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Salvation In One Corinthians.

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Salvation in One Corinthians.

INTRODUCTION: The core focus of One Corinthians is not upon those outside of Christ, but to those that have been baptized into the name of Jesus Christ. Because the primary focus of this study is upon Scriptures (in most chapters of One Corinthians) that relate to salvation and are relevant to eternal life there are far too many different topics and titles to make a topics list, but I have faith that most who travel through each chapter will by the time they arrive at the end not only be enriched in their knowledge of salvation, but also enriched in God's love and God's grace in Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:17-25

The Message of the Cross is the Power of God to Save.

- **1 Corinthians 1:17-25:** For Christ did not send me (Paul) to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.¹⁸ For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.¹⁹ For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom,²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

The wise in this context carries the idea of those who are prideful, conceited and consider themselves wise in their own eyes. To these the message of the cross appears foolishness. Even though Paul understood this he did not attempt to proclaim the message of the Gospel and the cross so that it would appeal to human wisdom, but rather he preached it with simplicity. The power of the cross (the death and resurrection of Christ) refers to its message since the message of the cross not only has the power to spiritually change lives, but also to deliver a person from mortality to immortality, from death to eternal life. The message of the cross is simple in fact so much so that it makes it difficult for those who are prideful, conceited and considers themselves wise by their own knowledge to accept since their heart condition is not right, yet a humble person with very limited education can with great ease understand the message of the cross.

This is the wisdom of God no-one needs a brilliant mind or a university education to know God and attain to eternal life neither do they need to attend a Bible college since the message of the cross states that a perfect man gave his life as a ransom for the imperfect and that whoever believes that Christ died and rose again and trust in him for their right standing before God will be saved to eternal life. It is also difficult for those who are wise in their own eyes to accept the message of the cross because it also states that sinners are saved by grace and not by self-effort or good works. This is enormously difficult for a self-righteous person, who considers themselves wise to accept as they count themselves righteous because of their good conduct, whereas the message of the cross states that it is our faith God counts as our righteousness and not our own self-effort or good works. God's great wisdom and power is manifested in Christ crucified in the following three majestic truths:

1. The way to salvation and eternal life is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace, and not by enormous intellectual head knowledge or by self-effort or by strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions.

2. No one needs a brilliant I.Q. or university degree to be saved to eternal life and in union with Christ and his heavenly Father.
3. God by His awesome power raised a human man from the dead to eternal life and everlasting glory never to see death again showing to all mankind that the human mortal body can be raised from the dead to everlasting glory.

In these three things the wisdom and power of God are manifested in the cross.

The foolishness of God: obviously does not mean God is foolish rather it refers to the point of view of those who are wise in their own eyes, to them God appears foolish since they cannot grasp the simplicity of God's great wisdom manifested in the cross and the message it carries.

The weakness of God: carries the idea that mankind (especially the prideful) consider the message of the cross as being weak they consider a King who surrenders his life to his enemies without putting up a fight as being the ultimate act of weakness. Consider for a moment that Christ's crucifixion took place during the time of Rome and the Caesars, who were exalted for conquering their enemies and not surrendering to them, this is one of the reasons the cross appears to the natural mind to be weakness, since even in the world today it is those who win wars, those who are at the top of the business world or the enormously rich and famous etc., that are counted as great. The natural mind esteems and exalts success not failure and therefore when a prideful and self-righteous person looks at the cross they simply see failure, but those who respond to its call see the resurrection and the triumph and understand that the message of the bloodstained cross is the power of God that sets mortal humans free from death and saves them to eternal life and everlasting glory. The wisdom of God is that salvation begins with a right heart attitude (i.e., humbleness contrasted to pride) and acknowledging our sinful dysfunctions and aberrations contrasted to being self-righteous which means two things:

1. No matter how great the success someone may have in this life or how much good a self-righteous person may do if they do not accept the message of the cross, they cannot enter God's eternal Kingdom.
2. No matter what wickedness has been done if a sinner embraces the message of the cross in humbleness and honest repentance, they will be granted forgiveness and through faith in Christ and entry into God's eternal Kingdom.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:29-30

God Chose what, is Foolish in the World to Shame the Wise.

- **1 Corinthians 1:29-30:** so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.
³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

Though many in the Corinthian church prior to their calling did not have a brilliant education; possess great wisdom; hold principal roles of authority or came from noble families this is not so now they are in the body of Christ. This is because they are born into a noble and eternal family and therefore do have great wisdom and also great authority, since they now have the words of eternal life. From the world's perspective and wisdom, they look foolish, but from God's heavenly perspective they have great wisdom, because they embraced and believed the message of the cross and the Good News of the Gospel which saves them to eternal glory and everlasting life.

The reason no brother or sister in Christ can boast in the presence of God is because God made the Lord Jesus Christ every believer:

- **Wisdom:** because they embrace and believe his words.
- **Righteousness:** because of their faith.
- **Sanctification:** because God counts them holy because of their faith in Christ.
- **Redeemer:** because Christ paid the price to deliver them from the law of sin and death.

The universal law of sin and death states, "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23) which means the universal law of sin and death has no power to hold those who believe and faithfully follow Christ in the darkness of death this is the reason neither the rich nor the poor in Christ can boast that they attained their own righteousness and salvation, because God is the eternal source of every believer's life through their faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTE: the poor in Christ should never despise the rich of this world since it is far more difficult for a wealthy person who has the luxuries of this world to enjoy to come to Christ than it is for someone who has nothing. Added to this no-matter how difficult this life is for a brother or sister in Christ at the end of it we have everlasting joy and happiness and eternal life and glory whereas the rich without God simply have the darkness of the grave and death awaiting them.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-2

Paul's Message was Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.

- **1 Corinthians 2:1-2:** And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. ² For I (Paul) decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

The testimony of God is the majestic Good News of the Gospel in Jesus Christ which states that whoever comes to God through honest repentance and faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ is not only approved of and accepted by God the Father but all their sins are forgiven, not because they are deserving of it, by any self-effort or religious good works, but because through faith in Christ righteousness is imputed from God to them as a pure and free gift. But this is not the end of the Good News since God's promises also state that the faithful in Christ will be resurrected to eternal glory and everlasting life. Can there be any better testimony than this? This is the reason the testimony of God is called the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Lofty speech: in this context carries the following two ideas, firstly, speaking grandiose myths fables, parables, exaggerations, overstatements and hyperboles and secondly, speaking from a self-important proud and superior attitude to aggrandize self.

Wisdom: in this context does not refer to the wisdom that will make us wise which the book of proverbs tells us all to seek after, but to speaking from an egotistical, self-important attitude using excessive flattery and clever, calculating and scheming speech to persuade others to one's own ideas or to gain an advantage.

Paul decided to know nothing except Jesus Christ and him crucified: prior to Paul writing this letter he had heard from Chloe's people that there was quarrelling and divisions among their assembly (1 Cor. 1:11) this maybe one of the reasons Paul made the decision to focus on Christ and him crucified since they were obviously confused over many things. Looking back to that era it is very easy to understand their contentions since they were embracing an entirely new message which

calls Jews who had been indoctrinated in the Law of Moses for around four-thousand years to unite with Gentiles who had believed in idols and pagan gods this is the most likely reason Paul chose to set his focus upon Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:3-5

Faith that Rests Not in Wisdom, But in the Power of God.

- **1 Corinthians 2:3-5:** And I (Paul) was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, ⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible (enticing in KJV) words of wisdom (man's wisdom in KJV),, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Wisdom: in this this context does not refer to the wisdom of God, but worldly wisdom (i.e., the wisdom of the natural human mind) (see the notes concerning wisdom above). The education Paul would have received from his father and from Tyrannus concerning the Jewish faith and Moses Law would mean two things:

1. His intellectual knowledge would have far exceeded most.
2. He would have been fully aware that the message of Christ he was proclaiming would to the Jewish mind appear to be contrary to Moses Law and to the natural mind would sound like some kind of imaginary illusion or a make-believe fictional story.

