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1 CORINTHIANS

*Do everything in love*

WRITTEN

54-55 AD

KEY VERSE

*"Do everything in love."*

*16:14*

Last updated February 20, 2023

Answer questions and sort out problems

PURPOSE

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# Introduction

We may think that the first churches were always on the right track and functioned much better than our churches today, but 1 Corinthians shows that this was not the case. Some of what goes on in the church are quite shocking, and it is probably not without reason that Paul mentions his *"concern for all the churches"* at the end of his list of sufferings in 2 Cor 11:28.

This letter is the best example of Paul writing to address specific challenges, and the phrase *"Now about"* each time introduces a new topic (7:1, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1, 12). He responds to questions the Corinthians have sent him in a letter (7:1) and to matters he has heard about from *"Chloe’s household"* (1:11).

Paul touches on many themes in this letter and concludes with a long chapter on the resurrection in chapter 15. It may be that their view of the resurrection is the root of all the other problems - that they think they are living in *"the world to come"* already. They also believe that they are very *"spiritual"*. Paul says that to be truly spiritual, they must make love the most important thing (16:14).

**1. Corinthians**

* Responded to questions the Corinthians had sent him in a letter (7:1) and to matters he has heard about (1:11).
* *"Now for"* or *"Now about"* introduces a new theme (7:1, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1, 12)
* Divisions, misunderstandings, and abuse.

## When was the letter written?

Paul came to Corinth on his 2nd missionary journey (Acts 18:1-17) and was there for a year and a half from 50 to 52 AD (Acts 18:11). Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, came to faith with everyone in his house, and many others (Acts 18:8).

He wrote this letter from Ephesus on his way to Macedonia on his 3rd missionary journey sometime between AD 53 and AD 55, as described in 1 Cor 16:5-9 and Acts 19.

The table below shows that Paul might’ve written four letters to the church in Corinth:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter** | **Visit** | **Details** | **Reference** |
|  | First in year 50-52 (2nd trip) | *"When I came to you…"* | 1 Cor 2:1, Acts 18:1-7 |
| First |  | Lost letter: "I wrote to you in my letter..." | 1 Cor 5:9 |
|  |  | Chloe's people talk about some of the problems in Corinth and Paul receives a letter. | 1 Cor 1:11, 7:1 |
| Second |  | 1 Corinthians, from Ephesus. | 1 Cor 16:8 |
|  | Second | Quick and painful? | 2 Cor 2:1, 12:14, 13:1-2 |
| Third |  | Probably another lost letter (not 1 Cor?). | 2 Cor 2:3-4, 7:8 |
|  |  | Good news from Titus. | 2 Cor 7:5-8 |
| Fourth |  | 2 Corinthians, from Macedonia. | 2 Cor 2:12-13, 7:5 |
|  | Third in year 57  (3rd journey) | A visit after all letters have been written. | Acts 20:1-3 |

## Structure

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Chapters 1-4 | Splits. Pride and wisdom. |
| Chapters 5-7 | Sexual ethics and church discipline. Adultery, lawsuits, marriage, divorce, unmarried status. |
| Ch. 8-10 | Freedom vs. love. Can a Christian eat meat that has been sacrificed to idols? |
| Ch. 11-14 | When the congregation gathers. Headgear, communion, and spiritual gifts. |
| Chapter 15 | The Resurrection. They do not believe in the resurrection or believe that it has already happened. |
| Chapter 16 | Conclusion. |

## Opening (1:4-9)

v. 4: *"I always thank my God for you because of his* ***grace*** *given you in Christ Jesus."*

*v. 5: "****in him*** *you have been* ***enriched in every way****—with all kinds of* ***speech*** *and with all* ***knowledge.****"*

v. 6: *"God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you."*

*v. 7: "Therefore you do not lack any* ***spiritual gift*** *as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to* ***be revealed****."*

*v. 8: "He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be* ***blameless*** *on* ***the day of our Lord Jesus Christ****."*

*v. 9: "God is* ***faithful****, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."*

## 1:10 - Problem statement?

* The main message in the letter is that they must have unity (especially Ch. 1-4, 6, 8-14).
* Say it with 3 different expressions here.
* Nevertheless, room for different opinions when it comes to peripheral topics (Ch. 7-10).

# Ch. 1-4: Splits

Topics in chapters 1-4:

1. What is the relationship between the wisdom of the world and the cross/gospel?
2. What is God's attitude to the wisdom of the world?
3. What is the gospel/Jesus for the believer?

*"For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: "Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord."" (1 Corinthians 1:17-31).*

## 1. What is the relationship between the wisdom of the world and the cross/gospel?

* It can cause the cross to lose its power (1:17).
* The cross is foolish in the eyes of the world and cannot be reconciled with the wisdom of the world (1:18). In the first century, worshiping a crucified God was called folly, madness, and idiotic. The first Christians were called deluded creatures. Christianity was called a depraved and exaggerated superstition.
* The cross is a contrast to signs and wisdom (1:22-23).
* Paul deliberately did not use *"eloquence"* or *"wise and persuasive words"* (2:1, 4).
* It should only be about Jesus and the cross (2:2).
* He did not act like a great speaker (2:3).
* He built everything on God's Spirit and power (2:4-5).
* He does not want faith to be built on human wisdom (2:5).

## Presentation of the case (1:11-17)

* Heard from Cloe's people about divisions over leaders.
* Irony in v. 13, and perhaps v. 14?
* Paul makes it clear that he does not want to be the reason for the divisions, and points out (probably exaggerating a bit) that it is all about Jesus.

