues (1 Cor 14:5, 11, 13, 27, 28)
2. Audible speech (Acts 2:4, 11; 1 Cor 13:1; 14:2ff) in known languages (Acts 2:4-11)
3. Least important of all of the gifts (1 Cor 12:28), especially inferior to prophecy (1 Cor 14)
4. Can be controlled by voluntarily refraining from speaking (1 Cor 14:27-28)
5. Not given to all believers (1 Cor 12:30)
6. Only understood by God, not men (1 Cor 14:2, 28), so prayer in a tongue (1 Cor 14:14) is a *negative* action rather than praise (Acts 2:11; 10:46; cf. Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts*, 181, 186-99)
7. Revelational (1 Cor 14:16) since God himself is speaking (14:21)—presumably without error!

8. There may be a twofold purpose of tongues:
   a. Sign (Mark 16:17) to unbelievers (1 Cor 14:21-22), including Jews (Acts 2:4-11) and Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48; 19:1-7; 1 Cor 14:22-24) to authenticate the message of salvation in Christ (Heb. 2:3, 4). They authenticated God's activity in evangelistic settings (Acts 19:6).
   b. Edification to the church when translated (1 Cor 12:7; 14:5, 12, 17, 19, 26).

Note: Another commonly taught purpose is for self-edification, based upon 1 Corinthians 14:4. However, self-edification is merely an accompanying circumstance or by-product of exercising this gift (or any gift!). Gifts are given not for selfish ends but for the "common good" (1 Cor 12:7).

Scriptural Examples: Apostles at Pentecost (Acts 2:4, 11), Gentile believers (Acts 19:46), converted disciples of John (Acts 19:6), Corinthians (1 Cor 12-14), and Paul (1 Cor 14:18)

Temporary Nature: In 1 Corinthians 13:8 "to be done away" (*καταργηθήσονται*) in the passive voice indicates that something *outside* of prophecy or knowledge would end their use. However, for tongues "to cease" (*παύσονται*) in the middle voice indicates that "the subject is *both* the performer and receiver of the action" (Goetchius, *The Language of the New Testament* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965], 100). This indicates that the gift of tongues would stop in and of *itself* without any object acting upon it. The gifts of prophecy and knowledge were to be "done away" at the coming of the "complete" ("perfect"; 1 Cor 13:10), which probably refers to the relative maturity of the Body of Christ at the completion of the New Testament since they fulfilled their purpose by providing us with God's Word in written form (see pp. 16-17). However, tongues ceased by *itself* after fulfilling its purpose as a sign to Israel (Isa. 28:11, quoted in 1 Cor 14:21) and to unbelieving Gentiles (1 Cor 14:22-24).

"God was thereby giving notice to Israel that He was moving from the Jews to the Gentiles as His people. Paul explains this in detail in Romans 11 and Jesus had prophesied it in Matthew 21:33-43... In 70 AD Israel was wiped out in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 28:63-65. They were dispersed into every nation on the face of the earth, and since that day there has been no Biblical purpose for the gift of tongues" (Radmacher, *Controversial Spiritual Gifts*, 18). Also, Hebrews 2:3-4 says "signs" (including tongues) authenticated the apostolic message.

How then can one explain "speaking in tongues" today? It must not be the biblical gift of tongues, but ecstatic speaking which is often called "glossalalia" (*glossa* "tongue" + *lalia* "speech"). Gibberish then and now serves not as a sign but only underscores the Corinthians' or our pagan backgrounds. Today's phenomenon (ecstatic utterances) may be attributed to one of two sources:

1. **Self**: Highly emotional experiences for many people have caused them to suddenly burst out in a gibberish, ecstatic speech, which has often been confused with the biblical gift of tongues. Psychologists have studied this extensively as a psychological phenomenon.

2. **Satan**: The devil is a master counterfeiter, even appearing as an angel of light if necessary (2 Cor 11:4), so the more closely ecstatic speaking resembles true tongues, the more suspect it may be! Satan is especially interested in convincing believers to rely upon any experience more than the Word of God. Ecstatic speaking is characteristic of many cults and religions, including Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and pagan African cults.

But how about, "Do not forbid speaking in tongues" (1 Cor 14:39)? This applies only to the true gift of tongues—not to ecstatic utterances. Nothing in the NT prohibits us from limiting ecstatic speech.

Other Viewpoints:
1. Tongues today edifies oneself in a "private prayer language," as well as "public tongues" to communicate immediate messages from God to the church (charismatics; Wagner, 253).
2. Tongues exist today not as a gift, but as a "manifestation" (result in *someone else's* life). This is a supernatural result "of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives and also in the lives of those to whom we minister." So "various tongues" means that as a tongues speaker speaks, "another's spirit is freed to communicate with God" (Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 5).

Questions on Tongues Speaking

1. Why can't tongues be a special prayer language for private use?

a. The purpose of the gifts is that they might edify *others* (1 Cor 12:7; 14:26). The one mention of tongues edifying self is a *negative* action in comparison to prophecy's *positive* result of building up others (14:4). Self-edification is not to be the *goal* of exercising a spiritual gift, but simply an accompanying circumstance (cf. 1 Cor 13:5).

b. The purpose of tongues was to serve as a sign to unbelievers (1 Cor 14:22). J. B. Phillips translates this, "That means that tongues are a sign of God's power, not for those who are unbelievers but for those who already believe" (*The New Testament in Modern English,* rev. ed., NY: Macmillan, 1972). He explains this misinterpretation thus, "This is the sole instance of the translator's departing from the accepted text. He felt bound to conclude, from the sense of the next three verses, that we have here either a slip of the pen on the part of Paul, or, more probably, a copyist's error" (Phillips, 552). Phillips fails to mention, however, that *not one* of the thousands of NT manuscripts read with his own invented reading! Nor can an error by Paul be reconciled with an inerrant text. Despite Paul's clear teaching that tongues serve as a sign to *unbelievers*, most charismatics today see this as a sign to them as *believers* that God is at work in their lives. Examples of tongues usage include both outside (Acts 2, 10, 10) and inside the assembly (1 Cor 14), but the clearly stated purpose is as a sign to unbelievers. One could infer from this that God only grants a tongues utterance to an assembly when an unbeliever is present (14:23), but even in this case it should be translated so that believers could be edified (14: 5, 12, 17, 19, 26).

c. One who speaks in a tongue does so "to God" (1 Cor 14:2), but Paul clearly says that prayer with understanding is superior to prayer in a tongue because prayer without understanding by comparison is a *negative* action (1 Cor 14:14-15).

d. The gift of tongues was not given to all (1 Cor 12:30), so why would God give a special prayer language to only *some* of His children? While some may ask the same question ("Why did only some receive it?") of any of the gifts, prayer is a privilege shared by all.

e. God's provision of the gift of interpretation of tongues (1 Cor 12:30) shows that tongues were not for devotional use. Tongues should never be used without interpretation (14:26-28), which indicates that a private use is out of character with the purpose of the gift. Even though a tongues speaker should seek to understand what he is saying (14:13), this person has no guarantee that he does indeed understand. While very few who claim such a "private prayer language" ever seek to understand their utterances, Paul noted that prayer with understanding is better (1 Cor 14:19).

f. The use of every gift is public, not private. In every case where gifts were used, the body is assembled. But how are we to understand 1 Corinthians 14:28 in this respect: "If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God"? Is this not a private use? No, for every time in Scripture that tongues are spoken, they are uttered within the context of a group—even the speaking of 1 Corinthians 14:28 takes place "in the church" (cf. 14:19 which is not clearly contrasted with private use).

g. Paul said that he spoke in tongues more than the Corinthians (14:18). Did this not indicate a private usage? No, for Paul never stated the circumstances or location of this practice. He then notes, "but in the church" intelligible speech is better than unintelligible speech (v. 19). Is this not a comparison between private and public tongues? No, rather he contrasts tongues used outside of the assembly as a sign to unbelievers (vv. 20f.) with tongues needing interpretation in the assembly. In both cases tongues are public.

2. Why isn't speaking in tongues proof that one has been baptized with the Spirit?

a. Receiving at least *one* spiritual gift is evidence that one has received Christ (i.e., been baptized with the Spirit; 1 Cor 12:7, 11, 18), but nowhere does the Bible say this gift must be tongues. The "gift" of Acts 2:38 is not tongues but the Spirit himself.

b. All Christians are baptized with the Spirit (1 Cor 12:13), but not all believers are to speak in tongues (1 Cor 12:30); therefore, a connection between the two cannot be maintained.

c. Scripture records the salvation experience of dozens of individuals; however, on only two accounts did salvation result in tongues (Acts 10, 19).

3. Why shouldn't I seek the gift of tongues?

a. You shouldn't seek *any* spiritual gift since the Holy Spirit is the one who decides which gift each believer should possess (1 Cor 12:7, 11, 18).

b. Even if you *were* to seek a gift, it is clear that tongues would not be that gift since it is the least important of the spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:28).

c. There are only five passages in the NT that mention tongues speaking (Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4-11; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Cor 12–14). None of these passages indicate that the speakers ever sought for the gift. In fact, Peter and the saved Jews were amazed that it happened (Acts 10:45). Therefore, the biblical pattern is not to seek the gift—except in the case of the Corinthians, who were rebuked for it (1 Cor 14:1-2, 39).

4. Should the use of the gift of tongues in Acts be the pattern for the church today?

a. The problem with this question is that it assumes a single pattern of tongues speaking in Acts, which the following chart shows did not exist. It was bestowed at differing times in relation to salvation and to separate groups. The only common element is that in each occurrence it served as a sign to Jews.

b. Interpretive problems have often arisen when establishing doctrinal beliefs based only upon the material in the Book of Acts. A proper understanding of Acts can only be obtained when one recognizes that it is a transitional book and therefore not intended to set norms for the post-apostolic age. This is especially true in regard to speaking in tongues in Acts:

Text	Speakers	Audience	Time	Purpose
2:1-4	Apostles+	Unsaved Jews at Pentecost	After salvation	Validate for Jews the fulfillment of Joel 2
8:14-17	Samaritans	Saved Jews doubting God's plan (Peter+)	After salvation	Validate for Jews God's acceptance of Samaritans
10:44-47	Gentiles (Cornelius+)	Saved Jews doubting God's plan (Peter+)	At salvation	Validate for Jews God's acceptance of Gentiles
19:1-7	OT believers in Messiah	Jews needing gospel message confirmed	At salvation	Validate for Jews God's message through Paul

Chart adapted from Stanley Toussaint, "Acts," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2:408

Notice that in each case above tongues were given on unique occasions to validate God's work for Jews in attendance. As far as we know, no situations when the biblical gift of tongues was given to groups of believers ever happened again. Thus, no norm can be established from Acts.

Tongues versus Prophecy

The Apostle Paul felt that one of the best ways to teach the proper emphasis regarding the gift of tongues was to contrast tongues with prophecy. Most of 1 Corinthians 14 is devoted to showing the superiority of prophecy over tongues. Paul's teaching here is summarized in the following chart along with other relevant passages.

	Tongues	Prophecy
Value	Inferior (14:5a)	Superior (14:1)
Relation to Other Gifts	The least important gift (12:28)	The second most important gift (12:28)
Language Used	Foreign (14:10)	Vernacular (14:19)
Corollary Gift	Interpretation of tongues (12:30; 14:27-28)	Discerning of spirits (12:10; 14:29)
Speaker's Knowledge of Language	Unknown: "utters mysteries with his spirit…my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful" (14:2b, 14)	Known: "pray with my spirit [and] with my mind" (14:15, 19)
Value (without Interpretation)	Harmful: people cannot understand and thus are not edified (14:16-17, 23, 28)	Great: people can understand and thus are edified (14:5b, 24-25)
Edification (without Interpretation)	Self only (14:4a; cf. 10:24; 12:7, 11)	Entire church (14:4b)
Direction of Speech	To God (14:2)	To men (14:3)
Result in Others	Revelation, knowledge, prophecy, word of instruction (14:6)	Strengthening, encouragement, and comfort (14:3b)
Type of Communication	Speaking (14:6), prayer (14:14), praise (14:16), singing? (14:15b)	Foretelling the future, "forthtelling" or declaring doctrinal truth (14:19)
Purpose	Sign to unbelieving Jews (14:21-22a)	Message to believers (14:22b)
Limitations	Two or three tongues messages in each service (14:27a), speak in turn (14:27b), someone must interpret (14:27c-28)	Two or three prophetic messages in each service (14:29a), speak in turn (14:30-31), weigh what is said (14:29b, 32)
Exhortation	Negative: Do not forbid tongues (14:39b)	Positive: Be eager to prophesy (14:39a)
Agent of Cessation	Self: middle voice (13:8b)	Someone other than self: passive voice (13:8a)

A Self-Test on Love

Most Christians know 1 Corinthians 13 as the best description of love in the Bible. However, we often assume that *knowing* is *doing.* To find out how much love really controls your own actions, rank yourself from 1 (weakest) to 10 (strongest) in these descriptions in verses 4-7.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never	Once	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Occasionally	Usually	Often	Almost Always	Always

Love is Patient
I am slow to anger; I bear with trials and people without complaint; I don't give God deadlines.

