

## THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

Collect Prayer - First Sunday in Advent

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and [the]\* dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*

Are there questions or comments from the last session? For those of you following online you may email Fr. Bart at [frfryanssc@frontiernet.net](mailto:frfryanssc@frontiernet.net)

### **1 Corinthians 11**

*I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I have delivered them to you. <sup>3</sup>But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. <sup>4</sup>Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, <sup>5</sup>but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled dishonors her head—it is the same as if her head were shaven. <sup>6</sup>For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her wear a veil. <sup>7</sup>For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. <sup>8</sup>(For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. <sup>9</sup>Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.) <sup>10</sup>That is why a woman ought to have a veil on her head, because of the angels. <sup>11</sup>(Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; <sup>12</sup>for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.) <sup>13</sup>Judge for yourselves; is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? <sup>14</sup>Does not nature itself teach you that for a man to wear long hair is degrading to him, <sup>15</sup>but if a woman has long hair, it is her pride? For her hair is given to her for a covering. <sup>16</sup>If any one is disposed to be contentious, we recognize no other practice, nor do the churches of God.*

## I. Three separate but connected sections

### A. The heavenly Order - 11:2, 3 - 11:11, 1

This is both for us to see what should be and what will be when the Heavenly order is restored.

### B. The Earthly Order - 11:4-10

Paul is both reporting and explaining why practices have begun and why some should continue although they are not as they should be- which leads us to the last section

### C. The Pastoral Directive - 11:13-16

He begins by posing a question - the answer is of course it is proper all way and everywhere to pray to God. The repeats the fact of how men and women are different in their outward appearance. This appearance is neither to be accentuated nor ignored in the churches.

## II. The Problem with Modern Biblical Scholarship - The Issue of Political Correctness

### A. Did Paul actually tell all women to cover their heads?

Yes and No, he calls for an egalitarian dress code that recognizes the differences between men and women and suggests that they not be the focus of our attention during worship. He may have also been addressing a particular issue for the church at Corinth.

### B. If he did how can we explain that?

1. Gloss - that is an addition to the original text added for reasons of those added the material. In this case the explanation of modern scholarship is that it was added by the patriarchal church to control women.

This issue of glosses exists, and there are passages that we can understand were added by the original author or those following him to clarify or enchain the original - an example is the prologue to John's Gospel. However, if a gloss was made in error, then we are denying that All Sacred Scripture was divinely inspired. Part of that understanding is that the Bible is protected from error by God who has delivered his word to us.

Note other gloss error - copying, notes in the margin etc. Self correcting in other copies

2. Paul did say it, but it was because Paul was a patriarchal Jew and he is reflecting their thoughts and not Christian Thought

This reasoning also defies the reality that all Sacred Scripture is protected by God to be His Word. There is also the problem that this section does not reflect a coherent line of thought. While this issue may be raised as a reason to defend the "gloss theory" it also may more reflect the nature of the material. This Epistle is a letter written to a particular community at a particular time addressing issues of that community. . That letter having particular material that applied to that community and material that applies to all Christians at all times.

### III. Another Interpretation of the Issue

A. There is division in the church at Corinth - Paul is addressing that division on all levels.

B. One division is the natural division between men and women

C. One division if among those who have embraced Christianity totally and those who are still practicing pagan ways.

Could it be that Paul is addressing dress, gender order and hair because the use of these characteristics is identified with the pagan practice?

*<sup>17</sup>But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. <sup>18</sup>For, in the first place, when you assemble as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it, <sup>19</sup>for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. <sup>20</sup>When you meet together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. <sup>21</sup>For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal, and one is hungry and another is drunk. <sup>22</sup>What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.*

I. Paul begins as he began the last section, but in the negative. *I do not commend you*

II. Paul is again addressing the major topic divisions in the church

A. Christian Gathering vs. Secular Gathering

1. Fourth of July Picnic vs. Mass on the Fourth of July  
Christian's gather in the Name of the Lord

2. Secular gathering tend to be homogeneous

a. family - social groups - work related gatherings - neighborhood parties

b. People from every social status and income gather in the name of the Lord

3. There is division in the social gathering between men and women - lave and free

B. The situation at Corinth

1. Social Gathering followed by the "Breathing of the Bread"

2. Everyone was not invited to the social - think of a reverse "coffee hour"

C. Paul is clear that this must not be so among the church

<sup>23</sup>For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, <sup>24</sup>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." <sup>25</sup>In the same way also 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." <sup>26</sup>For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

I. Our instructions for celebrating the Holy Eucharist - The oldest Account of the celebration of the Holy Eucharist - Paul is writing in 51 A.D.