## 1:17-31

**Observation:**

1. What does Paul say about *"foolishness"*?
2. What does he say about the wisdom of the world?
3. Which 3 groups are we talking about in vv. 22-24, and what was a crucified Christ to them?
4. Why did God choose to save us through the cross?

**Interpretation:**

1. How can eloquence and wisdom make the cross lose its power?
2. What does v. 25 mean?
3. Why does Paul say what he says in v. 26?

## 2. What is God's attitude to the wisdom of the world?

* He will destroy it (1:19).
* He has shown that it is foolish (1:20, 3:19).
* He saved with the cross to put the wise to shame (1:27).
* No one should be able to boast of his wisdom before God (1:29, 31, 3:21).
* It is the *"fool"* who is truly wise (3:18).
* He puts the wise in their place (3:19).
* Worldly wisdom is emptiness (3:20).

## 3. What is the gospel/Jesus for the believer?

* Not a foolishness, but the power of God (1:18, 24).
* For both Jews and Greeks (1:24).
* God's wisdom (1:24).
* Wiser than men (1:25).
* Jesus is our wisdom from God (1:30).

## 1:17-31 Application

Do you think what you believe in is ridiculous? Is it tempting to be considered an *"intellectual Christian"*?

*"... I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom..."* (2:1-5)

* It should only be about Jesus and the cross (v. 2).
* He did not act as a great speaker (v. 3).
* He built everything on God's *"Spirit and power"* (vv. 4-5).
* He did not want faith to be built on human wisdom (v. 5).

## 2:1-5

*"When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power."* 2:1b-5

"*Great fear and trembling*" need not be interpreted literally, it is used elsewhere as having respect and awe.

## 2.6-16: A wisdom for the mature

* Paul preached it (v. 6).
* Not worldly wisdom (vv. 6, 8).
* A mystery (v. 7).
* God's hidden wisdom (v. 7).
* From before the beginning of time (v. 7).
* Leads to glory (v. 7).
* None of the rulers of the world knew it (v. 8).
* Has been revealed by the Spirit (v. 10).
* What God has given us (v. 12).
* Those without the Spirit of God cannot understand it and do not receive it (vv. 14-15).

## "The person without the Spirit " (2:14-15)

* *"The natural person"* ESV.
* 'Psychikos': with soul/life (breath of life).
* A contrast to *"spiritual"* in 15:44-46 as well. An *"ordinary"* person - without the Spirit of God.
* Christian = spiritual (having God's Spirit).

## 2:6-16: A wisdom for the mature

Faith → God's Spirit → understand God's wisdom.

How can an unbeliever understand enough to believe the gospel at all until he/she receives the Spirit?

## "Presuppositional apologetics"

* 1 Cor 1-2: Can't understand it anyway. Acts 18:6.
* Rom 1: A moral problem. Everyone can know that God exists, one worships either the Creator or something created.
* There is no neutral ground where all you need are arguments to convince people. There is an underlying reason why they don't believe.
* Defense of the faith has become an "extra-biblical discipline" mostly for philosophers and scientists. It should be for everyone, and you only need the Bible.
* If you defend the faith to the point that there should be no more *"foolishness"*, then it may not be the gospel you are defending.

[Presuppositional apologetics in action - Dr. James White](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oOXj_STawE)

## *"* Evidential apologetics*"*

* Paul used rhetoric in his letters.
* Citing pagan poets and philosophers created a common starting point. (Acts 17, Titus 1)
* 1 Cor 15: Not the faith that matters, but what you believe, the historical facts.
* Apollos in Acts 18:28.
* *"Logos"* (John 1:1) taken from philosophy.
* The Church Fathers raised the same question: To use pagan philosophy or not?

## 3:10-17

* Context: The church as a temple (vv. 16-17).
* *"building on"* (v. 10), *"builds"* (v. 12), *"built"* (v. 14): On the foundation (Jesus) that Paul has laid.
* vv. 13, 15: fire = metaphor for judgment?

## 3:16-17

* *"You"* (pl.) constitute God's temple (sg.).
* Worldly wisdom will perish and will not stand in the judgment. And the divisions this wisdom has led to were destroying the temple of God, and it was serious.
* The Corinthians were holy even though they needed much guidance.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The Corinthians** | **The apostles** |
| Have all they want Rich  Reign | At the end of the procession  Like those condemned to die  A spectacle to the whole universe |
| Wise in Christ | Fools for Christ |
| Strong | Weak |
| Honored | Dishonored |

## The suffering of the apostles: 4:11-13

* hungry
* thirsty
* in rags
* brutally treated
* homeless
* work hard with their own hands
* cursed
* persecuted
* slandered
* treated as the scum of the earth
* treated as the garbage of the world

## Timeless truths from chapters 1-4

1. Follow Jesus, not men. Have I lifted a Christian leader or denomination too high? We follow Jesus, no one else. It is God who gives growth, not men.
2. Division is immature. How can I work for unity among all Christians? Am I (unconsciously) contributing to division or groupings?
3. One cannot reason one's way to salvation. It doesn't depend on IQ, knowledge, or wisdom - it's the same for everyone. Have I tried too hard to appear as an *"intellectual Christian"* at the expense of the content of the gospel? Have I become too preoccupied with worldly wisdom?

# Chapters 5-7: Sexual ethics and church discipline

Ch. 5: A man lived with his father's wife.