Being aware of this perhaps Paul's fear might have been the rejection, the mocking or even the persecution he might have received (especially by the Jews) while visiting the city of Corinth.

NOTE: even today rejection and mocking is something most in Christ struggle with when testifying of Christ and the Good News of the Gospel especially with the advanced knowledge of our century which makes our message not only sound like an old fashioned and out of date myth, but also has the potential to make us appear naive for believing such a simplistic story that to the natural mind sounds like childish fantasies or imagined illusions of the mind. This is one of the reasons we need to trust that the Holy Spirit will be working through the Good News of the Gospel and the message of the cross as we share it. A wise man once said:

- You cannot say the wrong thing to a person with the right heart nor can you say the right thing to a person with the wrong heart.

Only God knows the heart of the person and therefore how they respond to the Gospel message is not in our control the only thing we have any power over is proclaiming the message and therefore no-one should feel condemned simply because people do not respond and should always be encouraged by the fact that not everyone responded to the greatest Shepherd to ever have spoken the eternal majestic and glorious message of God.

Demonstration of the Spirit and of power: these words, can refer to the manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit (courage, compassion, grace, kindness etc.), to great acts of charity and courage or to miracles and the working of the Holy Spirit in a person's life. Paul's words, "That your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (v5) means the following two things:

1. It is clever or enticing words that save a sinner to eternal life, but the power of God (i.e., the Holy Spirit working through the word of God on the heart of those the Gospel and the message of the cross is being proclaimed to).
2. We are not saved by self-effort and good works (i.e., the wisdom of men), but by the power of God, referring to His saving grace that is granted to all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Secret and Hidden Wisdom of God.

- **1 Corinthians 2:7-10:** But we (Paul and the apostles) impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— ¹⁰ these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

These verses shine a brilliant floodlight on God’s eternal foreknowledge that before the ages began God planned in His eternal mind that Christ would be crucified and rise again to glory. From the foundation of the world Christ’s death and resurrection was in God’s eternal plan for mankind’s salvation from before time even began. God’s eternal foreknowledge is a stunning mystery to the human mind, but majestically manifests the wisdom of God who has given mankind free will. By foreknowledge God is able to allow us to do as we please and come what may our free will is still mysteriously working within God’s sovereign will and bringing about His eternal plan that He set in motion before the beginning of time such is the wonder of God’s foreknowledge. God in the book of Isaiah says:

- My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9).

The secret and hidden wisdom of God in this context refers to: -

- The death and resurrection of Christ to eternal glory.
- The Good News of the Gospel which proclaims that those in Christ are set free from the law of sin and death which states, “The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).
- The Gentiles through Christ are now being grafted into the Commonwealth of Israel and becoming partakers of all the promises made to Abraham.

These are the things the rulers of Christ era (the chief priests, Pharisees, scribes and elders) did not understand.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15

Whoever’s Work is Burned up they will suffer Loss, But will be Saved.

- **1 Corinthians 3:10-15:** According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I (Paul) laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. ¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³ each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

This is fabulous, every brother and sister in Christ should see themselves in this world as fellow workers for God’s Kingdom. Paul pictures us like a royal and golden field amongst the world, a majestic building that God is building on the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTICE: many others will build on this foundation, it is certain Paul was fully aware that there will be many in the global family of Christ with varying ideas, but rather than judge their salvation he simply warns them to be careful how they build on the foundation. Paul's mindset toward whoever is in Christ is that they are brothers and sisters in the Lord and should be treated as such regardless of their lack of spiritual growth or infant human and worldly behaviour.

Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and straw: the following I believe is one of the most important changes that need to take place in the mindset of the global Christian community. In most religious denominations I have attended over the past forty-five years almost all teachings of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation are counted as being important to have right to be saved to eternal life and in union with God and his heavenly Father. The underlying idea is that if a believer has all these doctrines neatly wrapped in a golden ribbon (according to the domination one is in at the time) and their lifestyle is in accordance with their standard they are saved.

This is not how Paul views salvation, rather he sees Christ as the foundation that all other things are built upon. This means that whoever is building their life on this foundation and is trusting in Christ and believes the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is saved to eternal life and will be rewarded according to how they have built on that foundation (i.e., with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or straw). This means that within the worldwide body of Christ not all behaviour nor all teachings are going to be as we might think they should be, but this does not mean that a person is not saved to eternal life, but it might mean they will suffer loss since Paul tells us what is good and what is bad in a brother or sisters life will be rewarded accordingly (i.e., some will suffer loss while others will be rewarded).

Just because someone doesn't fit our mould of what we think a Christian should look like it they are faithfully building their life on the Lord Jesus Christ (the foundation) they should be counted as brothers and sisters in Christ since they will be saved to eternal life despite the fact they might still be feeding on milk (babies feed on milk), acting in a human manner and living their life in a worldly fashion as were those in the Corinthian church. Paul never cast doubt on their faith since he always refers to them as brothers and sisters in Christ, but he did view them as infants in the family who had never grown up and who may suffer loss of some kind.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:21-23

Let no-one Boast in Men for All things are Yours.

- **1 Corinthians 3:21-23:** So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours,²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours,²³ and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Paul in these verses is saying, Paul, Apollos and Cephas and by extension all leaders of the Christian faith belong to all in the global body of Christ and that all good things of the world are our inheritance since in Christ we have conquered death and will be granted eternal life and therefore we should live in this present age with this amazing hope knowing that all things will be ours in the glorious future age when the Lord returns as, King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

1 CORINTHIANS 4:5

Do not pronounce Judgment before the Lord Comes.

- **1 Corinthians 4:5:** Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

The focus of judgment here is upon the following two things:

1. Judging the purposes, intent and motivation of another person's heart (Paul is saying, we cannot not judge the hidden things of the heart since we cannot know a person's true motives).
2. Exalting brothers and sisters because of their gifts, spiritual knowledge or their abilities etc.

The words, "Not to go beyond what is written," means don't exalt anyone as being more important or valuable than another no matter how gifted since in doing this there is the danger of becoming prideful and equally as bad can result in brothers and sisters showing favour to one over another. These verses are teaching those in the global body of Christ to leave exalting others and judging the hidden things of the heart to God and treat everyone in Christ's family with equal worth.

I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos: Paul's statement, "I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos" (v6) means neither he nor Apollos judge the motives of each other's hearts nor do they exalt each other because of their gifts, abilities or success in the ministry, they do not consider one better or of more value in worth simply because one might have greater gifts or much greater success in saving the lost and establishing God's Kingdom.

1 CORINTHIANS 4:9-10

They are Fools for Christ's Sake Not the Kingdom.

- **1 Corinthians 4:9-10:** For I (Paul) think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. ¹⁰ We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute.

The Old Testament prophets were the first to come with the light of God's word and be a showcase on the stage of the world to shine forth God's glory until John the Baptist and the glorious moment the promised Messiah the Christ appeared to the world as the Lamb of God to be slain. Now the apostles are the last prophets of God to proclaim the final message of God's new covenant of grace and the eternal Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the message of the cross before the Lord Jesus Christ returns. Paul feels that God has shone a heavenly floodlight on the apostles making them a spectacle a wonder and exhibition to all of creation.

1 CORINTHIANS 4:15

Though you have Countless Guides in Christ, You do not have Many Fathers.

- **1 Corinthians 4:15:** For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Paul is not saying in this verse that his followers should call him father in the sense that he is a priest of higher righteousness before God than they are. It is true that it is the custom of some churches worldwide to have their followers refer to their priests as father, but Jesus told his followers, "To call no man their father on earth, because they have one Father, who is in heaven" (Matt. 23:9).