Love is Kind
I am thoughtful, considerate, and generous with praise; I have time for people and build them up.

Love Does Not Envy
I am as happy to see others promoted as I am to see this for myself; I am not threatened by others' gifts and accomplishments and am not critical when I am unnoticed.

Love Does Not Boast
I readily acknowledge that I can do nothing for God apart from His grace; I am quick to redirect praise to God; I don't leave others with a better impression than what is absolutely true.

Love is Not Proud
I view myself rightly rather than have an inflated idea of my own importance; I don't have to be coaxed, honoured, or pampered to do my part; I talk about others more than myself.

Love is Not Rude
I am not crude, nasty, cutting, sarcastic, or cocky; I am polite, well-mannered, courteous and gracious with everyone—especially with my closest family members.

Love is Not Self-Seeking
I have a greater concern for the well-being of others than for myself; I accept others without expecting them to conform to my expectations and interests; I am not possessive of those I love.

Love is Not Easily Angered
I can "keep my cool"; I look at inconveniences as opportunities for growth rather than violations of my personal rights; I don't talk about my rights; I am not touchy or defensive.

Love Keeps No Record of Wrongs
I easily forget how others have hurt or inconvenienced me; I reach out to those who are not kind to me rather than feeling that they "owe me one."

Love Does Not Delight in Evil But Rejoices in the Truth
I spend more time reading God's Word than I do watching television; I am saddened to see evil people come out on top; I am glad when right and justice prevail no matter who gets the credit.

Love Endures All Things
I bear with the shortcomings of others; I patiently stand with people whose faults I know well.

Love Believes All Things
When I have no evidence, I believe the best; My first response is to believe rather than disbelieve others; I make my decisions based on the honesty of other people.

Love Hopes All Things
When the evidence is adverse, I hope the best will come out of it; I anticipate future victory.

Love Perseveres All Things
When my hopes are repeatedly disappointed, I courageously wait; I "hang in there" rather than try to escape my difficulties with others.

Love in Action: For the next seven days, I will do one unselfish act each day for my family and friends—something I wouldn't ordinarily do—to improve in my weak areas (write them above).

What's a Woman to Do?

Note: The context of all three passages below is public worship.

It looks like 1 Corinthians 11 contradicts 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2

1 CORINTHIANS 11	1 CORINTHIANS 14	1 TIMOTHY 2
Can pray publicly (vv. 5, 13)		Public prayer for men only (v. 8)
Can prophesy publicly (v. 5)	Speaking is prohibited (v. 34)	Must be silent (v. 12c)
Speaking is O.K. (implied)	Speaking is disgraceful (v. 35)	
		Can't teach men (v. 12a)
		Can't have authority over men (v. 12b)

Which text is the general rule (norm) and which the exception?

Veils universal practice (v. 16) | Silence universal practice (v. 33) Men praying universal practice (v. 8)

To see how people have tried to solve these apparent contradictions, see the next 8 pages of these notes!

The Role of Women in the Church

Introduction

Years ago, my wife and I visited an Evangelical Free Church. The adult Sunday school class of several men and women greeted us warmly, then we sat in the front row. Then the song leader informed us all that the regular teacher was not able to make it, so a very qualified substitute teacher had come instead. After a very impressive introduction to this teacher named "Gene," the teacher turned the pulpit over to the speaker. When the teacher came forward, I soon saw that the one I thought had been a "Gene" actually was a "Jean"! She did an excellent job preaching to the class, but I still had some lingering questions…

A young woman became a good friend of mine one summer while we traveled together in America and Europe with a Christian music group called the Continentals. Over the years after that summer Joan and I corresponded with one another. One day I noticed that the return address on her letter was from Berkeley, California. To my amazement, her remarks inside the letter revealed that she was attending the American Baptist Seminary to become a pastor of a church. "Rev. Joan" has been ordained now for many years.

The role of women in the church has been debated much the past 50 years due to the emphasis on the equality of men and women. Many denominations now ordain women into ministry and at most churches, women have freedoms to minister that were suppressed for centuries. This debate is generally good, for it has forced evangelicals to return to the Scriptures for answers.

However, this controversy has at least two problems. First, for many Christians the biblical teaching on the matter has taken a back seat to pragmatism and the world's philosophies. The second problem is that even when one does turn to the Scripture, some apparent contradictions on the role of women cause confusion whether God has a definitive answer on the issue. Since the Bible itself is the only reliable authority for faith and practice, this study will evaluate these passages in an attempt to clear up some of the confusion.

Problem Passages on the Role of Women

A glance at the key NT passages on the role of women in the church can at first seem irreconcilable. In 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 Paul allows women to publicly pray and prophesy in church. However, three chapters later he commands women to remain silent in the churches (1 Cor 14:34). How can we reconcile these two passages? Then in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 Paul confounds us more by asserting that women should receive instruction with submissiveness, not teaching or exercising authority over men. Therefore, in the first text women are to speak publicly, in the second they are to say nothing at all, and in the third they are to remain quiet (but not necessarily silent). How can Paul's teaching on this important subject be harmonized?

Various Attempts to Harmonize Paul's Teaching

The three passages mentioned above have been explained in several different ways:

1) Paul changed his mind between 1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Corinthians 14 (with 1 Timothy 2:11-12), withdrawing the former passage's allowance of public prayer and prophecy.[1]

   Response: A fickle apostle can hardly be described as under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit!

2) The 1 Corinthians 14 prohibition refers to teaching with an authoritative direction for the church but the other two texts allow prayer and prophesy as part of their regular ministry.[2]

   Response: The three passages do not have distinctions on the amount of authority inherent in each situation. Also, why would not a "regular ministry" be considered authoritative?

3) Women are allowed to pray and prophesy in general (1 Cor 11) but the prohibitions are designed to discourage hysterical outbursts (1 Cor 14:33, 40)[3] and to maintain the doctrinal integrity of the church by not allowing any uninstructed persons to teach in the body (1 Tim. 2:11).[4] Therefore, the latter two passages are not applicable today except in situations concerning unruly conduct and false teaching.

   Response: Hysterical outbursts are not noted in 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40 and 1 Timothy 2 does not indicate that women are to refrain from teaching because they are not as well instructed. It refers back to the creation account as evidence for woman's subordination.

4) Paul's statement in 1 Timothy 2:12 is best translated "I am not presently permitting a woman to teach or to have authority over men…" with the meaning that "the verb tense cannot be made necessarily into a general principle for all time" and the infinitive "to have authority" is literally "to domineer."[5] The "silence" of 1 Corinthians 14:34 is qualified in that it relates only to questions which women are to reserve for their husbands at home (v. 35) and whatever praying or prophesying they do must be done under the inspiration of the Spirit (1 Cor 11:5).[6] Therefore, women can pray and prophesy today.

   Response: To claim that Paul's use of the present tense meant that the practice was limited to his own time is only speculation. It more likely means that this was his normal practice, especially in view of his appeal to the creation account for support (1 Tim 2:13ff.). Also, the Greek word *authenteo*, "to exercise authority," does not necessarily have a negative connotation such as is true of "to domineer."

5) Paul did not actually make the statement in 1 Corinthians 14:34 which advocates that women be silent in the church since this was added sometime later by someone seeking to conform the church to a more traditional, "Jewish" position.[7] Also, he did not author the 1 Timothy passage.[8] This leaves only the 1 Corinthians 11 passage as authentic.

   Response: No textual support exists to question the authenticity of either of these passages.

6) Women praying and prophesying is allowed in 1 Corinthians 11, but 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 prohibit women from teaching men.[9] Therefore, the latter two passages do not limit women in public prayer and prophesying.

   Response: Teaching is not the subject addressed in 1 Corinthians 14. The context concerns prophecy and tongues. Also, one should wonder why prophesying would be allowed but teaching excluded. Finally, public prayer for women is prohibited by 1 Timothy 2:8.

7) Women cannot speak publicly in church (1 Cor 14:34), including teaching men (1 Tim 2:12). The 1 Corinthians 11 permission to pray and prophesy is only hypothetical as "we are not sure if... Paul contemplated the *possibility* of women prophesying in exceptional cases."[10]

   Response: It makes little sense that Paul would devote half a chapter to a situation that was not actually occurring. The rest of the epistle addresses actual problems, not hypothetical ones. Also, Paul does not prohibit the practice of women praying and prophesying.

8) Women cannot judge prophets in 1 Corinthians 14 which is a completely different situation than their permission to pray or to prophesy in the church according to 1 Corinthians 11.[11]

   Response: 1 Corinthians 14 limits women from speaking authoritatively in church, not simply judging prophets. If not, Paul would have used the verb "to judge" rather than "to speak."

9) The prohibitions in 1 Corinthians 14:34 and 1 Timothy 2:12 that prohibit speaking and teaching men apply only to married women whose husbands were present in the assembly whereas 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 applies to all other women.[12]

Response: The first two texts may apply only to married women, but nothing in 1 Corinthians 11 suggests that it is limited to single women and women with unsaved husbands.

10) 1 Corinthians 11 has informal meetings in view (e.g., mid-week prayer meetings, etc.) but 1 Corinthians 14 refers to the more formal Sunday worship service. [13]

Response: Formal/informal contrasts are forced since church worship took place in homes anyway. Paul seems to address the entire church by the phrase "nor do the churches of God" (1 Cor 11:16b) and women ministering to men privately would have been inappropriate.

11) A woman's prophesying in 1 Corinthians 11 refers to preaching, which is allowed of women today, indicating that the speaking limits in 1 Corinthians 14 does not include *all* speech.[14]

Response: Preaching is not the same as prophecy. Preaching interprets the Bible while prophecy is uninterpreted (2 Pet. 1:20-21). This view also does not address 1 Timothy 2 that clearly prohibits women from teaching men, which would be included in preaching.

12) The prohibition of 1 Corinthians 14 is the general rule and the prophesying of 1 Corinthians 11 the exception occurring only in the Corinthian church—a practice which Paul did not necessarily approve (he only regulated it with the use of the veil). The principle of silence also applies in 1 Timothy 2 where women are not allowed to teach men as well. "It is only too apparent that the early church did not allow its women to take part audibly in public worship. That included preaching, praying in mixed company, and teaching men in public."[15]

Response: Most (if not all) views above see 1 Corinthians 11 as the general rule on women's role in the church. Yet this emphasis upon 1 Corinthians 11 is not necessary, especially since the major teaching in this chapter is to illustrate with a head covering the woman's position of subordination to man (her role in the church service is not the emphasis). Undoubtedly, the women in Corinth prayed and prophesied in church, but Paul did not condone this practice and we find no evidence of women leading in worship in any other NT church. In 1 Timothy 2:8, he specifically states that it should be the *men* who are to pray in the worship service.

Therefore, the prohibition of 1 Corinthians 14 is the general rule and the prayer and prophecies of 1 Corinthians 11 the exception. Chapter 11 concerns the women's position but chapter 14 relates to the women's public activity, indicating that chapter 14 should be the norm for worship. This priority of silence is consistent with the 1 Timothy 2 prohibition from teaching men as well.

Conclusion

Both 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 teach that the men in a congregation should lead in worship. Women should "remain silent" in the sense of public preaching, public prayer in the services of the church and teaching men in public (Priscilla's ministry to Apollos was approved of God as a *private* ministry in Acts 18). These limitations, of course, do not bar women from *all* ministries since older women are commanded to instruct the younger women (Tit. 2:4) and all women may teach children and serve the church in numerous other ways.