6:1-11: They took trivial cases before the ungodly for judgment.

6:12-20: *"your bodies are members of Christ himself"* (v. 15).

Chapter 7: Marriage and singleness

*"Do not have sexual relations with your father’s wife; that would dishonor your father."* Leviticus 18:8

## Chapter 5

### 5:1-5

*"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father’s wife. And you are proud! Shouldn’t you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord."* 5:1-5

This was a case of incest, where a man had sex with his stepmother. The punishment for this in Greek law was to be banished to an island, but the congregation let it pass.

### "Don't judge!" (?)

*"Do not judge, or you too will be judged." (Matthew 7:1)*

*"What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?"* 1 Cor 5:12

Christians are often known to be judgmental. We are not to judge non-Christians; we are to judge those who are within the congregation. In Matthew 18:15-20 Jesus gave guidelines on what to do when a brother sins:

1. Talk with him individually.
2. Take one or two others along.
3. Tell it to the church.
4. Treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Paul said they should hand the man who committed adultery over to Satan (5:5). This does not refer to someone who struggled with sin and was unable to overcome it, but someone who lived in rebellion against God. It’s possible that everything outside of the church was seen as Satan’s territory, and therefore the man should have been casted out into the world. The world was seen as evil. He also would have lost his status by being casted out of the community. This seems to occur after points 1-3 have been carried out without the man repenting. At least we see that point three has been implemented; the church knew it, but they haven't done anything about it. Paul asks them to throw the man out of the congregation (5:2), but that didn’t mean they should’ve gotten rid of him permanently. The goal was for him to repent and return. The *"destruction of the flesh"* means that the sinful nature must be destroyed. In 2 Cor 2:6-8, Paul asked the congregation to let a man back in again, perhaps it was the same man?

*"The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient. Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him."* 2 Cor 2:6-8

### Get rid of the old yeast (5:6-8)

*"Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."*

The week after Easter was the Feast of Unleavened Bread. When they had to make sure that there was no yeast in the whole house. Sin was spreading and had to be stopped! If they did nothing about this man's sin it could’ve permeated the whole church, they had to address it! *"The old yeast"* represents the evil and sin of the old life. They then would be like new unleavened dough and would live in purity and truth. They would celebrate Easter (Jesus' work of salvation) all year round and would live holy lives in gratitude.

*"The historical norm of church discipline has remained fairly constant for 18 centuries, from Irenaeus to Athanasius to Augustine to Thomas Aquinas to the Reformers to the evangelical revival and finally to the careless phase of adaptation to modern times. Then it stops completely. The last century has seen the discipline become more and more relativistic, sloppy, ambiguous or completely gone."* Thomas C. Oden, the quote has been translated.

### Why church discipline?

* Because the church is the body of Jesus.
* Because of what Jesus has sacrificed for our sins we take sin seriously.
* Because we don't want to be hypocrites.

## 6:1-8

* Problem: They took trivial cases before the ungodly for judgment.
* vv. 2-3: The Lord’s people will judge the world during Jesus' judgment at the end of the world, not now.
* Solution: Rather suffer injustice and fix the problems within the congregation. Don't give the church a bad name.
* v. 7: Suffer injustice and endure loss. Follow Jesus' example.
* The root of the problem was their attitude. They stood their ground and didn’t treat each other as siblings.
* v. 8: instead, they did the opposite, they did wrong and took brothers to court.

## Timeless truths

* Avoid taking legal action against other Christians.
* Be willing to suffer injustice as Jesus did.

## Application

* Let the other person win the argument.
* Do not go to the media with anything that can be solved within the congregation.

*"Throughout church history, we've tried everything possible to win people to Jesus [...] But you know what? We should try to get along with each other. We should try to appreciate and honor each other!"* Dean Sherman, the quote has been translated.

## Homosexuality

Robert Gagnon, the author of *"The Bible and Homosexual Practice"* (500 pages), writes:

*"Anyone who claims that they did not know of mutual loving homosexual relationships in antiquity simply does not know the ancient evidence."*

*"Various theories about the origin of homosexuality were also discussed already in antiquity."*

Website: <http://robgagnon.net/>

The following quotes by Bjørn Helge Sandvei were from Norwegian, the last two are from the book *"En annerledes vei" ["A different way"]* by Espen Ottosen:

*"Ancient sources testify that a faithful homosexual cohabitation was not at all rare in the Greco-Roman cultural circle."*

*"Paul is one of the few ancient authors who mention both male and female homosexuality (Rom 1:26)."*

*"The mention of homosexual behavior in 1 Cor 6 shows that this represented a familiar reality from life for him: "Such were some of you before"*, he says in v. 11.*"*

*"Is the church about to lose its boldness as a countercultural force?"*

*"The church's attitude represented an ethical and religious counterculture in a minority situation in the Greco-Roman world. Nevertheless, it was able to meet all people with the disposition of Jesus' love, in fidelity to the truth of the Gospel."*

[Christopher Yuan - A Christian Response to Homosexuality](https://youtu.be/tk4gqp4qTk8)

Website: <https://christopheryuan.com/>

## 6:15-20

They seem to have believed that prostitution was irrelevant to their spiritual life.

*"Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never!"* - one of Paul's most powerful expressions.

The Christian's body is part of Jesus' body (the congregation);, therefore it is not free to do with it what one wants to.

We are all individual temples of the Holy Spirit and must therefore include the use of the body in our lifestyle according to God's will.