Obviously, this is not referring to our biological earthly fathers, but to calling men our spiritual fathers, fathers, Paul is certainly not saying or even implying that his followers should call him father. The words, "I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel," in the context of what Paul is saying carries the following two ideas:

1. Paul gave spiritual birth to the Corinthian church and as such is raising them as a parent would raise their own children.
2. Paul loves and cares for them as a father does his own children, in contrast to the many teachers who are able to proclaim the word of God, but have no love or care toward those they are teaching. A true shepherd is one who not only teaches the Scriptures, but also whose heart cares about his flock as a father cares about the well-being of his own children.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20

Your Body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

- **1 Corinthians 6:19-20:** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit means that God dwells in our hearts, our minds and our inner most being by His word, by our faith in Christ and by the Spirit of his love. You are not your own: means we have been redeemed to God by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and should therefore endeavour to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith.

You were bought with a price: the price Paul refers to is the life of God's only beloved Son. The Lord Jesus Christ laid down his life down to a brutal, bloody and cruel death so that we could be counted righteous by faith apart from the law, self-effort and works. In spite of our sinful aberrations and dysfunctions that dwell within God counts our faith in Christ as our righteousness it is imputed to us as a pure and free gift.

In conclusion to the price that was paid consider the following: Paul in the book of Romans wrote, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8). This is the most perfect example of love and the most splendid and humbling of all Scriptures since it clearly shows how much Christ loves us, Paul in the same letter also wrote: "While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6). These two verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that God loved us long before we loved Him. This means that though we were full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within our bodies (i.e., self, ego, pride, greed and lustful thoughts etc.,) Christ died for us, he laid down his life that we could be made righteous by faith apart from the law, self-effort and works. In spite of our corrupted fallen nature that we have inherited from our earthly father Adam God counts our faith in Christ as our righteousness it is imputed to us as a pure and free gift. Though some of us might die for a friend or loved one, Christ died for us while we were ungodly and indifferent to God and His ways and in many cases blasphemers, because of a lack of perceiving this great love God has toward us that these two verses (and others like them) shine a spotlight on some in the Christian faith tend to determine whether God loves them by their good or bad circumstances.

They feel if life is charmed and blessed God loves them, but if it suddenly takes a turn for the worse and trouble comes, they feel God has withdrawn his love, but this is superstition and judging God according to the fickle circumstances of this world. When anyone who believes in Christ doubts God's love all we have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross and see what it cost the heart of the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered to redeem us and spiritually crown and cloth us with a royal and majestic robe of righteous so that we could be justified and granted eternal life in everlasting glory apart from self-effort and strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions. Paul in his letter to the Romans wrote, "While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, how much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life (Rom. 5:10).

1 CORINTHIANS 8:3

God knows those who Love Him.

- **1 Corinthians 8:3:** But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

This verse should bring tremendous comfort to every brother and sister in Christ, Why, you might ask? Simply this: though the faithful deeply desire to honour God, not one of us live a perfect life before God and not one of us attain to the perfect Holiness the law demands and not one of us are without sin (1 John 1:8-10). Added to this not one of us has perfect knowledge of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Now here is the comfort in all our lack God not only understands, but His eyes perceive the love in our hearts for Him, and because of this love in our hearts toward him we are favourably and graciously known by Him. This means that God's grace, mercy and kindness is toward all who have love in their hearts toward Him.

1 CORINTHIANS 8:5-6

There is One God, the Father and One Lord, Jesus Christ.

- **1 Corinthians 8:5-6:** For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

Since the Bible very clearly teaches that there is only one God, some might wonder what Paul's statement, "There may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth" means. To gain some insight it helps to understand

a little bit about the human imagination. When a person strongly believes in a thing such as an idol which symbolizes some form of god, the imagination develops an image on the screen of the mind of that god the person is believing in, it's a little like a small child who after going to bed and having the light turned off believes there is a monster in the room, if that belief is strong enough the child's nervous system will react in fear accordingly, since the human nervous system does not have a mind of its own and therefore responds to whatever mental movies we play in our minds whether they are true or imaginary. This same principle applies to the belief in idols or other gods, and the reason why Paul is able to say that there are many gods, referring to the many gods people believe in, but in reality they are gods of superstition and though very real to those who believe in them they have no real form, no substance and no real existence except in the imagination of the mind of those who strongly believe in them since as the Bible clearly teaches there is only one God. For further information see the title:

- Demons in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The words, "Jesus Christ, through, who are all things and through whom we exist" (v6) have been mistakenly used to support the theory that Jesus is God the creator, but notice the previous words in verse six in which Paul has written, "There is only one God the Father, from who are all things and for whom we exist." When Paul wrote a similar thing of Christ he was not referring to the original creation, but to the church, the body of Christ (i.e., it is through Christ we all exist and the all things refer to all things needed for eternal salvation (i.e., forgiveness of sins, God's favour, mercy and grace, the promises to Abraham and eternal life) all things we need to be saved to eternal life and everlasting glory are in Christ. It is in this sense Paul makes the statement, "Jesus Christ, through who are all things and through whom we exist meaning without Christ there would be no Kingdom of God it simply would not exist since from the beginning of time Christ has been the central focus of Gods foreordained eternal plans and purposes for mankind's eternal salvation.

For further information concerning Jesus being God, see the title:

- Trinity (the Doctrine of the Trinity)" in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-27

This is my Body Given for you; this Cup is the New Covenant in my Blood.

- **1 Corinthians 11:23-27:** For I (Paul) received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. ²⁷ Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.

Jesus said:

- This is my body, which is for you, do this in remembrance of me (v25).

He then breaks the bread and shares it with all those at the table he then takes the cup and says:

- This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it in remembrance of me (v25).

He then shares the cup with all who were at the table Jesus in doing this is presenting the following two ideas:

1. Sharing our food and drink with each other contrasted to the Corinthian church who were keeping it for themselves.
2. When eating a meal with brothers and sisters do it (meaning eat it) in remembrance of Christ and his death.

The idea behind this is that Christ died not for himself, but for others, this means that the words, "You proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (v26) also carry the following two thoughts:

1. Christ died and rose again.
2. Christ lived and died for others and therefore those who belong to his family are to live with this same attitude, meaning we are to live for others and not be selfish with what we have, which in the context of the Lord's Supper means we are to share our food and drink.

Eating the bread and drinking the cup unworthy: the words, "Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord" (v27) are not referring to our personal sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that dwell within us, nor to the sinful things we may have personally done (repentance and sorrow for these does not wait until the next Lord's Supper since godly repentance is instant the moment the heart is convicted. Rather the context these words are spoken in is about brothers and sisters in Christ not sharing their food and drink with their poorer brothers and sisters. It is in this way they are guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord, since his life and his message is all about dying to self and living for others (i.e., doing good when able and sharing what we have with those who lack). When the Lord told his disciple to, "Do this" as often as you drink it he was telling them to share their food and drink with each other contrasted to being selfish and uncaring especially since the poor amongst the church of Paul's generation had most likely never had the luxury of tasting wine or eating good food. This is why Jesus is saying, "When you come together in my name share your food and drink with each other." The concept of the Lord's Supper is about brothers and sisters sharing a meal together in the Lord's name. The noble, wealthy and rich in the Corinthian church were not doing this they did not understand that Jesus when telling the twelve at the last meal he had with them was not only teaching those at the table by saying, "Do this," but actually showing them by his actions in passing the bread and wine to all at the table so that when they did come together (after he had ascended to heaven) to have a meal they would know what the Lord expected of them (i.e., to give thanks to God, remember the Lord and then share what they have with each other).

