Now as we begin a new book we'll still be in I Corinthians Chapter 10.

Every so often I tell you that we are nondenominational and we never try to attack anyone in our teachings, but rather just teach as the Holy Spirit leads us. When we first started the television ministry I guess my biggest fear was all the hate mail we would get, but in the six years we have been on the air we have only received two letters like that, and they weren't all that bad. So I have to just count it a real blessing that we're not making people downright angry. If you disagree with me, that's your privilege, the Word of God is such that I think we can have some differences of opinion, and still not be heretics or anything like that. I have to totally depend on how the Holy Spirit opens it to my understanding, and not how some would have me to teach it.

Now in the Book of I Corinthians, as we have been stressing ever since we started teaching this little letter, evidently from Chapter 7 verse 1 some questions had arisen, and I think this is the clue for Paul writing this letter of I Corinthians. Now granted it's all inspired by the Holy Spirit, and everything that has happened has been directed by God's Sovereign Grace, but nevertheless the human element always enters in as well. Now this is the beauty of Scripture as it's all inspired of God. Every word has been directed by the Holy Spirit, and yet every author maintains his personality. In other words, Isaiah writes from a totally different personality than Ezekiel. The Four Gospels are from a totally different perspective than Paul's writings, and so on and so forth, and yet they are all in a composite way authored by the Holy Spirit. And so here in Chapter 7, and verse 1, the Holy Spirit inspires Paul to write this, but yet it gives us the human element as to why he wrote I Corinthians and it was in response to:

I Corinthians 7:1a

"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me:...."

So what did they do? They had a whole ton of questions, and I can just see them as they just put them down on the page, and were asking Paul, "What about this problem, and what about that problem," and so forth. So this whole letter of I Corinthians deals
with problems that Paul does not commend them for, and he's too kind to just out and out condemn them, but neither does he brag on them, but rather Paul is just kind of backing into this situation so that he doesn't flare up their anger, and put them into a place where he can't deal with them. And yet he is not going to agree with all of their problems, and we know the reason is that they are still so carnal. Remember they are the most carnal of any group that Paul deals with. Even here in Chapter 10 in their practicing of what we call the Lord's table, or the communion service, or whatever your particular denomination may call it, the Corinthians had made it a problem. They were having all kinds of things going on that should have never taken place in the Church, and Paul has to address it.

Now we just came out of the situation of eating meats that had been offered to idols. And there again that tells us that the Corinthians were having to deal with things that you and I know nothing of. You know we're not living in a culture where people have offered meat to idols in some pagan temple, and then have it end up in our butcher markets. And then when we buy meat have to wonder, "Well, has this come from that pagan temple?" We're not up against that, but the Corinthians were, and even before that they were going to law with one another, they were suing each other in the pagan courts. Paul says, "That's not the way you do things when you are a believer." And so the whole Book of I Corinthians is dealing basically with problems that were besetting the Corinthian Church. Now we touched on verse 16 in our last lesson, but let's look at it again.

I Corinthians 10:16,17

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (or fellowship) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (or fellowship) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

When we get into Chapter 12 we will see Paul make the analogy of the Body of Christ being put together like the human body with all our various functions of fingers and toes, and the rest of the body. But yet we're under one central nervous system aren't we? Everything is centered in the head in our brain. So also is the body of Christ, because He is the Head in heaven, and every born again believer is a member now of that Body, and we're all members of each other.

The bread speaks of much the same kind of thing, because you all know where bread come from don't you? From wheat. What makes a bin full of wheat? Kernels. I remember when I was farming up in Iowa, I would, every now and then, just look at a 10,000 bushel bin I had, and would just stand there amazed that this whole 10,000 bushel bin is comprised of individual kernels. All right, that's the analogy. Every time
you eat a loaf of bread, what has comprised that loaf of bread? Umpteen kernels of wheat that were ground into flour, and then made into bread. The analogy still holds. What are we as members of the Body of Christ? We're just like that loaf of bread that has become a composite of those individual kernels of grain. Now with that in mind let's look at verse 16 again:

**I Corinthians 10:16,17a**

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (or fellowship) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not (in picture form) the communion (or fellowship) of the body of Christ? (Which is that group of believers) For we being many are one bread, ..."

Even that loaf of bread coming from several thousands of kernels of wheat, yet in the final make-up it's one loaf. In fact let's even stretch our imagination a little further. Within that one loaf of bread there may have been a composite of wheat shipments from all over the United States that have ended up maybe in a Kansas City mill where it was in turn ground into flour. So we have that loaf of bread here in Oklahoma and where may some of that wheat have come from? Ohio, North Dakota, Colorado, Kansas and so forth. But it all ended up as part of that one loaf of bread. **And so is the Body of Christ: we've got believers in China, we've got believers in Europe, in America, and South America, regardless of their background we are all members of that one Body by virtue of the blood of Christ. We're blood bought.**

**I Corinthians 10:17b,18**

"...for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: (the nation) are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?"

Now you want to remember that when the pagans set up their animal sacrifices, it was the satanic counterfeit of what God had established to be the right way with the nation of Israel. Satan established the counterfeit, and is the master counterfeiter. So when the pagans offered their animal sacrifices, and then had the meat from the temple taken to the market place or maybe given to the individual who brought the sacrifice, where did they really copy this practice from? Well from Israel, because Israel did the same thing. If Israel took a sacrificial animal up to the priest, who could eat of that meat first? The Priest did. But on the other hand if there was more than the priest could handle, evidently it was within his power to designate who would get it, maybe the individual who brought the sacrifice in the first place. So even the Jew who brought the sacrifice could end up partaking of that sacrifice, and that is what Paul is saying in verse 18. Now verse 19 and here Paul is going to bring in the idolatry side of it.
I Corinthians 10:19

"What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?"

Now you know it's hard for us to comprehend Paul's thinking. On the one hand he makes it sound like there's absolutely nothing wrong with eating meat offered to idols. As far as Paul was concerned that idol was nothing more than dead stone or wood, it could never have an effect on that meat so far as he was concerned, he could eat it without compunction. But on the other hand he would warn people that there was something associated with those demonic gods, and these gods had power, and so there were instances where Paul says, "Don't eat of it." And we're going to see that in the next few verses. But right here in this verse Paul is saying, "That idol can't affect that meat, because it's dead." But on the other hand the idol may be dead, but what about the power behind it? Hey, it's not dead, and that's Satan. See? Satan works through idolatry. Now verse 20.

I Corinthians 10:20

"But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils,..."

Demons. Why did they sacrifice to demons instead of the true God? They didn't know the true God. They didn't know Who God was. Remember back in the Book of Acts? Let's go for a moment and look at it. I don't intend to do these things when I'm preparing for this, but in Acts Chapter 17 we find the Apostle Paul coming to Athens. And you want to remember Athens was a thriving city of intellectual imports. They had all the philosophers, and good universities today still study the Greek writers: Aristotle, and Homer, and Plato and all the rest of these fellows. So Paul comes into Athens and now verse 16:

Acts 17:16

"Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry."

In spite of all their intellectualism, and intelligence, and philosophy, did they know anything of the one true God? Nothing. They were given over totally to the worship of idols, and the mythological gods. And then just come on down to verse 21.

Acts 17:21
"(For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)"

But listen, did they every hear anything of the One True God in the new things that they heard? No. It was just a rehash of another oriental god of some kind, or another mythological goddess sitting up on some mountain top supposedly in their minds at least. Now look at verse 23: I'm just doing this so you can get the picture of these people among whom Paul is ministering.

Acts 17:23

"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, (their idolatrous worship) I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

Just like a fellow told me once when I was going through some real financial hardships, and he knew I was. Boy, he came flying into my farmyard one day, and the dust was flying as he came to a stop, and said, "Les, I was just going down the highway and I was thinking of you. Have you ever thought of praying to St. Jude?" "No." I said, "Why should I?" He said, "Well I'm a firm believer that you plug every hole." And that's the way these Athenians were. I mean they had all these gods and goddess, and all their worship, and yet just in case they had missed one they set up a special one and dedicated it to "the Unknown God." They knew absolutely nothing of the God of Creation. They knew nothing of the God of Abraham, although the Jews had been in their midst for hundreds of years. Now let's come back to I Corinthians again.

So these were idol worshiping heathens as we would call them. I don't like to use the word 'heathen,' because most of us in America think of heathen as those that our missionaries ministered unto a hundred years ago. They would go into the deep, dark jungles in foreign countries, right down into deep dark paganism, and we still get that connotation when we use the word 'heathen.' But in Scripture the word 'heathen' just means any non-Jew. Anyone not a Jew was considered a heathen or Gentile. So keep your definitions straight. Now verse 20:

I Corinthians 10:20

"But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils (demons), and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils." (demons)
Oh horrors, that's why when we get to II Corinthians Chapter 6, Paul says, "You can't have fellowship with God and demons." There has to be that separation, and here Paul is saying that so clearly. Also remember that Paul is building his case for the communion table. Verse 21.

**I Corinthians 10:21**

"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: (demons) ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. (demons)" You can't. I think Jesus made the statement Himself:

**Matthew 6:24b**

"...You cannot serve God and mammon." You can't have one foot in the world, and the other in the Church, it just doesn't work like that. Oh, you can get by for a while but you're miserable. Now verse 22.

**I Corinthians 10:22**

"Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?"

Remember the argument that Paul is building is that they have to be careful how they practice the Lord's table. In verse 23 we find Paul shifting gears again, and here in this verse he seemingly changes the subject and drops into something totally different, but it's still coming home to the effect of the Lord's table, compared with fellowship with demons, and fellowship with the Lord and His work of the Cross.

**I Corinthians 10:23**

"All things are lawful for me, (that's frightening isn't it? How in the world did the Holy Spirit see fit to inspire the man to say something like that?) but all things are not expedient: (now what does that mean? Well, there was no set law resting on Paul's shoulders that says, 'Thou shalt not.' The Cross finished all of that. We're no longer under law, but even though he is set free from law, yet is he free to do the things contrary to the law? No. And when we say that we're not under law, but rather Grace, I never imply that we are now free to do as we please. Remember Grace is not a license.) all things are lawful for me, (so far as legalism is concern) but all things edify not."

And again he is going to be building his case here that every believer has to be careful what they do, and what they practice because there are people constantly watching us. Paul does use the expression that everyone is a living epistle.
II Corinthians 3:2

"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:"

What does that mean? There are a lot people who will never pick up this Book and read it, but they can look at you, and they can read. You are a living epistle, and this is what Paul is trying to bring these Corinthians to understand, that even though they were living in the midst of abject immorality, and idolatry, and mythology, yet wherever those Corinthians went within that Greek culture they were to be a living epistle. They were to be something that the world around them could read, and understand. Now verse 24, and remember he's still building to the practice of the Lord's table.

I Corinthians 10:24

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." Now in that verse the last word "wealth" is italicized which means it's been added. That's unfortunate, I think it should have been left blank. This is a hard verse to explain, but you know that Paul is not saying that you are to try to get what the next man has, because that flies in the face of everything that he teaches. So what I think he is really saying here is that we are not to just constantly look for what's in it for number one. That's been the cliche for the last generation or so. "What's in it for me," is what it's saying. Don't be concerned about what you do for yourself, but be concerned what's it going to do for my neighbors? How is it going enhance his situation, and that's exactly what he's driving at. Now verse 25:

I Corinthians 10:25,26

"Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, (here I think Paul is talking about the open market that we referred to earlier) that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

Now I think we can get a little glimpse of verse 26 when Peter saw the sheet come down in the Book of Acts. And of course the Lord was teaching Peter something totally different, but it was the same analogy. Here came this sheet filled with all manner of four-footed animals and creeping things and what did the Lord tell Peter? "Kill and eat." Boy that was the shock of all shocks to a good kosher Jew. What did Peter say? "Not so Lord, I have never eaten anything common or unclean." But you see here comes Paul in I Corinthians with that freedom that Grace brings even to the Jew, and that is, you don't worry about whether it's kosher or not, the Lord has created it, thank Him for it, and eat it. And that is where we are today. Now verse 27.
I Corinthians 10:27

"If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; (in other words you are going to respond to the invitation) whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake."

Now if that same individual when he invites you to that feast says, "The meat I'm serving tonight came from the pagan temple," then that makes it a little bit different. See in verse 28:

I Corinthians 10:28

"But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, (Why? Now you are going to show him that you are not going to have anything to do with that which was tainted by being offered to some demonic god.) and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof:"

But other than that, Paul says, if you don't know the difference go ahead and eat, because there's nothing wrong with that meat. Offering it to that idol didn't affect the meat one iota. It's nothing but a dead, dumb idol. So it always depends on the circumstances.
LESSON ONE * PART II

ORDER AND MEANING OF THE LORD'S TABLE

I CORINTHIANS 10:18 - 11:30

Now before we continue our study let me say that we are nondenominational, and this is the way that I have been teaching for many years. We have always taught with the idea that people in every local Church are active in their own local Church. We are not competing with the Church, but rather hopefully are enhancing it, and a lot of our folks are Sunday School teachers and so forth. In my teaching environment I've always tried to stay on neutral ground, in fact I've learned that if I try to have a class for example in a Baptist Church, then the Methodists, Catholics, and Lutherans aren't going to come. So when we teach we always try to have everything on neutral premises, because we want to reach people from every denominational background. This Book is not a denominational Book, but rather it is for everybody. Remember heaven is not going to be divided by denominations, we are all members of the Body of Christ, and if we're saved we're going to be in the same place regardless of denominational handle.

Now as we ended our last lesson we were dealing again with something that is not applicable for us living over here in America, but it is still a problem in some areas of the world. And that is this idea that if something has been offered to a pagan idol, then can a believer have anything to do with it? Well you see Paul spoke his mind when he said as far as he was concerned that dumb idol couldn't affect that meat, and he could eat it and think nothing of it. But just like Paul taught back in the Book of Romans, eating ordinary meat, perfectly legitimate meat, if there were some that had become vegetarians, through whatever convictions, and if it was going to upset their Christian experience by watching Paul not be a vegetarian, then what did Paul say? "I won't eat another bite of meat as long as I live if it's going to be a stumbling block to others." Well, it's the same way here with regard to meat that had been offered to idols. He says, "If it's going to cause a problem to the unbeliever, as well as to the believer, then I won't eat it." Remember where we left off in our closing moments in verse 28:

I Corinthians 10:28

"But if any man say unto you, 'This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it,...'"

Even that pagan is going to be taught a lesson if he tells this Christian who is now a guest at his table, "Hey, this meat is what I got back from the temple," then the believer should reject it for that man's sake to show him that he does make a
difference. And on the other hand it could have been a fellow believer invited to that same feast, and that young believer did not have the strength to say, "This meat can't be affected by an idol," so for that young believer's sake, don't eat it. And you can carry that into every aspect of life. Anything that is going to cause a weaker believer to stumble, then for goodness sake set it aside. Now I think the crux of this whole thing is wrapped up in verse 31:

_I Corinthians 10:31_

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

And that's the only reason we're left here is to bring glory to His name. Even in the mundane things that we think don't really count. Yes they do if we do it as unto the Lord and for His glory, then that's the way God sees it. Now verse 32, and here is another admonition that fits just as well today as it did back in Corinth in Paul's day.

_I Corinthians 10:32_

"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:"

In other words, that verse divided the population of Corinth, or any other city at that time, into three categories. We normally think of two, saved and lost, but here Paul puts it in three. Because the Jew was still a factor to be reckoned with when Paul writes to the Corinthians. Now a little later in his ministry Paul's writings are a progressive revelation in themselves. Just like the Bible is on the whole. Because you've certainly seen that by now, when you come from Genesis all the way up through the scriptures, it's a constant progressive revelation of things that were not revealed back there, but now they are. Paul's letters work the same way. He works from a simple beginning, and he comes on up and finally he'll end with those deep spiritual things that the carnal believer can't comprehend. So here he is still showing that there is a difference between the Jew and the Gentiles, and those Jews and Gentiles who were members of the Body of Christ. Then to finish up the chapter:

_I Corinthians 10:33_

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."

Now as you study Paul's letters I think you're going to become aware of one overriding thought, and that is the man could never get lost people off his mind. All that Paul could think about was lost people. People for whom Christ had already paid
their sin debt, people for whom the blood of Christ had been shed, people whose lives were ready to be ransomed by virtue of His resurrection from the dead. We never want to lose sight of the fact that when Christ went to that Cross, when Jesus died that death by crucifixion it wasn't just another crucifixion because there were thousands of those. It wasn't unique in that respect. But what made it unique is that He was the Creator God Himself Who took on human flesh to go to that Cross, so that on that Cross God poured out all of His wrath for sin. All the sin from Adam until the last person that will ever live in time, their sin was laid on Christ on that Cross and God judged it. He poured out His wrath on Him. Which means that even the vilest member of some mafia or whatever you want to think of as vile, lost, wicked people, their sins are already atoned for. **They are already paid for.** The only reason they'll go to an eternal doom, if they don't come into salvation in the meantime, is because they rejected Christ's atonement. **That's why we maintain there's only one sin that will ever put a person out in his eternal doom and that is rejecting the Gospel, because the sin debt has been paid.** That has been finalized once and for all.

And so this is why Paul just burned until his dying day that he might get the Gospel of Salvation out to the lost people. And if each one of us would just get a part of that same desire, we'd make a difference. I think personally the world is too far gone. I don't look for a great awakening. I hope I'm not small in faith, but I just can't see it. But **IF** every believer would burn for the lost world like Paul did, then we'd still turn the world around. We could turn this country inside out and turn the world around, but it looks like believers aren't going to. **Of course, it's all in God's providence and we know that things have to come to their conclusion.** But anyway, Paul's whole desire any place he went was that lost people might be saved.

How many times do we think about it when we go our way, and I guess we're most aware of the masses of humanity when we're on the road. You just see this constant rolling of traffic into the city and out, and I don't care where you go, it's the same everywhere. Highways just chock full of people coming and going, and that's when I become aware of the masses of people and to think that most of them are lost, and we could care less, seemingly. But if we could do like Paul and just burn with that desire. Now come with me back to I Corinthians Chapter 4 and drop down to verse 16.

*I Corinthians 4:16*

''*Wherefore I beseech (beg) you, be ye followers of me.***

That's contrary to what most people think. Now come on over to Philippians Chapter 3 and verse 17.

*Philippians 3:17*
"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample."