*"For Paul, sex is a union of your body with another's. In baptism, you became part of Christ's body, and it is Christ's body that must permit you to unite your body with another's. We have no right to sex. The Church gives you that privilege at the wedding; marriage allows us to have sex with someone. Abstinence, in other words, is part of the Christian life. In the New Testament, sex outside of marriage is simply forbidden. To have sex outside these boundaries is to commit a sin against the body of Jesus. Abstinence before marriage and faithfulness within marriage; all other forms of sex are bodily apostasy."* Lauren F. Winner, author of "Sex in the body of Christ" (the quote has been translated).

## The structure in chapter 7

1-7: The married and marital life.

8-9: The unmarried, and the widows.

10-16: The married, and about divorce in “mixed” marriages.

17-24: Each person should remain in the state they were in when God called them.

25-40: The young unmarried/engaged.

(39-40: Widows)

### Roman marriages

* Mostly arranged marriages.
* Became a way to expand property and raise the status.
* The husband had more power and authority than the wife.
* The expression *"buying a wife"* was still common.
* The husband was often much older than the wife. Many girls were married at the age of 15. Men were usually over 25 years old.

### Marriage in Greek culture

* Most saw marriage as the norm.
* Some saw marriage as an obstacle to religious devotion, but still thought sex with prostitutes was okay.
* Many philosophers believed that marriage was an unnecessary obligation and saw sex with prostitutes as a normal male activity.
* Celibacy was not particularly popular.

### Marriage in Jewish Culture

* Marriage was very important. Some thought it was a sin not to marry.
* The Jews were at least as opposed to celibacy as the Greeks were.
* Some rabbis encouraged scribes to marry early so as not to be distracted by temptation. Some seem to have been so busy with their studies that they nevertheless did not marry.
* Some of the Essenes lived in celibacy, which suggests that some saw it as particularly *"pious"* to withdraw from society and family life.

### 7:1-7: The married

* Based on 6:12-20, Paul can agree that it is good not to *"touch a woman"* outside of marriage, but not necessarily in general.
* The married should not deprive each other of sexual relations, because sexual immorality can be a temptation if they do.
* Few Romans would initially agree that the man's body *"belonged"* to his wife. Such equality was completely unusual.
* Paul emphasizes that this is not an order for celibacy. Abstinence is their idea, not Paul's.
* Being single is a blessing.

*"Now, getting down to the questions you asked in your letter to me. First, Is it a good thing to have sexual relations? Certainly—but only within a certain context. It’s good for a man to have a wife, and for a woman to have a husband. Sexual drives are strong, but marriage is strong enough to contain them and provide for a balanced and fulfilling sexual life in a world of sexual disorder."* 7:1-2 in "The Message."

*"I do, though, tell the unmarried and widows that singleness might well be the best thing for them, as it has been for me. But if they can’t manage their desires and emotions, they should by all means go ahead and get married. The difficulties of marriage are preferable by far to a sexually tortured life as a single."* 7:8-9 in "The Message."

### Divorce in antiquity

* "Hollywood conditions": All too common in the upper echelons of society.
* No public legal action was required to dissolve the marriage. Divorce usually happened when the man said: *"Take your things and go!"*
* The author Plutarch (ca. 46-120 AD) suggested that it was cowardly not to divorce when one had a "bad" wife.
* Women in the Roman Empire could get a divorce just as easily as men. In Jewish culture, women were only allowed to divorce in extreme cases, but it seems that Jews outside of Israel followed Roman customs.
* Roman law required divorce for adultery.

### 7:10-11: Jesus about divorce

""

Paul believes that the statement in 7:10 must be modified, as it also is in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9:

Matt 5:32: *"But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."*

Matt 19:8-9: *"Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."*

### 7:12-16: Divorce in "mixed" marriages

* Paul addresses a problem that Jesus did not mention because he was speaking only to Jews in Israel: What if a Christian is married to a non-Christian?
* Was he interpreted to mean one could not continue to be married to a heathen? (5:9-10) Perhaps someone divorced because of this?

*"I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people — not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world."* 5:9-10.

### "Unbound" (7:15)

* Does this mean that they didn’t need to be legalistic in such cases?
* Or, that they were not bound by marriage?
* Remarriage after divorce was a right under both Greco-Roman and Jewish law.
* Would a 1st century reader have understood this as a general prohibition against remarriage when this was common?

*"I M divorce and release of my own free will, today you K who has been my wife before. You are free to become the spouse of any Jewish man you wish. This is for you a written release document and divorce papers…"* Divorce papers (Masada, AD 72).

### 7:14-16: The children are holy

* The unbelieving spouse is called *"holy"*, but he/she is not saved for that reason (v. 16).
* Paul seems to be saying that the children/spouse are still under the influence of the gospel even if only one parent is saved. Roman law gave custody to the father.
* It is an advantage for the rest of the family if the believing woman stays.

### 7:17-24: Stay where you are

* v. 20: *"each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them."*
* v. 24: be there *"as responsible to God."*
* Regardless of your position in society, you are there for God, and in God's presence. This is how every job can be done to the glory of God?
* Paul says nothing about them having to *"discover God's plan for their lives"*. God's plan for them is for them to stay where they are.

