

# Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians

A New Rendition

Translated by  
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and  
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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY  
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# About the Brigham Young University New Testament Commentary Series

Welcome to the BYU New Testament Commentary, a project by a group of Latter-day Saint specialists offering to readers a careful, new look at the biblical records that witness the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and the first generation of his church. The commentary series seeks to make the New Testament more accessible to Latter-day Saint general readers and scholars by employing much of current biblical scholarship while reflecting important LDS insights. At the same time, this effort may also be helpful to interested readers of other faiths who want to learn how a group of Latter-day Saint scholars understands the Bible. A fundamental article of faith for Latter-day Saints (Mormons) affirms the Bible “to be the word of God” while adding, understandably, that it needs to be “translated correctly” in order for it to be accurately comprehensible to modern language speakers.

These objectives have helped shape the purposes and parameters of this commentary series. Serious LDS readers of the Bible search the scriptures, looking for depth and breadth in passages whose meanings and mandates may ultimately be plain but not shallow. Such readers and interpreters are served by treatments that unite faith and research, reason and revelation, in prayerfully confronting profound and difficult issues that arise in the texts and affect one’s path of progression. The New Testament has served as an influential guide to western civilization for centuries. As such, its records have long been studied by lay people and scholars alike, resulting in a rich reservoir of information that illuminates the New Testament era culturally, historically, and linguistically. Selectively, the BYUNTC builds upon this vast body of knowledge, resting on the Greek texts of the New Testament and connecting helpful elements of linguistic, literary, historical, and cultural research and traditional scholarship together with LDS scriptures and doctrinal perspectives. The combination of all these features

distinguishes the BYUNTC from other commentaries, which are readily available elsewhere and which readers may also want to consult for more encyclopedic or specialized discussions.

The tone of the BYUNTC aims to be informative rather than hortatory, and suggestive rather than definitive in its interpretation. The opinions expressed in this series are the views of its contributors and should not necessarily be attributed to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Brigham Young University, where many of those involved here are headquartered; or anyone else, though these works have benefitted from input and guidance from a number of colleagues, advisors, editors, and peer reviewers.

Each volume in this series contains a new working translation of the New Testament. Calling this a new “rendition” clarifies that it does not seek to replace the authorized KJV adopted by the LDS Church as its official English text. Rather, it aims to enhance readers’ understanding conceptually and spiritually by rendering the Greek texts into modern English with LDS sensitivities in mind. Comparing and explaining the New Rendition in light of the KJV then serves as one important purpose for each volume’s notes, comments, analyses, and summaries. This effort responds in modest ways to the desire President J. Reuben Clark Jr. expressed in his diary in 1956 that someday “qualified scholars [would provide] . . . a translation of the New Testament that will give us an accurate translation that shall be pregnant with the great principles of the Restored Gospel.”

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# Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians

## Salutation (1:1–3)

1 Paul, called as an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Brother Sosthenes, 2 to the Church of God that is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, who are called as Saints, together with all those who call upon the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in every place, their Lord as well as ours. 3 Grace to you and peace from our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Thanksgiving (1:4–9)

4 I am continually expressing gratitude to my God for you because of the grace of God which has been given to you in Christ Jesus, 5 that you have been enriched in everything through him, in all your speech and understanding, 6 in the same way that the testimony of Christ has been confirmed among you, 7 so that you do not fall short in any spiritual gift as you look forward to the revealing of our Lord, Jesus Christ, 8 who will also strengthen you until the end, so that you will be found blameless in the day of our Lord, Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, who has called you to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## Divisions and Factions in the Church (1:10–17)

10 I urge you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, to all speak with a united voice, and not allow any divisions to be among you, but to be completely unified in your thoughts and intentions. 11 For it has been brought to my attention by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you. 12 This is what I mean: some of you say, "I follow Paul," others say "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." 13 Christ is certainly not divided! Surely Paul was not crucified for you, nor were you baptized in Paul's name! 14 I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so that none of you can say that you were baptized in my name. 16 Now I

also baptized the household of Stephanas. Beyond that I do not recall if I baptized anyone else. 17 Because Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, without clever speaking, so that the cross of Christ would not be made ineffective.