NOTE: doing something in the Lord's name does not just mean mentally remembering Christ, the name in Hebrew culture embraces everything about who is given that name it means remembering that Jesus gave freely of himself to bless others, he sacrificed his own leisure time and time with his family to bless others, he subjected his body to hardship to bless others and ultimately gave his life so that others could benefit. The Lord's motives were all about putting others before himself so when he was telling his disciples, "Do this in remembrance of me" he was saying the following two things:

1. Remember all that the Lord has spoken and done.
2. Put others before yourselves and share what you have as he did.

When the noble, wealthy and rich in the Corinthian church were eating the Lord's Supper they were eating to themselves instead of sharing their wine and their food with the less fortunate, because of their pride and sense of superiority they had totally missed what the Spirit of the Lord and having a meal in Jesus name was all about.

All Baptized Believers are Part of the One Body of Christ.

- **1 Corinthians 12:12-13:** For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

The body: in this context refers to the local and global family of Christ, the body carries the idea of being a complete and sound whole though made up of many different parts. Paul is likening the worldwide family of Christ, the church to a human body in the sense that the church has many different members with all sorts of varying personalities and abilities yet they are all form one global body in Christ.

All drank of the one Spirit: all drank of the one Spirit means that all believe the same Gospel, all believe the same message of the cross and all believe and embraced the same Lord and that all who believe this message and embrace Christ are brought by faith and love into the same spirit which is the Spirit of God. It is God's Spirit that is the one spirit and often called the Holy Spirit, all who believe (Jews and Gentiles) and are baptized into Christ enter into the Spirit of God by faith and love. God the Father is building one family through his Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Receiving and entering into the one Spirit also embraces the idea of being of one mind and one thought (i.e., having the same focus, goals and purpose toward the same end) which is to honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and not only do what one is able to do to benefit brothers and sisters in the family of God, but also do whatever will help rescue those in the kingdom of darkness and deliver them into the Kingdom of light.

NOTE: since God is love it could be said that through Christ all enter into one Spirit of love meaning they enter into the love of God and the love of Christ and from this love desire to do what honours God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Though this is a correct concept it is limited since the meaning of the words one Spirit not only refers to entering into God's love but also entering into eternal life.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3

Love the Highest of all Gifts.

- **1 Corinthians 13:1-3** ¹ If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Paul in these verses is speaking in extreme hyperboles (exaggerations overstatements and magnifications) we know this because no-one in the Bible had faith that moved mountains, he is speaking this way to overemphasize and shine a brilliant spotlight on the point he is making which is this:

- If anything is done, no matter how great or self-sacrificing, if it is done without love then it gains nothing and the one doing it counts for nothing.

Paul's statement:

- If he does anything without love he is nothing.

Gives us a clear understanding of what God values above all things, sadly amongst the faithful global family of Christ and in many local faithful Christian churches there are divisions and hurts which could be avoided if every brother and sister in Christ was able to give love the high priority God gives it and with all its royal glory gracefully cloth their particular

understanding of the Scriptures (outside of the Gospel and the message of the cross) with loves majestic splendour and abundant grace. It is certain if we had the same attitude toward love as Paul did many hurts in the family of Christ would be healed and many divisions would vanish.

Tongues of angels: it is interesting to notice whenever angels spoke in the Bible the people they were speaking to and the ones who were listening always understood what the angels were saying which means even if we could speak in the tongues of angels, those listening to us would still understand what we were saying. The words, "If I speak in the tongues of angels" conveys the following two ideas:

1. If Paul spoke with the full understanding of God and His eternal ways as the angels did.
2. Speaking with purity and holiness and in full accord with God's will.

For further information concerning speaking in tongues see: -

- 1 Corinthians 14 in, Commentary NT (ON WEBSITE MENU).

1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

Faith, Hope, and Love Abide, these three; but the Greatest of these is Love.

- **1 Corinthians 13:13:** So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

These words clearly shine a mega floodlight on what God gives the highest priority. There was a moment in Christianity when wearing a wrist band with the letters WWJD (meaning, what would Jesus do?) became the in thing to wear. The idea was to remind Christians to ask themselves in any given situation, "What would Jesus do be?" Since God exalts love above all other gifts, knowledge and even faith itself maybe complimenting, WWJD would be the letters WITLR (meaning what is the loving response) perhaps if we asked ourselves before making a decision or taking any action the question, "What is the loving response" meaning what can I say or do that will best benefit the people involved in this situation or circumstance many hurts and divisions would be avoided.

Perfect Love: the following is the most perfect example of love and the most splendid and humbling of all Scriptures since it clearly shows how much Christ loves us, the apostle Paul wrote the following to the brothers and sisters at Rome:

- While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

This means that though we were full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within our bodies (i.e., self, ego, pride, greed and lustful thoughts etc.,) Christ died for us, he laid down his life that we could be made righteous by faith apart from the law, self-effort and works. In in spite of our fallen corrupted nature God counts our faith in Christ as our righteousness and imputes it to us as a pure and free gift. Though some of us might die for a friend or loved one, Christ died for us while we were ungodly, meaning indifferent to God and His ways and for many of us blasphemers, consider; if God was willing to sacrifice His Son for us while we were indifferent to Him by sending his Son how much more will He love us now that we love His most beloved Son. Some in the Christian faith determine whether God loves them by their good or bad circumstances, (i.e., if life is calm and running smoothly God loves them, but if it suddenly takes a turn for the worse and trouble comes they feel God has withdrawn his love), but this is superstition and judging God according to this world, when anyone who believes in Christ doubts God's love all we have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross and see what

it cost the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered so that we could have put upon us a royal crown and majestic robe of righteousness apart from the law and works and not only be justified but granted eternal life in everlasting glory. Paul wrote the following eternal and majestic words, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8). No one in the global Kingdom of God who loves Christ should ever doubt how much the Lord and his heavenly Father loves them.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8

The Resurrection of Christ and the Third Day.

- **1 Corinthians 15:1-8:** Now I (Paul) would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

The things of first importance to the Gospel Paul proclaimed is:

- Christ died for our sins.
- Christ was buried.
- Christ was raised on the third day.
- Christ appeared to Peter (Cephas), the apostles, more than five-hundred brothers and sisters and to James and to Paul.

14

The words, "By which you are being saved" (are saved in KJV)" (v2) does not mean that those who have faith in Christ are in the process of being saved, we know this because Paul in the book of Romans clearly teaches that we are counted righteous because of our faith, not because of our works and that it is our faith in Christ that saves us to eternal life and not self-effort or strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions. The following are just a few of the verses that show that the King James Bible always presents salvation in Christ as absolute:

In Acts the English Standard Bible says:

- The Lord added to their number day by day those who *were being saved* (Acts 2:47).

The King James Bible agrees, it says:

- The Lord added to the church daily such as *should be saved* (Acts 2:47).

This clearly shows that it is the unsaved that are in the process of being saved.

In Corinthians the English Standard Bible says:

- The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who *are being saved* it is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

The King James Bible states:

- For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us *which are saved* it is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

In Corinthians the English Standard Bible says:

- By which you *are being saved*, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you unless you believed in vain (1 Cor. 15:2).

The King James Bible says:

- By which also *ye are saved*, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain (1 Cor. 15:2).

These are only a few of the verses that show when referring to eternal salvation in Christ the King James Bible does not give any room to think that salvation in Christ is a process (i.e., not complete) since it is always stated in the absolute and never uses the term being saved when referring to those in Christ but rather always states, ye are saved or which are saved etc. Strong's concordance tells us that the word, (*are*) is only used when something is absolute, assured and definitely decided. The idea of being saved is only applied to those who are being witnessed to and are listening with an open heart it is to this person or group of people that the King James Bible would state that they are being saved meaning they are in the process of being saved, but haven't yet responded to the Gospel message. Faith that saves to eternal life is absolute meaning it is 100% assured to those who are fully trusting in Christ. The Good News of the Gospel of Christ does not proclaim that whoever believes and trusts in Jesus will be 95% saved and then they will have to earn the other 5% to be fully saved. This would mean that Christ's horrific, brutal, cruel and bloody death wasn't quite enough to fully save those who come to him in humble repentance and faithfully follow him. Righteousness that leads to eternal Salvation is a free and pure gift of God granted to those who put their trust and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for their righteousness and eternal salvation there is no room for doubt in believing and trusting in the cleansing power of the blood of Christ it is absolute to cleanse and to save this is one of the reasons the Gospel of Christ is called the Good News.