### 7:25-38: "The Virgins"

* "The young unmarried"?
* Paul states his *"opinion"* only in v. 25, v. 40, and 2 Cor 8:10.
* He recommends them to remain as they are (v. 26), betrothed or not.
* vv. 29-31: About prioritizing in the light of eternity?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Paul in Romans** | **Jesus** |
| *"Bless those who persecute you."* 12:14 | *"*Pray for those who persecute you.*"* (Matthew 5:44) |
| *"Do not repay anyone evil for evil."* 12:17 | *"Turn to them the other cheek also"*, etc. (Matthew 5:39-41) |
| *"live at peace with everyone."* 12:18 | *"Blessed are the peacemakers"* (Matthew 5:9) *"*be at peace with each other.*"* (Mark 9:50) |
| *"Take no revenge"… If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. …" overcome evil with good."* 12:19-21 | *"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you."* Luke 6:27 |
| *"If you owe taxes, pay taxes"* (13:7) | *"give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s"* (Matthew 22:21) |
| *"Love your neighbor as yourself."* 13:8-10 | *"Love your neighbor as yourself."* Mark 12:31 |
| Free to keep the Sabbath (14:5) | *"The Sabbath was made for man"* Mark 2:27a |
| *"nothing is unclean in itself"* (14:14) | *"nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them."* Mark 7:18b |

### 7:36-38

*"the virgin he is engaged to"* (NIV) *"virgin daughter"* (ASV), *"young woman"* GNT.

*"his passions are too strong"* (v. 37), the footnote in NIV says *"Or if she is getting beyond the usual age for marriage."*

It is good to get married, it is not sinful. But Paul's own opinion is that it is better not to.

It is not a timeless truth to get engaged and then never marry.

1. Is that why he mentions that it's just his opinion?
2. Was there a "local" emergency in Corinth right then?

## Reflection questions based on 1 Corinthians 5-7

How can we take better care of each other? How can meaningful church discipline be recovered in a culture that prefers no accountability at all?

# 1 Cor 8-10: A sandwich

Ch. 8: Meat sacrificed to the idols.

Ch. 9: Rights.

Ch. 10: Meat sacrificed to the idols.

*"It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell."* Acts 15:28-29

## Chapter 8

Knowledge, known or know are mentioned 11 times in NIV in Chapter 8.

1. What is this knowledge about? Knowledge of what?
2. What are some dangers of such knowledge?
3. Which two attitudes does he set up against each other?

*"Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that "We all possess knowledge." But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. But whoever loves God is known by God. So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that "An idol is nothing at all in the world" and that "There is no God but one." For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never* *eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall."* 1 Cor 8

**1 Cor 8:6**

*"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."* Deuteronomy 6:4

*"yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live."* 1 Cor 8:6

Here Paul clearly says Jesus is God, since Lord and God are used synonymously in Deuteronomy 6:4, while Jesus and Lord are used synonymously in 1 Cor 8:6.

### Chapter 8 - preliminary summary

We don't need knowledge of everything. Love is more important. It is love that should determine our actions, not our knowledge.

*"Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me. Don’t we have the right to food and drink? Don’t we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas? Or is it only I and Barnabas who lack the right to not work for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn’t the Law say the same thing? For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn’t he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn’t we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. Don’t you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me, for I would rather die than allow anyone to deprive me of this boast. For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights as a preacher of the gospel."* 1 Cor 9:1-18

## Chapter 9

### 9:7-11

1. A soldier gets paid for his job.
2. One who plants a vineyard can eat the fruit.
3. A shepherd can drink the milk from the animals.
4. Deuteronomy 25:4 says that an ox must be allowed to eat while it works.

It would have been perfectly right for him to receive material goods from them.

### 9:13-18

1. The priests in the temple live on the temple's income.
2. Those who serve at the altar receive their share of what is sacrificed.
3. Jesus said that those who preach the gospel should live by the gospel (Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7).

Paul did not make use of this right because the gospel is free.

### 9:19-23

* For Jews: Always visited the synagogue first, circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3), took the Nazirite vow (Acts 21:26) and abstained from meat sacrificed to idols (Acts 15:21).
* For Gentiles: Titus was not circumcised (Gal 2:3). Ate with Gentiles (10:26; Gal 2:11-14).

### Chapter 9: Preliminary summary

* Paul was very flexible.
* Christian leaders who are paid must remember that it is first and foremost a "calling" and not just a profession.
* Christian leaders should not chase status.
* Paul does not see his ministry as "his". He sees it as a great honor since God could easily have used someone else. (vv. 16-17)

## Chapter 10

### 10:1-4

*"For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ."*

### 10:7-10

1. Do not be/become idolaters! (v. 7) The word translated as *"dance"* or *"play"* in verse 7 was interpreted as a sexual dance or play by the rabbis. There may therefore be a link with the call not to commit adultery in verse 8. The NIV says: “Indulge in revelry".

2. Do not commit adultery! (v. 8)

3. Do not test Christ! (v. 9)

4. Don't grumble! (v. 10)

### 10:16-21

*"Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf. Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? Do I mean then that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons."*

*"Participation in"* is a repeated phrase. Although the idols are not real, there are demons present in the temples. By participating in idolatry, they sacrifice to demons and help support a religion that leads people astray.

## Reflection questions related to chapters 8-10

1. Are there situations in our everyday life that come close to eating meat sacrificed to idols? When can it be a sin to make use of the freedom in Christ?
2. Paul sums up these chapters with "*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."* (10:31). Can you think of concrete examples where this can help us to make the right choices?

# Chapters 11-14: When the congregation gathers

11:2-16: On covering the head in worship.

11:17-34: Abuse of the Lord's Supper.

**Sandwich**

Chapter 12: Spiritual gifts.

Chapter 13: Love.

Chapter 14: Spiritual gifts.