Why does the Holy Spirit prompt the man to tell the world to follow him rather than to follow Jesus? Because this man is of the same human make-up that we are. He has the same failures, the same weaknesses, the same fears that we do. He went into one of these strange pagan cities and do you think he went in with a boldness and a facade that showed no fear? No! He trembled in his boots just like we would, not knowing what kind of a response he would get, but he went anyway. And that's what we have to do. It's a fearsome thing to take the Gospel out to a belligerent world. But this is what he means when he says, "Be followers of me," and that we burn with that same desire as we see more people come to a knowledge of salvation. Now, if you'll come back with me to I Corinthians and we'll go into Chapter 11. And remember, he still hasn't left the thought completely of the Lord's Supper.

**I Corinthians 11:1**

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

Now remember Paul writes to Gentiles in the world today just as surely as he wrote to the Corinthians in his day and time. He says, "Be ye followers of me." These are three verses right in a row that say the same thing. I Corinthians 4, Philippians 3 and now I Corinthians 11. "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Now Paul isn't setting himself up as the Savior of the world. He isn't setting himself up as some god. Never! But what does he say? "As I follow the resurrected, ascended Lord, you follow me." He makes that analogy throughout his letters. In fact, let's go back and review for a moment. Let's go back to I Corinthians 3. I know when I make statements like this I endanger myself to those who say I make too much of the Apostle Paul. Well, I don't see how I can because the Apostle Paul is that man that God designated to take salvation to the Gentiles. And if God designated it, then I make no apology for it. And this is why he is defending his apostleship in all of his letters. I'm always stressing that Paul defends his apostleship because even the people of this day were accusing him of heresy and being an impostor, because he didn't actually walk with the Lord Jesus those three years, like Peter, James and John did. But nevertheless, he still has to come back constantly and say, "I am an apostle! I am the one who has received all these revelations!"

**I Corinthians 3:10,11**

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed
Christ is the foundation of everything we believe in and hope for. The foundation and the finished work of the Cross. But who was the masterbuilder that laid it out? Paul was! And that's why his letters are intrinsic to our doctrine, because he alone was given these revelations with regard to this Church made up of Jew and Gentile. Now Peter makes reference to it in his little epistles way at the end of his life, you might say. But Peter knows nothing of this in his early preaching. He absolutely has no concept of the Body of Christ, this composition of Jew and Gentile. But this apostle has had all of this revealed to him. Now let's go on the Chapter 11.

**I Corinthians 11:2**

"Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, (the things that have been delivered, that have been taught by the Apostle Paul, and some of the other gifted men), as I delivered them to you."

Now turn over a couple of pages to Chapter 15 when Paul says that "I delivered them unto you." Now don't lose sight of the fact that these Corinthians have heard none of this until the Apostle Paul came to town. It wasn't that someone else had already been and had laid the groundwork and set the stage so that this guy could just come in and take all the glory. No way! When he first came to town there had never been a word concerning the Gospel of the Grace of God, how that Christ had died and been resurrected. He says it so plainly here in Chapter 15 and you've heard me say it on the program and in my classes in Oklahoma, and you all know it forward and backwards - that if you want a clear definition of the Gospel that will save a man, here it is:

**I Corinthians 15:1**

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you (not a gospel but ) the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand."

He's telling them not to get blown over with every little wind of doctrine and every false teacher that comes along. You stand on this Gospel and you won't have to worry about eternity.

**I Corinthians 15:2a**

"By which (that is this gospel) also ye are saved..."
I always have to stop at that word. I had someone tell me years and years ago that they wished I wouldn't use that word. It sounded too much like someone they knew in town. And I said, "Now wait a minute. This is not a denominational word. This doesn't belong to one group of people. This is a scriptural word. You go all the way back into the Old Testament and what were the Jews constantly told to be looking for? Salvation! The salvation of Israel. The salvation of the individual. What does salvation mean? To be saved from something!" And again, I've always used this simple analogy: you take some old boy that's just about gone broke and is about ready to throw in the towel. There's no way he can pick up all his debts. Some rich uncle dies and wills him a whole bunch of money and all of a sudden he's back on his feet and is going 100 miles an hour. What do we say about him? "That old boy's estate was that guy's salvation." It saved him from bankruptcy. This is the same word. We are saved from an eternal doom and this Gospel is our salvation. Now let's read on.

I Corinthians 15:2b,3

"...if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you unless ye have believed in vain." (Know what you believe). For I delivered unto you (what's the next word?) first (see how plain that is? This is the first time the Corinthians have ever heard the Gospel and it was from this one man.) of all that which I also received (Now you have to know your Bible to know what Paul is talking about don't you? You have to understand that when God zapped him off his horse on the road to Damascus and saved him, God didn't send him back to Jerusalem to go and check in with the Twelve and come under their ministry. He separated him totally from the Twelve and sent him out into the backside of the desert and revealed these doctrines to him and then, yes, he went to Jerusalem for 14 days and visited with Peter. But of the other apostles he never saw one. And immediately Paul began his ministry amongst the Gentiles. And so his ministry just continued and went west across Asia Minor which is present day Turkey. They over the Aegean Sea and Greece, where Corinth is. And here is what he received) how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.

Christ didn't just die for the sins of Israel, but the sins of these pagan Corinthians, the sins of America, the sins of Europe, the sins of the Orient. He died for them all. This was the fulfillment of God's whole design from day one. That He would go to the Cross and take upon Himself men's sins. Now let's go on to verse 4.

I Corinthians 15:4

"And that he was buried, (He had to be in order to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that He was dead. This was not some tomfoolery, or beguiling whatever. He died. He was dead three days and three nights in the tomb.) and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"
Again, the Sovereign God was in complete control. How can the unbelieving world continue to ridicule the Book when they know from history, from archaeology, that these Old Testament writers lived. They were real, they were flesh and blood. We’ve found excerpts of their writings, whether it be on clay tablets or whatever. They lived and we know those things were written a thousand, fifteen hundred, two thousand years before Christ came. But here He came. And we know that David wrote in the Psalms a perfect picture of the crucifixion. We know that David wrote in 1000 B.C. concerning His resurrection. But it was in such vague language that it took this Apostle to bring it out into the open. It was all back there and that was why he mentions it. It was according to the scriptures that the Gospel came about and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures. Now that's the Gospel that he received and he took to Corinth.

Now let's go back to Chapter 11 and we have it here again, that all the things that Paul had instituted in the little group of believers. You want to remember that none of these New Testament churches were in huge edifices as we see in America and Europe and so forth. Where did they meet? They met in homes! The average local church probably didn't have more than a common ordinary home would accommodate. A dozen, two dozen, and if they had a huge home maybe they could get 30 or 40 in there. But they weren't huge congregations, but nevertheless, whatever they rested on, they had gotten it from the Apostle Paul.
LESSON ONE * PART III

ORDER AND MEANING OF THE LORD'S TABLE

I CORINTHIANS 10:18 - 11:30

Now let's pick up again in Chapter 11, and we'll begin with verse 2 where the Apostle writes.

I Corinthians 11:2

"Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, (things) as I delivered them to you."

In other words, go by what I have instructed because I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, and of course, this was a predominantly Gentile congregation. I say predominantly because no doubt there were some Jews in the early congregation because the Scripture teaches that Paul would always go first to the Jew, and then when he saw that he wasn't going to reap a harvest, then he would go to the Gentiles. So I'm convinced in all his early little congregations there were a smattering of Jewish believers.

Now in the next few verses we are going to deal with something that is as far removed from us in America in this day and time as what we just talked about in the previous chapters with meat offered to idols. And that is women in the Church and their covering or not to be covered heads and so forth. And it is one of those areas again that has certainly changed by virtue of customs and environment, not that the Word of God changes, but I certainly think that customs do. We know that a lot of the things that God mandated for Israel, for example, was because of their national customs and the way God had taught them. So we will take these coming verses with a little bit of a grain of salt. I'm not going to take it as no longer being the Word of God but I do want us to realize that there has been a tremendous change in the position and attitude of men toward women in Christianity.

Now maybe just for openers before we read the Scriptures, I would like to share a couple of quotes that are appropriate. You want to realize that Paul himself was not anti-women. Paul in Romans Chapter 16 commends so many women who helped him in the ministry, and he certainly recognized the fact that there was a role for women in the Church. Now in this portion in I Corinthians when it sounds like he is coming down kind of hard on the women, again, remember the circumstances in Corinth being the pagan city that it was. It was still probably closer to the Orient than what we call western civilization, and so many of the things that were part and parcel
of the Hebrew, as well as the pagan attitude toward women, is probably epitomized in these two little quotes.

Sophocles, a Greek philosopher back even before Paul's time said it like this: "Silence confers grace upon a woman." Do you hear what he is saying? The best thing that a woman can do is be quiet. Now that was the philosophers of Greece. Now I'm not saying this to promote this, but rather I'm just saying that this was the attitude that was prevalent when Paul was dealing with these early Christian people. Now the other quote comes from the Jewish writings out of the "Talmud," and actually the Talmud was really a commentary. But this book lists several plagues that could be laid upon the Jewish people, and of the several plagues here is one of them. Now you're not going to like this, but I'm just trying to show you that this was the attitude prevalent when Paul is writing. The Talmud says, "The talkative widow, and the virgin who wastes her time in prayer are one of the plagues of Israel." Now we would never dream of saying something like that today.

This backs up what I have taught for years and years, and I've made no apology for it. Don't ever accuse the Apostle Paul of being anti-female, because it's the Apostle Paul's doctrines that opened up the world of freedom to the women. Christianity is really what set womanhood free. And as we come into these coming verses, keep in mind that even today in the Middle East, a women that is unveiled is open to anything. She can be opened to verbal abuse, and snide remarks as she walks down the street, and she may be opened to various types of attacks, but if she is veiled she can retreat into a world all her own. And then even the most brazen of men in the Middle East will recognize that that veiled women is not to be touched. So we have to take these cultures into view as we now see what Paul is writing here, and what he's telling these Corinthians believers is, "Be careful how you handle this situation since the world is watching, lest they misinterpret." Now we're in the same situation in many areas of things today. We have to be careful how we do certain things lest the unbelieving world totally misinterprets our actions, and totally accuse us wrongly. Now maybe as we come into the text you can see what we are talking about. Now verse 4:

I Corinthians 11:4

"Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head."

Now we still, except for the younger generation, adhere to that. Those of us who grew up in a generation several years back wouldn't dare wear your cap into the high school, for example, or you'd wind up in the principal's office. Well that was discipline, and it's the same way today, as very, very few men would walk into a
church sanctuary with their hat on. I mean we just don't do those things. Well you see, back here in Paul's day it again goes back to customs, and so Paul is telling us us that it's just common knowledge that a man does not come into an attitude of prayer or worship with his hat on. For the woman it's the other way around. You don't expect a women to go into any kind of a worship situation without her head covered as we see in verse 5.

I Corinthians 11:5

"But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven."

Now does that mean that women today have to wear a veil or hat or something to cover their head when they go into church? No. I don't think the scripture is saying that at all, but in the culture of that day for a woman to be out in public with nothing on her head when they were used to the veil, what kind of a woman would usually flaunt herself in that way? Well, the prostitute. They would just remove these coverings from their head to unveil their profession. Now naturally, if that is the mind-set of 99.9 percent of the population do you see what an impact that makes? So Paul is dealing with it under those circumstances. Now today we're not bothered with that, and so this is why I think custom has completely changed our interpretation of some of these things. But we're still going to look at it because it's still part and parcel of the Word of God. Now verse 6:

I Corinthians 11:6

"For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered."

Now that's simple isn't it? If a woman realizes that it's certainly not becoming to have her hair all shaved off, and again making her right down at the same level as the prostitutes, what woman is going to do that? That's just common sense. Now verse 7:

I Corinthians 11:7

"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man."

And again that goes back to Adam. As Adam was created in the image of God, and also as Adam was the first created, and the woman was created next, that's what Paul says in so many words in verse 8.
I Corinthians 11:8

"For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man."

That was the process in creation. Do you remember I stressed that when God created Adam, where was Eve? In him! And then it was out of Adam that He created the woman later. Now you see this is why God has ordained all the way up through human history. That the husband was to be the head of the woman, not as a slave master, but in the order of God's things this is the way He has ordained it by virtue of Him creating the man first and then the woman. Verse 9.

I Corinthians 11:9-12

"Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God." Let's go back to the Book of Genesis Chapter 2 for a moment and tie this together.

Genesis 2:18

"And the LORD God said, 'It is not, good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet (or complement) for him.'"

Now we know that God at this time has already made the animal kingdom, and come down to verse 19 and He's going to have Adam name them.

Genesis 2:19,20

"And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air; and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet (or a mate) for him."

Now remember when I taught this, when we started in Genesis, I said can't you imagine that Adam was seeing all these creatures come by him to be named, and they all had their mates, no doubt the male and the female, and probably after so long a time Adam got a lonely feeling and said, "Now LORD why? Why do all these creature have a mate and I'm alone?" Well, God had already said that it wasn't good for man to be alone. So now let's look at verse 21.
Genesis 2:21,22

"And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, (I prefer to use the term side chamber, which is also the same definition for that Hebrew word) and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man."

There was the process of Eve coming onto the scene. Now from here I always like to turn to Genesis Chapter 5 to show this is exactly how it happened, that Adam was created and was alone for a period of time, but that Eve was already inside Adam to a certain degree, because she had to be, in order to keep Adam as the federal head of the human race.

Genesis 5:2

"Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."

So what does that tell you? Eve was in Adam, and she was part and parcel of him even as God created him and named him Adam. Now you also want to remember she wasn't called Eve until after the fall. But that was the process of creation. God created Adam with Eve within him, and then sometime later He takes that part of Eve out of Adam and creates the woman, so now he has his complement, he is now complete, he is no longer alone. Now coming back to I Corinthians 11, again we find that this is what Paul is resting on. That the whole order of the sexes is not some modern phenomenon. This originated at creation. God created the man to be the head of the women because she was created next, and that was God's ordained way of setting up the home and family, and it holds to this day, because God never rescinded it. Now I always have to emphasize, that does not make the man a slave master. His wife is not a "go-fer" for him, but rather she is a help meet, she is a complement, and men are to understand that. Now looking at verse 12 again:

I Corinthians 11:12

"For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God." In other words they have come together in a union now that puts them almost on an equal basis, but the man is still the head of the union. Now verse 13:

I Corinthians 11:13,14
"Judge (make up your own mind) in yourselves: is it comely (proper) that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?"

Now again I think that goes back to the custom of Rome, and I think the men of those days wore rather short cropped hair. Now verse 15:

**I Corinthians 11:15**

"But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."

It's a blessing, and I think any woman would be the first to admit that to have a beautiful head of hair is indeed a blessing. Now verse 16, and here Paul is tempering all this. He's not just coming in with a sledge hammer blow, but is constantly tempering his words to these Corinthians because he doesn't want them to feel browbeaten, and return their feelings in rebellion. Yet he's got to make some corrections, things have to be straightened up, and the word he uses in Chapter 14 is, "Everything that is done in the local Church must be done in order." This is the way God does things. He is a God of order, and even in the Nation of Israel when the children of Israel were ready to move out after camping over night, did they just pick up and go like a mob? No! I mean they moved out like an organized army with all the tribes in their rightful order. He's a God of order, and it was the same way in the Temple worship, there were prescribed ways to do everything. And it's the same way in the resurrection that Paul teaches in Chapter 15, and we'll be coming to that soon. What does Paul say:

**I Corinthians 15:22,23**

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Even the resurrection isn't going to be just a great big jumbled up affair, but every man in his own particular order, so it's going to be an orderly resurrection. Now verse 16:

**I Corinthians 11:16**

"But if any man seem to be contentious, (always causing problems) we have no such custom, neither the churches of God."
Now again I think he is tempering the attitude of these people concerning the hair cuts of the prostitutes compared to the hair cuts of the Roman citizenry. He's basically saying, "Just don't do anything that makes the outside world think that you believers here in the Church are a bunch of kooks." Now that's the best way I can put it. Don't let the world think of your Church service as something like a bunch of nuts, or you're somebody out there in left field, because they are watching. Now verse 17, and here Paul is coming back to the instructions concerning the Lord's table. And the Corinthians did have a tremendous problem with the Lord's table, it was more than any church could imagine today.

_I Corinthians 11:17_

"Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, (in other words Paul is telling them that he is finding fault with them.) that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse."

Paul is saying, "The way you're doing things is totally wrong. You are mixing up things that I have delivered unto you. You're doing it all wrong." Now verse 18:

_I Corinthians 11:18_

"For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be division among you; (we covered that back in Chapter 1. And remember the division was that some followed only Jesus, others said they followed Paul, some Peter, some Apollos) and I partly believe it." Now remember Paul is getting all this by hear-say.

Now verse 19.

_I Corinthians 11:19-21_

"For there must be also heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. (Now here is where we're going to deal with the Lord's table.) When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken."

Now wait a minute, the Lord's Supper now is nothing more than pieces of unleavened bread, and a little cup of grape juice or wine. Now that's not enough to satisfy physical hunger or to get drunk on. Right? So what was going on? Hey, they were having a great big pot luck supper before they had the Lord's supper. And most of the smaller rural churches still like to have their pot luck suppers where people just bring in what they feel they're qualified to bring, and everybody eats. Well the Corinthians were doing that ahead of the Lord's table for an evening service. I think the reason it's
called supper is because the ancients practiced more or less like rural America does. The farmer, when he gets up, wants a big breakfast; he probably won't eat all that much at noon, but then in the evening is the big meal. Well it was the same way back here, and so these Corinthians were used to their main meal being in the evening. So before they observed the Lord's table they would come in with the pot luck supper. And in the next lesson we'll get into what Paul meant when he says they were using excesses at this pot luck supper, and that's what it all amounted to, and why he had to correct them.
LESSON ONE * PART IV

ORDER AND MEANING OF THE LORD'S TABLE

I CORINTHIANS 10:18 - 11:30

Now to get back to where we left off in our last lesson. But before we do, I just want to say this is an informal Bible study, and we want people to just study the scriptures, and we like to do it in an atmosphere like we do in our Bible studies here in Oklahoma, with a cup of coffee, or other refreshments, and a table where you can take notes if you like. And we trust that many of you are joining with us in Bible study as we know you are. Remember all we're doing is trying to get folks to search the Scriptures and see what the Book really says, and just as important, what it doesn't say.

In our last lesson we were studying about the Lord's Supper and how Paul was having to upbraid the Corinthians because they were abusing it. And remember before they would have the official Lord's supper of unleavened bread, and the communion cup, they would have a pot luck supper. Now again remember the circumstances. You see that's what makes the Bible so interesting. Historically, and environmentally everything makes a difference with the circumstances. The Corinthian believers were a make-up of a few Jews, more than likely more Gentiles, but from the whole strata of society. Now naturally, in that day and time what kind of people were at the bottom of the totem pole socially? Slaves. Bond slaves, and then of course you had your wealthy merchant men who probably had ships out at sea, and Corinth was their home base.