Finally, Charles Ryrie writes,

> There are many times on both the home and foreign fields when there are simply no men to do the work. In such instances this writer feels that we need to remember that Paul not only commanded that things be done decently and in order but also that they be done. In such cases, then, one feels that it is better to do the work with qualified women—even though this is not the ideal—than to sit back and do nothing simply because there are no men. However, women must be cautioned against continuing in such work after there are trained men available for the job.[16]

To this I can heartily agree.

Endnotes

[1]Thomas Charles Edwards, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1885), 381.

[2]F. Godet, *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1887), 2:915.

[3]Irene M. Robbins, "St. Paul and the Ministry of Women," *Expository Times* 44 (January 1935), 186.

[4]Austin H. Stouffer, "The Ordination of Women: YES," *Christianity Today* (February 20, 1981), 258.

[5]Don Williams, *The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church* (Ventura: G/L Publications, Regal Books, 1977), 112; David M. Scholer, "1 Timothy 2:9-15 & the Place of Women in the Church's Ministry," in *Women, Authority & the Bible*, ed. Alvera Michelsen (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1986): 193-219 says that Paul's prohibition related only to women at Ephesus who were succumbing to false teachers and is not a timeless principle.

[6]Williams, 71.

[7]Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 699; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 246.

[8]Robbins, 185.

[9] George W. Knight III, "The Ordination of Women: NO," *Christianity Today* (February 20, 1981), 262; H. Wayne House, "The Speaking of Women and the Prohibition of the Law," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (July-September 1988): 310. James B. Hurley says most interpreters have held this view ("Did Paul Require Veils or the Silence of Women? A Consideration of 1 Cor 11:2-16 and 1 Cor 14:33b-36," *Westminster Theological Journal* 35 (Winter 1973): 190.

[10]Godet, 324-325.

[11]James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 188-194.

[12]David K. Lowery, "1 Corinthians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, eds. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983), 541.

[13]Harold R. Holmyard III, "Does 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 Refer to Women Praying and Prophesying in Church?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154 (October-December 1997): 461-72; John MacArthur, Jr., *1 Corinthians*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1984), 256; W. E. Vine, *1 Corinthians* (London: Oliphants, 1951), 147; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), 437.

[14]Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1994), 219.

[15]Charles C. Ryrie, *The Role of Women in the Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958), 80; Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians,* 2d ed., The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914), 230; Leon Morris, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 201.

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Connection
EXTRA
TOPICS OF INTEREST TO DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY ALUMNI

WOMEN IN THE CHURCH
BIBLICAL DATA REPORT

Several years ago, an ad hoc faculty committee prepared a report on the role of women in the church. The report was presented at a time when Dallas Seminary was revising its degree programs and admissions policies. The purpose for the report was to help the seminary design and administer its degree programs in a manner consistent with a valid understanding and application of Scripture.

Since the initial publication of the report, the seminary has received many requests for copies from alumni and churches. Most were searching for a concise survey of the biblical data pertaining to the participation of women in the worship and service of God. Because of this continuing interest, we have decided to reprint the report in its entirety as a *Connection Extra*. While the report focuses specifically on Dallas Seminary, we believe the information will be beneficial to churches and parachurch organizations.

Woman at Creation

• Woman has personal equality with man as an image-bearer of God (Gen. 1:27–28; 5:1–2).

Allowing for biological distinctives a woman has the same nature, qualities, and abilities as a man. Maleness and femaleness, though distinct, are fully harmonized (Gen. 1:28; Ps. 8:4–8; 1 Cor. 11–12).

• Woman has a distinctive role function within this equality (Gen. 2:18).

The priority of the male in creation reflects God's appointed order for His creation not male superiority. Man has the responsibility of headship (cf. 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:21), and woman has the responsibility of being a "fitting helper" (Gen. 2:18). Each supplies what is lacking in the other. They are complementary because they are distinct.

Woman at the Fall

The superiority of male over female is first mentioned in Scripture as an inevitable consequence of sin not as an inherent quality or right. In the post-Fall order of things God said man would exploit woman's natural "helpmate desire" toward him, or more probably, he would retaliate in the face of her "desire" (cf. Gen. 4:7) to dominate and lead him in order to dominate and subjugate her (Gen. 3:16b). The subjugation of either women or men is a symptom of mankind's fallen nature (cf. e.g., pagan religions).

Women in the Old Testament Times Until the Time of Jesus

• Women served in the doorway of the Tabernacle (Exod. 38:8; 1 Sam. 2:22).

The same word (*saba*) is used of their work as that of the Levites. These women were probably widows who devoted themselves to the service of God.

• Miriam, a prophetess, and all the women with her gave public praise to God (Exod. 15:20–21).

Apparently she also had some leadership role along with Moses and Aaron (Mic. 6:4).

• Deborah was a prophetess and also a judge in Israel (Judg. 4–5).

She and Barak sang a song of praise for God's deliverance which is recorded for both men and women to read (Judg. 5).

• Hannah prayed in the house of the Lord, and her prayer of thanksgiving was recorded for both men and women to read (1 Sam. 1:9–2:10).

• Huldah was a prophetess who prophesied before the high priest and the men of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:8–20; 2 Kings 22:3 with Jer. 1:2).

• Many women sang in the temple choirs (1 Chron. 25:5–7; Neh. 7:66–67).

• Many women had an important part to play in proclaiming the Lord's Word (Ps. 68:11).

• Though a few women served as civil rulers in Israel (e.g., Deborah) there is no record of a female priest or high priest.

• The prophet Joel predicted that one day "your sons and daughters will prophesy" (Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:16–18).

• The Virgin Mary's praise to God is recorded for both men and women to read (Luke 1:46–55).

• Anna was a prophetess who served in the temple night and day with fastings and prayers (Luke 2:36–38).

Women in the Ministry and Teaching of Jesus

• A loyal group of women accompanied Jesus and served Him on His ministry tours (Luke 8:1–3; Matt. 27:55; Mark 15:41).

• In contrast to normal custom and rabbinic standards, Jesus spoke with a Samaritan woman and revealed to her the nature of true worship (John 4:7–26).

• Jesus cared equally for the physical infirmities of women (Mark 1:29–31; 5:25–34), and He drew attention to the devotion of an unnamed poor widow to teach a lesson in discipleship (Mark 12:41–44).

• He permitted Mary, Lazarus' sister, to sit at His feet and learn—a privilege granted only to men at that time (Luke 10:42).

• Women who had been healed by Jesus praised God publicly in the synagogue (Luke 13:13).

• In a male-dominated culture, He redressed legal situations which were weighted against women (Matt. 19:9–10; Mark 10:11–12).

• Though Jesus had both male and female disciples, all twelve original apostles were men (Matt. 10:1–4; Mark 3:13–19).
• He entrusted women with the high privilege of carrying the news of His resurrection to His twelve disciples (Mark 16:6–8; Luke 24:11).

This was a remarkable thing in that culture since a woman's testimony was not legally valid in order to establish a fact. No wonder the disciples had a hard time believing them!

• Mary Magdalene was one of the first people to see Jesus as the risen Lord (John 20:11–18).
• Jesus' charge to evangelism and discipleship given to the apostles applies to the church at large with reference to all believers, men and women (Matt. 28:19–20; Mark 16:15–16; Acts 1:8).

Women in the Life and Ministry of the Early Church

• The Holy Spirit fell on men and women on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4).
• Women prayed with men (Acts 1:14; 12:12).
• Women had various ministries of hospitality, service, and good works (Dorcas, Acts 9:36; Mary the mother of Mark, Acts 12:12; Lydia, Acts 16:14–15).
• Priscilla and Aquila took Apollos aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:26–28).
• The Holy Spirit used women as His prophetic mouthpiece (Philip's four daughters were prophetesses, Acts 21:8–9).

Overall it appears that women took as active a part in the life and ministry of the church as men.

Women in the Ministry and Teaching of Paul and Peter

• Paul affirms the personal equality of man and woman in the new creation by stating that in Christ there is "neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28).

A woman obtains salvation by faith exactly as a man does (Eph. 2:8–9; 1 Pet. 1:18–19), and both are coheirs of the grace of Life despite some physical limitations a woman has as one who has "the weaker [feminine] vessel [body]" (1 Pet. 3:7).

Like a man, she is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9b), and her body also serves as a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19–20). In the new creation she has equal standing before God (Rom. 5:1–2) and man and woman are interdependent (1 Cor. 11:11–12).

• A woman has access to God in prayer as does a man (1 Cor. 11:4–5, 13); she is nurtured by His Word as is a man (1 Pet. 2:2); and she enjoys the privileges and responsibilities of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; 3:7; Rev. 1:6a).
• In Christ a woman is given the same spiritual gifts available to men today, including pastoring, teaching, and evangelism (1 Cor. 12:7–11; 27–31; Rom. 12:3–8; 1 Pet. 4:10–11).

The Holy Spirit sovereignly distributes spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:11). They are given in order that all believers might use them to glorify God (1 Pet. 4:10–11) and to equip and build up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12–16). They are to be exercised for the common good and according to God's established order (1 Cor. 12:7; 14:26–40). A spiritual gift is not the same thing as a church office.

• Paul recognized that the Holy Spirit used women as His prophetic mouthpiece (1 Cor. 11:5).
• Paul instructed older women to teach younger women and children (2 Tim. 1:5 with 3:14–15; Prov. 1:8; Titus 2:3–5).
• Women had ministries of hospitality, good works, and service (1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; 1 Tim. 2:10; 5:9–10).
• Paul encouraged both unmarried men and women to remain single and devote themselves to the Lord's service (1 Cor. 7:32–34).
• Euodia and Syntyche were coworkers with Paul (Phil. 4:2–3).
• In Romans 16, out of the 29 people commended for loyal service 10 were women (Rom. 16; 1 Cor. 9:5). No distinction in service or status is implied.

Phoebe is called a "deacon [servant] of the church" (Rom. 16:1). Andronicus and Junia (feminine), Paul's kinsmen and fellow-prisoners, were said to be "outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me" (Rom. 16:7).
• Within the framework of the personal equality of man and woman God has established a functional order in which man has the responsibility of headship (leadership) in both the home and church (1 Cor. 11:3, 8–9; 14:34–36; Eph. 5:23; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:11–12; 1 Pet. 3:1–7), and woman has the responsibility of willing submission in recognition of God's order (Eph. 5:22–24; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1).

Functional submission in these spheres is not inconsistent nor incompatible with personal (ontological) equality in Christ. The two must exist side by side just as God instituted them originally.

One primary means by which woman glorifies God is through being the "glory of man" (1 Cor. 11:7), that is, by fulfilling her responsibility given at creation of voluntarily submitting herself to the headship of man.

In the New Testament, the headship-submission relationship relates to the home and the church. All women are not subject to all men.

• Paul's list of elder qualifications indicates that the office of elder/pastor is limited to men, and this office with its commensurate authority is conferred by the local church (1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Pet. 5:1–4).

Consequently the directing/ruling function of the local church is reserved for men. There are no examples of "ordained" women elders in the Scriptures, nor are they encouraged to seek such an office. Nevertheless elders may delegate certain responsibilities to various church members, both men and women.
• Whether the office of deacon is open to women is debated. The primary passage which raises this issue is 1 Timothy 3:11. There are three major interpretations of this verse:

1. The women mentioned are unmarried assistants to male deacons (Robert M. Lewis, "'Women' of 1 Timothy 3:11," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136 [April–June, 1979]:167–75).
2. The women mentioned are the wives of male deacons (Charles Ryrie, *The Role of Women in the Church*, p. 91; C. K. Barrett, *The New Clarendon Bible*, p. 61).
3. The women mentioned are a select group of female deacons within the church (James Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, and the majority of commentators).

The second and third views seem more probable, and both handle the data adequately. Whether or not they held the office of deacon in New Testament times, it is clear that women fulfilled many of its functions (1 Tim. 2:10; 5:9–10; Acts 9:36).

Phoebe may have been a recognized deacon of the church in Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1–2). If so, this would indicate that both men and women served in this office. However, since she was probably a wealthy social leader in the city, she may have been simply an unofficial patroness of the church.

• Since the function of teaching is a spiritual gift and not an office of the church, it is available to both men and women (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28–29).