*"I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you. But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off; but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head. A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering. If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God."* 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

## "The head of the woman is man" (v. 3)

*kefalé*: head or origin?

**An argument against *"head"***

The word is not usually used to indicate authority in the Greek OT (only 18 out of 180 occurrences), the translators preferred to use *"archon"*.

**Arguments against *"origin"***

The word is never used for *"origin"* in the NT or the Greek OT.

Only two occurrences older than Paulus (4th century BC).

1. Herodotus: In the plural about the *"sources"* of a river.
2. The Orphic fragments: On Zeus as the head of all things.

This definition is not found in most Greek lexicons.

**Comparison with Jesus’ submission to God the Father**

Just as Jesus has a subordinate role in relation to God the Father, the woman/wife has a subordinate role in relation to the man.

BUT: Just as Jesus is of the same nature as the Father, the woman/wife is just as valuable as the man since both are human beings created in God's image.

AND: Jesus is the head of the congregation, but he showed that biblical leadership is to serve others. That the man is the head of the woman means that he must love his wife *"just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her"* (Eph 5:25).

## The women's covering of the head in worship (vv. 5-6)

* Very short hair or a shaved head was associated with shame and humiliation, or grief.
* Roman law: A woman who brought shame on her husband by being unfaithful had her head shaved.
* Married women covered their hair in public.
* Loose hair was considered promiscuous or at least a sign of being unmarried. Thus, this concerns her husband’s honor.

## Symbol of authority? (11:10)

“A woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head.*"* BSB

*"For this reason, and because the angels are watching, a woman should wear a covering on her head to show she is under authority." NLT*

*Two possible interpretations:*

1. *"For this reason"* refers back to the order of creation in v. 9, and the *"covering on her head"* should show that the man is her head.
2. If there is no linguistic support for a "passive" meaning, it is always the subject who has the authority. It can mean *"having a sign of one's authority"*, i.e., a sign of one's rightful place in the congregation.

## Summary

**Culturally:**

* v. 6: It is a shame for a woman to cut or shave off her hair.
* v. 13: It is not fitting for a woman to pray to God without something on her head.
* v. 14: It is a shame for a man to have long hair.

**Non-Cultural (Creation Theology):**

* v. 3: The man is the head of the woman (as God is the head of Christ).
* vv. 8-9: The woman was made from the man and for the man → The woman is the man's glory.

**Men:**

* Should not look like those who belonged to pagan religions. There were no men in the Roman Empire who had long hair.
* Should not look like women, because God has created two sexes.

**Women:** Should not disgrace their husbands by dressing indecently or *"unmarried"*.

God has given men and women different roles, but both are nevertheless created in his image and are equally valuable.

## Application of 11:2-16

1. The man is the head of the woman/wife, but the man must be the *"head"* in the same way as Jesus is the head of the church. (What does this look like in practice?)
2. God has created two sexes to be kept separate. Men should look like men and women like women.
3. Women should not disgrace their husbands by dressing indecently or behaving "unmarried".

## The abuse of the Lord’s Supper (11:17-33)

Potlucks were common at that time. Some treated the Lord's Supper like a dinner in the temple by eating with their "elite friends" before the slaves and the poor arrived. By then the food was gone and it had turned into a drinking party. Consequently, social differences became evident and the Lord's Supper, which was supposed to be a symbol of unity, became a mockery of Christian unity. It was not communion at all (vv. 20-21).

**3 purposes of the Lord’s supper:**

* Remembering Jesus (vv. 24-25).
* Proclaim his death (v. 26).
* Unite the congregation (vv. 18, 21, 22, 29, 33).

# Chapters 12-14

Chapter 12: Various spiritual gifts make the church a unit.

Chapter 13: Love is better than all spiritual gifts.

Chapter 14: Prophecy is better than speaking in tongues without interpretation because prophecy builds up the church.

## Chapter 12

vv. 1-3: All Christians have the Holy Spirit.

vv. 4-11: This one Spirit gives various spiritual gifts to each one in the church to serve the common good.

vv. 12-26: All believers belong to one body because they all have the same Spirit. They are members of the body of Jesus. God has given them their place, and all are needed. He has put them together so that what lacks honor will receive much honor, so there will be no division in the body.

vv. 27-31: Some sort of order of importance (?) is: Apostles, prophets, teachers, then mighty works, then healing/helping/leading/tongues. They should focus on the greatest (first?) spiritual gifts.

## Chapter 13

**The necessity of love (vv. 1-3)**

vv. 1-2 Tongues, prophetic gift, wisdom, knowledge (Ch. 1-4), or strong faith are nothing without love.

v. 3 To give away everything one owns (Rom 12:8), even one's own life, is worthless without love.

**The nature of love (vv. 4-7)**

v. 4 They were envious (3:3), boasted and were haughty (4:6, etc.).

v. 5 They offended others (Ch. 5-6, 11), sought their own (Ch. 8-10, 11), and hid evil (Ch. 6).

**The duration of love (vv. 8-13)**

vv. 9-10 Piece by piece vs. perfectly.

v. 11 Children vs. adults.

v. 12 Mirror/riddle vs. face to face.

v. 13 Love continues into eternity.

## Chapter 14

vv. 1-19: Prophecy is better than tongues without interpretation because the church is built up.

vv. 20-25: Prophecy is better than speaking in tongues without interpretation because it can have a positive effect on unbelievers.

vv. 26-40: Guidelines for speaking in tongues, prophecy, and women in the church.