So you have this whole cross-section of society even within that little congregation. So they would have this potluck supper, and people being people, the bottom echelon people would bring what they could afford, and maybe some of them couldn't afford anything, but they were free to come. Come on up through the scale, and people bring various levels of food and so forth, but what do you suppose the wealthy brought? They brought the best wines, meats and vegetables because they could afford it. Now I can imagine, before Paul writes, that the poor people were just gorging themselves with the things that the wealthier people were bringing. They had never tasted wine so good so they just guzzled it. They were becoming gluttonous, and drunk. And then in verse 22:

I Corinthians 11:22

"What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not."
It would indicate that the people were also separating themselves during the potluck supper, and the wealthy were saying, "You're not going to eat the good food that I've brought or drink our good wine. You go have your own table." Well that's the furthest thing from what the Church is supposed to be. So they were dividing themselves now according to their status in the culture, and Paul is shocked, and says, "In the first place, you didn't come to Church to fill your bellies with food and drink," but this was what they were doing, abusing. Now there is nothing wrong with a potluck supper once in a while, because I'm not one of these who say you can't eat when you come together as believers. In fact, I think that is one of the highlights of our classes here in Oklahoma, and even here at the studio. After an hour of teaching we take a coffee break, and these gals bring out the best that there is. So all of our classes enjoy these little breaks, and it's also a time of fellowship, and there is nothing wrong with that. But the Corinthians were abusing all of that, and some were even getting drunk. You might say, "Christians?" Yeah, no wonder Paul was shocked and upset. Now verse 22.

*I Corinthians 11:22*

"What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? (Now it's obvious he wasn't talking about the elements of the Lord's table, but rather he was talking about their potluck dinner. He's saying if you can't do it right then eat at home.) or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? (Do you see what Paul is saying especially to the wealthy? He's saying how dare they flaunt their wealth by bringing all this expensive gourmet food when they know there are other people that can't afford anything.) What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? (What does he say?) I praise you not."

So Paul is gently condemning them by just simply saying, "I can't praise you for this kind of action because this is the way that it should not be done." Now in verse 23 he is going to come in and give the real purpose for what we call the Lord's Supper or communion table. And again I'm going to emphasize that it has nothing to do with the salvation of these Corinthians. These Corinthians are already saved, they are believers. Now for the purpose of this table in the Church program.

*I Corinthians 11:23a*

"For I have received of the Lord..."

Now do you see what he says? He didn't get it from the Twelve in Jerusalem, or from seminary, or some denominational big wigs, but where did he get it? From the Lord! Let's go back to the Book of Galatians for a moment and look how Paul received these revelations. This way you can compare Scripture with Scripture. We've got to look at these Scriptures because they are tantamount to our understanding Paul's apostleship.
Galatians 1:11,12

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, (by man, but how did he get it?) but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Now you have to remember, where is Jesus Christ all during Paul's revelations? In glory. And so everything that Paul writes concerning our doctrine today is from the ascended Lord after His death, burial, and resurrection. And remember, until He went to that Cross, and died, He was not the object of faith to the main run of Gentiles. But once He had finished the work of the Cross, and revealed His plan of salvation to this apostle then it becomes that Gospel as he says in Chapter 2, "Which I preached to the Gentiles."

Galatians 1:15-17

"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace. To reveal (a revelation) his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen;(Gentiles) immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."

Do you see how the Holy Spirit is prompting the man to write definitively that he had no contact with those Twelve men at Jerusalem. So when he speaks of revelation he is always referring to that which Christ revealed from His position now in the heavenlies. Now you come into Chapter 2 to a verse that I just semi-quoted in verse 2. Paul goes up to Jerusalem now to convince the twelve that his Gospel to the Gentiles was not connected with Judaism, and so he says in verse 2:

Galatians 2:2a

"And I went up (that is to Jerusalem) by revelation, (God instructed him. "Paul, it's time you go up and meet with the Twelve, you go up to Jerusalem.") and communicated unto them(the Twelve) that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles,..."
"For I have received of the Lord (by revelation) that which also I delivered unto you,..."

By the time Paul writes the I Corinthian letter, the Church of Corinth had been operating long enough to build the excesses. They had been going long enough that they were getting all these kooky ideas coming in. Because this isn't what he taught them at the beginning. This isn't how he taught them to practice the Lord table. I imagine that when they got ready to have the Lord's table they realized that they couldn't satisfy a whole day's energy with a little cup or swallow of wine, and one little piece of unleavened bread. "My, let's start bringing some food and we can have a real supper out of it." But that led to excess, and so now Paul has to bring them some criticism. Looking at the verse again.

**I Corinthians 11:23-25**

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, `Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.' After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, `This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye as oft as ye drink it. in remembrance of me.'" Now let's go back to Matthew Chapter 26 and begin with verse 17.

**Matthew 26:17-20**

"Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, `Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?' And he said, `Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand: I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.' And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve."

Remember when they ate the passover lamb back in Egypt, what was the position of each of them at the table? Standing. So if they were to be standing to eat the Passover lamb with their feet shod, why were they standing? They were ready to go, and I don't think the custom had changed all that much, so when He sat down there was a regular meal that they ate before they killed the Passover lamb, if I understand Passover. Then let's come all the way over to verse 26.

**Matthew 26:26-30**
"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.' And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives."

Now why did I read this to you? Does Jesus give any doctrinal exposition on the bread and the wine. Not a word. All He says in verse 26 is "...this is my body." and in verse 28. ...this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

But we see no explanation or instructions on how to practice it from here on. Now let's come all the way back to Genesis Chapter 14 and look at the first example of bread and wine. And here comes this hard to pronounce name out of Jerusalem. Who? Melchizedek, the high priest and king of Salem, which was a little village that later became Jerusalem. And in order to get the backdrop, remember Abraham had put together a little army out of his servants and had recaptured the people that had been taken captive out of Sodom, and that included his nephew, Lot. And he's coming back after their victory, and here's a situation that's loaded of course with a lot of prophetic impact, and let's pick it up in verse 18. And we find that this Melchizedek this high priest of Salem, and remember He was not a high priest of the Jews, because that Nation hadn't been formed yet.

**Genesis 14:18**

"And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God."

Now that wasn't what they normally used in the sacrifices of Abraham's day. So why in the world did Melchizedek offer bread and wine? Well, it was a subtle prophecy. Oh, it was so subtle because what was the bread and the wine, as Jesus administered it in Matthew 26, going to represent? The resurrection. And that's what the whole idea of the Lord's supper is. It is to be a constant reminder that every time we partake of that bread and that cup it is a reminder of that finished work of the Cross.

And this is the first time that's it's explained. In fact one commentator that I've read puts it this way: "This is probably the first time that Jesus is quoted chronologically in the Scriptures, because the Four Gospels hadn't been written yet. Have you ever thought of that? The Four Gospels hadn't been written so Paul couldn't go to the Gospel of Matthew. But rather Paul's interpretation of the Lord's supper came by revelation. And isn't it amazing how God does everything in His own order,
as before the Four Gospels were ever written Paul writes to the Corinthians the very same words. Now read on in I Corinthians, verse 26, and here is the doctrinal reason for the Lord's supper.

*I Corinthians 11:26*

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew (or remind yourself of) the Lord's death till he come."

**Now I'm going to point out two things.** There is no stipulation from the apostle as to how often a Church practices the Lord's supper. I don't care if your denomination practices it every Sunday, that's your prerogative. If you want to practice it once a year that's also your prerogative. Because the word is whenever you have the Lord's Supper you had better have the right mind-set when you do partake of it. And that is that you are reminding yourself that Christ died, His blood was shed, and He arose from the dead. And that's the only purpose of the Lord's supper, and it is to be a solemn experience. And again, the Corinthians were so abusing this beautiful, beautiful picture in type, by their indulgence with food, getting half drunk on too much wine, so how in the world could they receive the impact of such a solemn service. So Paul had to upbraid them and tell them to stop it, because it was a solemn occasion. And as the last part of verse 26 says the Lord's table will not stop until the Lord returns. Now verse 27, and here comes the apostles description of what our attitude should be as we partake.

*I Corinthians 11:27,28*

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

When it says, "But let a man examine himself,..." I think that's the secret to behavior at the Lord's table. You don't examine the next person to you or judge someone else, but just look at your own heart, and attitude. Am I right with the Lord? Am I right with my fellow believers? And if you can say `yes' and `amen' to that, then you feel free to partake. If you can't, you'd better refrain, because then you are drinking and eating condemnation. Now verse 29.

*I Corinthians 11:29*

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."
That is speaking of someone who partakes of the Lord's table with the wrong attitude. The Corinthians were going into that supper with almost an attitude of revelry, totally wrong. Many others of the Corinthians had a real thing against someone across the room, and their enmity was just like sparks, and Paul tells them that won't work. You can't take the Lord's table with that kind of attitude. Now verse 30. Since the Corinthians were guilty of many things that should have kept them from partaking:

I Corinthians 11:30

"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, (in other words God was already chastising them by taking away their health) and many sleep."

What does he mean? They had died. Now there is a sin unto death recorded in one of John's little epistles, and we won't have time to look at it today, but John also tells us that we don't pray for it. Even though you think that someone is awfully out of step, you never pray, "Lord take them out." That's not our prerogative, but the Lord does have that prerogative. That if a believer will not shape up, and if a believer continues to walk in known sin, then yes, God will take them, because He's not going let anybody drag His name through the mud. Now we know there are people who have made profession of salvation, they've probably been members of the church, and they're doing the same thing. And if the Lord doesn't deal with them, if the Lord doesn't chastise them, then Paul teaches in the Book of Hebrews that they are not His children.

Hebrews 12:5-8

"...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

So the Lord had been chastening the Corinthians because Paul says:

I Corinthians 11:30

"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."
LESSON TWO * PART I

ETERNAL EXCELLENCE OF LOVE

I CORINTHIANS 12:1 - 14:3

In our last lesson we pretty much finished Chapter 11 of I Corinthians, and in these next four lessons I hope to cover Chapters 12, 13, and 14. We're still studying the questions that Paul had received from these Corinthians. I think Paul is doing like I do even now, and that is, when someone writes and they have several questions, then I answer the questions in the order that they wrote them. We have been studying how he has been dealing with one problem after another that they had evidently listed in this letter to him. Now when we come to Chapter 12 he starts out the same way as I'm sure they had asked him about spiritual gifts, and he is going to cover it as only the Apostle Paul, by inspiration, could cover it.

I Corinthians 12:1a

*Now concerning spiritual gifts,...*

Now it's rather interesting and I guess I had never really thought of it this way until I spent the last 3 months just racking my whole being on these three chapters, getting ready for this series like I never have before. And then it suddenly dawned on me why Chapter 13 is the love chapter, which almost everybody in Christendom knows. Why is it sandwiched right in between 12 and 14? It could just as easily have been back in the Book of Romans, or in Ephesians or any one of his other letters, but why did the Holy Spirit inspire the apostle to write the love chapter between these two chapters? I think you will see in just a little bit, as we now take off, that this is the great love chapter of the whole New Testament. And again it's in response to the problems and questions that the Corinthian Church had. Remember, they were so carnal and had so many problems. They were babes in Christ! They couldn't handle the meat of the Word!

I Corinthians 3:1,2

"*And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.*"

Now the Apostle could have just blasted these Corinthians on some of these things, and especially Chapters 12 and 14. But instead he is not only preparing the Corinthian congregation to accept Chapters 12 & 14, he is also preparing his own heart and
attitude lest he become too belligerent, and become angry with them. So what does he have to do? Well the Holy Spirit has prompted him to pen Chapter 13, and now let's look at it in that light. We want to approach the things that are so controversial, even in the Corinthian Church in Chapter 12 and 14, based on the love and the understanding and patience that we see in this chapter. It is imperative that we look at Chapter 13 before I start making any comments on the other two chapters because this was the apostles' attitude as he approached these carnal Corinthians. Now let's look at Chapter 13.

**I Corinthians 13:1**

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, (Now I'm going to stop right there. That does not say that he spoke in the angelic tongue. It is only a hypothetical statement. "If," he said hypothetically, he could speak in the tongues of angels, and all the languages of the world, if that could be the case) and have not charity, (love) I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

Now what is he opening the door to? How are these Corinthians going to respond to some of the things he's going to say in Chapters 12, and 14? Well, without the attitude of love, faith, and understanding they're going to get upset and angry. And I shouldn't doubt that some of my audience will also, but I guess the Lord does everything in His own way because He's so Sovereign to the smallest detail. Ordinarily when we leave to drive the 90 miles to tape the programs we don't have time to look at our mail. We usually do that when we get home. But this morning for some reason I went and got the mail and opened up the letters quickly, and I'm sure that this one little letter was meant for me this afternoon. It was a lady writing from Minnesota, and she said, "I've been watching you and even though I'm from a background far different than yours, and even though you say things that I can't agree with, yet never have you offended me with anything that you have taught."

And this is my whole goal, that maybe I have to say things that are contrary to what some have been taught, but I want to do it without making offense. And this is exactly what Paul is saying. "I'm coming to you in the spirit of love." And that has to be for all of us because when you approach some person that you may know is as hell-bound as can be, don't ever go up to them and say, "Look, unless you do such and such you're going to go to hell!" Hey, you'll close their mind right now because you don't do that to people. But you approach them with this whole attitude that the apostle uses of love, and patience, and understanding, and not compromising the truth in the process.

**I Corinthians 13:2**
"And though I have the gift of prophecy, (which of course he admonishes the Corinthians to look for because it was far better than other things) and understand all mysteries, (now I wish I had more time. Even when you go into the pagan religions of the world, at the very core of every pagan religion, what do you find? Mysteries! The secrets of that evil religion. And so Paul is really saying here that even though he had the gift of understanding even the mysteries of the Oriental, pagan, idolatry religions [and of course he uses the same word in his own letters] that He was revealed the Mysteries of God. Nevertheless this is speaking of something beyond the norm. So he says even if he had the ability to understand all the supernatural mysteries) and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, (love) I am nothing."

And you know the letter to the Church at Ephesus, back there in the Book of Revelation, oh, they were so correct in everything. They had their doctrine straight, they had their discipline in order, and yet as the Lord Jesus spoke that letter to that Church, what was their major lacking? No love! It doesn't do any good to have all your doctrine straight, or to have perfect discipline, if there is no love then it counts for nothing. And so this is what this apostle is bringing out to these Corinthians. He's saying, "Look, I'm going to be coming at you about some things that I don't agree with you that you're doing, but I'm going to do it in the spirit of love."

Now reading on.

I Corinthians 13:3

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, (how could anybody do anything better than that?) and though I give my body to be burned, (as a complete sacrifice to even the service of God) and have not charity, (love) it profiteth me nothing."

Everything we say, think and do with regards to our family, our wife, our neighbor, our business partners, whatever the case may be, it still has to be based on this premise of love. Now understand of course that this term of love is not the erotic kind that Hollywood promotes. This is talking about the agape that is God-centered. And only the true believer can really have and exercise this kind of love, because the unsaved world doesn't know what it is. They can't comprehend it, but for us Paul says, this is out there for us to latch onto. In verse 4 he begins to explain all the attributes of this one word "love."

I Corinthians 13:4

"Charity (love) suffereth long, and is kind; charity (love) envieth not; (and of course the other word for envieth is covet. If you love someone you cannot covet what is theirs. That goes right back into the commandments doesn't
it?) charity (love) vaunteth not itself, (In other words, love doesn't become arrogant, and put pressure on the subjects of your love.) is not puffed up."

I Corinthians 13:5

"(Love) Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, (Now that doesn't mean it can never be provoked, but it's not easily provoked) thinketh no evil; (True love can think no evil. That's quite a statement isn't it? Now verse 6.

I Corinthians 13:6-8a

"(Love) Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; (Love) Beareth all things, believeth all things, (Remember faith is the other word for believeth, so our faith is based on love. The whole crux of the work of the Cross was the love of God, that He showered on mankind when He sent the best that heaven had to the Cross of Calvary. So far as Christ is concerned, God's wrath was poured upon Him while He hung there, but as God's wrath was poured on Christ the love of God was shed abroad on the human race.) hopeth all things, endureth all things." Then verse 8a: "Love never faileth:...."

Love will never let us down. We know human nature. We know that there are times when we may love our neighbor and may do everything we can for them and they're still going to take advantage of you. But over the long haul, love is going to persevere. I think one of the best examples that I can remember is that of President Abraham Lincoln. He was the epitome of this kind of Christian love. At the height of the war there was a gentleman who had ridiculed Abraham Lincoln before he became President. He ridiculed him to such a state that he once admonished an explorer, traveling all over Africa looking for a gorilla, "Why go to Africa when all you have to do is go to Springfield, Illinois" (referring to Abraham Lincoln).

He also made other disparaging remarks concerning Abraham Lincoln, but besides that, when Lincoln needed the right man to be his Secretary of War during the midst of the Civil War, whom do you suppose he appointed? This man, Stanton. And as time went by and Stanton served under the President, he continued to give him snide remarks and had no respect for the man whatsoever. But Lincoln never paid any attention to it. And then when he was assassinated, and as they had laid his body in a side room, Stanton came in and through his tears, weeping, he said, "Never has there been such a leader of men." You know, that touches our heart and well it should. But what made Lincoln what he was? He knew this whole attribute of Godly love. A man like Stanton never phased that love. He continued to work with him, appointed him and so forth. And I think this is what we have to understand, that a lot of times we
don't get the immediate gratification, but in the long run, what goes around, comes around. Our love is still going to be a profitable thing. Now, let's move on.

1 Corinthians 13:8

"Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

In other words, the gift of prophecy, which he says back in Chapter 12 is the one that is by far the best, it's going to fail. Well, how can something that's so good fail? You see, before this book came into print, (the New Testament), and Paul had already been winning hundreds and hundreds of people to Christ, and congregations were being started, they didn't have anything written to go by. None of the Gospels were even written yet. In fact, Paul will quote some of the words of Jesus as we see them in the Gospels in your Red Letter Edition. And so you know the man is moved by inspiration because they hadn't been written yet. So here, while the world was waiting for God's Word to come into print by way of the Four Gospels' account, by way of Luke's writing Acts and by way of Paul's epistles, what did God have to provide to feed those believers? Gifted men! And so the gift of prophecy was indeed by far the most important because that's all those early believers had to go on. And here, he says, they're going to fail. They're going to pass away. Why? Because the written book is coming. And Paul, evidently by inspiration, knew that there was a time coming when the Word of God would be in print for the New Testament believer, even as the Old Testament was at that time.