### **The Foolish Wisdom of the Cross (1:18–25)**

18 For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are on their way to spiritual ruin, but to those of us who are on our way to salvation, it is the very power of God. 19 For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the intelligence of the intelligent I will reject.” 20 Where is the sage? Where is the scriptural scholar? Where is one skilled in the philosophy of this world? Has not God shown the wisdom of the world to be foolishness? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world, by its wisdom, did not understand God, God resolved to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching. 22 For Jews demand signs, and Greeks seek for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, an affront to the Jews, and foolishness to the Gentiles. 24 But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

### **God's Choice of the Foolish (1:26–31)**

26 Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you are clever by human standards, not many are people of importance, not many are of high status. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to put the wise to shame, and God chose the weak things of the world so that he might put the powerful things to shame. 28 God chose the insignificant things of the world, and the things that are despised, things that are regarded as nothing, to nullify the things that are regarded as being something, 29 so that no one can boast in God's presence. 30 It is because of him that you have a personal relationship with Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, “Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

### **Paul's Preaching of Christ to the Corinthians (2:1–5)**

1 Now when I myself came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come with eloquent speech or wisdom as I proclaimed to you the mystery of

God. 2 For I resolved to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3 And I appeared before you in weakness and fear and with considerable trepidation, 4 and my speaking and my preaching was not with the persuasiveness of wisdom, but with the convincing proof of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith would not be based on human wisdom but on the power of God.

### **The True Wisdom of God (2:6–8)**

6 However, we do speak wisdom among the spiritually mature, but not the wisdom of this world or of the leaders of this present age who are doomed to perish. 7 But we speak God's wisdom which is hidden in a mystery, which God foreordained for our glory before the world was, 8 which none of the leaders of this present age has understood, for if they had understood, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

### **Intellectual versus Spiritual Understanding (2:9–16)**

9 But as it is written: "That which neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into a person's heart—all these things God has prepared for those who love him." 10 But to us God has revealed them by the Spirit, for the Spirit fathoms all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For what human being understands human things except the human spirit that is in him? So too, no one understands the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which comes from God, so that we can understand the things which God has generously given to us; 13 which we also speak, not with words taught by human wisdom but those taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things by means of spiritual things. 14 But the natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But one who is spiritual discerns all things, but is himself discerned by no one. 16 For who knows the mind of the Lord so that he can advise him? But we have the mind of Christ.

### **Divisions in the Corinthian Church (3:1–9)**

1 And yet, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but as fleshly people, as infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, because you were not yet ready for it. But even now you are still not ready, 3 because you are still under the influence

of things of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and dissension among you, are you not under the influence of things of the flesh, and are you not behaving in a fleshly manner? 4 For whenever someone says, "I follow Paul," and another says, "I follow Apollos," are you not merely human? 5 Now what is Apollos? Or what is Paul? We are servants through whom you came to believe, even as the Lord assigned to each of us. 6 I did the planting, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth. 7 So then neither the one who does the planting nor the one who does the watering matters, but rather God who causes the growth. 8 But he who does the planting and he who does the watering are united, and each will receive his own reward according to his own work. 9 For we are God's coworkers, you are God's field, God's building.

### **Building the Church of God (3:10–15)**

10 According to the grace that God has given me, like a skilled master-builder I have laid a foundation. Another is building upon it. But let each one pay close attention to how he builds. 11 For no one can lay any other foundation than the one that has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 And if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, 13 each builder's work will be plainly seen, for the Day will make it clearly known, because it will be revealed by fire, and that very fire will test the kind of work each has done. 14 If anyone's work which he has built upon the foundation survives the test, he will receive his reward. 15 If anyone's work is consumed by the fire, he will suffer loss, but will himself be saved, but only as by fire.

### **God's Temple (3:16–17)**

16 Don't you understand that you are a temple of God and that God's Spirit dwells within you? 17 If anyone tries to destroy God's temple, God will destroy that person, for God's temple is holy, and you are that temple!

### **A Warning against Self-deception (3:18–20)**

18 Let no one deceive himself. If any one of you thinks he is wise in the ways of this world, let him become a fool, so that he might become truly wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness from God's point of view, for it is written, "He traps the wise in their own trickery," 20 and further, "The Lord knows that the reasoning of the wise is futile."