In the context of eternal salvation, the Bible speaks of the following three groups of people:

15

1. Those who are saved.
2. Those who are being saved (i.e., those who are being witnessed to by those already saved).
3. Those who are perishing (referring to those who deny God and the Lord Jesus Christ)

Unless you believed in vain: (v2) means that if those confessing Christ do not believe in the resurrection from the dead too eternal life then their faith was in vain (i.e., its wasted) since it will be of no benefit to them here in this present spiritual Kingdom of God nor will it save them to eternal life in the future literal and eternal Kingdom.

In accordance with the Scriptures.

The words, "Christ died for our sins was buried and raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (v3-4) refer to the following Scriptures of Isaiah and David:

Isaiah prophesied:

- Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead" (Isaiah 26:19) and in chapter fifty three, "They made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth (Isaiah 53:9).

David wrote:

- For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol (grave), or let your Holy One see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:10-11) (See also Acts 2:24-32).

The third day: it is not of importance that the Old Testament Scriptures do not specifically state that Christ would rise on the third day since the focus is not the day, but that he would rise from the dead nevertheless the following verses do visibly imply that God would raise Christ up on the third day since it is clearly suggested in the following words of Hosea:

- After two days he will revive us; on the *third day* he will raise us up, that we may live before him (Hosea 6:2)

Added to this it is not only prefigured by the deliverance of Isaac on the third day after Abraham had given him up for dead, and received him back, in a figure of Christ's resurrection (Heb. 11:19), but also by Jonah's deliverance out of the whale's belly, after he had been in it three days which even Jesus himself refers to by telling his disciples:

- Just as Jonah was *three days* and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be *three days* and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matt. 12:40).

It is interesting to notice that the Jews took particular notice of the THIRD DAY as being remarkable for many things:

- The *third day* Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place he was to offer up Isaac (Genesis 22:4-5).
- The *third day* Joseph told his brothers to bring their youngest brother to him and they would live (Gen. 42:18-20).
- The *third day* Rahab protected the two spies of Israel and tied a scarlet cord to her window and her household was saved (Joshua 2:16-19).
- The *third day* Moses took the people to meet God at the foot of Mount Sinai to receive the Law (Exodus 19:16-17).
- The *third day* of Jonah (in the belly of the fish three days and three nights) (Jonah 1:17).
- The *third day* of them that came out of the captivity (Ezra 8:15).
- The *third day* of Hosea prophecy, "After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight (Hosea 6:2).

It is clear that the third day has special significance in the Bible and that the prophecy in Hosea of the resurrection of the dead, of Isaac and of Jonah's deliverance on the third day is Scripture types of Christ's resurrection.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-20

The Resurrection of the Dead.

- **1 Corinthians 15:12-20:** Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵ We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. ²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Sin: means offence (i.e., to offend someone) and carries the idea of missing the mark and therefore not share in the prize. The faithful of Old Testament Israel looked in faith and in hope toward the coming of the:

- The promised seed of the woman spoken of in (Genesis 3:15).
- The prophet and deliver Moses said was to come like him (Deut. 18:15) (Acts 3:22) (Acts 7:37).

- The promised seed of Abraham and of David Israel's Messiah the Christ.
- The Messiah, the Christ, the King and Saviour the Old Testament prophets said was to come and the Scriptures speak of.

The faithful of the New Testament are not only able to look back to Israel's Messiah, the Christ and his death and resurrection, but also able to look with excitement as did Old Testament Israel did toward his return as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace during his millennial reign on earth.

The awesome, majestic and wondrous power of Almighty God: God resurrected Christ who is the firstfruits of all those who are to be resurrected when Christ returns, in the next resurrection God is not just resurrecting one man from the dead, but multitudes will be raised in a twinkling of an eye from the dead to eternal life and everlasting glory as the Lord Jesus Christ was. This is why Paul is so excited about the Gospel he preaches and why he basically states that without the resurrection the Christian faith is not worth the paper it is written on. The majestic and awesome day of the resurrection of those in the Old and New Testament who are sleeping in Christ will manifest the breath-taking and overwhelming awe-inspiring wondrous power of Almighty God as nothing else has since the days of creation.

SLEEPING IN CHRIST

When a person who belongs to Christ dies, the Bible says, that they have no knowledge and know nothing, they are totally unaware of it and are therefore in a perfect state of peace, this state is called sleeping in Christ and because they have no consciousness there, is no time. It is very similar to someone in a deep sleep there is no awareness of time, when the person wakes, they have no idea of whether four, seven or twelve hours have passed. Likewise, because there is no time in death the moment a Christian dies, is the moment they are in the Kingdom of God and with the LORD, for them it is instant, even though many years may have passed by in our world's time. David died thousands of years ago, but the moment he is resurrected will be like the moment he breathed his last breath, because for him there is no awareness of time, so it is for every Christian from death to Christ is instant.

Death to the Christian is similar to a person in a coma: a person in a coma has no consciousness of time, time does not exist to them, when they wake, they often think only a day or so has gone by, when in actual fact several years may have passed yet they think they are waking up, the same day, or next day after they went to sleep. The person in the coma or in death is totally unaware of any time that they have spent in the coma or being dead. Death to those who belong to Christ is much the same as the person in the coma, the dead or those who are sleeping in Christ have absolutely no consciousness of time so for them, the moment they die, is the moment they are instantly with the Lord, even though many years may have passed during the time they have been dead (i.e., sleeping in Christ).

It is the same principal as a person who goes into hospital for an operation: the patient is given an anaesthetic and put to sleep, surgeons cut them up and take bits out, over the next few hours, yet the patient is totally unaware of it they wake up and have absolutely no idea of the time that has passed, therefore when Paul says:

- We are of good courage, and we would rather be away (absent in the KJV) from the body and at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).

It is a true statement, even though he may have spent years sleeping in Christ.

NOTE: a second reason a Christians death is called sleeping in Christ is because their death is only temporary, being asleep in Christ means everyone who dies in Christ is kept in the eternal mind and memory of God. Jesus said:

- Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them falls to the ground without the father knowing it and even the hairs of our head are all numbered therefore we should not fear death because we are of more value than many sparrows (Matthew 10:29-31).

The entire person, (i.e., body, spirit, mind and consciousness) remains sleeping in Christ, until the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5) when all who are asleep in the Lord are woken up at the blast of the angels trumpet and raised from the dead to everlasting glory and clothed with an eternal and immortal body.

NOTE: some people find it difficult to comprehend God raising the dead, but think of it this way: we have super computers today that have in their memories literally trillions of bits of information and at the touch of a key any one of those bits is resurrected to us on a brightly coloured screen (soon it is most likely they will simply appear in the air), then with another touch of the key it all vanishes into the super memory and is gone, until we resurrect it again. Knowing that God has given his creation a mortal mind and finite memory to be able to build such amazing computers should make it very easy to understand how God keeps us all in His immortal mind and eternal memory waiting for the right time to touch the supernatural keyboard of heaven and raise us once again to life. Added to this very few Christians have any trouble believing God created the universe that we live in so raising the dead in comparison is not such a difficult task for such an awesome, powerful and majestic God (Heb. 11:3).