Now let's move on to the next part: "whether there be tongues...." I guess I'm going to have to emphasize something and it will carry for all three of these chapters, and I'm going to do this just so that people can readily understand that in the Greek whenever you see the word "tongues" (plural) it always means a known language. A speakable, reducible to writing, language. Now, the word `tongue' in the singular (and we'll point this out as we go through the coming chapters, especially Chapter 14), when there is no plural, speaks to those non-phonetic sounds, and that's all they were, just sounds, that no one could reduce to writing. Even some of our most gifted translators today, such as your Bible Societies, the Wycliffe translators, whenever they have heard someone speak in one of these so-called unknown tongues, they have never been able to pick out a single phonetic sound that could be reduced to writing. Amazing isn't it? And so they are unintelligible and that's why Paul said that if they are going to use it, they have to have someone to interpret or translate it, otherwise leave it alone. Whatever, we're going to leave that aside for now.
So now, he says, that this whole gift of speaking even in known languages, being able to speak in almost any language that would happen to come up, this gift will cease. Paul makes the statement in Chapter 14, verse 18:

**I Corinthians 14:18**

"I thank my God, I speak with tongues (plural) more than ye all:"

Now that was early in his ministry. And from what we can gather from the time he comes to the end of his ministry, he no longer practices it either. Now I can best explain this ability to speak in languages from one of our guides when we've been to Israel (and we're hoping to get him when we go again). When we'd finished our tour, the whole group that was with us had fallen in love with the guy. I asked him, "Eli, what do you do from here?" He said, "I've got a few days off and then I pick up another group from Italy." I said, "Then what do you do? How do you communicate?" He said, "I speak Italian." I said, "What if a week after that a bunch of Japanese come?" He said, "No problem. I speak Japanese too." He gave me his business card when we left and I sat down on the plane and turned it over on the back side and there he had it down - the guy was fluent in seven languages. He could take a tour from any one of those countries and be able to converse with them as well as he did us.

Now that's what it means to be able to speak in tongues (plural) as we see it here. And the guy had this but it wasn't a supernatural gift. I imagine he had a talent and ability, but he still had to learn those various languages. But Paul, wherever he went in his missionary journeys, and he went into various tribes and dialects, didn't have to stop and take six months to learn the language. He communicated with them. And even in Corinth, there was a multitude of languages being constantly used because it was a center of East and West trade. But whatever, Paul says the day is coming when this gift of being able to speak in such as he was able to do, would also disappear. Why? Because God's Sovereign. Talk to any missionary that's gone to the mission field over the last many years, and have you ever found one that can go right in to Brazil and speak Portuguese? Or into Bolivia and all of a sudden be able to speak the languages of those Indian tribes? No! And so what do they do? They have to study months and years learning the language. Because God has taken that whole thing away.

When we were in Haiti, I would have given anything if we could have just been able to communicate with those 700 Haitians who were out there in that crowd every night, plus the fact that it went out over island-wide radio. If I could have spoken that whole week in either Creole or French, I would have been satisfied with either one of them. But I couldn't. I needed an interpreter. And so Paul says this whole gift of tongues is going to vanish, as well as the gift of prophecy and even this supernatural knowledge that was given to men, till the printed page came in, disappeared. Now you want to
remember that God gave us this Book, which is supernatural in itself. And He has written it in such a way, as one of the old Reformers put it, that every plowboy in England could read the Bible and could comprehend it. So this is why all these supernatural things are going to fade away: because the printed Word would now come in and take over. Now verse 9:

*I Corinthians 13:9,10*

"For we know in part, (what does `in part' mean? Partially, there's not a full knowledge revealed yet. Paul understood that. That even with all the revelations that he had received from the ascended Lord, he still did not have them all, as there would be more coming and we know now that there were.) and we prophesy (or preach, particularly) in part." He still didn't have the whole revelation of the truth of the Gospel of Grace, this was only the beginning.

"But when that which is perfect (mature or complete) is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

Now here I have to use a simple illustration: everyone of you went through the grade school and learned your arithmetic, your plain and simple combination of 2+2, the multiplication tables and so forth. How often do you still use them today? I mean as such? Very rarely. But whatever mathematics you do use, what's it all based on? Those first principles. I don't care how high you go in mathematics 2+2 is still 4. Now it's the same way with scriptural revelations. God starts with the simple, but He is constantly revealing deeper and deeper truths. Now that doesn't take away the simpler part, but rather puts it in a place where you're not constantly hashing it over because you don't have to. It's just simply part and parcel of your make-up. Let me show you a verse that I think points it out so clearly, and that would be in Hebrews Chapter 6 right there in verse 1.

*Hebrews 6:1*

"Therefore (Getting off the baby bottle in Chapter 5, and getting into the meat of the Word. You don't throw them away, or say they are no longer true, but you don't need them anymore) leaving (just like we leave grade school arithmetic) the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; (maturity, or that which is complete)"

Don't stay back there in the simplicity area of Scripture, but move on into deeper things.
LESSON TWO * PART II

ETERNAL EXCELLENCE OF LOVE

I CORINTHIANS 12:1 - 14:3

Now let's pick up where we left off in the love chapter, at verse 10, and remember we had just looked at Hebrews 6 where Paul said, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ,..." In other words, there comes a point in our Christian growth where you have to leave just spending all your time on the simplistic or the elementary, and you move on into the deeper things. Paul's writings are a progressive revelation just like the Bible is as a whole. And so the Book of Romans and the first one of Paul's letters in the New Testament are doctrinally elementary. I've said so often if people could just understand two chapters in the Bible then they've got the battle over half won, and those are Genesis Chapter 3 which records the fall of mankind, and his problem with sin. And then Romans Chapter 3 which gives us the remedy for it.

So Romans is elementary, but then you see as the congregation was beginning to grow problems arose, and we'll see that in our next study after we leave II Corinthians and go to the Book of Galatians. Well, there again, problems such as legalism were creeping in and Paul had to address that. But after we leave Galatians then you see we move into what I call the higher doctrines of Grace. Then we go into those deep concepts of the prison epistles, and that of course is the Body of Christ and our position in the heavenlies. But you just can't unload all of that at once, we have to take it progressively, and that's why I feel the Lord has blessed our system of teaching through the scriptures, as we've been doing.

And so Corinthians, as we've been stressing, is addressing problems in a congregation that was so very carnal. They had not yet moved into the deeper spiritual things, and of course they hadn't really been revealed except through the gifted men who could preach it. But as we move on through from Corinthians into Galatians then you will see what I'm talking about. Now let's get back to the great love chapter, and we've been stressing that Paul puts this little chapter, by inspiration, between two chapters that are even controversial today. And the only way we can handle the controversy, as we're faced with day in and day out, is on the basis of the love of I Corinthians 13. I do not condemn people for practices that I don't agree with because that's between them and the Lord. But it is my responsibility to teach what the Book says, and not what I think. Now verse 11:

I Corinthians 13:11
"When I was a child, (Paul uses simplistic illustrations, and I also like to use illustrations that even grade school kids can understand.) I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: (Paul was just as normal as anybody else, but here's where a lot of people fail in the next portion.) but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

Now I'm finding out that the older I get, the sharper I become at remembering things that happened when I was five years old, and I think those of you who are older than I am notice the same thing. As we become older then, yes, we no longer play with the toys of a five or six-year-old, but have we forgotten them? No! It's still part of our make-up. We still reflect back constantly. And he says the same thing. "When I was a man, I put away childish things," but does that mean he totally obliterated them from his thinking? Of course not. But he is now a man and is no longer on the child level of activity. Now he goes on to bring, I think, the thought that he is trying to bring through at this point of revelations. And remember, he still hasn't had the revelations of the prison epistle.

I think he probably got those revelations while he was in prison in Caesarea. You remember, that was after all of his three missionary journeys through the Book of Acts. And then he went to Jerusalem and got in trouble with the Jews. He went under house arrest and protective custody with the Romans, and then they had him in prison in Caesarea for a year and a half while they were waiting to decide what to do with him. I think that while he was rotting away in a Roman prison for a year and a half, God was revealing the deeper revelations that would now come from the apostle's pen when he gets under house arrest in Rome. And so this is the whole process of his revelation. He has gotten enough to bring out the doctrines of grace for salvation and so forth, but so far as that deeper doctrine of the position in the heavenlies that we now enjoy, that hadn't been revealed to him as yet. But he evidently had an understanding, or at least the Holy Spirit knew it, so he says:

**I Corinthians 13:12**

"For now we see through a glass, (or we look into a mirror) darkly; but then face to face: ...."

Now the Greek implies an enigma. For years I didn't know what that was and I don't expect most people to know it today. But an enigma is like looking in a mirror and only getting an opaque reflection. In other words, if your mirror is covered over with steam after a hot shower, you may see the overall outlines of your face, but you do not see the little details that you'd want for putting on your make-up or shaving or whatever. Now that's what the word "darkly" means. Paul was seeing through an opaque view. He could tell that there was more out there, but as yet he didn't have the
revelations. And so he says, "Now we see through a glass, or look into a mirror that's clouded over, but then...." Now a lot of people think that this is referring to when Christ comes and it could be, but I prefer to think that Paul is referring to when he would have the complete revelation as we now have it. At the point he's writing I Corinthians 13, he didn't have it. And so he says, "We see through the glass darkly, but then...." when he has the full revelation, and the Word of God has become complete, then, he says, face to face.

He's not talking about my seeing my parents face to face, or you seeing your loved ones or even seeing the Lord Jesus face to face, he's talking about the fact that when the steam is wiped off of that bathroom mirror, he's going to see himself as he really is. And so then, when the revelations are complete, he says it will just be like having the steam wiped off the mirror and I'll see it all and we can see it all. And this is why I think we should be spending more time in, not just Paul's early epistles, but in his later ones. The Church today needs to be taught what's in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. And we're hearing precious little of it. That's the deep stuff. That's what makes us grow and become mature believers. Now let's go on.

**I Corinthians 13:12b**

"...now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

In other words, the revelations would be complete and there would be no more explanations necessary. It is so obvious that when you start those prison epistles, the revelations go completely beyond his earliest epistles of Thessalonians, Corinthians, Romans and Galatians. Then verse 13. So after all is said and done, after all the gifts and sign gifts have come and gone, only three things abide and what are they?

**I Corinthians 13:13**

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Faith, hope and charity, or love. Now it's interesting, and I want you to watch for this as you read Paul's epistles, that here and there sprinkled throughout all the rest of his epistles, up will come these three words. Not always three at a time. Sometimes it's faith and hope. Sometimes it may be faith and love. But he will constantly be using these three words to the end of his writings. Why? Because they will abide. They're not going to pass off like prophecies did, tongues did, and some of these other things. And so he says, the greatest of all three is love.
I think we have to look at the whole picture. Naturally, without faith you cannot please God. One of the other absolutes I've always said is that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. But you can also say that if there is no love, it's the same thing, it's impossible to please God. So of the three, faith, hope and love, even love is now the greatest. Now let's back up and pick up with Chapter 12. With love as the basis, and even as I deal with people who may not agree with me, I'm not going to get upset or angry with you. I'm just going to simply say, "Look, this is the way I feel this is the way the Lord has opened the Scriptures to my understanding and it's my responsibility to teach what the Book says and not what some group may think." Now look at verse 1. He is again, seemingly, referring to this letter of questions. And he says the same thing like he did in Chapter 7.

I Corinthians 12:1

"Now concerning spiritual gifts brethren, I would not have you ignorant."

I know your King James says "gifts." It's italicized, is it not? So I think it would also be plainer if we would put an "s" on the word spiritual and leave it at that. "Now concerning spirituals, or spiritual things." Now, here again, we have to be so careful because, you see, when we talk about the things in the realm of the spiritual, it's just not the Holy Spirit's power that we are confronted with, but also the adversary. He also is among the spirituals. Let me show you what I'm talking about. Turn to Ephesians 6, and a verse that all of you know and you'll recognize it as soon as we look at it. This is one of those letters that I was just telling you about. Here we're into one of the deeper aspects, the fuller and more final revelations that the apostle Paul received.

Ephesians 6:12

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Now what do you suppose? The word "spiritual" here in Ephesians is basically the same Greek word, it's different case, but it's still the same Greek word as what is translated the "spirituals" in Chapter 12 of I Corinthians verse 1. Now he says:

I Corinthians 12:1

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant."
I'm going to have to jump across the page a minute in order to show you why I jumped over to Ephesians, because Chapter 12 here in I Corinthians verse 10, is interesting. Because here the Corinthian church is just beset with these problems, one of which was they were abusing some of the gifts.

**I Corinthians 12:10a**

"To another (not to all) the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits;....."

Now what does it mean to discern something? Well, to analyze it and put it in its right category. You intelligently look at something and determine where this belongs and where that belongs. In other words, it had to be a gifted person even in Corinth to separate the spiritual things that were being prompted by Satan, and the spiritual things that were being prompted by the Holy Spirit. Now let me show you what I mean. Let me use Scripture. I'm not going to use my own ideas. Go all the way back to I John Chapter 4, verse 1. This is just as relevant today as it was when John wrote it, or when Paul wrote Corinthians. It is still the valid Word of God, and look what it says:

**I John 4:1a**

"Beloved (who is John writing to? Believers!) believe not every spirit...."

Now remember the word there isn't capitalized. It's the small case "s" and so it's not talking about the Holy Spirit, but it's talking about a spirit that is involved with the very mind and mental attributes of man, as well as Satan. You know the spirit of Satan is never capitalized either. And so here he says;

**I John 4:1**

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try (or test) the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Now John wrote around 80 or 90 A.D., just before the turn of the first century, and if the Holy Spirit inspired him to write that there were many false spirits then, what do you think it is now? It's far, far greater and so we have to be all the more aware of the gift of discerning these spirits. And I maintain that every believer has the wherewithal to do that if you'll line it up with the Word of God. That's your only criteria. You don't go by what some preacher says or what I say, or what some seminary says, you line it up with the Word of God. And now come back to I Corinthians Chapter 12 and I think I can show you one area that Paul, as well as John, was talking about.
I Corinthians 12:1

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant."

God does not want the most uneducated believer to be ignorant. There's absolutely no excuse for it. There are Bibles in every book store and commentaries galore. But the Word of God can be understood by the lowliest, the most uneducated in the world. God has promised it. He may lead someone to help you understand it, but it is not beyond the comprehension of any believer. Now verse 2.

I Corinthians 12:2

"You know that ye were (in the past) Gentiles (we know it was primarily a Gentile congregation) carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led."

The word "dumb" there merely means that they couldn't speak. It didn't mean they had no intelligence, it just meant they couldn't speak. And he says, "You were led to those." Naturally, that's all the world knew at that time, except for Judaism and Israel. Now verse 3.

I Corinthians 12:3a

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit (capital "S." That's the Holy Spirit. Do you see the difference? Small case "s" is not the Holy Spirit. It's the spirit of man or spirit of evil, but it is not the Holy Spirit.) calleth Jesus accursed:...."

Now we think, how could anybody ever do that? Listen, what do you suppose the Jews did then and probably a lot of them do today? What do they call Jesus? Accursed! What do you think Saul of Tarsus called Him in his days of intense persecution? That accursed Person? How could you believe like that? You may say, "Les, how can you be so blasphemous?" I'm not, I'm reading Scripture. And I'll tell you why the Jews would say something like that. Turn with me now to Acts Chapter 5. This is interesting and this is why I like to teach. This is Bible study. I'm not going to roll out a sermon at you, we're going to search the scriptures. And here Peter is still holding forth with the 11 and they are still primarily dealing with the Jewish people, still confronting them with the fact that the One that was crucified was their Messiah.

Acts 5:29,30
"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.'"

Now let's go back to Matthew 27 and verse 5. Judas has just gone to the chief priests and in verse 4 he has admitted he has betrayed innocent blood. And now verse 5

**Matthew 27:5**

"And he (Judas) cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."

Now come all the way back to Deuteronomy and you'll see what I'm driving at. Deuteronomy 21 and here is why Jews, with a straight face and conscious, would accuse or curse Jesus because He had been hanged on a Cross.

**Deuteronomy 21:22,23**

"And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (does that ring a bell? Why were the Jews in such a hurry to get Jesus off the Cross? They knew this verse!) (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;)...

Did you know that was in your Bible? Now let's go back to I Corinthians and that will probably make more sense. Paul is admonishing, especially in the direction of Jewish unbelievers who were giving Christianity such a bad time, and reflecting, I think, in his own pre-salvation experience. He was literally telling Israel that this Man, Jesus of Nazareth, was accursed because he was hanged on the Cross, on the tree. Paul is making it so plain here in I Corinthians 12 that no man who is now a believer and under the control of the Holy Spirit would ever call Jesus accursed simply because He'd been crucified. We know better than that, but you see the Jews were leaning on Deuteronomy, and what Judas had done, and so they were calling Jesus accursed. But they were not doing it in the power of the Holy Spirit, they were doing it in their unbelief. The reason I'm making a point of this is because years ago this verse bugged me. I thought how in the world could anybody curse Jesus? But this was their reasoning. Now let's go on and look at the last part of verse 3.

**I Corinthians 12:3b**

"...and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, (and really mean it) but by the Holy Ghost."
Now that's the other side of the coin. No unbeliever can ever claim that Christ is His Lord, it's impossible. **Christ can never be the Lord and Master of an unbelieving person.**
LESSON TWO * PART III

ETERNAL EXCELLENCE OF LOVE

I CORINTHIANS 12:1 - 14:3

Continuing on in I Corinthians Chapter 12, and verse 3, in the last half of the verse where it says:

*I Corinthians 12:3b*

"...and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

In other words an unbeliever may say it, but it doesn't amount to anything because there is no genuine belief in his heart. The only person that can genuinely claim Christ as Lord is the believer. Come back to Romans Chapter 10 and look at a Scripture that goes with this verse.

*Romans 10:8,9a*

"But what saith it? (that is, the Scripture) The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,..."

Now that's where the term comes into its full meaning. That as a believer, now we know that Jesus is Lord. He's in control of our life, He is the One in Whom we eat and sleep and move and without Him we are nothing. So that is what Paul is referring to back here in I Corinthians Chapter 12:3b. Now back to I Corinthians to continue the study. So only a truly saved, born again individual, a believer, can make the statement with all sincerity of the heart, because the Holy Spirit is the One that is the evidence that indeed Jesus is Lord.

*I Corinthians 12:4a*

"Now there are diversities of gifts,..."