**All Things Belong to the Saints (3:21–23)**

21 Therefore, let no one boast in mankind, for everything belongs to you, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death, or the present or the future, everything belongs to you, 23 and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

**Faithfulness (4:1–5)**

1 So people should consider us as assistants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. 2 In this case, moreover, what one looks for in a steward is that he is trustworthy. 3 But it is to me of little or no importance that I am judged by you or by any human tribunal, indeed, I do not even judge myself. 4 For I am not conscious of any wrongdoing, but I have not been acquitted on account of that; it is the Lord who judges me. 5 So do not pass any judgment before the proper time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light things hidden in darkness and will disclose the motives of our hearts. Then each person will receive recognition from God.

**Admonition against Pride (4:6–8)**

6 Brothers and sisters, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that by our example you might learn “not to go beyond what is written,” so that you will stop your prideful favoring of one person over another. 7 For who considers you superior? What do you have that you have not received? And if you have received it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? 8 You already have enough! You are already rich! You have become kings without us! Indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we might rule with you.

**The World's Treatment of the Apostles (4:9–13)**

9 For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display as the most insignificant of mortals, like men condemned to die, because we have become a universal spectacle, both to angels and to mortals. 10 We are fools on account of Christ, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are honored, we are despised. 11 Even until this present time we are hungry and thirsty, poorly clothed, beaten and homeless. 12 We are worn out from working with our own hands. When we are insulted, we respond with kind words; when we are

persecuted, we endure it patiently; 13 when we are defamed, we seek to reconcile. We have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of all people, even until this present time.

**Admonition (4:14–17)**

14 I am not writing these things to make you feel ashamed, but to admonish you as my own dear children. 15 For though you may have countless guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, because I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. 16 Therefore I encourage you to imitate me. 17 For this reason I sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, and he will help you remember the ways I conduct my life in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church.

**Approaching Visit (4:18–21)**

18 Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not going to come to you. 19 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord is willing, and I will find out not what these arrogant people have been saying, but what they can actually do. 20 For the kingdom of God is not demonstrated by mere words, but by power. 21 What do you prefer? Should I come to you with a rod, or with love and in a spirit of gentleness?

**The Incestuous Relationship (5:1–8)**

1 Now it is common knowledge that there is an illicit sexual relationship occurring among you, and such immorality is not even tolerated among the Gentiles—a man is having sexual relations with his stepmother. 2 And you are proud of yourselves! Shouldn't you rather have been saddened and had the one who committed this act expelled from your midst? 3 For although I am physically absent, I am present in spirit, and as if I were present, I have already passed judgment 4 in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has perpetrated such a thing. When you have met together, and my spirit is present, then with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 hand over this man to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord. 6 Your pride is not a good thing. Don't you understand that a little yeast can leaven a whole batch of dough? 7 Purge out the old yeast so you can become a new batch of dough, as indeed you are unleavened. For

even Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for us. 8 And so let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of evil and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of pure intent and truth.

### **Dealing with General Immorality (5:9–13)**

9 I wrote to you in my (previous) letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. 10 By no means did I mean the immoral people of this world or the greedy or swindlers or idolaters, since you would then need to depart this world. 11 But I am now writing to you not to associate with anyone who is a member, who is sexually immoral or greedy or idolatrous or verbally abusive or a drunkard or a swindler. Don't even eat with such a person. 12 For what business of mine is it to judge people outside the church? Isn't it those within the church that you are supposed to judge? 13 Doesn't God judge those outside the church? Drive out the wicked person from among you.

### **Lawsuits among Believers (6:1–8)**

1 If any of you have a legal dispute with another, how do you have the effrontery to bring yourselves to take the matter to court before unbelievers rather than before the saints? 2 Don't you understand that the saints will judge the world? Now if the world is to be judged by you, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3 Don't you understand that we will judge angels, to say nothing of things pertaining to daily life? 4 So if you have legal cases dealing with ordinary matters, should you bring it before judges who have no standing in the church? 5 I am saying this to your shame. Isn't there a single person among you wise enough to settle a dispute between members? 6 Instead, one member sues another before an unbeliever! 7 Legal disputes against each other demonstrate that you have already lost from a moral perspective. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? 8 But instead you yourselves wrong and cheat—and you do it to fellow members at that.