A. Came from an earlier tradition and passed one - the Didache

B. Paul and Luke contain the Anamnesis (do this in memory of me)

Hebrew thought about Remembrance - to make present again. Paul and Luke are connected to the evangelism of the gentiles vs. the preaching to the Jewish people - thus they would have included what was known to Jews so that that the gentiles would understand.

What is Eucharist?

Eucharist means thanks giving, but the question is about how we are transformed by the celebration. Are we only eating or being fed? Are we offering "ourselves, our souls and bodies as a living sacrifice"? What happens when we are raised by God Grace into His presence at His Holy Feast?

These questions are at the heart of catholic sacramental theology. Are we celebrating only a memorial or are we entering into an event that changes ever moment of our existence? Paul wants us clearly to understand and to consider the importance in the next section of his letter.

<sup>27</sup>Whoever, therefore, 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. <sup>28</sup>Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. <sup>29</sup>For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. <sup>30</sup>That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. <sup>31</sup>But if we judged ourselves truly, we should not be judged. <sup>32</sup>But when we are judged by the Lord, we are chastened so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

<sup>33</sup>So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another—<sup>34</sup>if any one is hungry, let him eat at home—lest you come together to be condemned. About the other things I will give directions when I come.

## I. The Summary of Paul's thoughts about the Assembly of God People

A. Focus people it is not about men and women - social status - eating food at all, it is about the Grace of God or the condemnation we bring upon ourselves.

B. Paul elevated the status of the Mass above the cultural meals

C. As the meal is more important- so too should be our preparation

## II. How does this passage affect our Liturgical Practice?

A. Summary of the Law, Ten Commandments for our reflection

B. Confession before Canon of the Mass

C. Humble Access before Holy Communion

## III. By what authority of Paul speaking?

Not just his apostolic authority, but from the Lord. vs. 23

## **1 Corinthians 12**

*<sup>1</sup>Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be uninformed. <sup>2</sup>You know that when you were heathen, you were led astray to dumb idols, however you may have been moved. <sup>3</sup>Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.*

I. Paul is introducing a new subject - Spiritual gifts

II. His form of address confirms what he stated in 11 "Brothers and Sisters"

A. Familial form

B. Equality of the genders

III. His purpose to educate - teaching as an Apostle

#### IV. The underlying Issue - division - charismatic and others

##### A. The slogans - "Jesus is Lord" - Jesus be cursed

##### B. Jesus is Lord

May be part of a Baptismal Liturgy - Paul wanted us to know that the gifts of the Holy Spirit come to all in Baptism

##### C. Jesus be cursed

During the time of the persecution the Christian were forced to revile the name of Jesus - it was understood in the Christina Community that those who did saved their lives, but where demonically possessed.

*<sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup>and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup>and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. <sup>7</sup>To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. <sup>8</sup>To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.*

I. This section completes the thought about Baptism - it is the gifts of the Holy Spirit that works in the Christian and in the community. Not given for the individual to be puffed up, but for them to use as God intended.

II. The individual response to the gifts is another issue for the charismatics- this is further developed later in the letter.

**More theology in the next part of the letter - The understanding the Church as the Body of Christ comes from this section of Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians.**

<sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

<sup>14</sup>For the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? <sup>18</sup>But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup>If all were a single organ, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. <sup>21</sup>The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup>and those parts of the body which we think less honorable we invest with the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, <sup>24</sup>which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior part, <sup>25</sup>that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

Unity and Diversity - Paul uses the ancient image of the body to explain this Christian Principle

- A. Unity in Baptism and Eucharist
- B. Diversity in gifts, purpose and function
- C. Unity in Purpose - to serve God by serving the Body

In the world unity is from the state, our economic benefit, our family connections- in the church our unity is in Christ

<sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. <sup>28</sup>And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues. <sup>29</sup>Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup>Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup>But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

*And I will show you a still more excellent way.*

I. The two lists of the charisms are the central focus of this section

- A. This is the only enumerated list of gifts in the N.T.
- B. The second list using questions, differentiates the gifts

II. The enumerating of the gifts does not rank them by importance or power rather it as an awareness of the ordering of the creation

- A. Apostles - listed first, why? Because the Christian Community begins when the apostolic function is fulfilled - the Gospel s preached
- B. Paul also notes himself, An Apostle, as the servant of all others

III. The Teacher - differentiated from the preacher or the prophet

IV. Missing from the List

- A. Who presides at the Eucharist?
- B. Who Baptizes?
- C. Who collects the funds and gifts of the community?

The theology and the need for the presbyteral function has not yet occurred. The role of the Bishop and Deacon are in the Acts of the Apostles. It is in the Post Apostolic Era the priesthood is developed as the Apostolic Function is taken over by Bishop's and the Bishop's roles are shifted to the priest.

In this era of the Letter the shared responsibility of the community is paramount. The Apostles are still present and their role is to be the overseer's of the Christian Community. Today the Bishop is the overseer.