Later on in this chapter Paul is going to introduce now for the first time in his writings this concept of the *"Body of Christ."* That invisible from the human element, that invisible make-up of all believers who have been baptized (spiritually) into that Body of Christ, and we'll see it laid out in more graphic terms beginning with verse 12. But here he's just saying, "That in the Body of Christ every one of us has a particular role." Every one of us have been saved for a particular place of service. It may be some dear
lady who never is able to get out of her house, she is very seldom seen by the public at large, she may be a busy housewife and mother, but she can be a prayer warrior. She can accomplish more for God without being seen than many evangelists who go from pulpit to pulpit. And so we have to remember that every believer has that unique capability of serving God as He intended it. Now I'm going to make a point here in a moment that we are not to beg for a particular gift. We are not to ask for it because that has to be discerned and given as the Holy Spirit wills it and not as we determined it, and we'll be getting to that in a couple of verses.

I Corinthians 12:5

"And there are diversities of administrations; (absolutely, and in dispensations - the other word for administrations) but the same Lord."

God is the same over all. In fact I've broken it down this way. When Adam and Eve were in the Garden, they were under a certain set of circumstances. The only thing they had to concern themselves with was "Don't eat of that tree," and that was it, because everything else was there for them to enjoy. There was nothing that would be disobedient to them, they knew nothing of sin, but they were not to eat of the tree. Well you know what happened, they disobeyed and they ate. Now the point I'm trying to make is that when they came out of the Garden of Eden, was everything still the same? No! It couldn't be. Sin and death had entered. They had been separated from that daily walk with God, and so there was a whole different set of circumstances. They were then under the curse, they had to work by the sweat of their brow, they were no longer under the easy existence of Paradise, and Eden. So it was all different, but had God changed? No, God didn't change, but rather Adam and Eve did.

That leads all the way up to the flood, and Noah and his family go into the ark. Now when they come out of the ark after the flood, again, is it like it was when Adam and Eve came out of the Garden? No way. Everything was different again, God laid other responsibilities upon them as they could kill the animals and eat the meat. Before the flood they couldn't do that, so it was a different administration. Then comes along the Tower of Babel, and you know what happened there. All the people around Babel were scattered by virtue of their languages now, and they all went to different parts of the then-known world. Different than before? Absolutely! Had God changed? No!

And then God raised up Abraham and does something totally different, and promises this one man a Nation of people, a different set of circumstances? Absolutely. The same God? Absolutely. And then God brought in Law, and He says to the Nation of Israel, "Keep the Law." We had never had anything on the planet like that before, but now Israel was under the Law. Then comes along the Age of Grace, this great
Gospel that you and I proclaim that anybody, black or white, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile can now enter into God's salvation by just simply believing the Gospel (Ref. I Corinthians 15:1-4) this had never been on the planet before. So it's a different administration, but has God changed? Not a bit. So this is what Paul is referring to in verse 5. A change of operations? Absolutely, but it's the same God. Verse 6:

_I Corinthians 12:6,7_

"And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." Now verse 7 is the verse that I was referring to a few minutes ago about asking for gifts. You take the gift that God has given you, and you be content with it. Look what he says.

"But the manifestation (putting it in the spotlight) of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." Now let's just go down to verse 11 and you'll see the same thought repeated.

_I Corinthians 12:11_

"But all these (the things that he has listed up there in verses 8, 9 and 10) worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally (differently) as he (the Holy Spirit) will."

Do you see that? So it's not for you and me to go and say, "Oh I want this gift, or that gift," No, you just take the gift that God has given you. Now I think the greatest thing we can do is just simply say, _"Lord here I am, I'm available, use me."_ And let Him direct you where He want to use you. I've told people this for years that I don't wait for God to say something out loud, He's never spoken to me out loud, but I'll tell you how He talks to me, and that's with open and closed doors. He gets us just exactly where He want us. If something doesn't fly and the door closes, don't push against it, you just take it that God doesn't want you in that direction. You will find another open door someplace else so just take that one. _And then from the Word, His Word can just impress you so much. Another one is by prayer, and that's some of the ways that we can find what God wants. But just to simply go to God and say, "I want the gift of such and such, no I don't think this is what the Bible permits. We are to leave that up to the Holy Spirit. Now I don't want to skip any verses or I'll get a call saying, "Well, you copped out." Now verse 8:

_I Corinthians 12:8_
"For to one (believer in the congregation) is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; (that's a gift to have wisdom) to another the word of knowledge (but it's going to come) by the same Spirit;" See, these were things that the Church needed, and God is providing then with these particular abilities. Now verse 9:

I Corinthians 12:9

"To another faith by the same Spirit; (now whether you know it or not, if you're a believer where did you get the wherewithal to believe the Gospel? From the Holy Spirit, because it's a gift, and as we exercise that gift of faith we respond by believing. Also some have greater faith than others and there's nothing wrong with that.) to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;"

There's no doubt they exercised this gift in the early Church. We know that even Paul himself exercised this gift in the Book of Acts as he performed miracles. But by the time you get to his later letters there's not a word about these kind of miracles, and he doesn't perform them himself. One of his best friends, and fellow laborers in the work was sick on the island of Miletus, and was nigh on to death, but could Paul heal him? No. So what did he admonish the believers to do? The same as we do today; pray for him. And we know that Timothy evidently had a stomach ailment, and we know Paul didn't heal him, he gave him a remedy for it, but he didn't heal him. And it was the same way with many of his own catastrophes in his life experience. Did he get healed? No. The Lord brought him through them, but no sign of any miraculous healing. In this area of Scripture, remember, that it's only in the letter to this carnal Corinthian Church that he deals with these particular gifts. Now let's finish verse 10:

I Corinthians 12:10

"To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; (to determine whether it's true or whether it's false) to another divers kinds of tongues;(languages) to another the interpretation of tongues: (or those languages)"

Go to Ephesians Chapter 4, one of his prison epistles. It was written several years later, and he now has that revelation that I think he was referring to in I Corinthians Chapter 13. Now the steam has been wiped off the mirror, and he now has the complete revelation, and he is teaching here in Ephesians the position of the believer in the Body of Christ. If people would only look at it this way. This is where we are today! This is like coming out of 3rd and 4th Grade arithmetic, and ending up in higher mathematics. The electrical engineering that puts all our computers and everything together takes a lot of smarts. They didn't forget simple mathematics, but they have put all that behind them. That is exactly where I put the Book of Ephesians. Ephesians is like somebody with a PH.D. in mathematics or physics.
Ephesians 4:4-10

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism," (not three, as a lot of people are depending on, and that's not what the Book says now as you can see. We've moved on into another administration or dispensation) One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us (from the greatest to the least He has given these gifts of the Spirit that He lists here.) is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, `When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Absolutely He did.) [Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended (that of course was in His three days and nights that He was in the tomb) is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.]'"

Look at the gifted men he gives to the Church in verse 11.

Ephesians 4:11

"And he gave some, apostles; (and they even faded off the scene after the apostolic age ended. We don't have apostles in the Church today, but they were part of it even when he was writing Ephesians.) and some, prophets; (they also faded away because we now have the printed Word. Once the Word came into print there was no longer a need for gifted men to speak forth the Word, but even so, Paul still lists them here in Ephesians. Now here's where we are today.) and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;"

Those are the three basic gifts that the Church needs today. Men who are evangelists and can preach salvation, and probably going from place to place, we all understand the role of an evangelist. And then there's the man who is the gifted person to be a pastor. We know that not all of God's men can be pastors, and not all can be teachers. But these are the three basic gifts that are explained here in the Book of Ephesians, and now look also at verse 12. Why did God give the Church these three categories of people?

Ephesians 4:12

"For the perfecting (the maturing of believers, getting away from the milk bottle, and learning to eat the meat of the Word) of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of (not for the evangelist, pastors, and teachers, but for whom?) the body of Christ:"

Now I've maintained for years that the primary purpose of the Church (and I don't care what denomination that is), is to so feed its members that those members can go out
and become soul winners among the world in which they live. That's the way they did it in the early Church. They didn't have great evangelistic campaigns, they didn't have great coliseums full of people, but oh listen, they turned the Roman Empire upside down. And how did they do it? By just simply every believer being taught from the Word that he could be a living testimony to the world around him, and this is the criteria for us today. Oh, to be so taught in the Word that you can be a testimony wherever you go, whoever you are. I don't care how little education that you have, you can be a gifted person in God's program for today.

Now back to our study. So we did have these gifts in Corinthians that Paul doesn't mention again in the Book of Ephesians. And just come to your own logical conclusion. For the same reason that you don't go back and use 3d & 4th grade arithmetic books when you're up in higher mathematics. It's the same way here, because these things are now left in the background and we move on to the greater gifts that Paul brings out in Ephesians and other prison epistles. Now verse 12, and here in this verse, even though the Body of Christ as a doctrine is brought to its fullest forte in the prison epistles, it doesn't mean that Paul knew nothing of it because here he introduces us to it. Here we have the description of the Body of Christ. Now I know there are a lot of people who do not understand this concept that every true believer is a member of the Body of Christ. As I've said before, Jesus never once mentioned the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ is a term that you cannot find in the Four Gospels. You can't find Peter using this term either, because that term was only given by revelation to the Apostle Paul in this Age of Grace. Now here it comes.

**I Corinthians 12:12**

*For as the body (this human body from which he's going to draw a comparison or allegory) is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ."* (*"so also is Christ" is referring to the Church or Body of Christ*)

Here we are with a human body of ten fingers and toes, our ears, and eyes, and all the functions of this physical body, but where is the control of these fingers and toes? Up in our brain. So also is the Body of Christ. We are now members of the Head Who is in heaven, and that's why that's where our citizenship is. That's where the Head is, that's where the nerve center is. So Paul says by inspiration that we believers are members of that one Body of Christ. How did we get there?

**I Corinthians 12:13**

"For by one Spirit (the Holy Spirit again, as it's a capital `S.') are we all (notice that says all. Not just the most spiritual, not just the ones that have had an emotional
experience, but every true believer regardless of where he is or how great experience he's had, we are all members of the Body of Christ because the Holy Spirit has) baptized into one body, (Now you see there's not a word about tongues here, and yet I maintain this is the only time that Paul teaches a baptism by the Holy Spirit. When we are saved the Holy Spirit immediately places us in the Body of Christ, it's a baptism, and there is no water involved. But rather the Holy Spirit did it, and that of course is our guarantee that we are Christ's and He is ours. Now reading on:) whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

Remember that a believing Jew is a member of the Body of Christ, and they will be taken out at the Rapture of the Church just like the Gentiles will. And that's what so unique about it. Everyone who has become a believer of the Gospel (Ref. I Corinthians 15:1-4) has been made to drink into that one Holy Spirit. And then Paul goes on to say:

I Corinthians 12:14

"For the body is not one member, but many."

We are part of the many into the one whole, and that's the whole picture of the Body of Christ. That's why you can go from here to Timbuktu and if you get into a fellowship of believers you're never a stranger. Anywhere Iris and I have gone, when we go into a home of believers, we don't feel strange for a moment, because there's a oneness we have in Christ. Then Paul goes through and uses all the bodily members to show the example, and he's belaboring the fact that:

I Corinthians 12:15,16

"If the foot shall say, 'Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body;' is it therefore not of the body?" Of course not, just because the foot is not the hand that doesn't take it away from the body, it's exactly where it belongs. It's a place of function.

"And if the ear shall say, 'Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body;' is it therefore not of the body?"

Now I know the apostle is on the edge of being ridiculous, and I sometime teach the same way, because that's what gets people attention. If you can get ridiculous enough it will make them think, and that's what he is saying here. Every part of the body functions together for the purpose of using and energizing the body. Now reading on:

I Corinthians 12:17-22
"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, `I have no need of thee;' nor again the head to the feet, `I have no need of you.' (I like the next verse) Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:"

And you know the one I'm going to refer to? Your little toe. Oh, your little toe almost seems insignificant doesn't it? But if you ask someone who had one amputated they'll tell you they miss that little toe almost as much as a complete hand. Why? Because that which is the most feeble is sometimes the most important.
LES S O N T W O * P A R T I V

E T E R N A L E X C E L L E N C E O F L O V E

I C O R N I T H I A N S 1 2 : 1 - 1 4 : 3

As we continue in I Corinthians Chapter 12, Paul has been explaining that the Body of Christ, that invisible make-up of all believers from wherever they are on the planet, and of whatever background, every true child of God becomes a member then of that Body of Christ. And that is a revelation that was given only to the Apostle Paul, because you do not see the Body of Christ taught until Paul comes and shares the revelations that he got from the ascended Lord. And that is what we'll be emphasizing in Chapter 15; a chapter about the resurrection. You see the resurrection of Christ was at the core of all of Paul's preaching.

But here Paul has been addressing problems because the Church was still so carnal, they had not grown spiritually. Now it's interesting that of all the things he has dealt with in Corinthians from Chapter 1, where they had divisions of whom they were following, and going to court against each other, and the problem of immorality in the Church, he also had to deal with the tongues phenomenon, which it had also become a problem. He does not address it as some aspect of their spirituality, because it had become a problem. It had upset the function of the local Church, and they were causing disorder, and he has to address it. So all these things had been in answer to questions that they had written to Paul requesting some answers. Tongues were unique in the Corinthian Church, and this is what I can't get over in my own study, as we never see again in any of his other churches tongues even mentioned. We only find tongues at this carnal Church at Corinth, and that should tell us something.

But for now let's get back to where we left off, and here Paul is dealing with the Body of Christ which is composed of people who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit. Now that Holy Spirit baptism is not an emotional phenomenon, or a physical thing, because you or I never felt a thing, or didn't know anything had happened when the Holy Spirit baptized us into the Body. We know it happened only because the Book says so, and that's the only way we know that we were placed into the Body of Christ, and we have to leave it at that. We don't try to look for some emotional thing or feeling. I've told people so often that word feeling is not used in the Scriptures. We take these things by faith, and not by feeling. Now let's look at verse 23:

I Corinthians 12:23
"And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, (remember in the last lesson I used the little toe as an example. It's very seldom seen, and we probably think it's totally useless until you lose it, because if you lose your little toe it inhibits walking, and balance. It may be the place of less honor, but it is still important, so also are the less noticed, and less honored members of the Body of Christ.) upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness." In other words, that's just the way that God works. He takes the foolish things of this world and confounds the wise. He says in another place in I Corinthians that He took the things that are not, to confound the things that are, and it's basically on this same premise.

I Corinthians 1:27

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;" Now let's look at verse 24:

I Corinthians 12:24

"For our comely parts (the best part of our appearance) have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked."

Isn't that amazing? As I was studying this I couldn't help but think of parents who have had a retarded child, maybe even the Down Syndrome child. We've talked to several who have had this kind of child and even though they had several children, the Down Syndrome child was always the most responsive. That was the child that they poured their love to in such a very special way, and every parent that has one will tell you that same thing. They are the most lovable, and the most easy to love of all children. Well I think Paul is saying the same thing here, we take the weakest believer, the one that the world would think, "Well, the Church certainly can't use that person." But that's the very one that God wants us to enhance, and to bring them to the forefront. Now verse 25, all of these things are for one purpose.

I Corinthians 12:25,26

"That there should be no schism (or division) in the body; (That is the Body of Christ) but that the members should have the same care one for another." In other words, every believer in God's eyes deserves the same amount of love and compassion as the next one. Verse 26:

"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it;...
And again he's going to use the analogy of the human body and what is it? You hit your thumb with a hammer, and the whole body is shot with pain. It's the same way with the Body of Christ, if a believer is hurt, then the whole Body hurts with it. Now verse 27.

**I Corinthians 12:27**

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

As an individual, we don't just come into the Body of Christ as a number, but every one of us is an individual in God's sight, whom He knows. And He knows our every need, and He knows our every heartache and joy. So many times Christians pray, and we think, "Oh it's just another sound to God." No it's not! It's just as if you are the only one in the throne room with Him, and that's the kind of God we serve. Now verse 28, and again here's the list that he has in Corinthians compared with the one we saw in the Book of Ephesians.

**I Corinthians 12:28-31**

"And God hath set some in the church, (that is the local Church) first apostles, (we know they went off the scene) secondarily prophets, (we know that has left, because we now have the printed Word) thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, (or administrations) diversities (the ability to speak more then one language, and that's what the word tongues in the plural always implies; it was known languages, and they were able to communicate the Gospel to those of a different language.) of tongues."

"Are all apostles? (of course not, the Church would get lopsided.) Are all prophets? (No) are all teachers? (No) are all workers of miracles? (Of course not) Have all the gifts of healing? (No) do all speak with tongues? (absolutely not) do all interpret? (No) But covet (or desire) earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."

And that's why I taught Chapter 13 first, because all of this, even to be an apostle, even to be a gifted man, at especially in the Church at Corinth, if they didn't exhibit the love of God in what they were doing, then they were better off staying at home. Just don't even do it, if you can't do it in that attitude of love. Now since we've covered Chapter 13, let's go right on over to Chapter 14.

**I Corinthians 14:1**
"Follow after charity, (love) and desire spiritual gifts, (don't request them specifically; ask the Lord to use you) but rather that ye may prophesy."

Now remember the word `prophesy' is not being able to tell the future as we think of Daniel or Isaiah, but to simply speak the Word of God. Share the Word, that's what it is to prophesy, and that's what every believer should desire. "Lord give me that ability to just share your Word with people, whether it's believers who need to be taught, or the unbeliever who is still out there in darkness, Lord give us that opportunity to speak forth the Word." Now verse 2 which reads:

**I Corinthians 14:2**

"For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue (Now watch the language here because the word "unknown" is italicized. So it's been added by the translators, because even way back at the time of the King James translators, they really didn't know how to handle this word tongue in the singular, because, like I explained in an earlier lesson, this denoted a sound that had no phonetics to it. It could not be reduced to writings, it was just a guttural sound, and had no pronunciation.) speaketh not unto men, but unto God: (because only God could understand it) for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit (Now it's a small s so it's not the Holy Spirit, but in his mind and his own thinking processes) he speaketh mysteries."

Those things are beyond the ordinary human comprehension. Now before we go any further, come back to what we just read: that the person speaking in this so-called "unknown"tongue, or in this unwritten tongue, was speaking to God. Let's go back to the three times in Scripture when the Holy Spirit delegated this miracle of speaking in tongues to men, and there are only three times. The first is in Acts Chapter 2, and here is our first example of the gift of speaking in tongues, but it's plural so it's languages, and of course it's back when God was still dealing with the Nation of Israel. And here it was on the day of Pentecost. I've always maintained that Pentecost was a Jewish feast day, and Gentiles had nothing to do with Pentecost.

**Acts 2:1-4a**

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues,..."

Other languages, because there were Jews there from all over the then-known world all speaking different languages. Now the miracle of Pentecost was that God gave
these apostles for sure this gift to speak all the languages of the people that were out there in that massive crowd in front of them. And then you come down to verse 6:

**Acts 2:6**

"Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language."