### **The Wicked Will Not Inherit the Kingdom of God (6:9–11)**

9 Or don't you understand that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't deceive yourselves; neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor those who engage in homosexual acts, 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor the verbally

abusive, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And some of you used to be those sorts of sinners, but you have been washed and purified and made innocent in the name of the Lord Jesus and through the Spirit of our God.

### **Flee Sexual Immorality (6:12–20)**

12 It is said, “I can do anything,” but not all things are beneficial. “I can do anything,” but I will not be controlled by anything. 13 “Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food. But God will do away with them both.” The body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 Now God both raised the Lord and will raise us through his power. 15 Don’t you understand that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I take the members of Christ and make them the members of a whore? Certainly not! 16 Don’t you understand the one who is joined together with a prostitute becomes one body, for it is said, “They shall become one flesh.” 17 But one who is joined with the Lord becomes one spirit with him. 18 Flee from sexual immorality! Any other sin that a person can commit is external to his body. But one who practices sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 Or don’t you understand that your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit that is within you, which body you have received from God? Indeed, you are not your own, 20 for you were bought for a price. So glorify God with your own body.

### **The Mutual Obligations of Husband and Wife (7:1–9)**

1 Now regarding that which you wrote saying: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” 2 On the contrary, because of the numerous enticements for sexual misconduct, let each man have his own wife, and each woman have her own husband. 3 Let the husband grant conjugal rights to his wife, and likewise the wife conjugal rights to her husband. 4 A wife does not hold exclusive rights over her own body—her husband also has rights; neither does a husband hold exclusive rights over his own body—his wife also has rights. 5 Do not deprive each other of intimate relations, except perhaps by mutual agreement for a specified time, so that you can devote yourselves to prayer, and then come together again, so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 I’m telling you this as a concession, not as a command. 7 Now I wish everyone was like me, but each



person has his own gift from God, one having one kind, another a different kind. 8 To the widowers and widows, I say it is good for them to remain even as I am. 9 However, if their desires become too strong, then they should get married, for it is better to get married than to be consumed by those desires.

### **Counsel on Husband and Wife Relationships (7:10–16)**

10 To those who are married, I give this command—not I but the Lord—that a wife should not divorce her husband. 11 But if she does, she should remain single or become reconciled to her husband. Likewise, a husband should not divorce his wife. 12 To the rest I say—I, not the Lord—if any brother has a wife who is not a believer, and she is willing to live with him, he should not divorce her. 13 Also, if any woman has a husband who is not a believer, and he is willing to live with her, she should not divorce him. 14 For a man who is not a believer is sanctified by his believing wife, and a wife who is not a believer is sanctified by her believing husband, otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. 15 But if the unbelieving spouse wants a divorce, then let the divorce take place. The believing husband or wife is not under bondage in such circumstances—God has called us to live in peace. 16 Wife, how do you know whether you might save your husband, and husband, how do you know whether you might save your wife?

### **Fulfilling Your Calling in the Church (7:17–24)**

17 Nevertheless, let each person live as the Lord has assigned him and as God has called him. And I give this same instruction in all the churches. 18 If a man was circumcised when he was converted, he should not have that surgically altered to an uncircumcised state. Likewise, if a man was uncircumcised at his conversion, he should not get circumcised. 19 Circumcision is unimportant and uncircumcision is unimportant. What matters is keeping the commandments of God. 20 Let each person continue in the calling to which he or she was called. 21 If you were a slave when you were converted, don't let that worry you. But if you can indeed obtain your freedom, then do so. 22 For whoever was a slave when converted is the Lord's freedman, likewise whoever was free when converted is Christ's slave. 23 You were all bought with a price. Don't become slaves of human masters. 24 Brothers and sisters,

in whatever situation you found yourself when you were converted, there you should continue with God at your side.

### **To the Unmarried (7:25–28)**

25 Now concerning those who have not yet married, I do not have any commandment from the Lord, but I do give my opinion as one shown mercy by the Lord to be trustworthy. 26 Therefore, in view of the impending crisis, I think it is best for a person to remain as he is. 27 Are you engaged? Don't consider breaking the engagement. Has your engagement been broken? Don't go looking for a wife. 28 But if you should marry, you are not committing a sin. And if an engaged woman marries, she is not committing a sin. But those who do marry will experience difficulties in this life, and I would like to spare you from those.