The question, however, is not whether a woman may teach but whom she may teach and in what setting. Three Pauline passages speak to this issue: 1 Corinthians 11:2–16; 14:26, 34–35; and 1 Timothy 2:9–15. The interpretation and application of these passages continue to evoke considerable debate in evangelical circles. It is generally agreed that these verses primarily refer to activities within the context of corporate worship.

1 Corinthians 11:2–16; 14:26

On two occasions Paul mentioned specific situations in which a woman may speak in corporate worship (1 Cor. 11:5 and 14:26).

In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul instructs a woman to have a sign of authority on her head (1 Cor. 11:10) when she prays and prophesies in order to demonstrate her submission to God's established order in the church. Some argue that "authority on her head" refers to the authority of a woman herself to exercise her spiritual gifts within the divinely ordained order and not to a sign of another's authority over her (Morna Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of 1 Corinthians 11:10," *NTS* 10 [1963–64]: 410–16).

The nature of this sign of authority in Paul's day is difficult to determine, but it is usually interpreted in one of two ways.

It may refer to the practice of wearing veils in corporate worship since some sort of head-covering seems to be indicated in the passage, even though the term "veil" does not occur in the Greek text (Bruce Waltke, "1 Corinthians 11:2–16: An Interpretation," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 135 [January–March, 1978]: 46–57).

Or it may refer to a woman's long hair which, when properly fastened, would serve in place of a head-covering (11:15), reflecting her submission to God's established order in the church (James Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective,* pp. 184–86).

This raises the hermeneutical problem of cultural relativity with its corresponding adaptations. Unchanging truths about God and His will are applied in a variety of cultural and situational contexts within Scripture itself. It is generally recognized, especially by dispensationalists, that not all biblical teaching about conduct is normative for behavior today. Some applications of biblical principles are restricted to a limited audience. Scripture itself must specify the nature and extent of this restriction in some way and biblical theology confirms it.

One task of exegesis that is widely practiced but lacks widely accepted definitive criteria is to distinguish universal, unchanging, normative truths from recorded applications which are local, temporary, and subject to changing situations. To fail to see how a particular application of a normative principle has been culturally conditioned or to treat a normative principle as culturally relative would both be mistakes. How to make this distinction and do it accurately needs further thought and discussion.

Many interpreters agree that the normative principle in 1 Corinthians 11 is that a woman, while praying and prophesying, is to show her acceptance of and submission to God's ordering of His creation (11:7–13). Accordingly, the application of this principle here is culturally conditioned. In Paul's day it was expressed by the head-covering which was necessitated by first-century culture (11:16). Our culture has no consistent, corresponding custom. However a woman's hair naturally serves in the place of a head-covering, and the normative principle of a submissive spirit remains constant.

Some, however, would argue that the head-covering is not simply a particular application of a normative principle and therefore culturally determined; but is, in fact, part of the normative principle itself and thus normative practice since Paul appeals to creation order in his argument. But one must consider whether Paul used the creation account to substantiate male headship or a female head-covering.

1 Corinthians 14:34–35

In light of 1 Corinthians 11:5 and 14:26, it is reasonable to suggest that 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 does not mean that women are to be absolutely silent at all times during corporate worship. Of several interpretations of this passage two of the most common are also the most probable.

Paul's prohibition is against women speaking out to teach men in corporate worship (1 Tim. 2:11–12; George Knight, *The New Testament Teaching on the Role of Men and Women,* pp. 36–37).

The second interpretation states that Paul's prohibition is against women evaluating the utterances of the prophets in corporate worship (since this evaluation would involve an exercise of authority which would go against the requirement of submission to male headship) (1 Cor. 11:2–6; 1 Tim. 2:11–15; James Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective,* pp. 188–94).

Both interpretations have merit, but the latter one fits the context of 1 Corinthians 14:26–35 better. As shown above, the Law did not prohibit prayer and praise by women in public worship. Consequently, Paul's reference to the Law (14:34) is probably a reference to the creation order as it is now to be exhibited in the local church.

1 Timothy 2:9–15

In verses 9 and 10 Paul directed that a woman's dress and behavior should be appropriate when she engages in corporate worship so that in attitude, appearance, or conduct she does not give the impression that she rejects God's established order of male headship in this sphere.

In verse 11, he asserted that women are to receive instruction in corporate worship with a quiet and submissive spirit. If they do this, they will have less problem

obeying Paul's command in verse 12 to neither teach nor have authority over a man in public worship. This is not Paul's narrow opinion or an overreaction to a local church problem at Ephesis (cf. Douglas Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11–15: Meaning and Significance," *Trinity Journal* 1 NS [1980]: 62–83).

The reason for Paul's prohibition is twofold:

1. Adam was formed before Eve (2:13), a reference to God's established order in creation and the principle of headship (Gen. 2:21–22).

There is a proper kind and order of leadership in the new creation as well as in the old prior to and following the Fall.

2. Eve was genuinely deceived by Satan; whereas Adam was willfully disobedient to God's command (2:14).

She acted on her own initiative and was deceived. Paul did not wish Eve's error to be repeated in the church. Thus, a woman, no matter how gifted or capable, is not "to have authority" (not just "to usurp authority," KJV) that properly belongs to a man in this sphere. This is simply God's established order. Paul did not mean that a woman is inherently less intelligent or more easily deceived than a man and so cannot teach or lead. Male headship itself has not preserved the church from heresy. Neither did Paul mean that sin in the human race is the fault of a woman (cf. Rom. 5:12–21).

Despite her equal standing in Christ, a woman should not despise the key role assigned to her—childbearing and child rearing—and should use it as an opportunity to glorify God. Her unique ability to bear and nurture life is evidence of God's favor upon her. In so doing she will work out her salvation in God's ordered plan and will reap eternal reward (2:15).

Though women are forbidden to teach men in corporate worship, they can always teach women and children (Titus 2:3–5) and give instruction to men as well, at least privately, as Priscilla and Aquila did with Apollos (Acts 18:26).

Several questions remain.

What constitutes teaching in the worship service of the church? A testimony, a devotional, a missionary report, singing a solo, or reading a passage of Scripture?

Does a woman violate Paul's injunction if the elders of her church, realizing she is a competent teacher, agree that she should teach the whole church, men included, in the area of her competence which may or may not involve the direct exposition of Scripture?

Can a woman teach men in settings apart from local church worship or church-related meetings (e.g., home Bible studies), such as in a college classroom, in personal evangelism, in a writing ministry, or on the mission field where no male missionaries serve (cf. Acts 18:24–26)?

Conclusions

- Scripture affirms that women are equal with men as image-bearers of God and in their personal standing before God and the church.
- Scripture affirms that women are distinct in their femaleness from men in their maleness as created and ordered by God.
- Scripture affirms a basic pattern of functional order applicable to the church in which men are given headship—the task of leadership, and women are to be subject to this leadership (as are men who are not designated leaders).
- Scripture demonstrates that women have unique and significant ministries to fulfill along with men in the church because they are gifted with the same spiritual gifts as men. There are no gender distinctions in the distribution of spiritual gifts.
- The office of elder is not open to a woman, but as with a man, she can exercise her gifts without holding this office.
- The office of deacon is probably open to a woman—at least women fulfilled many of its functions in the New Testament church.
- The Scriptures indicate that a woman may participate actively in corporate worship, but she is not to teach or engage in activities in which she has authority over a man or men in this sphere.

She may minister in church services or church-related meetings so long as her primary purpose is not to have authority that befits the office of elder/pastor. It is debated whether this prohibition regarding teaching the Scriptures or Bible doctrine extends beyond the confines of corporate worship or church-related meetings.

There are numerous spheres of leadership and ministry that are appropriate for women, limited only by situations where a woman would assume "headship" authority over a man or men. Such spheres include Christian education, outreach and evangelism, specialized pastoral ministries, church administration, a music ministry, a prayer ministry, a service ministry, and a writing ministry.

Perhaps two biblical guidelines would be helpful in evaluating particular situations:

1. Does our interpretation or application of a biblical passage in a given situation affirm woman's personal equality with man?

2. Does our interpretation or application of a biblical passage in a given situation affirm woman's responsibility of willing submission to man's headship responsibility in the home and church?

—July 1997

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Interpretive Issues on Spirit Baptism

I. The Issue Stated

A. Both John and Jesus promised the disciples that they would be baptized with the Spirit, which was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). The Spirit is not mentioned as the agent (the one who baptizes) in these references in the Gospels and Acts, but all translations show him to be the agent in 1 Corinthians 12:13. The translation of "baptized *with* the Spirit" in the Gospels/Acts is accepted by both charismatic and non-charismatic interpreters.

B. However, a difference of opinion occurs regarding 1 Corinthians 12:13, translated as follows:

> "For we were all baptized by* one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" (NIV, *Marginal Note: Or *with*, or *in*)
>
> "For by* one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slave or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (NASB, *Marginal Note: Or *in*)

Because of the added phrase "into one body," both interpretive camps see a need to render the "by one Spirit" phrase differently than in the gospels. The Pentecostal choice is "in one Spirit" but the non-Pentecostal view is "by one Spirit." Both of these ("in" and "by") are acceptable grammatically, but theology and the rest of the verse must also be considered to make the best decision.

II. The Choices Reviewed

Actually, the phrase **Baptizo en Pneumati** could be translated three different ways:

A. "Baptized <u>in</u> the Spirit": This translation makes the Spirit the *element* (or sphere) into which a believer is spiritually baptized. This standard Pentecostal interpretation is advocated by some commentaries on 1 Corinthians (e.g., Gordon D. Fee, NICNT, 606; Leon Morris, TNTC, 174; Robertson/Plummer, ICC, 272; cf. NIV and NASB margins). These commentaries translate the next phrase "so as to become one body" (instead of the NIV "into one body") with the idea that the Church is the end or goal of the baptism.

B. "Baptized <u>by</u> the Spirit": This option makes the Spirit the *agent* or the one who actually does the baptizing. Most if not all reputable translations and paraphrases follow this interpretation (NIV, NASB, KJV, NKJV, Amplified, GNB, RSV, LB, Phillips, etc.). They all note that believers are baptized "into one body" so that the Church is the element (or sphere).

C. "Baptized <u>with</u> the Spirit": This makes the Spirit the *instrument* in the baptism, a meaning which is used consistently in the Gospels and Acts. However, few (if any) translations render it this way in 1 Corinthians 12:13, though it is grammatically possible (cf. NIV margin; MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, 231-32; my view on the next few pages).

* Some may hope that all three views exist at the same time (cf. David Lowery, "1 Corinthians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2:533). However, this is unlikely as the *sphere* (element) in the text is specifically designated to be the body of Christ.

** Note that the concept of a "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" is not a scriptural designation since the Greek preposition *en* (ἐν) only very rarely means "of" (an exception is Rom. 5:15 ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι "the gift of grace").

III. The Significance of the Issue

Why does it make any difference whether the translation is "in the Spirit" or "by the Spirit"?

A. The issue affects whether we must have a post-conversion Spirit baptism (a so-called "second blessing") after our salvation, evidenced by speaking in tongues (cf. Acts 2:4). The "in the Spirit" view makes 1 Corinthians 12:13 teach a different baptism than the gospels/Acts and thus divides the Church into the "haves" and the "have-nots" (those with a special baptism experience versus "non-Spirit-baptized" believers).

B. The issue affects whether the baptizing and filling of the Spirit are separate (non-charismatic) or the same (charismatic) experiences.

C. The issue affects distinctions regarding whether the Church began on the day of Pentecost (non-charismatic) or not (charismatic). The latter view produces a much different conception of what is meant by the body of Christ, for it has the problem of explaining how the Church existed in the OT without any baptizing work of the Spirit. (Other problems also result from having the Church exist prior to Acts 2.)

IV. Reasons why "baptized with the Spirit into one body" may be the best solution

A. One phrase (*baptizo en pneumati*) describes the same work of the Spirit throughout the NT. The other uses of *baptizo en pneumati* contrast John the Baptist as an agent of baptism with Christ as an agent of baptism (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16). Each of these references clearly mention Christ as the agent who "will baptize you *with* the Holy Spirit." While the sphere into which Christ baptizes is not stated, this sphere is clearly indicated in 1 Corinthians 12:13 as the body of Christ, the Church. Thus, both the agent and the sphere are noted in Scripture, leaving us with the Spirit as the instrument.

B. In none of the six cases above is the Spirit the *sphere* (element) into which people were baptized, so why would He be the element in 1 Corinthians 12:13?