This is the first time in Scripture that we have a manifestation of the Holy Spirit given to men - this gift of speaking known languages, but which was not intrinsic to their own education. In other words, where did Peter and most of the disciples come from? Galilee. They were uneducated fishermen, and all of a sudden here they are speaking the various languages that were evident there on the day of Pentecost. It was miraculous, and it was the work of the Holy Spirit, but as Paul said in I Corinthians, who were these men talking to? Other men, and what was the purpose? To bring them salvation. That's the whole purpose of this Book from cover to cover. The purpose is that mankind might hear the plan of salvation, and it was the same way at Pentecost. Peter and these other disciples were promoting the Gospel of the Kingdom, that Jesus was the Christ, but they were doing it in languages that everyone could understand, so it had a divine purpose.

Now the next time this happens is in Acts Chapter 10. And Peter is now up in the house of a Gentile, the Roman, Cornelius. You all know the account, how that Peter, contrary to his own desires, is forced by God to go up to the house of Cornelius. And you remember the last thing Peter said as he goes through the door: "**Cornelius, you know it is an unlawful thing for me, a Jew, to come into the house of another nation. But God has shown me.**" In other words, there was a distinct divine purpose in Peter coming up to the house of Cornelius. Now, as he is preaching and is probably expounding about Jesus of Nazareth, and how He had come to be Israel's Messiah and Redeemer and King, I imagine as Peter was laying all of this out, in the back of his mind he was thinking, "**Why am I giving this to Gentiles?**" He had no idea that there was something moving in God's purposes that He, God, was now going to go out to the Gentile world. He certainly was not aware that in the previous chapter (I don't know how many months previous to this, but not many), that God had saved Paul of Tarsus and had told him He was going to go to the Gentiles. I don't think Peter knew that yet. But here he is in this Gentile house of Cornelius and is proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus and the Twelve preached: that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, Repentance, and water baptism, which was in a different administration, and is completely different from the Gospel of Grace that was given to the Apostle Paul, and the Gospel that we believe for salvation. (Ref. I Corinthians 15:1-4) Now let's look at verses 44 and 45:
Acts 10:44,45a

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Now you want to remember, this was in the confines of a gentlemen's house. This wasn't in a great coliseum. This was in the house of Cornelius, a Roman officer. But as Peter was preaching, the Holy Spirit fell on that house full of Gentiles. Verse 45.

"And they of the circumcision (these Jews) which believed (they were like Peter. They had recognized Jesus was the Christ) were astonished,..."

Now we pointed all this out when we taught the Book of Acts, that these Jews, six men who came with Peter for a total of seven, were just utterly astonished that these Gentiles were hearing a salvation message and believing it. Now in order for God to prove to these seven Jews that He was doing something totally different than had ever been done before, what does He do? He proves it with these Gentiles speaking other languages. Not just the Latin, in which they had grown and probably practiced. Maybe not even just Greek that they probably used in their military conversations, but now:

Acts 10:45b,46

"....as many as came with Peter (these six Jews) because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. (how did they know?) For they heard them (the Gentiles)speak with tongues (known languages) and magnify God..."

Were they talking to God? NO! They were talking to fellow men and they were magnifying God in the presence of these seven Jews, as well as the members of the house of Cornelius, and there is no manifestation of an unknown language here or a guttural sound. It was speaking languages. That's the second time that the Holy Spirit was manifested by giving the gift of speaking more language than they were normally living with. Now the third and last time that this happens in the whole of Acts is in Chapter 19. The first time it happened to Jews in Chapter 2 - strictly Jews. The second time it happens - to a whole house of Gentiles. Now the third time it happens it's another unique little group. Small in number, but they were representative of another larger group and we'll look at it here in Acts 19 and verse 1.

Acts 19:1-6

"And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: (where a church had been founded) and finding certain disciples, (we know they were Jews because he says they are) He said unto them, `Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?′ And they said unto him,
'We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.' And he said unto them, 'Unto what then were ye baptized?' And they said, 'Unto John's baptism.' (John the Baptist) Then said Paul, 'John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, (that was to the Nation of Israel and John baptized in Jordan with the message of repentance) saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.' When they (these Twelve men) heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, (these twelve Jews) the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues (languages other than their own) and prophesied."

Now those are the only three times in the whole Book of Acts, in fact in all of Scripture, where the Holy Spirit manifested Himself by giving out the gift of speaking a multitude of languages. They were known languages. They were languages that could be understood if somebody happened to be in that same room with that same background. There was no need for interpreters. No emotional upheaval. This was just simply the working of the Holy Spirit to the third category of people that God would be dealing with in the Book of Acts. Remember what they were. Chapter 2 - with the Nation of Israel. Chapter 10 - with the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. Chapter 19 - with those who were in the transition. They were Jews who had been saved under John's baptism, but they had known nothing of Paul's Gospel and now the Body of Christ and these further revelations. And those three categories are the only ones that came under the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit to speak in languages other than the ones they normally practiced.

Now let's go back to Chapter 14 and remember that whenever the Holy Spirit was manifested in the Book of Acts, it was for a divine purpose and that was to prove something. It was to show Israel that God was now moving in the work of the Holy Spirit. It was to prove to the Jews in the house of the Gentiles that God was now saving Gentiles. It was manifested in these twelve Jews to show that there was now a change in the overall program. It was not longer based on John's baptism and Christ's earthly ministry. It was now based on that which followed the work of the Cross, His death, burial and resurrection.

*I Corinthians 14:3*

"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." Paul said in verse 1 that the one that they should really long for is the gift of speaking the Word of God. That's the number one criteria and in verse 3 he re-emphasizes it again.

*I Corinthians 14:3*
"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification. (to lift him up, support him) and exhortation (to encourage him. Every one of us need to be encouraged throughout our daily walk) and comfort."

Now we know that we're in this old world which is under the curse, and a lot of people are hurting. How can we best comfort them? By proclaiming to them the Word of God.
LESSON THREE * PART I

RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

I CORINTHIANS 14:4 - 15:19

Now let's open our Bibles to I Corinthians Chapter 14. And again, before I start teaching I would like to get into the background, because I'm finding out there are very few people who know the circumstances that surround a particular Book or Letter, so we should always know the circumstances, and that makes all the difference in understanding. Remember that Paul is writing to these weak, carnal, fleshly, believers that have just come out of abject immorality in Corinth. He's writing to correct them because they had so many problems. So the whole theme of I Corinthians is to correct problems, and this whole letter has to be studied in that light.

Also remember the reason, I think, the Holy Spirit prompted Paul to write the love chapter, which is Chapter 13, and to sandwich it in between 12 and 14, which are filled with problems. Chapter 13 was to soften his approach in order to prepare the ground. Because Paul realizes, as well as anybody, that the only way that you can bring people around to the truth is in the spirit of love, you don't slap them in the face with anger, or ridicule, and put them down as some kind of dummy, but in the spirit of love bring them around to the truth. So as we pick up our study in Chapter 14 don't lose sight of what he wrote in the love chapter. Remember love is still the greatest of all the things so far as God's dealing with mankind is concerned. Verse 1:

I Corinthians 14:1

"Follow after charity, (love) and desire spiritual gifts, (gifts is italicized, and personally I like to use the word `things' instead of gifts) but rather that ye may prophesy."

Remember the greatest spiritual thing at this time was to prophesy or to speak forth the Word of God, because at the time that Paul is writing to these early Churches there is still no New Testament written. The Four Gospels haven't been written and won't be written until many years after Paul's letters. His own letters have not gone out as the Word of God as yet. He certainly hasn't written to the Corinthian Church before, so you have to realize that these early primitive, apostolic Churches were experiencing their growth and reaching out into the pagan world without benefit of the written Word. Where would we be today if we didn't have the Book. I mean this is all that we have to go on, but they didn't have that so what did they have to depend on? Gifted men. And they had to be gifted to the point that they they could now teach people the Pauline doctrines, and not that which was still coming out of the Old Testament, or
there would have been pandemonium. So Paul realizes through the Holy Spirit that this was the most important thing a local Church could have, and that was men who could proclaim the truth of God's Word without benefit of having it in print. Now does that help? Paul said in Chapter 13 and verse 10 that the time would come when that gift would fade away. And it is no longer a valid gift, because now we have the printed page. Now of course to be a pastor or teacher it's still a gift, and it's delineated as such. But once the printed Scriptures came into being, Paul's letters come into the right format. Then we got the Four Gospels, and Book of Acts, and so forth, and our New Testament is complete, and now there is no need for that kind of gifted men.

I had an interesting phone call the other day, and ordinarily I wouldn't share something like this with you, but I imagine that if the gentlemen hears it it may get his attention. And that phone call reminded me of gifted men who didn't have the Word of God, and he was such a kind, benevolent type or I would have hung up on him sooner than I did. At first I didn't get what he was driving at, but finally he came out and in so many words said, "Les, you're just like everybody else, you are teaching men's words, and I wish I could sit down with you and teach you what God has said." Well, the bells began to ring, and the red flag started to fly, and I said, "Wait a minute, what are you trying to tell me? That you are the only one who has received the revelation of the true Word of God?" He replied, "Yeah." I said, "I'm sorry, but this conversation is ended," and I hung up on him.

I had a note in the mail from him yesterday, and he couldn't figure out why I hung up. I didn't fly off the handle I just said, "You're way out in left field, why do you think I have the camera constantly putting the Scriptures on the screen!" I said that's the Word of God, not what someone like you has supposedly received, and this is what I'm constantly trying to drive into peoples' thinking - that it doesn't matter what I say or think, but rather what does the Book say? This is why I prefer the Word of God on the screen rather than myself, and we have to understand that, yes, in the early Church it did take men with that kind of a gift, but today we have the Word of God. And the Word is in such a format that anyone can understand it, and it can feed a hungry heart. So when Paul speaks of this gift of prophecy it was under a whole different set of circumstances than what we've got today.

I Corinthians 14:2a

"For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue..."

And we defined all that in our last lesson, and when you see the word "tongue" in these two chapters, 12 and 14, in the singular, and with the added word unknown italicized by the translators, it's talking about a bunch of sounds that cannot be reduced to print. They are not phonetic, there is no way anyone can write
them down, it's just a bunch of noise. And Paul is going to make this so evident later through this chapter. But when you see the word "tongues" plural, then he's talking about languages. And even in the city of Corinth there were probably five or six languages being used constantly. There was Latin, Greek, Spanish, Hebrew, and Aramaic, so those languages made up the city of Corinth, and it all enters into the picture of these Chapters 12 and 14. Now here he's speaking of the tongues movement, it's an unknown language that no one can print, so this is why the translators call it an unknown tongue. Continuing on in verse 2:

**I Corinthians 14:2**

"For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: (God is the only One who can make anything out of it if it were possible.) for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit (small "s" so that's man's spirit) he speaketh mysteries,"

And I mentioned this in the last letters about some of the pagan religions and their mysteries. And so Paul is saying here what they're doing is using their own make-up or personality, and they are speaking things that to anybody else is nothing but a mystery. Now verse 3:

**I Corinthians 14:3,4**

"But (the flip side) he that prophesieth (or speaketh forth the Word as a gifted individual) speaketh unto men to edification, (lift them up) and exhortation, and comfort." Now verse 4, and I'm not going to make a lot of comment, because the Book speaks for itself.

"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth (and speaks forth the Word of God) edifieth the church."

When someone claims to have had a tongues experience, according to the Book, who are they edifying? Themselves. It's an ego trip, and that's what it amounts to. Now reading on in verse 5.

**I Corinthians 14:5**

"I would that ye all spake with tongues, (That's plural, which means languages. Paul is saying it would be nice if you could just go up into northern Greece, or other countries and speak the dialects that those people do. Today I'd say the same thing, and those of you who have kids out on the mission field know what I'm talking about. My, wouldn't it have been great if your son or daughter could have gone to the mission
field, and picked up the language the next day? But instead they had to go to language school to learn the language before they went to the field. So Paul knew what he was talking about. He said, "It would be great if you all spoke several languages.") but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying."

Let's take that little congregation in Corinth, and let's say that most of them were able to understand Greek. Now there were probably some even in Corinth that couldn't understand Greek, all they could understand maybe was Hebrew or Aramaic. Paul says, "Now it would be great if you could come into this congregation and be able to teach and preach in a language that they could all understand." My, what a great gift that would be, because that's what people needed, they had to hear the Word, because they couldn't go home and read it.

_I Corinthians 14:6_

"Now. brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, (these different languages) what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?"

Those are the things that count. People even today need doctrine as very few professing believers today have a good solid understanding of doctrine. I've learned over the years that most Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, or just about any other denomination don't really know what they believe. And if you doubt that, just ask people what they really believe, and most of them can't tell you much. I say that sincerely, and this is what Paul is saying. Even the Corinthians were so weak in the fundamentals, but oh, they were emotional, they had a lot of enthusiasm, but that in itself is not enough. So Paul says:

_I Corinthians 14:6b,7_

"...except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine." What's the profit? Now verse 7.

"And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?"

What is the Apostle Paul is saying here? Unless somebody picks up an instrument that knows how to play, knows how to bring out the right tone at the right time within the score, what do you have? A bunch of noise. In fact I've been to a few concerts in my life, and especially if you go to a concert of a symphony orchestra, and before they lift the curtain what are those musicians doing back there? They're tuning their
instruments at the same time and it's just a bunch of noise, there's no melody, or harmony, or anything worth listening to, you can't hardly wait till the curtain goes up and you can hear some real music. Well here, Paul is saying the same thing. Look at it again:

**I Corinthians 14:7**

*And even things without life giving sound, (Musical instruments, when they're giving sound) whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, (The right note at the right place) how shall it be known what is piped or harped?"

How can you make a melody? How would you know what song they're playing? Well, you don't. Now verse 8, and Paul is using simple illustrations, and I really don't have to comment on them.

**I Corinthians 14:8**

*"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

Now you want to remember that the Romans used the trumpet for battle commands much like you have seen in the movies and like our American Calvary did with their riders and so forth. They had a particular trumpet sound for each command, and every soldier knew what it was. And it was the same way in the Roman army, when the trumpet was sounded they would know whether to retreat, attack, or whatever. And Paul is using that analogy here. Now what if the trumpeter didn't know his command? What if he was just blaring out a bunch of sounds, what would the poor troops do? They would just be looking at each other wondering what they were supposed to do. It would cause confusion. Now verse 9:

**I Corinthians 14:9**

*"So likewise ye, (see how plain this is?) except ye utter by the tongue (this organ in your mouth) words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air."

Common sense? Yeah. In fact I've even given this illustration before: I remember years ago I was reading a book by one of the deep, deep theologians of that time, and I would just have to go back and read it over and over. I mean, it was just so hard to dig any of the truth out of it, because it was written in such complicated language. So one morning while Iris was fixing breakfast, and I was sitting at the table, and I had just read a paragraph to her, I said, "Honey, do you know anything that the guy is saying?"
And she said, "No, what's he saying?" Well, I just spit it back out into plain, ordinary laymen's language, and then she said, "Oh, is that what he said?"

And this is what has happened across the whole spectrum. We've got men that are such theologians that they talk above the heads of the average individuals. And you know what I'm talking about. You pray with me that every time I teach that I can take these same truths and keep it so simple that a six-year-old can understand it. And this is what Paul is saying, what good does it do to come in with high-sounding intellectual statements if people don't know what you're talking about. The Word of God is simple, I explained just yesterday the Gospel (Ref. I Corinthians 15:1-4) to a man I'm sure had never heard it before. I put it in such simple language that I know he went down my driveway with no doubt what it would take to gain heaven. I don't know whether he will or not, but I tell you what, he's going to stand responsible someday, because I laid it out as plain and simple as it can be laid out. And this gentleman just stood there and said, "I've never heard that before." Of course not, most people haven't. Now verse 10:

I Corinthians 14:10

*There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.*

Do you know what Paul is talking about here? You go out even into the animal kingdom and what are sciences learning more and more everyday? That even the animals communicate one with another. Those of you who are quail hunters know if you flush out a covey, the first thing you hear is they start whistling. Iris and I were out fishing a while back, and our dog scared up a wild turkey, and she flew right over where we were fishing, and after a while we could hear her start to cluck, and her little ones who were back in the woods started to answer. What were they doing? Communicating. And those sounds weren't jibberish, those little turkeys knew exactly what momma was saying, and momma knew exactly what they were saying. And we've found that throughout the whole spectrum of the wild animal kingdom that they communicate. The same is true with sea creatures, they all communicate. Men, whatever the background, whether we're European, or Asiatic, we all communicate and this is what Paul is saying, and that's why God gave us that ability to communicate.

I Corinthians 14:11

"*Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, (If I don't know what someone is saying) I shall be unto him that speaketh (like) a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.*)"
What's he talking about? He can't understand, and if that be the case what purpose is there in making a sound if it isn't going to communicate. So how much understanding will come between a barbarian, an uncivilized person, and a cultured man like Paul? Nothing!

_I Corinthians 14:12_

"Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying (or promoting, or the lifting up) of the church." Not just one person or two, but the whole congregation.

_I Corinthians 14:13_

"Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue (here's that singular again) pray that he may interpret." I know that to most of our tongues people, (and I'm not condemning them, because the last verse of this chapter says that he doesn't forbid it), unless this sound can be reduced to something understandable, you're beating the air. That's what this chapter is pointing out. Verse 13 again:

_I Corinthians 14:13_

"Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret."

And for what purpose? To communicate. Otherwise it's just so much lost energy, and time. And we're going to see in our next lesson that it had gotten to the place even in Corinth where it was just causing commotion in the local congregation, and no one was being edified by it. So the whole purpose of this chapter is in the spirit of love to bring these people to a solid understanding.
Now let's just jump right into where we left off in the last lesson and that would be verse 14, and here Paul is admonishing the Corinthians to take stock of what they were doing, and realize that all that glitters isn't gold. And that's all I'm saying, because I'm not condemning the folk who claim to have spoken in tongues, or I won't look down my nose at them, but all that I do ask everyone in the spirit of Chapter 13, the love chapter, is to analyze this whole thing in the light of what God wants, not what men want. You know we're living in that era of instant gratification regardless of what area of our life we may be looking at. But listen, we have to line everything up with the Word of God or we're on thin ice. And that's all I try to do. I don't try to browbeat people into everything the way I see it. You can disagree with me on things and that's fine, but on the other hand I think it's my responsibility, since the Lord has given me this avenue of teaching, that we show what the Word says. Now verse 14, and to me this is so plain, where Paul, now speaking in the first person says:

*I Corinthians 14:14*

"For if I pray in an unknown tongue, (there's that singular again, that sound that can't be reduced to a phonetic sound or to writing) my spirit (small "s" - his own personality) prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful."