### Tongues: A prayer language

v. 2: *"for/to God"* - not a message from God.

v. 4: More meaningful to be strengthened by it if it is a prayer and not a message from God that you do not understand.

v. 14: *"if I pray in a tongue…"*

vv. 16-17: A prayer of thanksgiving.

### 14:21-25

*"In the Law it is written: "With other tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord." Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers. So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!"* 14:21-25

Paul quotes Isaiah (he calls it *"the Law"*, but that could refer to the OT in general). The context of Isaiah 28 is that God will address the people in the language of the Assyrians because they have not listened and have rejected God. Therefore, this becomes a negative sign that heralds judgment for them. Speaking in tongues without interpretation is likewise a negative sign for those who do not believe. They do not understand anything, run away and never come back because they think that those in the congregation are out of their minds.

Paul first says in verse 22 that prophecy *"is not for unbelievers"*, but then he says in verse 24 that *"if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all"*. Prophecy can therefore be useful for both believers and non-believers.

### "Let two or three speak prophetically, and let the others test what they say." (14:29)

The Shepherd of Hermas (approx. 140 AD) gives two characteristics of a false prophet:

1. Draws attention to oneself.
2. Prophesies on command - outside the church assembly.

*"The Holy Spirit does not speak when a man wants him to speak, no, he only speaks when God wants him to do so."*

*"Many Christians are afraid of sinning against love by daring to scrutinize something that comes in Christian garb and breathes the name of Jesus. They do not dare to investigate the credibility of the last prophets in the city, lest they be guilty of rejecting something that may come from God... One believes this is a sign of great spirituality. But there is no sign of it at all. It might as well be a sign of the Holy Spirit's absence."* AW Tozer (the quote has been translated)

### The women must be silent (vv. 33b-38)

*"For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord’s people. Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church. Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached? If anyone thinks they are a prophet or otherwise gifted by the Spirit, let them acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord’s command. But if anyone ignores this, they will themselves be ignored."* vv. 33b-38.

**Interpretation 1: Small talk**

Johannes Chrysostemos (end of the fourth century) is one of the first to interpret it this way.

The framework is order (vv. 33 and 40).

**Problems:**

1. Verse 34 uses a very common word for speaking.
2. The reason is not that they create disorder, but that it is a shame for them to speak.
3. The closest justification seems to be a more general reference to subordination and not to disorder.

**Interpretation 2: Question**

*"speak"* = to ask questions.

Ancient women generally had much less education than men, and the church allowed them to learn. Perhaps they made too much of this opportunity.

Plutarch's *"Advice to Bride and Groom"*: The husband's responsibility is to provide for his wife's education.

Also, those who speak in tongues (v. 28) and the prophets (vv. 29-30) must remain silent to maintain order in the congregation (v. 33, 40).

A conditional silence for all three groups: *"If"* in vv. 28, 30, and 35.

Application: Irrelevant as today's western women have at least as much education as men.

**Interpretation 3: Testing of prophecies**

The context in chapter 14 is prophecy and speaking in tongues.

The immediate context is the use of the prophetic gift in the congregation.

May have something to do with the testing of prophetic messages (v. 29).

1. Women were not to participate in the trial at all.
2. A wife should not test her own husband's prophetic message and ask (irrelevant?) questions. She must submit and not shame him in this way.

## Some timeless principles from chapters 12-14

Spiritual gifts are used properly when they build up the church.

The spiritual gifts are to be used in the congregation.

Love is better than all spiritual gifts, but we are not the ones who define love.

Speaking in tongues without interpretation must take place at home and not in the congregation.

We can not forthright say the command to remain silent in the assembly is valid today, we first need to understand what the meaning in the original setting was and why the command was given.

There must be order when the congregation comes together.

## Application from chapters 12-14

1. Do you know what your spiritual gift is?
2. Paul expects the spiritual gifts to be used in the church, but does this imply all spiritual gifts in all churches?
3. What can we take with us from Paul’s guidelines on how things should take place?

# Chapter 15: The Resurrection

[EXCLUSIVE: A Closer Look Inside Christ's Unsealed Tomb | National Geographic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkmx_k9wVs0)

## 15:3

Paul says he received this in AD 34-37.

* Jesus was crucified in the year AD 30.
* Paul's conversion took place around year AD 31-34. He stayed in Arabia for 3 years, then he met with Peter and James in Jerusalem (Gal 1).

The verses are formulated as a confession, so it must have been stated before Paul received it 4-7 years after Jesus' resurrection.

Even the most critical scholars say that this is older than Paul's conversion. Some of them say it must be a maximum of 3 years after Jesus' resurrection, and some estimate 6 months.

Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures:

Isaiah 53: *"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed...the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all…"*

More than a single verse: The exile came because of the people's sin, and the exile was not finally over until Jesus came and led us out of the real exile by taking our sins upon himself (e.g., Jer 31:15 in Matt 2).

## 15:4

Did he rise on the third day according to the Scriptures?

Hos 6:2: *"After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence."*

John 2:1; Matt 12:40: *"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*

Psalm 16:10-11: *"You will not let your holy one see decay."* Acts 13:35

## The resurrection of the dead (vv. 12-19)

Did they think the resurrection had already happened? (Like Hymeneos and Philetus in 2 Tim 2:17-18?)

It is illogical to believe that Jesus rose from the dead but not believe in the resurrection of the dead.

It’s decisive for the Christian faith that Jesus has risen!