1. It makes much better sense to see the Spirit and Christ working together as dual agents to baptize believers into Christ's body, reflected in "View B" on the next page and translated this way in most Bibles. (All reputable translations adhere to this view. While this itself is not determinative, note that a unanimous opinion exists against the Pentecostal interpretation of the verse.)

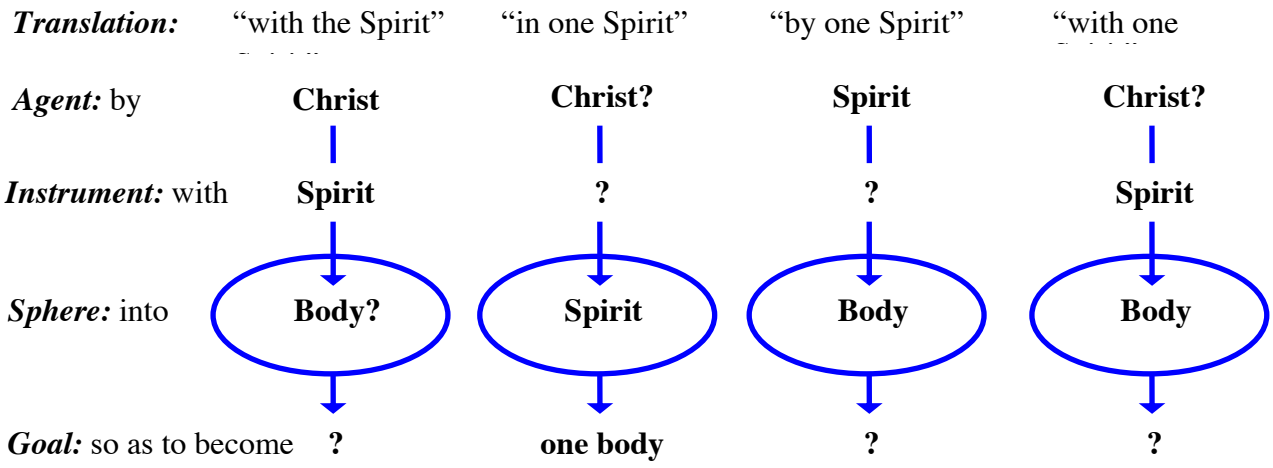
2. Perhaps it is even better to interpret *baptizo en pneumati* as indicating instrument/means. This way the same phrase is used in a consistent manner throughout the New Testament. Perhaps significantly, "Nowhere in the Bible is the Holy Spirit spoken of as the baptizer" (MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, 231).

C. The Corinthian church did not *become* one body because of the Spirit baptism. Rather, it only joined the *already existing* universal church when these Corinthians were saved.

D. The translation of "in the Spirit" with its associated "so as to become one body" sheds doubt on whether all believers have actually received this Spirit baptism, which would contradict Romans 8:9.

Summary of Interpretations on Spirit Baptism

	Gospels/Acts	**1 Corinthians 12:13**		
	Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 2:33; 11:16	***View A*** Pentecostal Interpretation	***View B*** All Bible Translations, Non-Pentecostal View	***View C*** Another Non-Pentecostal View —My View
Translation: How is *baptizo en pneumati* rendered?	"will baptize you *with* the Holy Spirit"	"We were all baptized *in* one Spirit *so as to become* one body"	"We were all baptized *by* one Spirit *into* one body"	"We were all baptized *with* one Spirit *into* one body"
Agent: Who baptizes? ("by…")	Christ	(Unstated)	Holy Spirit (under Christ)	(Unstated)—but the gospels show him to be Christ
Instrument: With what or whom is the believer baptized?	Holy Spirit —Matt. 3 says all are baptized either with the Spirit (v. 11, believers) or with fire (v. 12, unbelievers)	(Unstated)	(Unstated)	Holy Spirit
Sphere: Into what *element* is the baptism?	(Unstated)	Holy Spirit	Body of Christ	Body of Christ
Goal: To what *end* or purpose is the baptism?	(Unstated)	Body of Christ	(Unstated)	(Unstated)
How is *eis hen soma* translated?	N/A	*"so as to become* one body" (goal or end)	*"into* one body" (sphere)	*"into* one body" (sphere)—same use in Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27
Correlation of Gospels/Acts with 1 Cor 12:13	—	Inconsistent	More consistent	Most consistent
Resulting Theology	N/A	Not all Christians have Spirit baptism (we should seek it) Baptism and filling are the same experience	All Christians already have Spirit baptism (we shouldn't seek it) Baptism and filling are different experiences	All Christians already have Spirit baptism (we shouldn't seek it) Baptism and filling are different experiences



The Baptism and Filling with the Spirit

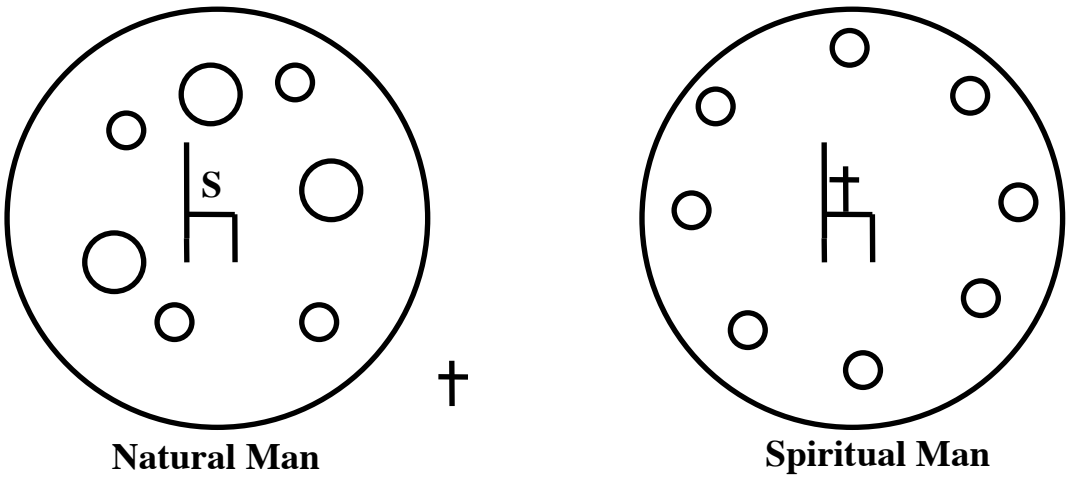
One key issue that must be clear in order to understand the Scripture's teaching on charismatic issues is the biblical distinction between the Holy Spirit's ministries of baptizing and filling:

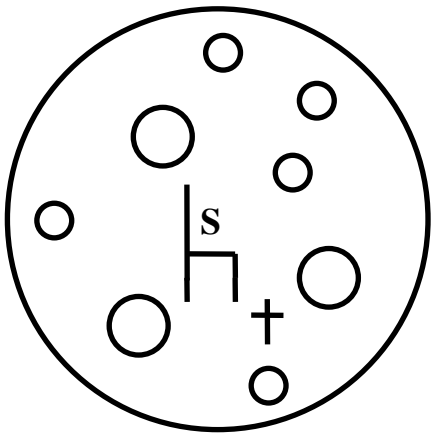
	The Baptism with the Holy Spirit	**The Filling with the Holy Spirit**
Definition or Purpose	The Spirit's work of placing believers into the body of Christ	The Spirit's work of empowering (controlling) believers for service and equipping them with Christ's character
Scripture	Prophesied (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5); Fulfilled (Acts 2:1ff.; cf. 11:15-16); Explained (1 Cor 12:13)	"Walk by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16) "Keep in step with the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25) Be "led by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:18)
Key Passage	1 Corinthians 12:13	Ephesians 5:18
Tense	Aorist: past event, action undefined	Present: continuous, action repeated
Mood	Indicative: a statement of fact ("were baptized"), never commanded or shown "how to get the baptism"	Imperative: a command to heed ("be filled"), shown how to receive the filling by yielding ourselves to Christ
Time Occurs	At salvation "promise...is for all" (Acts 2:38-39) when they believed (Acts 11:16-17) "every spiritual blessing" (Eph. 1:3) "complete in him" (Col. 2:9-10) Believers have been given "everything pertaining to...godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3)	At and after salvation
Frequency	Not repeated (a one-time experience)	Repeated (throughout one's life; compare Acts 9:17; 13:9)
Participants	All Christians (spiritual and carnal) ("we were all baptized" 1 Cor 12:13; cf. Gal. 3:2, 14; 4:6)	Spiritual Christians
Permanence	Eternal: cannot be undone	Temporal: can be lost (Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31)
Prerequisites	Faith in Christ	Yielding to Christ
OT occurrences?	No: never happened before Pentecost	Yes: OT believers sometimes empowered for service by the Spirit but not indwelt
Results	Position: Placed in the body of Christ (Church)	Practice: Praise, worship, thanksgiving, submissiveness (Eph. 5:19-21); Christlike character (Gal. 5:22-23); Evangelistic involvement (Acts 2:4 w/ 2:41; 4:31 w/ 5:14; 6:3 w/ 6:7)
Commanded?	No	Yes
Sought?	No (Acts 11:15-16)	Yes

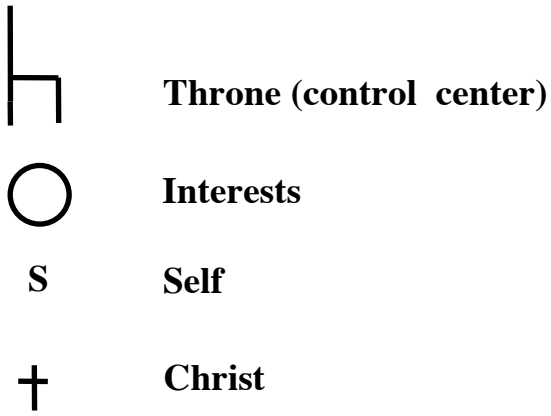
Walking by the Spirit

1 Corinthians 2:14–3:3

Adapted from the booklet *How to Be Filled with the Holy Spirit* (Campus Crusade for Christ)*







- Typically, the phrase "walking in the Spirit" is used regarding this ministry of the Spirit, but this phrase designates the *sphere* (which actually is the body of Christ). A better term is "walking by the Spirit" which more accurately shows *dependence* as the phrase is a dative of means (Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit,* 1st ed., 100).

Tongues in Acts and 1 Corinthians

Speaking in tongues in Acts have both similarities and differences with the tongues of 1 Corinthians. While the tongues themselves are the same, the circumstances were different.

Comparisons	Tongues in Acts	Tongues in 1 Corinthians
Known foreign languages used	Languages of the Roman world were spoken (Acts 2:7-11)	Since the same term (*glossa*) is used, we should assume the nature of the gift is the same
Both functioned as a sign to unbelievers	The listeners were exhorted to receive forgiveness (Acts 2:38)	Unbelievers in the assembly needed translation for blessing (1 Cor 14:21-22)
Source is God rather than self	The tongues speakers were not trying to get the gift (Acts 2:2)	Tongues is among the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor 12–14)
Contrasts	**Tongues in Acts**	**Tongues in 1 Corinthians**
Speaker's Control	Uncontrolled	Controlled
Given to…	Groups only	Individuals who are gifted
Phenomenon	Wind and fire (Acts 2:2)	None
Frequency per person	One-time	Repeated
Those who understand	Native speakers	Those gifted in interpretation
Interpretation	No corollary gift	Yes (the corollary gift of interpretation)
Dates	AD 33-53 (Acts 2–19)	AD 56
When occurred	Generally, at salvation	Generally, after salvation
Use	Always used properly	Often misused
Restrictions	None	Some: only 2-3 per service, each in turn, need interpreter (1 Cor 14:27)

Eternal Security in Corinth

One issue Christians disagree about is the subject of "once saved, always saved." Are believers genuinely saved for eternity *now*, or must we wait until death to find out if we have persevered enough to achieve eternal life? In other words, can a Christian find assurance of salvation?

Answers to this question typically fall into two camps. Arminian churches (Methodists, Wesleyans, Pentecostals, General Baptists, Salvation Army, etc.) who emphasize free will in salvation generally teach against eternal security. However, Calvinistic churches (Presbyterians, Reformed, Particular Baptists, Brethren, Anglican, etc.) usually support eternal security. Their logic is often that those who are genuinely saved will persevere to the end of their lives and prove they had salvation all along.