How much plainer can you get? Even for the individual, what good does it do, Paul says, to speak in a language that you don't know what you're talking about, and I know their answer, "Well, God does." But the Book doesn't say that He does. We know that God being Omnipotent, He certainly can if He wants to, but there is nothing in here that indicates that this is what God expects people to do.

*I Corinthians 14:15*

"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, (Paul is saying, `I will pray from my innermost being. His own spirit - small `s') and I will pray with the understanding (Now how many of you would talk to God in prayer, whether it be in thanksgiving or supplication, or whatever thing you might have on your mind - what good would it do to talk to God in some language that you don't know what you're saying? Even if God is able to discern it, what if you can't? You don't know what you're asking for, and this is what Paul is pointing out. Whatever you do while communicating with God, do it in understanding.) also: I will sing with the spirit, (I
know that sometimes we're too laid back. I know from Scripture that there were times when people sang and danced before the Lord, and there's nothing wrong with singing, or an exuberance in our Christian Spirit, absolutely nothing, but again, it has to be tempered with common sense.) and I will sing with the understanding also."

**I Corinthians 14:16**

"Else when thou shalt bless (That is the food) with the spirit, (small "s" - your being) how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say ‘A-men’ at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

In other words, you're asking the blessing over a table around where many people are sitting, and if you supposedly pray in an unknown tongue how will the people around the table know when you're finished? Verse 17:

**I Corinthians 14:17,18**

"For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. (and then in verse 18 Paul makes a graphic statement) I thank my God, I speak with tongues (Plural - Languages) more than ye all:"

Now for years I've said this is what Paul is driving at, and now some of the great scholars are beginning to write it in their books. What's Paul saying? That when he went into some of these various areas and different tribes and dialects, and different languages, could he communicate? Yes. He had that special gift, Christianity was just getting off the ground, and he had this gift to speak whatever language was necessary. So here in verse 18 Paul is speaking of languages with which he could communicate the Gospel. Now verse 19:

**I Corinthians 14:19,20**

"Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice (And that's not a very nice word) be ye children, but in understanding (grow up and) be men." Do you see how plain all of this is? Now verse 21:

**I Corinthians 14:21**

"In the law it is written, `With men of other tongues (Languages) and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.'"
Here Paul is quoting from the Book of Deuteronomy, and we're going to go back and look at it in Chapter 28: And naturally this is directed to the Children of Israel.

**Deuteronomy 28:49**

"The LORD shall bring a nation (*of foreign people*) against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand:"

Now here the tongue refers to their language. Whether it was the Babylonians that He was referring to or some other nation, there would come a time in Israel's history that a foreign nation would over-run them, invade them, and the Jews would have to listen to them talking in their language as they were being occupied. Do you see that? Now it wasn't an unknown tongue, but it was a language that the Jews wouldn't be able to understand. It was a warning, "Listen, you're going to have people in your midst that you're not going to like to have around, you're not going to be able to understand what they say, they're going to be foreigners." And so this is exactly what Paul is referring to now in I Corinthians when he says in verse 21 again:

**I Corinthians 14:21,22**

"*In the law it is written, `With men of other tongues (or other languages) and other lips will I speak unto this people; (by occupying them) and yet for all that will they not hear me,' saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues (This ability to speak in languages) are for a sign,...*"

To the Jew, and we find that in I Corinthians Chapter 1, and verse 22, and again, all we're going by is what the Book says.

**I Corinthians 1:22**

"*For the Jews require a sign,...*"

Now stop and think, how long has Israel been demanding signs? Well, it goes all the way back to when Moses was first called out of the desert, and even Moses the Jew did not believe that he was supposed to do what God wanted him to do. And so how did God prove it to him? He said, "Throw your shepherd rod on the ground." And you all know the account, and what happened? It became a serpent. Then the Lord said, "Pick it up," and it became a shepherd's rod again. What was God trying to show Moses? That He is in it. He is going to take him back to Pharaoh. And then Moses said, "Yeah, but when I get to Pharaoh he's not going to believe that I'm supposed to lead the children of Israel out." And what does God tell Moses and Aaron? The same
thing: "You throw your rod down and it will become a serpent," and all these signs were not so much for Pharaoh's benefit, but rather for Moses' and Aaron's. To prove to those two men that God was going to do the supernatural. He's going to bring Israel out of Egypt. So all the way up through Israel's history you have the supernatural, and you come into Christ's earthly ministry, and I've taught it and I've taught it until I'm blue in the face. Why did Jesus perform miracle, after miracle? To prove to the Jew that He was Who He said He was. It was signs. And remember when we taught the Book of John there were seven miraculous signs, and every one of them had a whole train-load of truths for the Nation of Israel. They didn't mean that much to the Gentiles, but they meant everything to the Jew. And now Paul comes in even as he writes to a Gentile congregation and says:

*I Corinthians 1:22,23*

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; (Now look at the flip side in verse 23) But we preach Christ crucified,..."

Do you see the difference? Now let's come back to Chapter 14, and again he comes back with that same concept that tongues, the ability to speak all the languages such as he had, were for a sign.

*I Corinthians 14:22a*

"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but (the flip side) prophesying (being able to speak forth the Word before they had the New Testament)...."

So signs and all this is not going to accomplish all that much, but what will? Preaching the Word! This is what people need to hear today, people have to hear the Gospel (Ref. I Corinthians 15:1-4). They have to hear the plan of salvation, they don't have to see some kind of miracle, and I'm not condemning these people that can prove some miraculous manifestation. But they've got to prove it before I believe it. If they can prove it, then I'll say, "Yes, I know we have a God Who can perform miracles." I know God can heal miraculously, and I do not deny that. Now finishing verse 22:

*I Corinthians 14:22b*

"...prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe."

Now what's Paul talking about? To bring them growth in their Christian experience. To bring them so they wouldn't be blown about with every wind of doctrine. Well let's just sort of skim through these next few verses, and then I've got to deal with another
hot potato in this day and time: "What about the women's activity in the local Church?" Well, we'll come to that in a few minutes, but before we get there let's skim verses 23 through 33.

I Corinthians 14:23

"If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, (languages) and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?"

Do you know what the Greek root word for mad in the King James is? Maniac. That's where the word maniac came from. He says, "They'll come in off the street, look at you, and will say you're a bunch of maniacs, you're mad." Now verse 24.

I Corinthians 14:24-26

"But if all prophesy, (or speak forth the Word) and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: (Because he's hearing the Word of God, see the difference?) And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. (if he can hear the Word) How is then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. (now if you had all that at once you'd have confusion) Let all things be done unto edifying." If you're wondering what he's driving at, verse 40 puts the cap on it.

I Corinthians 14:40

"Let all things be done decently and in order." That's what the Book says, it's not what I'm saying. The Book says, "Let all things be done decently and in order." Now let's come all the way up to verse 34.

I Corinthians 14:34a

"Let your women keep silence in the churches:..."

Now here is where the women have come down on the Apostle Paul. They say he was anti-feminist, he didn't want to give women credit for anything. Here again, I'm going to have to explain in detail why the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write the things concerning women in these coming verses that he did, and there is a reason for it. I've already alluded to it in previous lessons. Corinth was a wicked, wicked city, gross immorality like what I hear even the internet is coming close to now. From that
temple up there on that bluff, every night a thousand of those priestesses from the temple came down into the streets of Corinth practicing prostitution. So this was something that had to be dealt with every day of this little Church's existence. And so what is Paul going to lay upon the congregation of believers? Don't do anything that even resembles being like one of those prostitutes. Now do you see that? And so when he comes in he says, "Now ladies, watch your languages and your speaking, and your behavior, because if you do anything that resembles those brazen, talkative prostitutes then the world is going to get the wrong impression. Are you following me? So anything that would make someone say, "Well, they're no different than those prostitutes." Paul says, "Then you have to be careful."

Now like I've said, the prostitutes were completely in a class of their own, and do you know even today in the Middle East if a lady is veiled, she can go anywhere, any street in the Middle East without fear. No one dare touch a veiled women. Now we can't understand that, but that's their culture. But let her take her veil off, and she becomes the object of almost anything they want to do to her. And so Paul is using all this as an example that these prostitutes were so brazen in their dress, in their behavior, in their talkativeness, and in light of that he says, "Don't you women be anything like one of those women of the streets. Consequently be subdued, be subservient to your husband, and don't be like they are." Now reading on in verse 34.

**I Corinthians 14:34**

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law."

I had to point out to someone here the other day, you have to remember that under the law, even under God's law to Israel, the woman had almost no rights. It was unfortunate, but God had His reason for doing it, and I've said it over and over on this program that the greatest liberty for the feminine portion of the human race was Christianity. Christianity brought women out of that place of being downtrodden, not permitted to be educated, not permitted to read. But Christianity brought the women up on almost an equal level with men. But what have present day women done with that? They've abused it, and anytime you abuse something then it begins to backfire. So Paul is still writing here in light of the culture and the day and time in which he writes, so he says, "Women be subdued, don't be talkative, don't be the one to take authority in the local Church."

**I Corinthians 14:35**

"And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home:..."
Why? In order again to keep that mood of subservience. Not slavery, but recognizing that the husband was the head of the house, and that goes all the way back of course to the Garden of Eden. That's where it all began, and it was prompted with Eve eating of the fruit first. Let's go back and look at it in Genesis Chapter 3, and we'll begin in verse 16. Now this is after Adam and Eve have eaten, this is after sin has entered, and God has already dealt with old Satan.

**Genesis 3:16a**

"Unto the woman he said, `I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;...'

When I teach on the millennium, I scare women half to death, as I say you want to remember that in the thousand-year-reign with Christ the curse will be lifted, and childbearing will no longer be part of the curse as it was here. You see the travail, and the pain and suffering that women go through today is a direct result of the curse. And that's not the way God intended it to be. And so when the curse is lifted, child-bearing is going to be an exhilarating experience beyond even what it is today. But because of the curse look what God did.

**Genesis 3:16b**

"...in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

That's the way God commanded it to be, that's the way He ordained it, and so all the way up through the Old Testament, yes, the woman was, to our way of thinking, almost overly subdued. But this is still part of Paul's thinking as he deals with the Corinthian Church. The women were to recognize the fact that the man was still the head of the family, he was still the head of the woman, and that she was to be subdued under those services in the Church. Back to I Corinthians.

**I Corinthians 14:36,37**

"What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are (What?) the commandments of the Lord."

Now I'm sure Paul at this point in time had not recognized, or understood that his letters would become part of Scripture, and that you and I would be studying it 2000 years later. But he did know that what he wrote to this little congregation in Corinth
was inspired by the Holy Spirit as he wrote it. So this wasn't just man's idea, this is the Word of God, and this is what he's saying. Now reading on in verse 38.

I Corinthians 14:38-40

"But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. (That's a matter of choice. If you want to know what the Word say, you read it, you study it, you'll learn.) Wherefore, brethren, covet (or desire) to prophesy, (to speak forth the Word) and forbid not to speak with tongues. (nor will I because of this verse) Let all things be done decently and in order."

Because then you see then it brings honor and glory to the God Whom we claim to worship. But how many people are taking these things out of context and they're forgetting that the primary purpose of all that we do is to bring honor and glory to God.
LESSON THREE * PART III

RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

I CORINTHIANS 14:4 - 15:19

As we come into I Corinthians Chapter 15, Paul sort of shifts gears on us, as he does that every once in a while. He's just come out of the various problems in the local Church and how he had to correct them. But here he shifts gears, and here comes the chapter that is the greatest chapter in all of Scripture dealing with the resurrection. Now we know the Old Testament was very vague, they knew about resurrection, they knew there was a life hereafter. Job spoke of it.

Job 19:25,26

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:" Yes, Job knew about resurrection, but for the most part you just don't find much about in the Old Testament. Jesus spoke of the resurrection in John Chapter 5, and He said:

John 5:28

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."

Everyone that has ever lived is going to be resurrected, but in all those various portions of Scripture there is not that detailed description of what resurrection is going to entail like Paul describes here in I Corinthians Chapter 15. And so always remember it as the resurrection chapter; this whole chapter deals with this doctrine of resurrection from the dead. Now starting with verse 1:

I Corinthians 15:1

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, (And these Corinthians came out of their paganism because of Paul's Gospel.) which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;” Now what was Paul's Gospel? Well in a nutshell we find it in these next 3 verses, and then we're going to go back and look at some of the other ramifications of it. But in these next 3 verses he says:

I Corinthians 15:2a
"By which also ye are saved,..."

Now I know that a lot of people don't like that word, but nevertheless it's a Scriptural term that refers to that act of God that takes us out of darkness and eternal doom in our future, and instead He covers us with His righteousness. He puts our feet upon the Rock, He gives us the Lamp unto our pathway. He puts our name in the Lamb's Book of Life. He places us in the Body of Christ, and we are constantly now a people with a heavenly citizenship, and we are headed for a glorious eternity. I was sharing with our Tulsa class the other night how few believers, I think, have any concept of the glory that the Body of Christ is going to enjoy in eternity. Now remember, in eternity it's going to be a whole new ball game. I think the whole universe is going to be brought back to it's origin. I think everything, heaven, earth, and everything that has ever been created is going to be brought back to a nothingness and recreated more glorious than ever before. Because everything in the universe has been tainted by the old devil himself, and so God is going to create it all new.

Now when we go into that eternal state as members of the Body of Christ (not part of Israel which will enjoy their earthly domain on the new earth), we're a heavenly people. What does that mean? I think we're going to rule and reign in this whole new universe that God is going to bring about. I think we're going to have places of responsibility, and you also want to remember, in that eternal state, there is no time, and distance means nothing. We'll be able to go from one end of the universe to the other in a split second of time, so don't let that bother you. We just can't imagine the glory that is waiting the believer, and the world down here thinks we're a bunch of kooks. They think that we try to shun some of the pleasures of this world for a few years, but they have no concept of the ratio. What is seventy years to unlimited billions of years, well you can't even put it into mathematical ratio. So Paul is speaking of that (the Gospel) which prepares us for that kind of eternity when he says:

I Corinthians 15:2

"By which also ye are saved, (but you've got to know what you believe, so the next part of the verse says) if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."

Then here comes the Gospel that saves you, and we've stressed it over and over on this program and in our classes. This is the Gospel! Now I don't have any fault with John 3:16, and I'm not going to tell people not to use that verse. Don't get me wrong. But listen, John 3:16 doesn't have this part of the Gospel. You have to use this in conjunction with John 3:16 to make sense, and what is it?

I Corinthians 15:3
"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;"

It wasn't an accident that Christ died for our sins, because God had already planned it back in the eons of pre-eternal existence. He would create mankind, and man would sin, and He would bring about a plan of redemption. It was all in the foreknowledge and council of God according to Peter in Acts Chapter 2, and now verse 4:

**I Corinthians 15:4**

"And that he was buried, (now we can't leave that out, because we have to understand that Christ was truly dead. The purpose of the three days was to prove that there was no life left in Him.) and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:" Now that is what Paul calls my Gospel, and the Gospel you must believe for your salvation. Now let's just look at few scriptures all in connection of what he calls the Gospel in I Corinthians Chapter 15. The first one we will look at is in Galatians Chapter 1.

**Galatians 1:4**

"Who (speaking of Christ in verse 3) gave himself for our sins (How that He died voluntarily of His own volition.) that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:"

At verse 6, this is exactly where so much of Christendom is finding itself again tonight. I don't claim to be the only one with the truth far from it, but I'll tell you what, we're in a pretty small percentage anymore. And here Paul is dealing with a problem even within the Galatian Churches. Corinth was not the only Church with problems.

**Galatians 1:6,7**

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed (removed away from) from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another, (it's not something completely different, then we'd recognize it, and know it was a false gospel) but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert (twist it out of shape) the gospel of Christ."

So Paul says, "You are being moved from the pure Gospel that I proclaimed to you, and you're listening to people who are twisting it. Oh, they are basically using the same things I preach, but they're adding to it or taking from it, they're twisting it, and then it becomes another Gospel." Now look what Paul puts on those kind of people.
**Galatians 1:8,9**

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached (speaking of himself and I'm sure he's including Barnabas, and I'm sure later on, Silas) unto you, let him be accursed." That's strong language even for Scripture, but that's what it says. And to be accursed, hey, that's beyond human comprehension. That's to be separated from God forever. Verse 9:

"As we said before, so say I now again, 'If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, (from this apostle) let him be accursed.'" Now let's take another look at what he talking about in Galatians Chapter 2, and look at verse 2.

**Galatians 2:2a**

"And I went up (to Jerusalem to the Jewish believers ahead of him) by revelation, and communicated unto them (so there was no `ands, ifs, or buts' about it) that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles,..."

Now that Gospel was unique. Peter and the eleven hadn't preached Paul's Gospel, and they certainly hadn't preached it to Gentiles. I tell people, "You show me in Scripture where Peter ever had a ministry among Gentiles, except Cornelius, and that was a one-time thing, for a one-time purpose." But Paul here makes it so plain that the Gospel that he preached among the Gentiles was the Gospel that we have adhered to even today. Now coming back to I Corinthians Chapter 15: Paul calls it this Gospel, my Gospel, the Gospel of the Grace of God, the Gospel of God, the Gospel of Grace, the Gospel of Christ, and those are all titles of this three pronged fact. That Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, and that He arose again from the dead the third day. There is no other plan of salvation, there is no other Gospel, there is no other way.

I love to read the letters to the editor in Biblical Archaeology, because you get it from the whole spectrum of intellectual society, at least. And I almost get a kick out of some of them where they are complaining that some of these people preach only an exclusivist Gospel. And I say `Amen, that's me.' I'm teaching and proclaiming an exclusivist Gospel because that's what this Book declares. There is no other Name given among men whereby we must be saved than the name of Jesus, and that's where it's at or there is no salvation. Now people are going to an eternal Devil's hell by the millions. I know that, because they will not come into this exclusivist, narrow way that God has prescribed. And then they say, "Well, God isn't fair." Oh no? That's the problem, He's too fair! He has made it available, although the way may be narrow, but it's available to anybody if they will just simply believe it. Now you see if God would put on a whole train-load of requirements, stipulations, rules and
requirements then I would agree. Yeah, God isn't fair, He's made the way narrow, and He's made it so hard, no wonder few people find it. But that's not it, the way is narrow, but the way in is so easy that anybody can find it.