The vanity of hoping in Christ, but not believing in the resurrection: Paul's statement: if in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied (v19) the meaning of this is obvious, but it also implies that our primary focus is upon the blessings we can get from God in this mortal life and this world and not on the resurrection to eternal life and everlasting glory. When we do this, we are trading the eternal glory of the Christian faith for the temporal things of this world. Paul in the book of Thessalonians does not say that we are to encourage one another with the things of this world, but with the following words: -

- For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

Our innermost desire and supreme hope should be focused on the resurrection because it is eternal and certain since it is based on the promise of God whereas everything in this world can be taken from us in a moment including our homes, our health, those we love and even our life.

NOTE: when salvation to eternal life is spoken of as the hope of the faithful in Christ, it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future. The hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and he cannot lie. The apostle Paul wrote; "In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began" (Titus 1:2). The Christian hopes to be resurrected from the grave to be raised up to eternal life and everlasting glory to be made perfectly free from sin; to be everlastingly happy, but it is faith that gives these things a mental reality in the mind and it is under this influence of faith that those in Christ allow these unseen and yet future events to control their mind as if they were a reality now.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:21-26

By a Man came Death, and also the Resurrection of the Dead.

- **1 Corinthians 15:21-26:** For as by a man (Adam) came death, by a man (Christ) has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Being in Adam: carries the following three ideas:

1. Being mortal and separated from God and therefore destined to death.
2. Belonging to this mortal world and being led and influenced by self, ego pride, greed and such like things and having the mind and heart set on the things of this world (i.e., riches, wealth, material possessions etc.).
3. Living life in the flesh (i.e., giving no thought to God, but solely living to satisfy self, ego and pride etc.).

Being in Christ: carries the following three ideas:

1. Being united with God and therefore destined to eternal life and everlasting glory.
2. Belonging to the eternal family of Christ and the eternal Kingdom of God and being influence by the Spirit of God (i.e., by love, compassion, kindness, mercy, grace, forgiveness and such like things) and having the mind and heart set on the things of God rather than on the things of this world.
3. Living life in the Spirit (i.e. endeavouring and desiring to live a life that honours God and the Lord Jesus Christ and that reflects Christ's love rather than living solely to satisfy self, ego and pride etc.

From Genesis to Revelation: these verses are awe-inspiring since they give a panoramic view of the entire history of God's eternal plan from the beginning of mortal mankind and our death to the end of death and the end of this world as we know it and the introduction of eternal life upon earth.

Through Adam death came into the world, but through Jesus death has lost its stronghold and its power since God has shown that a human man can be raised to eternal life and everlasting glory.

The order of past and future ages for earth and for mankind: -

1. Adam and eve created.
2. Adam brought death into the world.
3. Christ was raised from death (the firstfruit) to eternal glory and everlasting life.
4. Brothers and sisters in Christ will be raised from death when the Lord returns.
5. Christ will rule on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords establishing God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace.
6. Every rule, authority and power against Christ and God will be destroyed.
7. All Christ enemies will be put under his feet.
8. Death the last enemy will be destroyed.
9. Christ will deliver the Kingdom to God his heavenly Father.

10. God will be all in all and ETERNITY will begin in all its majestic royal fullness.

For further information see the title:

- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.
- In Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

1 CORINTHIANS 15:27-28

God has put all things in Subjection under Christ's Feet.

- **1 Corinthians 15:27-28** ²⁷ For "God has put all things in subjection under his (Christ's) feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he (God) is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. ²⁸ When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

These verses clearly show that God has exalted Christ as the head above all things, but they also tell us something more and that is, "When all things are subjected to Christ then he will also be subjected; to God so that God will be ALL in ALL. The expression, "God will be ALL in ALL." in this context lifts the mind of the ardent Bible student at lightning speed and transcends it forward in time to the glorious and majestic vision of a godly man on the isle of Patmos who wrote:

- I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more and I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the *dwelling place of God is with man. he will dwell with them* and they will be his people, and *God himself will be with them as their God*. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "*Behold, I am making all things new*" (Revelation. 21:1-5).

20

This is the splendour the glory the wonder of the climax of God's promise to Abraham made many thousands of years ago and the inheritance of all who are children of Abraham by faith and brothers and sisters of Christ. Is there any other religion on earth that proclaims such a glorious eternal hope? (This author has not found one). The Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in sharp clearness proclaims that the stunning splendour of this eternal glory is not dependent on our abilities and talents or our lack of them since God in His wisdom has made salvation to eternal life and everlasting glory available to all, not by our own self-effort, but through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace can there be any better news than this, "I think not" thus the reason the Gospel of Christ is called the Good News. But, there is also another great insight we gain from the words, ALL in ALL, Paul wrote a similar statement in his letter to the Ephesians:

- God seated Christ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come and put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills ALL in ALL. (Ephes. 1:22-23).

These verses show us that Christ is also the head of the church and has dominion, rule and authority over all things in the church and the words, "Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills ALL in ALL (v23) shows us the following two things:

1. All those who trust in Christ form the global body of Christ.
2. It is God's Spirit (also called the Holy Spirit) that fills Christ's worldwide body (the church).

NOTE: God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit are in perfect unity, perfect love and in perfect harmony of mind in will and purpose therefore the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ can be viewed as being identical since those in Christ have fellowship with both the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3). To attempt to dissect down to microscopic detail the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ is to do God and the Lord an injustice (I think) since there is nothing in prayer we can say to Christ that God does not hear neither is there anything we say to the Father that the Son is not also listening to. Added to this there is nothing we can hide in thought, deed or action from either God or the Lord Jesus Christ. For these reasons God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit can be seen as being identical especially in prayer since they are united together in perfect love, perfect mind and perfect purpose and both God and Christ dwell in the heart of every brother and sister in Christ by faith and by love and by God's grace.

A torch its light, God and Christ: if we were to attempt to explain the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ in simple material terms (howbeit very limited) the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ could be likened to a golden torch, its light and its batteries. The torch gives brilliant light that dispels darkness and allows all who walk in its light to clearly see, but without batteries the torch has no power since they are the source of its light. With this in mind Christ could be likened to the torch and God to the batteries since God is the source of all life, but the batteries without the torch or the torch without the batteries cannot give light. This is another reason we should not try to dissect in microscopic detail God's Spirit from Christ's Spirit or Christ Spirit from God's Spirit, but always allow a certain amount of mystery since they are together united in perfect unity, perfect love and perfect mind will and purpose. Added to this there is nothing the Father wouldn't do for us that Christ wouldn't also gladly do, nor is there anything that Christ would do for us that the Father would not also be pleased to do.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:30-32

21

If the Dead are Not Raised, "Let us Eat and Drink, for Tomorrow we Die."

- **1 Corinthians 15:30-32:** Why are we in danger every hour? ³¹ I (Paul) protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day! ³² What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

The words, "I fought with beasts at Ephesus" no-doubt refer to the time when a great many turned away from the temple of the great goddess Artemis because of Paul's teaching, that gods made with hands are not gods and the silver smiths for fear of losing their business and their wealth stirred up the whole city of Ephesus against Paul and for about two hours they all cry out with one voice, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" (Acts 19:23-34). Paul's life was in constant danger because of his message concerning the resurrection and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is why he says he dies everyday meaning he is fully aware of the dangers he faces, but nevertheless is willing to put his life on the line for the sake of the Gospel. Paul is using the persecution and the danger he lives under to make the following point to the Corinthians:

- If there is no resurrection why would he put his life in such danger every-day instead of choosing to eat and drink and enjoy all the worldly pleasures this would have to offer?