A problem comes with people who claim the name of Christ but *do not persevere* in faith and practice. Are these people saved? At this point the church at Corinth can serve as a key test case. Corinthian believers were by far the most carnal Christians in the NT. If there *ever* was a church that Paul would have taught *against* the concept of eternal security, Corinth would have been that church—they had divisions, incest, prostitution, lawsuits, spiritual gift abuses, disbelief in the resurrection, etc.

Surprisingly, Paul affirmed the Corinthians repeatedly that they have eternal security:

1. Their salvation will be maintained until the Lord's return.

> "He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful" (1 Cor 1:8-9)

2. Even carnal believers will still enter heaven because of their saving faith but without rewards.

> "If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames" (1 Cor 3:12-15; cf. 2 Cor 5:10)

3. They should expel the incestuous man so Satan could even kill him, but he would still be saved.

> "When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit… hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord" (1 Cor 5:4-5)

4. Paul exhorts them to serve God wholeheartedly since their service would be fully rewarded.

> "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (1 Cor 15:58)

5. God alone secured their redemption by sealing them with the Spirit to assure their salvation.

> "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, guaranteeing what is to come" (2 Cor 1:21-22)

For further study, read Joseph C. Dillow, *Final Destiny: The Future Reign of the Servant Kings,* 2nd ed. (Monument, CO: Paniym Group, 2012); Charles Stanley, *Eternal Security: Can You Be Sure?* (Nashville: Nelson, 1990); Charles R. Swindoll, *The Grace Awakening* (Dallas: Word, 1990, 1996).

Should Leaders Defend Themselves?

"I'm convinced that God wants us to reconcile with our former church," I told my congregation. Yet our key lay leader insisted publicly that the motives of the church leaders at the mother church were wrong, making any talks with them pointless. That night I came face-to-face with opposition to my leadership as pastor and, frankly, I anguished at how to respond.

One touchy issue that every Christian leader faces eventually is how to respond when opposed. Should he defend himself or leave the matter alone for the Lord to deal with his opposers in His own time? Actually, we see both responses in Scripture.

1. Several leaders **<u>defended themselves</u>**.

    a. **Moses** sometimes defended himself against complaints from the people by rebuking them (Exod. 16:2; Num. 14:2; 16:2; 20:2).
    b. **Jeremiah** prophesied that Hananiah would die since he was a false prophet who opposed him by saying the exile would last only two years (Jer. 28).
    c. **Nehemiah** beat some of his opposers who intermarried with pagans and pulled out their hair (Neh. 13:25).
    d. **Paul** planted many churches, but others generally insisted on doing his follow-up—and they often did it wrong. So, Paul defended himself on the first missionary journey to the Galatians (1:1–2:21), on the second journey to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2:3–3:13), and especially on his third journey to the Corinthians (1 Cor 1:10-17; 2:1-10; 3:4-10; 4:1-21; 2 Cor 6:11-13; 10:1–13:10).

2. However, leaders sometimes left their opposers alone and **<u>did not defend themselves</u>**.

    a. **Moses** responded to opposition from Aaron, Miriam (Num. 12:3) and the people by doing nothing or simply talking to God about it (Exod. 15:24; 17:2; Num. 16:41; 21:4).
    b **David** was the legitimate king and yet repeatedly refused to defend the throne against Saul (1 Sam. 18–27) or Abner (2 Sam. 2:12–3:39) or Absalom (2 Sam. 15–18). He even executed those who defended his throne against Ish-Bosheth (2 Sam. 4).
    c. **Jesus** refused to defend himself before Herod Antipas (Luke 23:9).

So, the Bible has no clear pattern on how to respond to opposition—or does it? *In each case where leaders <u>did defend themselves</u>, they actually did not defend their own biases. Rather, they stood for God's clearly revealed will.* Moses knew that God was leading him since the Lord called him (Exod. 3–4). God told Jeremiah told that the exile would last 70 years (Jer. 25:10-11), so he had God's prophetic word that Hananiah stood against God. Nehemiah based his rash actions on God's clear prohibition of intermarriage (Exod. 34:16). Finally, Paul knew that opposing his apostolic authority actually attacked the gospel itself (Gal. 1:6-9).

Likewise, *in each case where leaders <u>did not defend themselves</u>, they also refused to defend their own way. Instead, they stood for God's clearly revealed will by allowing God alone to defend them.* When Moses refused to defend himself before the people and complained only to God, he witnessed God's relief of his burden (Num. 11:10-25) or God's judgment against his opposers (Num. 12:10; 14:1-5, 20-23). David also realized that he had little to fear about losing his kingdom since it was graciously given by God alone (1 Sam. 16:13). Of course, the ultimate example of not defending oneself was Jesus himself. He willingly submitted to the Father's will to the point of death, even death on a cross (Phil. 2:8).

When the gospel is at stake, Christian leaders must defend themselves based upon Scripture. However, sometimes a refusal to protect one's position is the very means that God exalts himself. Recognizing the deceitfulness of our own hearts, we must ask God for both wisdom and humility to discern whether we are protecting our own reputation or God's.

Marital Separation (1 Cor 7:5)

"Your husband must live in a separate house for at least three months to save your marriage." This advice from a Christian counselor intended to force the husband to see that he couldn't continue his feelings toward a former lover. Although he had lived faithfully with his wife for 16 years, the former woman had re-entered the picture and he had to choose between the two women.

This situation forced me to consider what biblical separation actually entails. "So, you are separated from your husband," I told the wife. "But what does that mean? Does it mean you still see your husband? How often? Does it mean that there is no sexual intimacy? Is there even any biblical warrant for you to separate from your husband apart from his consent? Is that submission?" The issue of separation raises many questions, especially since it is often suggested by Christian counselors and psychologists such as Dr. James Dobson in his book *Love Must Be Tough.*

The apostle Paul knew of certain Corinthians who practiced ongoing abstinence in their marriages. Paul addressed these believers in 1 Corinthians 7:

> [1]Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to marry. [2]But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. [3]The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. [4]The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. [5]Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. [6]I say this as a concession, not as a command. [7]I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.
>
> [8]Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. [9]But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.
>
> [10]To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. [11]But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

A key question about this passage is whether verse 5 speaks of sexual abstinence within the same house or in the context of a marital separation. Taking the text at face value, abstinence without separation appears more likely. First, the "coming together" in verse 6 refers in the context to resuming sexual relations, not a spouse coming back into the home with the other spouse after a separation. Also, separation in verse 10 begins a new subject and is parallel to divorce in verse 11. This usage indicates that, in the mind of Paul (and God), marital separation is not his will as it is tantamount to divorce.

So then, are there *no* cases that warrant separation? No, some cases do exist. With spousal abuse (physical, emotional, adultery, etc.), child molestation, and other criminal offenses separation is probably necessary for governing authorities to enforce the law. Also, saving the lives of family members is more important than saving the marriage.

Therefore, Paul likely addresses marital sexual abstinence while the couple still lives together. Yet even in this situation he gives three restrictions (v. 5):

- Abstinence must be <u>mutual</u>. A wife who withholds her body from her husband (and vice versa) violates verses 3-4. This is because God calls all spouses to mutual submission (Eph. 5:21).
- Abstinence must be <u>temporary</u>. Otherwise within a few weeks or months the husband will look elsewhere to meet his sexual needs and the wife elsewhere for her emotional needs.
- Abstinence must be for <u>prayer</u>. Intimacy with one another must be replaced by intimacy with God. A regular plan of prayer together and/or separately must be agreed upon and implemented.

Divorce & Remarriage (1 Cor. 7:12-16)

The most intimate relationship we can have is marriage, so when this union can be broken and reestablished is hotly debated. Even though it is difficult to set aside our personal experiences and those we care about, such experiences do not determine truth. As the divorce rate continues to rise, it is increasingly important for us to know God's view on divorce and remarriage. Therefore, though psychological, sociological, and other factors matter greatly, this study only addresses the *biblical teaching* on divorce and remarriage.

I. Quiz: What is your view on divorce and remarriage right now?

Choose EVERY answer below that describes your view at present.[1]

No Divorce, No Remarriage

❑ A. God's hatred for divorce ***forbids anyone to seek divorce***. Marriage to another while the previous partner is alive is ***adultery*** with no exceptions. Even though civil law allows for divorce, in God's sight, *only death breaks the marriage bond* between a husband and wife.

❑ B. God's hatred of divorce forbids a believer to seek divorce but ***allows the unbeliever*** to divorce; marrying another when the previous partner is alive is ***adultery*** with no exceptions.

Divorce, But No Remarriage

❑ C. ***A believer may seek divorce*** if the partner is unfaithful by the sin of ***adultery or desertion***, but marriage to another while the previous partner is alive is ***adultery*** (Matt. 5:32; 19:9).

❑ D. ***A believer may seek divorce*** if the partners are ***incompatible***, but marriage to another while the previous partner is alive is ***adultery***.

Divorce & Remarriage in Limited Cases

❑ E. God's hatred of divorce forbids a believer to seek divorce but ***permits an unbeliever to divorce***. In the unbeliever's case, remarriage to another while the previous partner is alive is ***permitted***. If God allows divorce for a person, then He also allows remarriage.

❑ F. ***A believer may seek divorce*** if the partner is unfaithful by the sin of ***adultery or desertion***; marriage to another while the previous partner is alive is ***permitted***.

Divorce & Remarriage in Many Cases

❑ G. ***A believer may seek divorce*** if the partners are ***incompatible***; marriage to another while the previous partner is alive is ***permitted***.

II. Definitions: Let's first agree on the meaning of some terms…

A. **Marriage** is the divinely ordained, legal, public joining of a husband and wife according to the statutes of the country where they wed, consummated in sexual intercourse. Thus, even if a country legally allows same sex "marriage," it does not constitute *genuine* marriage, as the only type of marriage that exists is heterosexual marriage that is consummated in legitimate sex.

B. **Divorce** is the legal breaking of a marriage bond so that the couple is not considered husband and wife by the civil authorities of the land.

C. **Remarriage** denotes a second, legal marriage of a previously married person.

D. **Desertion** is defined as the withdrawal of physical presence for many months from one's spouse, even though financial assistance could be maintained. Desertion does not refer to the lack of physical or emotional intimacy of a marriage partner living in the same home.

E. **Adultery** is when a married person has sex with one other than his or her spouse. It includes homosexuality and needs to happen only once to be considered adultery. There is no such thing as "spiritual adultery" where sexual fidelity is maintained but emotional needs are not being met.

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[1] Adapted from Ron Sheveland, "Pastoral Candidate Questionnaire" (Yucaipa, CA: Baptist General Conference, 2010), 9.

III. Sticky Passages

A. All Christians agree that *divorce is not God's original plan* since "God hates divorce" (Mal. 2:14). Also, Jesus sounded as if divorce is *never* allowed for any reason in both Mark and Luke:

1. "…Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her, [12]and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery" (Mark 10:11-12 NAU).

2. "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery" (Luke 16:18 NAU).

B. The clarity of the above verses probably would unify most Bible-believing Christians in a "no divorce, no remarriage" view if it weren't for three other "sticky" passages:

1. Jesus: "But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* reason of unchastity (Gk: *porneia*), makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery" (Matt. 5:32 NAU).

2. Jesus: "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality (Gk: *porneia*), and marries another woman commits adultery" (Matt. 19:9 NAU).

3. Paul: "Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such *cases,* but God has called us to peace" (1 Cor. 7:15 NAU).

IV. Four Views on Divorce & Remarriage

The above passages raise many questions that are answered differently by various scholars who generally fall into one of four views on divorce and remarriage. I have held each of these interpretations at different times in my walk with Christ. Reputable, evangelical scholars support each one, as seen below by four scholars, each of whom earned their Doctorate in Theology from Dallas Theological Seminary and contributed to the helpful book, *Divorce and Remarriage: Four Christian Views*.[2] The book addresses them in a continuum where the views are listed from the most narrow (left side) to the least narrow (right side). Note that the first two views are very similar and could be almost seen as a single view in many respects since both views recognize that spouses are often in situations where they have no choice but to divorce whereas they do have a choice whether to remarry.[3]

	No Divorce, No Remarriage	***Divorce, But No Remarriage***	***Divorce & Remarriage for Adultery & Desertion***	***Divorce & Remarriage for at Least 5 Situations***
Advocates *The first scholar represents the view in the book edited by House below*	J. Carl Laney F. F. Bruce Joseph Fitzmeyer Ralph P. Martin Charles Ryrie	William Heth Gordon Fee John Piper Gordon Wenham	Thomas Edgar Jay Adams D. A. Carson James Dobson William F. Luck John MacArthur John Murray Chuck Swindoll	Larry Richards

[2] The seven-page chart in this study summarizes H. Wayne House, ed., *Divorce and Remarriage: Four Christian Views* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1990) where the first scholar under "Advocates" section presents his view, gives a case study and responds to the other three views. There exists, of course, variance even within those holding the same view, but this study hopefully will basically represent their views as well. Note also that Richards does not mention anyone else who shares his view. He has only two footnotes in contrast to Heth's 106 notes.