Without Jesus' resurrection and its meaning, both the Gospel and our faith are useless (v. 14), faith is futile (v. 17), and we are of all people most to be pitied (v. 18).

*"In the various languages of the time, "resurrection" did not mean... that Jesus, or perhaps his "soul", had "survived" in a non-corporeal way. That's exactly what it didn't mean. There were words to describe such non-corporeal survival of death... The word "resurrection" was different. It meant a new bodily life after a period of being bodily dead."* N. T. Wright: The Day The Revolution Began. (The quote has been translated).

### Alternative interpretations

*"Whether he was literally raised from the dead is irrelevant, because his spirit lives on, and that's what makes him worth following."*

*"His followers are themselves resurrected to be his new body, and therefore his spirit lives on."*

*"Those who do not believe that Jesus was raised from the dead can still celebrate Jesus' resurrection as a metaphor for disobedience and opposition to the Kingdom."*

*"1 Corinthians 15:17 says... this is correct, since the resurrection made it possible for Christ to dwell in the believers and lead them. If he had not risen, they could not be led, and would go astray."*

*"The soul of Jesus, the enlightened consciousness, could not die, and he had materialized for the disciples soon after. The first Christians knew the "power of his resurrection" as Paul wrote. We too have access to that power: Wisdom, Light, and Love."*

### There MUST be a physical resurrection!

1. Otherwise, Jesus did not do what he said he would do, and then he was not who he pretended to be. (Matthew 16:21)

2. Otherwise, death was not overcome, and then neither was sin! (v. 56).

* When Jesus rose, death was overcome, which meant that he dealt with sin.
* *"Something had to have happened to make that possible. If the prison door is open, someone must have unlocked it, perhaps overpowering the guards in the process." N. T. Wright*

3. Otherwise, we shall not rise physically when Jesus returns.

* His body was the beginning of the world to come. (vv. 20, 23)

## A. The tomb was empty

**1st option: He didn't die.**

Flogged + on a cross for several hours → able to push away the stone (approx. 1500 kg)?

Would the soldiers have taken him down if they weren't sure?

**2nd option: The disciples stole the body**

The tomb was guarded. The disciples were depressed and disillusioned. Torture and death made it unlikely that they would’ve kept a lie.

**3rd option: The authorities stole the body**

They could only have displayed the dead body to stop the hysteria surrounding the resurrection.

## B. Jesus appeared to the disciples

### 1st option: The disciples lied

* More than 500 people?
* Many times over several weeks.
* The disciples were depressed and disillusioned. Torture and death made it unlikely that they would’ve kept a lie.

### 2nd option: The disciples hallucinated

* Only 15% of people experience hallucinations, more so women than men and more elderly than younger people. Usually those who are nervous, have a good imagination, are sick, or use drugs. Does not suit the disciples (robust fishermen, tax collectors, and doubters like Thomas).
* Hallucinations are individual events.
* Jesus was physical. They could touch him, and he could eat.
* They did not recognize Jesus. If you hallucinate about a dead person due to grief, you usually recognize the person you miss.
* It anyway doesn't explain the empty tomb.

## C. Church expansion

*"The Church began with a handful of unlearned fishermen and tax collectors and spread throughout the known world over the next 300 years. This is an incredible story of a peaceful revolution unparalleled in history."* Michael Green, the quote has been translated.

## (D. Human Experience)

Today, all the time all kinds of people all over the world experience the resurrected, living Jesus and come to believe in him.

## "The Order of the End Times" (vv. 23-28)

1. Jesus rose (v. 23a).
2. Jesus reigns as king (until God *"has put all his enemies under his feet"*) (v. 25).
3. Psalm 110:1 → in Acts 2:34 about Jesus' position now (Heb 10:12-13; Eph 1:22).

Those who belong to him are made alive (v. 23b), and death is the last enemy to be destroyed (v. 26). Jesus has destroyed all dominion, authority, and power (v. 24b).

1. Jesus hands over the kingdom to God his Father (v. 24a) and is made subject to God (v. 28a).
2. God shall be all in all (v. 28b).

## Baptism for the dead? (v. 29)

**A. Substitute baptism**

Probably about Christians who did not have time to be baptized before they died.

He does not recognize this practice but uses it as an argument against their denial of the resurrection.

**B. The meaning is "for their dead bodies"**

Unusual for Paul to let this pass. Baptism points to the resurrection (Rom 6:5), so why are they baptized if they do not believe in it?

## vv. 35-50

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **The earthly body** | **The heavenly body** |  |
| perishable | imperishable | vv. 42, 50 |
| dishonor | glory | v. 43 |
| weakness | power | v. 43 |
| natural | spiritual | vv. 44-46 |
| of the dust of the earth | of heaven | vv. 47-49 |

## The resurrection of the dead (vv. 12-19)

Since Jesus rose, our message is NOT empty! Our faith is NOT empty!

Our faith is NOT without meaning, it is FULL of meaning!

And we are NOT still in our sins!

Those who have died in the faith are NOT lost! We will see them again!

Our hope in Christ is NOT just for this life!

# Chapter 16: The collection for the church in Jerusalem

1 Cor 16:1-4 (year 55)

2 Corinthians 8-9 (year 56)

Romans 15:25-26 (year 57)

*"Do everything in love!"* 16:14

# Reflection questions from chapters 15-16

1. How does the resurrection of the dead give meaning and substance to your faith?
2. Does the world have the impression that Christians "do everything in love"? How can we become better at (communicating) this?