A wedding invitation: symbolically speaking God has sent out a wedding invitation to all mankind to come to an eternal wedding banquet that the Lord is planning to hold at some future date. This wedding invitation comes to us through the Lord Jesus Christ and those who accept the invitation receive God's favour and will be resurrected to eternal glory and everlasting life, but for those who have absolutely no interest in the

invitation Paul advice for them is to eat, drink and be merry, because they may as well enjoy the pleasures of the world as much as they can since that is all they have. From these verses it is clear that when witnessing our mindset should be to invite people into the Kingdom of God, not force, demand or impose it on them and if they reject the invitation we should not get upset or treat them as enemies, but rather allow them to find as much joy in this world as they can (i.e., eat, drink and be merry) since that is all they will have.

NOTE: this does not mean that we should not stand up for injustices inflicted on the innocent nor sit idly by while the poor and less fortunate are being oppressed by others for selfish gain and profit nor does it mean we should not do whatever we are able to help those who are being abused, verbally, physically, financially, sexually, emotionally and spiritually. Paul's is basically saying that those who reject God's wedding invitation should set their hearts, mind and life upon enjoying the many pleasures this world has to offer without hurting and inflicting harm onto others, (i.e., fame, travel, material possessions, riches and wealth etc.), since this is their lot in life.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:35-44

The New and Eternal Resurrected Body.

- **1 Corinthians 15:35-44:** But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?"³⁶ You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain.³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.³⁹ For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another.⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable.⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

22

Earlier in this letter Paul asked the question, how, can some say there is no resurrection of the dead? (1 Cor. 15:12) and now in response to their disbelief he answers the following two questions:

- How is it possible that the dead should be raised?
- With what body will those resurrected have?

The first question: "How are the dead raised?" It is certain that Paul is aware that whoever believes or disbelieves in the resurrection has at some stage pondered the following four questions: -

1. When our body decays and becomes entirely disorganized and returns to its native dust how will it be re-collected if the dust has been scattered?
2. If our body is burned at the stake, how will the particles which composed our bodies be recollected and re-organized?
3. If our body is devoured by the beasts of the field, the fowls of heaven, or the fishes of the sea, and their flesh may have served to constitute the food of other animals, and to form their bodies; how can it be re-collected and re-organized?
4. If our body has been the food of plants and like other dust has been used to constitute the leaves or the flowers of plants and the trunks of trees how can it be remoulded into a human frame?"

These are all common questions that have been asked throughout all ages.

The second question: "With what kind of body will those resurrected have?" And, "With what body do they come?" (v35) may be understood to mean, what will be the form, the shape, the size and the organization of the new body? Throughout all ages people have pondered the following five questions regarding the eternal, immortal resurrected body: -

1. Will all the matter which made up the composition of our body be recollected and renewed to rebuild a new body?
2. Will our body be the same as it is here, with the same organization, the same necessities and the same needs?
3. Will the aged be raised as aged, and the young as young, and the infant raised in the same state and remain such forever?
4. Will our bodies be material, and needing support and nourishment?
5. Will there will be an entirely new arrangement of the body altogether?

All these and numerous other questions have been asked throughout all generations, in regard to the body at the resurrection. Paul without giving specific detail to both the first and second questions beautifully answers them by pointing out the following four facts:

1. There are already many different types of bodies existing even now in this mortal world (i.e., humans, animals, fish, birds etc., and they all have their own unique glory).
2. When a seed of grain is planted in the earth and dies it always rises up in a form far more glorious form than it was before it died.
3. There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies and though both have their own unique glory, they are totally different from each other, but Paul doesn't stop here but rather goes on to say that:
4. What is sown is perishable is raised imperishable (v42).

23

Here is the glory and Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, our natural human mortal body with all its weakness, sinful dysfunctions and aberrations will perish, but we will be raised in glory and in power with an immortal and eternal spiritual body free from all its corruptions.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:45-49

Adam became a Living Being, the Last Adam a Life-Giving Spirit.

- **1 Corinthians 15:45-49:** Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

The first Adam: the words, "It is written, the first man Adam became a living being (v45) refers to the following verse from Genesis: -

- The LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature (Gen. 2:7).

The first Adam was created from the dust of the earth and became a living being and therefore all his offspring (i.e., all mankind) are from the dust of the earth because we are all borne in the image of the man of dust (v48).

The second Adam: The Lord Jesus Christ the second and last Adam in contrast to the first Adam is from heaven and became a life-giving Spirit and therefore those who trust in him for eternal life will be clothed in the image of his resurrected and glorified eternal body.

It is not the spiritual that is first, but the natural: the words, it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual" (v46) simply mean that all of us are firstly born through a natural human birth as children of Adam from the earth mortal and perishing offspring of dust, but in the second birth the resurrection we will be raised with a heavenly spiritual immortal body.

The second man is from heaven: the expression, the second man is from heaven (v47) does not mean Christ pre-existed in heaven before he entered the womb of Mary, it is Jewish language which means he was sent from heaven meaning sent from God, it carries the idea that Jesus was approved of God and had God's favour with him in every way. The expression from heaven and came from heaven is the same as saying, "Came from God and sent from God."

Those who are of heaven: (v48) refers to those who belong to Christ. For further information see the title: "Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity)."

- In, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

1 CORINTHIANS 15:50-54

We shall Not all Sleep, but we shall All be Changed.

- **1 Corinthians 15:50-54:** I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

Flesh: refers to the natural corrupt fallen nature that we have all inherited from our earthly father Adam (i.e., self, ego, pride, greed, lust, jealousy, envy, anger etc.), and to our human mortal body.

Blood: refers to the blood flowing through our heart and veins.

The Perishable: refers to our decaying and mortal body.

The Perishable does not inherit the imperishable: means that the natural human body cannot inherit the eternal and literal coming Kingdom of God in the state it is in. The human body as we know it today will be changed in a twinkling of an eye (v52) to something stunning, majestic, spiritual, eternal, immortal and heavenly glorious free of all its corruptions.

Imagine for a moment: an early model car built one hundred years ago its wheels and body full of rust, its motor seized up, its upholstery rotten and its windows broken parked alongside today's newest Rolls Royce with its motor gentling and quietly purring and the sun's warm rays full of a myriad of colours sparkling on the fourteen layers of its crystal clear paintwork. There is no-doubt (in my mind) that our old present mortal body will look to us like this rusted out car and by far surpass the glory of even the most magnificent Rolls Royce when we are clothed with our new resurrected and eternal body that in contrast to decay and wearing out will be constantly full of energy, vitality, life, and vigour and absolutely pain-free (in colloquial language one beautiful and well-oiled magnificent machine).

The mystery of the resurrection: Paul's words, "I tell you a mystery (v51) refer to the resurrection and our mortal body being transformed to an immortal body, even Paul with all his revelations and visions still viewed the resurrected body as a mystery which implies that not even Paul himself fully understood every detail regarding the form our new resurrected body will take other than that it will be glorious, immortal and eternal.

The Kingdom of God: the Kingdom of God in Paul's statement, flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (v50) refers to those who will be resurrected in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5-6) and to the faithful who are alive who will be gathered together to be with them when Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to establish God's kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

The New Testament refers to the following two Kingdoms:

1. The present spiritual Kingdom being established by faith in the hearts and minds of those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and manifested outwardly by the confession of one's faith and good deeds (i.e., acts of love, compassion, kindness and doing what is right) and collectively by the faithful worldwide body of Christ the church.
2. The future literal Kingdom to come on earth when Christ returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

NOTE: these are not actually two different Kingdoms since they are both the Kingdom of God, they are simply the same Kingdom, but in a different form and shape. God only has one Kingdom, but throughout history it has taken on different shapes and forms, under the Judges, it had one form, under David and Solomon another, while it appeared different again under the Kings of Israel, but though it appears in different shape and form it is the one Kingdom because regardless of what shape or form it takes God is always its King. The present spiritual Kingdom being established by faith in the hearts and minds of those who believe will again take on a different form when Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

25

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

1 CORINTHIANS 15:55-58

O Death, where is your Victory? O Death, where is your Sting.