[3] Other views not surveyed above include the betrothal view (unfaithfulness discovered before the marriage consummation) and the invalid mixed marriage view (*porneia* as the marriage between a believer and unbeliever); see rebuttals by Edgar, 171-177.

	No Divorce, No Remarriage	***Divorce, But No Remarriage***	***Divorce & Remarriage for Adultery & Desertion***	***Divorce & Remarriage for at Least 5 Situations***
What is Marriage?				
Is marriage an unconditional covenant? (i.e., is every marriage permanent in God's eyes?)	Yes, seen in "cleave" and "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24) and by calling remarriage "adultery"[4]	Yes—the terms in Gen. 2:24 indicate that the spouse becomes a permanent, close relative that can't be changed[5]	No—Gen. 2:24 does not speak of divorce; "cleave" elsewhere denotes a military alliance that can be broken; "one flesh" doesn't imply permanence[6]	No—it can be broken due to the hardness of man's heart
What breaks the marriage bond in God's sight?	Death alone (Rom. 7:3; 1 Cor. 7:39)	Death alone (Rom. 7:2-3; 1 Cor. 7:39)	Death, plus "sexual sin breaks the marriage bond, but the marriage is not actually dissolved until a certain legal procedure (divorce) is carried out" (Edgar, 142)[7]	Death, plus when a divorced spouse remarries, is homosexual, takes a live-in lover [i.e., adultery?], leaves the community and cuts off contact, remains hostile and abusive, or emotionally and spiritually abandons the relationship while still living together (Richards, 242)[8]
Divorce:				
Does Deut. 24:1-3 institute or approve divorce? Did the bill of divorce dissolve the marriage?	No, it simply regulated a practice already occurring; "There God *describes* what he does not necessarily *prescribe*" (Laney, 252)	No, it prohibited the first husband from benefiting financially by remarrying his now wealthy first wife[9]	A woman's "first" of two husbands shows that this marriage was dissolved;[10] it also says nothing about a dowry and allows almost unlimited remarriage (Edgar, 155)	Yes, although in some cases the marriage was against God's will, it still was forgiven

[4] Marriage is "God's act of joining a man and a woman in a permanent, covenanted, one-flesh relationship" according to Renald E. Showers, *Lawfully Wedded* (Langhorne, PA: Philadelphia College of Bible, 1983), 36: cited by J. Carl Laney in *Divorce and Remarriage: Four Christian Views*, 20. Other views surveyed would probably agree with this definition except for the word "permanent."

[5] The terms "forsake" and "cleave" in Gen. 2:24 are covenant terms used of God's unconditional commitment to Israel despite her unfaithfulness (Lev. 26:44-45; Jud. 2:1-3; Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:8, 12; Heth, 75). Heth also says the "one flesh" refers not to sex or children but to becoming permanent kin. Thus, a married person cannot "undo" being a spouse any more than this person can "undo" being a brother, sister, father, mother, son, daughter, etc. Marriage is just as permanent a relationship, supported by the prohibition of marrying one's in-laws (Lev. 18) since legal divorce does not dissolve marriage (though the levirate marriage of Deut. 25:5-10 is allowed; Heth, 82). Edgar responds that such as view would logically make the couple in an incestuous relationship—plus it would not restrict them from marrying others (Edgar, 154).

[6] "Christ's statement, referring to Genesis 2:24, 'What God has joined together let no man separate' (Mt 19:6) implies just the opposite of permanence, that it can be broken" (Edgar, 137). Edgar also notes that since sex with a prostitute is "one flesh" (1 Cor. 6:16), it rules out "permanence" as the meaning for one flesh (ibid.). Further, marital kinship is not the same as blood relations since a widower could marry his wife's sister (Lev. 18:18; Edgar, 139).

[7] Heth and Laney would presumably say that, if this is true, the couple would need to be married again following each act of adultery.

[8] Edgar rightfully points out that the first three situations Richards presents depends on *porneia* as an exception, the fourth depends on desertion, and the last (abandoning the relationship while still living together) has no exegetical support (Edgar, 266).

[9] "The biblical kinship view of marriage nevertheless suggests that just as parents cannot 'cut off' their children from being their own flesh and blood, no matter how disreputable or immoral they may be, so a man cannot 'divorce' or sever the kinship relationship with his wife, who is his own flesh and blood (Gen. 2:23-24; Lev. 18:7-8) through the covenant and consummation of marriage" (Heth, 87).

[10] Jesus also referred to the woman who "had five husbands" (John 4:16-18), indicating that her divorces broke former marriage bonds.

	No Divorce, No Remarriage	***Divorce, But No Remarriage***	***Divorce & Remarriage for Adultery & Desertion***	***Divorce & Remarriage for at Least 5 Situations***
Do the divorces in Ezra 9–10 indicate that God allows divorce and remarriage?	No, this story teaches the dangers of apostasy (9:10-14) and it is unclear if any remarriages took place; this was suggested by Shecaniah, not commanded by God (Laney, 252)	These annulled *illegal* "marriages": "took" (9:2), "gave dwelling to" (10:2) & "sent away" are used only for foreign women (cf. Ruth 1:4; Neh. 13:25) so these husbands likely remarried Israelites	Heth's argument that Ezra's action was kindness since the women were not killed neglects the fact that the men themselves also could have been executed	Yes—"God actually demanded in Ezra's day that some Israelites divorce their wives" (Richards, 252).
What is the porneia *of Matt. 5:32; 19:9?*	An unlawful, incestuous marriage prohibited in Lev. 18:6-18	Adultery is the most common type of marital infidelity, but others are included as well	Adultery, since an adulterous woman was normally described with the term *porneia*	Not adultery but any other sexual sin, including incestuous marriage[11]
Why is the exception clause only in Matthew's gospel when Mark 10:2-12 describes the same statement by Jesus as Matthew 19:9?	It related only to Jewish readers familiar with the OT laws and the incestuous marriages of Herod Archelaus, Antipas, and Agrippa II[12]	Remarriage was not allowed for *any* divorce—even that of Matt. 19:9—so Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18 are consistent with this view (Heth, 108)	"Mark, as often happens in other passages, merely omitted a detail which Matthew included…an exception is not a contradiction" (Edgar, 166, 168)[13]	It shows "God's compassion and willingness to accommodate his standards to humanity's weakness" (Richards, 145)
Did Paul allow divorce among believers in 1 Cor. 7:10-11? Can a divorcee remarry once the former spouse remarries since reconciliation is impossible?	No: "The wife should not leave her husband" (7:10) and "the husband should not send his wife away" (7:11b) with no exception clause present[14]	No: "In cases of separation or divorce, those involved must remain single or be reconciled (1 Cor. 7:11)"[15]	Yes, if adultery or desertion by an unbeliever exists;[16] remarriage is allowed in these two cases even if the former spouse is still alive	Yes: "A divorced person as well as widows and those … not previously married is included among the unmarried Paul speaks to, advising marriage if this is their gift… (v. 7)"[17]

[11] "Adultery may be grounds for forgiveness, but it is not grounds for divorce!" (Richards, 229). Richards is unclear as to his own view on *porneia*, for he claims "attempts to define *porneia* do not seem to help us clarify Jesus' meaning" (Richards, 231). He even thinks that Jesus may be "speaking of some previous sexual sin of the divorced partner that in effect invalidates the marriage so no stigma of adultery remains" (ibid.).

[12] "Mark and Luke omit any mention of the exception to the permanence of marriage in the case of *porneia*. They clearly understood that the exception would relate only to the Jews living under the Mosaic regulations of Leviticus 18:6-18" (Laney, 38-39).

[13] "The additional details in Matthew 19:3-12 must be understood in Mark 10:2-12. Mark's account does not *deny* any exception which is stated in Matthew" (Edgar, 253, emphasis mine; see especially his pages 179-180).

[14] "Apparently Paul knew nothing of an 'exception clause' spoken by Jesus" (Robert Stein, "Is It Lawful for a Man to Divorce His Wife?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 22 [June 1979]: 118; cited by Laney, 41). Laney also notes that Paul may not have seen the "exception clause" as applicable to believing Gentiles, yet Paul does refer the view of Jesus in 1 Cor. 7:10-11 (Edgar, 172).

[15] Heth, 92.

[16] "Paul is not giving the information in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 to provide a complete discussion on divorce and remarriage. He is answering the question whether or not it is acceptable for a believer to stay married to an unbeliever" (Edgar, 188).

[17] This is because Paul used the same word for "unmarried" to apply to both a divorcee (7:11) and to the broader category of unmarried people (7:7), including widows and those never married (Richard, 240). Laney responds by pointing out that the context changes at 1 Cor. 7:12 where Paul begins discussing mixed marriages, so divorcees are not addressed in verses 10-11 (Laney, 251).

	No Divorce, No Remarriage	***Divorce, But No Remarriage***	***Divorce & Remarriage for Adultery & Desertion***	***Divorce & Remarriage for at Least 5 Situations***
What should a person do after a divorce?	Two options by Paul (1 Cor. 7:11): 1. Remain single 2. Be reconciled	"Remarriage after divorce constitutes adultery (Mt 5:32; Mk 10:11-12; Lk 16:18)." See Rom. 7:2-3; 1 Cor. 7:39.	"It is wrong to divorce… and marry another unless it [due to] adultery" (Edgar, 190)	"The abandoned spouse is 'not bound' by the marriage vow… and thus free to remarry"[18]
Is desertion by an unbelieving spouse grounds for divorce (1 Cor. 7:15)?	No–"The prohibition against divorce is given four times in verses 10-13!"	Yes, "Paul exempts the Christian from the responsibility for the divorce" (Heth, 112)	Yes, since the believer has no say in the matter	Yes—An exception following what appears to be a situation without an exception (7:10-11; cf. Richards, 241)
Remarriage:				
Does Matt. 19:9 permit remarriage?	No, since the exception clause applies only to divorce and not to remarriage in the Greek text[19]	No, since the exception clause applies only to divorce and not to remarriage in the Greek text	Yes, unless the divorce was not due to adultery; prohibiting remarriage is a grammatical impossibility[20]	Yes—"Persons who divorce for any reason do have the right to remarry… [and] be fully involved in the life of the local church, without prejudice" (Richards, 243)
How does the "eunuch passage" relate to Christ's strict view of divorce and remarriage (Matt. 19:10-12)?	The context relates not to celibacy but to divorcees who chose to remain single for the sake of the kingdom	"God will give faithful disciples the grace they need if they should face a divorce they cannot prevent (v. 11)" (Heth, 106)	Celibacy is difficult but required of some servants of God, but divorce and remarriage *only after adultery* may appear strict	Richards does not address this issue, but he feels the general context relates to *legalism* by the Pharisees, not divorce (p. 221)[21]
To what is the believing spouse not "bound" in 1 Cor. 7:15?	Not bound to Christ's prohibition of divorce but Paul says nothing about remarriage for the deserted spouse as marriage lasts until death (7:39)	Not obligated to prevent divorce with an unbeliever with all the means at his disposal to prevent the kind of separation in 7:15	Not bound to the marriage with the deserting spouse, so this believer is free to divorce the unbeliever who left	Not bound to the marriage bond (Richards, 240)

[18] Richard continues, "Past failure to achieve the ideal does not disqualify the divorced person from another try!" (Richards, 239). However, divorce was not God's will as a single, permanent marriage is God's will, intended to be a lifetime commitment (ibid.).