Go into John's Gospel Chapter 10 where He uses the analogy of the sheepfold and the door. Anyone who enters the sheepfold has to come in by the door, and if he tries to come in any other way then he's a thief and a robber, and he's not going to get away with it. I'm always making the analogy, where is the door to the sheep fold? Up on some sheer cliff where you have to have ropes and climbing gear to make it? No. Is it across some roaring river where you have to have some kind of boat or raft to make it? Is it across the ocean where you have to be a millionaire and buy a ticket? No. The plan of salvation, the door, is on ground level, and it's in front of every human being, and all they have to do is believe it and enter in. Oh, it's narrow, but the way in is so simple, and here's where the world is missing it, they cannot believe that you can have eternal salvation, the hope of all that glory by doing nothing, but that's what God demands. And that's what we learned in the Book of Romans. Abraham did nothing, and yet he was justified, and it's the same way with us. Paul goes on to say in verse 5, and remember this is the resurrection chapter, and he's speaking of the fact that He rose from the dead, and as proof of it:

I Corinthians 15:5-8

"And that he was seen of Cephas, (Peter) then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren (The Jewish believers in the area of Jerusalem) at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, (as near as we can determine he wrote this letter about 59 A.D. That would make it about 31 years later, so most were still alive that had seen the resurrected Christ) but some are fallen asleep. (or had died) After that, (event) he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. (Now verse 8, and here we have a choice bit of Scripture) And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of (before the) due time."

When you speak of the due time, what are you talking about? Now I'm a rancher, and we watch the due dates of our mama cows, and hopefully we can be aware of when they are about to deliver their baby calves, the due date. That's one of the miracles of God's creation as everything is on His time table, and if you know the day of conception then you can almost tell within 48 hours the day of delivery. Paul is using that as an illustration, that he experienced His resurrection power and seeing the Lord in resurrection, as Paul, a Jew who was born before the due date. Paul was speaking of the delivery of the offspring. For you to understand that you must understand there is coming a day when the Nation of Israel will be born all the same day. Israel could have experienced this new birth at the time of Christ's first coming, as He presented Himself as the King of Israel. He performed all those signs to prove to the nation Who
He was, so Israel could have experienced that national spiritual birth, but they rejected it.

So now God's time table puts the spiritual birth of that Nation clear to the end of the Tribulation. We teach that it will be at the second coming of Christ. But here we find Paul, already saved 2000 years earlier, and so what does he say? "I'm like a preemie, I have been delivered prematurely." Now it's a stretch of the imagination when we go 2000 years, and I know that, but nevertheless the whole concept that he's teaching here is, that as he was saved in a moment on that road to Damascus miraculously, so also the nation of Israel will yet be saved in a moment also. Oh, not the 100% but the remnant of Israel, so this is what Paul is referring to, "that he was one born before the due date of the salvation of the Nation of Israel." And they, too, will some day experience that resurrection power, they will still see their resurrected Lord, and Messiah, and King coming in the clouds of glory, and at that time will believe in a moment. Now going on in verse 9:

*I Corinthians 15:9*

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet (not prepared) to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church (the assembly) of God."

Now who is Paul referring to? Those Jewish believers back there in the the Book of Acts. Let me show you what he's talking about, because it never got off the man's mind, and of course I can see why. Let's turn to Acts Chapter 26, and never forget that Saul of Tarsus who became Paul, was a religious zealot, a fanatic if there ever was one, when he was still Saul, and it was all for Judaism. Now here comes Jesus of Nazareth, and He's making inroads into Judaism, and so for a religious fanatic what does that mean? He's got to be stamped out, because He's ruining our culture, and He's ruining our religion, so Saul of Tarsus takes the lead in persecuting these Jewish believers who had recognized Christ as their Messiah. And he did everything that he could to stamp them out, but that's nothing new, because we know the Communists tried to do it also for seventy years. They wanted to stamp out the opposition. We know that Hitler also did it, and every other totalitarian leader will do the same thing. Just get rid of the opposition by putting them to death, and hopefully what you have left are the pure followers. Now look what Paul says in Acts Chapter 26.

*Acts 26:9,10*

"I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. (That is during His earthly ministry of course.) Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints (Jewish believers who had followed Christ in
His earthly ministry) *did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.*

Some believe the Jews didn't have the authority to put people to death in the Roman Empire, but I think they did, because it says so. They had that authority in the confines of their religion to put their own people to death, and they must have put a bunch of them out of the way. And Saul of Tarsus was at the head of it. No wonder he could never get it off his mind. Saul would always vote to put them to death when these believing Jews were brought before the religious leaders.

**Acts 26:11**

"And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; *(That's been the ploy of persecutors down through the ages. They force people to make a choice by blaspheming Jesus Christ, by reneging on Him, they had to recant their faith in Him, or be put to death. And when Saul found out that the One he was persecuting was the One Who really was his Old Testament Jehovah, it just beat him down, and he never could quite get over it. Well there are many more accounts of how he sorrowed for the day that he had so persecuted these Jewish believers.) and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." *(Now back to I Corinthians Chapter 15. So he says:)*

**I Corinthians 15:9,10a**

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church (assembly) of God. *(Now verse 10, and what's the first word?) But (I love that little three letter word, and there's nothing I like more than when people call, and tell me about the flip side. And that word "but" invariably means "The flip side." Here he had been the chief persecutor against those who had followed Jesus,) "But by the grace of God I am what I am:"

There is another one that I think of when I see that word "But" in the Book of Ephesians Chapter 2, and this is another great "But." Another great flip side, and oh, I at least want you to know where to find them. And let's begin in verse 1. My, how this just speaks to hearts, and here Paul is writing to Gentile believers in the city of Ephesus. Believers who were quite a bit above and beyond the carnal believer in Corinth. He never finds real fault with the Ephesian believers. So he says:

**Ephesians 2:1-4**

"And you hath he quickened, (Or made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the
prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (They were followers after the god of this world, Satan.) Among whom also we all had our conversation (or manner of living. Everyone of us, even the best of us) in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. BUT God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us."

LESSON THREE * PART IV

RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

I CORINTHIANS 14:4 - 15:19

We enjoy when people write and say that for the first time in their life they're enjoying and understanding their Bible. We trust in that light the Lord is using us. Now, in I Corinthians 15:10 we start the verse with "But." Paul is going to use the flip side, and we showed you in Ephesians 2:1-3 where he listed all the things that were part of the past of every one of us, and then in verse 4 he begins: "But God" - the flip side. We're no longer what we were, but rather we are what we are, not because we have done so much, but because God has done it all. Now it's the same way here. The Apostle Paul does not claim that he received his apostleship because he was so educated, which of course he had been. He doesn't claim to be the apostle of the Gentiles because of some merit on his part:

I Corinthians 15:10a

"But by the grace of God I am what I am:...."

I remember the question came up in one our classes, "What's the difference between Grace and mercy?" Well Dr. Bellamy got a computer program with all the Greek, and ramifications of the Hebrew, so I asked him to look up the difference between the two on his program. Then the other night he shared with us, and I haven't gotten it out of my craw ever since. "Grace is that attribute of God, that unmerited favor which makes the pouring out of His mercy possible." Have you got that? If it weren't for the Grace of God, He could have never poured out His mercy on mankind, because we don't deserve it. But since Grace is that unmerited favor, then God was able to pour out His mercy. Now don't you love that? I'm going to be teaching that every chance I get, that it's the Grace of God that makes it possible for Him to show mercy rather than wrath and judgment. So here this persecutor, this raging religious zealot who hated the Name of Jesus with a passion, in verse 10 says:

I Corinthians 15:10a

"But by the grace of God I am what I am:...."

This Grace of God permitted God to save him, and pour out His mercy. You remember several programs ago I showed you, I think in Romans 12, how Israel had the branches broken off, and the Gentiles are now placed on the root, and the fatness of Abraham. And then I made the analogy that how many times coming up through
human history, if God would have acted without Grace and mercy, if He had acted fair, He would have wiped the human race out, and wiped Israel out. A good example for Israel was when they demanded that Aaron make them a golden calf while Moses was up on Mt. Sinai getting the Ten Commandments. When Moses came down they were dancing in all their lewdness, and practicing all their immorality. What could and should God have done with them? In one thought they would have been gone. But he told Moses in the Book of Exodus Chapter 33:

**Exodus 33:19**

"And he said, `I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.'"

Why? Because God is Sovereign. He can do whatever He wants to do. So when Israel or mankind reaches the point where He should have just zapped them, and had them off the scene, He retreated into His Sovereignty, and by Grace He poured out mercy. He did the same thing with the Apostle Paul. He could have zapped him on that road to Damascus, and been done with him, but instead God retreats into Sovereignty, and says, "I'll have compassion on that man because I am God. I don't have to ask anybody." So He spared that man and saved him by His Grace. Now completing verse 10:

**I Corinthians 15:10a**

"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain;..." Saul succumbed immediately to the Grace of God, and what was his response?

**Acts 9:5a**

"And he said, `Who art thou, Lord?..." A humble seeking sinner saved by Grace, and now he's ready to do what God wants him to do, and in the mean time what had God told Ananias there in Damascus? Hey this fellow Saul is coming into town.

**Acts 9:13-16**

"Then Ananias answered, `Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name,' But the Lord said unto him, (Ananias) `Go thy way for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and
the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.'"

You know how the Apostle Paul suffered. If you don't think Paul had to suffer then read II Corinthians Chapter 11. Oh, how that man suffered, but he never slowed down in his fervor for getting the Gospel out to pagan Gentiles. Now reading on in verse 10:

_I Corinthians 15:10b,11_

"...but I laboured more abundantly than they all: (That is all the other apostles before him.) yet not I, (Paul says, 'It wasn't in the flesh that I did all this) but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed."

And that brought them out of their paganism, and again I have to just constantly bring people back to the fact that you don't become a Christian by going through a certain set of rituals or rules, or procedures. How many denominations, my own included, expect people to go through a set of procedures, and then all of a sudden the Church declares them a Christian. You don't have anything to worry about now, you're on your way to glory. No, that's not the case, because the Scriptures say, _"We have to believe the Gospel"_ Ref. I Corinthians 15:1-4. And then these other things have their rightful place. Absolutely I'm in favor of the local Church, I'm in favor of Sunday School and all of these things, but you do not use those as a substitute for salvation. _It has to be by personal faith in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection._ Now verse 12, and here we get into the whole theme of the chapter, _"resurrection."_ Life after death.

_I Corinthians 15:12_

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"

In that question I have to think Paul must have run up against the Sadducees in Corinth. Because you remember in Christ's earthly ministry the Pharisees were religious fanatics. They thought they were the only ones (with their self-righteous robes around them) that were ever going to merit anything with God. But you also had the Sadducees. Now the Sadducees never did believe in resurrection from the dead as they always rejected that. So in verse 12 I have to think there were some Sadducees in Corinth, because Paul is saying, _"How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"_ Now verse 13: If that be true, if there is no such thing as resurrection from the dead, and I'm probably talking to many people in the audience
who are of that mindset, you may think that this is all there is. You think that when you die you're like a dog and you're done, but Paul says:

*I Corinthians 15:13,14*

"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

In other words, everyone who ascribes to some form of Christianity, and if they're faithful in their Church going, and faithful in their Christian activity, if there is no resurrection from the dead they of all people are the most foolish. They're wasting their time. Why in the world sit in the pew, and sing the hymns of the faith, and all these things if there's no resurrection from the dead? And so this is what Paul is using as an argument. **There is resurrection from the dead, because Christ arose from the dead.** One of the best paper back books I've read about the proof of the resurrection of Christ was written by Josh McDowell, and I hope I've gotten his name right. Anyway, he had started out as a complete infidel on a college campus, and after he graduated from college he had been having so much fun destroying the faith of college students that he decided that to take it one step further he'd go to Israel and he would dig up all the proof that the resurrection was just a fallacy. But the more he dug the more he proved himself wrong, and he came away from it a born again believer. And then the direction of his life completely changed, if I remember the biography correctly. He has literally spent years now going from college campus to college campus, proving to college kids that Christ literally and physically arose from the grave.

Well, this is what Paul is doing here to the Corinthians. **He's proving to them without a shadow of a doubt that Christ died but He arose from the dead, the very hope of every believer.** If He didn't, we might as well pack up, throw our Bibles away and forget it. But don't you do it because **He did rise from the dead and come out of the grave!** We recently got a letter from a lady in one of our television areas, one that we had met when we were traveling. As I read that letter I couldn't keep back the tears as she said, "*Les, next Easter Sunday when I stand with the congregation and sing, `He Lives, I know that He lives,' that will be the first time in my life that I really mean what I'm singing.*" And I'm sure she has been a good church member for years. This is where so many people are. They talk about the resurrection, they sing about it, they have a mental ascent to it, but they have never experienced resurrection power in their own life. And this is what Paul is trying to teach here at the very heart of our Gospel. It isn't that Christ just died some martyr's death. He wasn't just put to death by some angry mob, but in the annals of all eternity God had already set in motion that He would die and would shed His blood. He would pay the sin debt for the whole human race, not just for the believer. I don't believe in limited
atonement, I believe that He paid the sin debt for every human being that has ever lived. But it goes for nothing until the person believes it personally, and then they cash in on it.

*I Corinthians 15:15,16*

"Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:"

You can't separate them. **You can't separate the resurrection of Christ from the resurrection of the believer, because they're tied together.** Now for a moment let's turn to II Timothy, and on the way stop at Ephesians Chapter 1, and let's start with verse 10. Now here's one of the little letters that we alluded to previously, that Paul wrote from prison in Rome. In Ephesians he takes us to a higher level of Christian doctrine, or into higher water, however you want to put it. But here in this letter of Ephesians, where there is no more reference to the Old Testament or the Jew, but rather this is higher ground, it's the Body of Christ territory, and look what he says beginning in verse 10.

**Ephesians 1:10,11**

"That in the dispensation (administration) of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we (Gentile believers especially) have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:"

Now another verse just came to mind. I had not planned on doing this but let's come back to Acts Chapter 2, because we've got to tie all this together. Now remember what we just read in Ephesians that all those things are going to come together in Christ to fulfill the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel (or the agreement of ideas of His own will). Let's start with verse 22.

**Acts 2:22,23a**

"Ye men of Israel, (Peter screams at the crowd at Pentecost) hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, (this same Jesus) being delivered (at the crucifixion) by the determinate counsel (same word) and foreknowledge of God..."
When did that take place? Way back in eternity past. We don't know how far back it may have been. Maybe billions of years ago, but this counsel of the Godhead determined that someday earth would be created, they would put man on it, man would be given that free will (choice) to respond to God's love or reject it, and in order to bring it to a consummation Jesus went to that Cross. It was all in fulfillment of that predetermined counsel of the Godhead. Now go to II Timothy, Chapter 1, still tying all these together. Beginning with verse 9.

**II Timothy 1:9**

"Who (speaking of God in verse 8) hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, (See how that word keeps coming up? It wasn't according to our works, but according to His own purpose which was what we read about in Acts Chapter 2, and Ephesians Chapter 1) which was given us in Christ Jesus (when?) before the world began,"

That's mind boggling isn't it? But this was the eternal purpose of the Creator God that He created everything for His own purpose. And what was His own purpose? That everything would be for His glory, and yet we work into that purpose by being recipients of His Grace, and mercy, and we're made partakers of it by simple faith in the Gospel. (Ref. I Corinthians 15:1-4). It is past finding out, it is past human understanding, but the Bible teaches it, and we'd better believe it. Now come back to I Corinthians Chapter 15 verse 17. Remember there is a lot of repetition in this chapter and the purpose of repetition is to drive home something that God wants us to know. And so all through this chapter we're going to see repeated, repeated, and repeated, this whole concept of resurrection from the dead.

**I Corinthians 15:17,18**

"And if Christ be not raised, (if He stayed in the tomb then) your faith is vain; (it's all for nothing) ye are yet in your sins. (You're doomed) Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

These believers who had embraced Christianity, had embraced Paul's Gospel. If Christ hadn't been raised from the dead then they too are just as doomed as anyone else, because without resurrection power there is no eternal life. It all has to come back to that three-fold of the Gospel that the eternal Creator God Himself took on human flesh and died. He shed His blood, He was buried three days and nights in the grave as proof positive that He was really dead. There are a lot of liberals and modernistic-type preachers that say," If He was raised from the grave then He really wasn't dead. He was jut unconscious, and was brought back to life." There are those
that teach that. But our Lord was literally physically dead, and then God raised Him from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures. Now verse 19:

I Corinthians 15:19

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

Now do you know what he's saying? The same thing that the world throws at us today. "Why do you give up the good times? Why get out of the fast lane for the sake of being a Christian? Why don't you live it up? Why don't you enjoy the flesh? Because after you're dead, then it's all over." And Paul says, "If that's true then there's probably merit in what they're saying." But that's not the way it is, because we of all people are not miserable. We have that hope. Let's turn to Titus Chapter 2. I remember years ago there was a fellow who came out to our little country church up in Iowa, and for the entire week, when the temperature never got above 30 degrees below zero even in the daytime, he taught us from the Book of Titus Chapter 2 and verses 11 through 15. I found out that a while back he went to be with the Lord, and his name was Dr. Norland. He didn't speak fast but every word was just like a truck load coming out. And much of what I teach, he shared with us that cold, cold, winter week. Now verse 11:

Titus 2:11

"For the Grace of God (Here it is again, you can't run away from it. Everywhere you go in Paul's epistles, here comes the grace of God) that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,"

Now that means what it says, and I know a lot of people wonder that without the benefit of radio, television, and the printed page, how did the Gospel cover the then-known world, and that covered primarily the Roman Empire in Paul's lifetime. Now remember, Paul was out there only about 30 years. And yet he was able to write by inspiration that the then-known world had heard the Gospel. How in the world could that have happened? But you have to take everything in the big picture. Remember, he was under house arrest in Rome with Roman soldiers guarding him 24 hours a day. Well, the Roman army would rotate their soldiers in places of duty. So in those two or three years that he was under house arrest in Rome who knows how many Roman soldiers had duty guarding him. But as these soldiers rotated, they would go throughout the Roman Empire and even into Caesar's palace. Well, I know one thing, anybody who spent any time at all in Paul's house became a believer. I'm almost confident of that, so as a result of Paul ministering to his guards, who, in turn, went to serve throughout the Roman Empire, the then-known world had heard the plan of salvation, this Grace of God in verse 11. Now verse 12:
Titus 2:12,13

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, (of course we do, because do not believe in just satisfying the flesh because supposedly tomorrow we die.) we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; (And verse 13 is the best part of all as we are) Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;"

Now that's our blessed hope. I once asked someone what our blessed hope is, and he said, "When I die to go to heaven." Now that's not the blessed hope. That's a glorious hope, but the blessed hope is "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;" Why? Because He arose from the dead!