- **1 Corinthians 15:55-58:** "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"
⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Paul can in a triumphant and exultant cry boldly make the statement, "O Death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? (v55), because God through the resurrection of the man called Jesus has shown to all humanity that a mortal human body can be raised from the dead clearly showing to all mankind that God's power is far greater than the destructive power of death. When Christ was raised to eternal life his death was swallowed up in victory. This is the Good News of the Gospel death has no power to hold those who belong to the family of Christ in the grave they like Christ will be raised from the dead to eternal life and everlasting glory and shout with triumphant joy death has been swallowed up in victory.

The universal law of sin and death: the words, the sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law, but God gives us the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ" (56-57) refer to two spiritual laws that are inscribed by the finger of God into the unchanging laws of the universe (like the law of gravity) and in the nature of our human body, the first of these laws states:

1. Whoever sins must die (Rom. 6:23).

Since we all sin this universal law has every legal right to condemn and sentence us to death, but there is second and higher law that supersedes this lower law which proclaims with majestic glory:

2. Though the wages of sin is death the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23).

This is one of the reasons the Gospel of Christ is called, the Good News since it triumphantly proclaims to all who trust in Christ that they have been granted:

- Eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:23), because, the law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2).

This means that the law of sin and death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him. Another reason the Gospel is called the Good News is that it states:

- Faith is 'counted as righteousness to whoever believes in God who raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead who was delivered up to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification (Rom. 4:22-25).

This means we are not saved because of our own self-effort in striving to attain to the perfect demand of the law or to God's perfect standard of Holiness, but because of:

- Our faith in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Our faith in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Our faith in Jesus heavenly Father and our trust in God's grace.

These are the things that save even the lowliest of sinners to eternal life, this is the reason Paul says:

- Since we have been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1)

This means that we have mental and spiritual peace with God because we do not have to strive to attain God's favour or eternal life by self-effort or by strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days, or by keeping religious customs and traditions.

Your labour is not in vain: the words, "Knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain is contrasting work we do for self, ego and pride which is vain because whatever it gives in rewards will be lost when we go to the grave, contrasted to what we do for the Lord and by extension for others will be rewarded with heavenly and eternal rewards.

Ponder for a moment the majestic beauty of the following Scriptures:

- God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).
- While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, how much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life (Romans 5:10).

These are breath-taking statements and should be an overwhelming comfort to every brother and sister of Christ since they carry an astoundingly and perfect example of love and are some of the most splendid and humbling of all Scriptures since they clearly show how much Christ loves us. Paul in the same letter also wrote the following: -

- While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

This means that even though we were full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within our corrupted earthly bodies (i.e., self, ego, pride, greed, lustful thoughts, envy, jealousies, anger and such like things) Christ died for us he laid down his life down to a brutal, bloody and cruel death that we could be made righteous by faith apart from the law, self-effort and works. In spite of our corrupted fallen nature God that we have inherited from our earthly father Adam God counts our faith in Christ as our righteousness it is imputed to us as a pure and free gift. These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that God loved us long before we loved Him. Though some of us might die for a friend or loved one, Christ died for us while we were ungodly and indifferent to God and His ways and in many cases blasphemers.

Sadly, some in the Christian faith, because of a lack of perceiving this great love God has toward us that these verses (and others like them) shine a spotlight on tend to determine whether God loves them by their good or bad circumstances. They feel if life is charmed and blessed God loves them, but if it suddenly takes a turn for the worse and trouble comes they feel God has withdrawn his love, but this is superstition and judging God according to the fickle circumstances of this world. When anyone who believes in Christ doubts God's love all we have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross and see what it cost the heart of the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered to redeem us and spiritually crown and cloth us with a royal and majestic robe of righteous so that we could be justified and granted eternal life in everlasting glory apart from self-effort and strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:21-24

If anyone has no Love for the Lord Jesus Christ let them be Accursed.

- **1 Corinthians 16:21-24:** I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. ²² If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! ²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. ²⁴ My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Accursed: (Anathema Maranatha in KJV) refers to a religious ban in this context it carries the idea of a person being excommunicated from a religious group organization or church.

Maranatha: means, our Lord has come it is an exclamation of the approaching divine judgment of God. Paul's words in verse twenty-two could be written, "If anyone has no love for Jesus Christ let them be excommunicated from the church until the Lord comes for judgment. Since Paul is writing to those in the church and the word anathema carries the idea of a person being excommunicated from a religious group organization or church the people in focus to be accursed are not

unbelievers outside of the Kingdom of God or to those who have never heard of God's love and grace in Christ, but to religious men and woman who confess to believe in Christ, but have no love which means they most likely have some kind of belief in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ, but are legalistic, formal, dogmatic and lack love, compassion mercy and grace toward those who listen to them or follow them, much like the religious leaders of Jesus Generation the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes. It is to these types of people Paul is saying, let them be accursed, meaning excommunicated from the church. This is because the entire foundation of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life is founded upon love as the following verses show:

- God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).
- God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8)

Christ not only laid his life down to a brutal, bloody and cruel death for us, but he laid it down while we were still unbelievers and sinners, added to this God Himself is love so any form of legalism, formalism and dogma is totally contrary to the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God and what CEO of any company wants people who have a totally different Spirit to the goals of their company working in their business.

The following also shine a brilliant spotlight on the importance of LOVE.

- If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing (1 Cor. 13:1-3).
- God is love and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in them. (1 John 4:16).
- Now faith, hope, and love' abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Paul ends his letter to the Corinthian church firstly by sending his love for Christ to be with them and secondly with an Amen. The meaning and history of the word Amen is fascinating, it means:

- Verily, firm, so it is, so be it and may it be fulfilled.

It is used at the beginning of a discourse to proclaim that what is being said is, surely a truth and when used at the end of a discourse carries the thought of what has been said is certain and asking for it to come to pass and be fulfilled. It was a custom, which passed over from the synagogues to the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or offered up solemn prayer to God, the others responded by saying, "Amen" and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own. The word amen is a most remarkable word translated directly from the Hebrew into the Greek of the New Testament, then into Latin and into English and many other languages, so that amen is practically a universal word. It has been called the best-known word in human speech. Amen is directly related and almost identical to the Hebrew word for believe (aman) and faithful, thus, it came to mean sure and truly and to be an expression of absolute trust and confidence. At the end of a discourse, conversation and dialogue amen means:

- So it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled.

It signifies the end of that discourse or subject, similarly amen at the end of a paragraph tells the reader this is the end of the previous subject and now the story will bring a new subject into focus.

Why believers say Amen through Jesus: Paul says, "Yes and no is not in Jesus Christ because in Jesus it is always yes," for the following reason; all the promises of God find their yes in Jesus since God establishes believers in Jesus and has redeemed and saved them through Jesus and put His seal on them because of their faith in Jesus. God has given those who belong to Christ His Spirit and His love in their hearts as a guarantee of salvation and eternal life that is why believers say Amen in Jesus name because all of God's promises concerning salvation and eternal life are in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 1:19-22).

SUMMARY: SALVATION IN 1 CORINTHIANS.

The entire focus and foundation of Paul's Gospel is: -

- Jesus Christ the Lord of glory crucified and resurrected.
- The cross of Christ is the power of God unto eternal salvation.
- Belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ leads to eternal life.
- Believers are saved by faith in Christ and by God's grace.
- God is the source of all life and Jesus heavenly Father.
- Every brother and sister in Christ have been brought and redeemed with a price (i.e., the blood of God's most beloved Son the Lord Jesus Christ).
- All baptised believers are part of the global and worldwide body of Christ.
- God and the Lord Jesus Christ know those that love them.
- Jesus will reveal the purpose and motivation of the heart when he returns.
- God will give all the faithful in Christ victory over death.

29

These are the central focus of Paul's teachings and his Gospel throughout One Corinthians.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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