[19] "This interpretation of the divorce texts remained the standard view of the church in the West until the sixteenth century when Erasmus suggested that the 'innocent' spouse had the right not only to divorce, but also to contract a new marriage. It is significant that those who had the closest contact with the language and culture of the New Testament did not regard the exception to apply to remarriage" (Laney, 38). Heth also gives an extensive argument against remarriage based on the Greek construction.

[20] Heth's view that divorce *alone* (without remarriage) equals adultery is illogical since the person remains celibate (Edgar, 157).

[21] Richards, 224-227, says Matt. 19 does not allow Jewish ecclesiastical courts to rule on a personal matter like marriage, but the passage actually says nothing about such courts (Edgar, 163).

	No Divorce, No Remarriage	***Divorce, But No Remarriage***	***Divorce & Remarriage for Adultery & Desertion***	***Divorce & Remarriage for at Least 5 Situations***
Does 1 Cor. 7:15 permit remarriage?	No, as this would contradict 7:10-11 where remarriage is prohibited for believers; marriage of a believer and unbeliever are no different	No—This violates an indissoluble marriage; the same word for "divorce" is in 7:11 and Paul argues each to remain in his state (7:17-24)	Yes. "A biblically valid divorce allows for remarriage" (Edgar, 190)	Yes—"The abandoned believer can consider himself or herself unmarried and thus is free to remarry" (Richards, 240)
What does it mean that one "released from a wife" is allowed to marry (1 Cor. 7:27-28)?	The context is female virgins but also includes unmarried men (but not divorcees)	Being released from a promise to marry one's betrothed (not divorce)	Edgar does not address this issue	Richards does not address this issue
Grace:				
How is God's grace shown? *Would "all things become new" (2 Cor. 5:17) support remarriage for a believer?*	Prohibiting remarriage is God's protection from an unlawful union; also, grace means a divorced and remarried couple need not break up	God does not give grace to sin via remarriage (Heth, 115); he gives grace by giving all "the divine resources [needed] to obey the ethical standards required of Christian disciples"[22]	"Four of the seven [passages on divorce and remarriage] seem to allow for some kind of divorce and remarriage" (Edgar, 153); it is *not* always sin, as Richards indicates (Edgar, 262)	Divorce and remarriage must be confessed as sin but it does enact a new union in a new marriage with sexual relations taking on a holy and undefiled character (Richards, 236)
Can a person marry again following divorce as an unbeliever?	No—Marriage is an indissoluble union by nature for believers or for unbelievers	No—Marriage is an indissoluble union by nature for believers or for unbelievers	Yes, if the former spouse was guilty of adultery	"God permits divorce where hardness of heart in one or both parties has destroyed the covenant character of the relationship" (Richards, 243)
How should we counsel a woman married to a repeatedly violent, incestuous, adulterous husband?	Since divorce is allowed only in cases of unlawful marriage, such a marriage should be maintained	A separation or legal divorce is allowable (but not a remarriage)	Divorce and remarriage is allowed for such a woman after she has unsuccessfully sought to be reconciled	"Spiritual leaders have no right to stand in judgment over particular cases" (Richards, 243)
How old is this view of divorce and remarriage? How popular is it now?	Not held by many in any period of church history, including today	Taught by *all* Greek and Latin scholars until AD 500 except one!	First taught by Erasmus in early 1600s but is now the prevailing view	The second most popular view among American evangelicals today

[22] Heth, 113. Also, against Richards, "I do not see how obedience to what I think is God's revealed will can be called legalism" (p. 260).

	No Divorce, No Remarriage	***Divorce, But No Remarriage***	***Divorce & Remarriage for Adultery & Desertion***	***Divorce & Remarriage for at Least 5 Situations***
Strengths:	Considers the Bible first, even if it results in the most unpopular view	Is the earliest view held by those who best understood Greek	Early Fathers often erred, even on justification, so carry little weight	Shows compassion for both the "innocent" and the "guilty" spouses
	Incorporates the Jewish context of Matthew's gospel	Is careful not to allow remarriage in Matt. 19:9 when that text does not clearly approve it	Appears to be the natural reading of Matt. 5:32; 19:9; 1 Cor. 7:15	Shows that the ultimate decision for a marriage lies with the couple themselves
	Sensitive to the fact that "neither Mark nor Luke saw the exception as applicable to their Roman or Greek readers" (Laney, 199)	Takes Paul's "no remarriage" counsel at face value: to remain unmarried or to reconcile (1 Cor. 7:10-11)	Sees statements as absolute unless exceptions are noted elsewhere	Emphasizes God's forgiveness and grace as he cares for us and understands our situations (Richards, 236)
		Correctly notes that Paul's only *clear* teaching about remarriage is after a spouse dies		Supports the decisions of those remarrying by standing with them (Richards, 245)
Weaknesses:	Gives a narrow meaning to *porneia* even though the NT uses it broadly	Can be seen as heartless to prevent remarriage for the "innocent" partner who sought to save a marriage to an adulterer or deserter	First taught in the 16th century, so is a very new view (but not necessarily wrong though) Inadequately defines marriage	Sees when an unbelieving partner wants a divorce in 1 Cor. 7:15 as representing *any* marriage, while the text speaks only of mixed marriages
	Does not address how to handle one who beats his wife	Prohibits remarriage even when Matt. 19:9 allows it in the case of the exception	Little explanation of the lack of an exception clause in Luke and Mark	Why is *porneia not* adultery only because a more common word for adultery could have been used?
	Seeing all marriage as permanent is an implication without strong biblical support	Seeing all marriage as permanent is an implication without strong biblical support (cf. below)	Divorcing an adulterous spouse leaves little place for biblical forgiveness[23]	Equates our setting parameters for divorce and remarriage as being Pharisees
	Does not adequately answer the exception texts	"One flesh" doesn't show permanence since it is applied to prostitution in 1 Cor. 6:16	Dogmatically permits remarriage in Matt. 19:9 when the Greek syntax is debatable[24]	Is it genuine pastoral concern to encourage people to marry contrary to Scripture?[25]

[23] "Is divorce the way to deal with an unfaithful spouse?" (Laney, 199). Edgar has little place for biblical promise keeping (p. 200).
[24] Heth, 208. The first scholar to appeal to the syntax of Matt. 19:9 to justify divorce and remarriage was J. Murray in the 20th century.
[25] Do we help people's hardness of heart by feeding their ungodly preferences? Is enabling them really in their best interest?

	No Divorce, No Remarriage	***Divorce, But No Remarriage***	***Divorce & Remarriage for Adultery & Desertion***	***Divorce & Remarriage for at Least 5 Situations***
	Leviticus 18 refers not to "incestuous marriage" but to incest (Edgar, 65)	View of Deut. 24:1-4 assumes the second divorce was for a significantly different reason	Treatment of OT texts is scant, as is his view that Luke 16:18 and Rom. 7:1-6 are merely illustrations	Sees the OT law as "flawed" (p. 227) but Paul saw it as "holy, righteous, and good" (Rom. 7:12)
	Arguing that 1 Cor. 7:10-11 doesn't allow for the exception assumes that Paul *must* have repeated it	Deut. 24:1-4 says nothing of the wife's dowry	Only one page of support for *porneia* meaning "adultery" (Edgar, 186-187) is a sketchy defense (Laney, 202); we need a full word study of all texts	"Doomed to a single life" (p. 239) violates Paul's view of the single life as "better" (1 Cor. 7:38) and "happier" (v. 40)
		Being the oldest view does not mean it is the best	Matt. 19:9 is the only text given much detail	Absolves account-ability to pastors or church elders[26]
			Edgar's claim (p. 151) that the no-divorce, no-remarriage view is sacramental is unfair to Laney (Laney, 205)	Richards says that divorce and remarriage is sin but can be done since God will forgive; this could be applied to theft, murder, and any other sin then!

V. Applications Today

A. I have attempted to state each position above objectively so the reader can make his or her own decision on this important matter after studying the relevant data. Which do *you* believe has the best biblical support?

B. I have held to each of these positions at various points in my Christian life, but at I present lean to the third one as the one best fitting the biblical data. There *do* appear to be two exceptions (adultery and desertion by an unbeliever) to the general prohibition of divorce and remarriage. The supposed indissolubility of marriage also does not seem to be supported by Scripture, and it makes sense that the exception clause of Matthew 19:9 could harmonize with Mark and Luke's treatment of divorce and remarriage by their assuming it need not be stated to their readers.

VI. Conclusion

We should make every reasonable effort to keep marriages together, but divorce will continue to be a reality in our fallen world. Whichever view you as a church pastor or lay leader or concerned Christian hold, you *must be consistent* in applying it. It is unfair to arbitrarily treat fellow believers going through the breakdown of the most important relationship in their life. May God grant you the wisdom that you need to represent both his grace and his high standards in the marriage relationship, which is a picture of Christ's love for the church (Eph. 5:21-33).

[26] Couples thinking, they have no accountability to church leaders is contrary to Matt. 18:15-18; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:5 (Laney, 253).

Self-Evaluating Sanctification

Charles R. Swindoll, "Integrity: How to Live Above the Crowd, " *Veritas* 2, no. 1 (January 2002)

DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

VERITAS

Equipping Christians to live by truth—veritas—*from God.*

VOL. 2, NO. 1 JANUARY 2002

Integrity: How to Live Above the Crowd

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Dr. Evan O'Neill Kane was the chief surgeon of Kane Summit Hospital in New York City and had practiced his specialty for 37 years. He was convinced that general anesthesia was too risky, that people should be operated on with simply a well-administered local anesthesia so that all of the risks of the general anesthesia could be bypassed.

He was anxious to prove his theories. The problem was finding a guinea pig who was willing to go under the knife and to be awake during that time. All of those that he talked to, it seemed, were fearful of waking up during the surgery, that is, in their bodies and feeling the pain of the deep, probing scalpel.

But finally he found a subject. Kane had performed appendectomies thousands of times. He estimates, as he tells the story, about 4,000 times. So it was, once again, the same procedure. The patient was prepped and brought into the operating room. The local anesthesia was carefully administered and the surgery was under way. As always, he simply came to the right side of the abdomen, made a cut across that narrow section, and went in. He tied off the blood vessels, found the appendix, excised it, and finished with a nice simple work of suturing the incision place.

And remarkably, the patient felt very little discomfort. In fact, he was up and about the next afternoon, which is remarkable since this was back in 1921, when people who had appendectomies were kept in the hospital six, seven, even eight days.

It was a milestone in the world of medicine. And it was also a milestone in courage because the patient and the doctor were one and the same. Dr. Kane had operated on himself!

What *Is* Integrity?

This is what I'm asking you to do today. I want to talk about the importance of integrity. But I cannot tell your integrity by looking. This is a "soul" surgery procedure.

We'll let the scalpel of the Word of God go into the very soul and spirit within us, that it might reveal the intentions of the heart.

Now in order to whet your appetite for a subject like this, it might help if I did a crash course on the word itself. The best among our English dictionaries is the *Oxford English Dictionary*. You know it's thorough when you get the two-volume set and the print is so small a magnifying glass comes with it. I have that set in my study, so I checked out "integrity" and found that it comes from the Latin *integritas*, which means "wholeness, entirety, completeness." The root is *integer*, meaning "untouched, intact, entire." *Webster* adds, "a firm adherence to a code of moral ethics, moral values, an unimpaired condition."

A person with integrity is not divided—that's called duplicity. They don't pretend—that's called hypocrisy. What is seen on the outside, if one has integrity, matches what is on the inside. People with integrity police themselves. They don't have to be watched. It makes no difference whether someone is looking or no one is around. The life is lived the same way.

In searching through the Scriptures for an example of this, I came to the life of Daniel. And I found in the fifth chapter a classic example of true integrity. The background is familiar to many of you. Daniel has lived through several administrations, the latest of which is Belshazzar.

That night the kingdom fell into the hands of the Medes and the Persians, and Darius took the throne from Belshazzar. He and "took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two" (verse 31).

Now when you take over a new kingdom, you set up a new administration. And it is a perfect time for corruption to enter in. Daniel, having been awarded for his good work under Belshazzar, is recognized by Darius as a trustworthy man. So he puts him as one of the three commissioners who oversee 120 governors, who together guard and administer the king's treasury. Then the text says Daniel "distinguished himself among the administrators and [the governors]."

He began distinguishing himself . . . he stood out among the crowd.

Michael Jordan, if anyone would've asked any one of us, has stood out in the ranks of the National Basketball Association.

Some of *you* are doing that.