### **To Those in the Ministry (7:29–35)**

29 But let me tell you, brethren, the time is short. So from now on, even those who have wives should be as though they had none. 30 Those who weep, should be as those who do not weep, those who rejoice should be as those who do not rejoice, those who buy should be as those who have no possessions, 31 and those who must deal with the world should not be completely occupied with it, for the way of life in this world is passing away. 32 But I would have you to be free from care. An unmarried man is concerned with the things of the Lord and how he might please him. 33 But a married man is concerned about the things of the world and how to please his wife, 34 and he is pulled in two directions. An unmarried woman, old or young, is concerned with the things of the Lord so that she might be holy both in body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned with the things of the world and how to please her husband. 35 Now I am telling you these things for your own benefit, not to hamper you, but to promote good order and undistracted service to the Lord.

### **Concerning Engaged Couples (7:36–38)**

36 If anyone thinks he is not treating his fiancée fairly, if she is past her prime, and he feels an obligation, let him do as he wants; he is not committing a sin. They should get married. 37 But one who stands firm in his heart, feeling no necessity, and complete freedom to choose, and

has decided of his own volition to preserve his fiancée's virginity, does well. 38 So one who marries his fiancée does well, but one who does not get married does better.

**On Widows (7:39–40)**

39 A woman is bound in marriage as long as her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry whoever she wants, but only in the Lord. 40 However, in my opinion, she will be happier if she remains a widow, and I think that I have the Spirit of God.

**Meat Offered to Idols (8:1–13)**

1 Now concerning meat sacrificed to idols, we know that “We all have knowledge.” Knowledge makes people conceited, but love builds them up. 2 If someone thinks he has come to understand something, he does not yet understand as well as he ought to. 3 But if someone loves God, that person is acknowledged by him. 4 Returning to the topic of eating food sacrificed to idols, we know that “there is no such thing as an idol in the entire universe,” and “there is no God but one.” 5 Indeed, even if there are those who are called gods, whether in heaven or on the earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords— 6 Nevertheless, for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things are and in him we live; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and through whom we are. 7 But not everyone has this knowledge. And some having previously become accustomed to idols, still consider the food they eat as food offered to idols, and because their sense of right and wrong is weak, it is defiled. 8 Now food will not bring us closer to God. For if we eat it we are not any better off, and if we do not eat it, we are no worse off. 9 But be careful that your own liberty does not somehow become an obstacle for the weak. 10 For if anyone sees you, one who has knowledge, having a meal in an idol's temple, since that person's sense of right and wrong is weak, will he not be encouraged to eat food offered to idols? 11 So by your knowledge, a weak person is brought down to destruction, a brother or sister for whom Christ died. 12 But if you sin against your brothers and sisters and wound their weakened sense of right and wrong, you sin against Christ. 13 For this very reason, if some food causes my brother or sister to sin, I would never eat any kind of meat again, so that I would not cause a brother or sister to sin.

### **The Corinthian Converts Are the Seal of Paul's Apostleship (9:1–2)**

1 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the evidence of my work in the Lord? 2 Even if I am not an apostle to others, to you at least I am, for you are the certification of my apostleship in the Lord.

### **Paul Defends His Apostleship (9:3–7)**

3 My defense to all those who question my apostleship is this: 4 Do we not have a right to be provided with food and drink? 5 Do we not have the right to travel together with our wives, even as the other apostles, and the Lord's brothers, and Cephas? 6 Or is it only I and Barnabas who do not have the right to not work? 7 Who serves in the army at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the grapes? Who shepherds a flock and does not drink some of the goat's milk?

### **The Privileges of Those Who Preach the Gospel (9:8–12a)**

8 I am not saying these things from a human perspective; does not the law also say the same thing? 9 For in the law of Moses it is written, "You shall not muzzle an ox that is threshing grain." Surely God is not concerned about oxen. 10 Isn't he certainly speaking for our benefit? It was indeed written for us, because the plowman should plow and the thresher should thresh in hope of sharing in the harvest. 11 If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it a big deal that we wish to reap material benefits from you? 12a If others share in this claim on you, don't we have a greater one?

### **Paul Has Chosen Not to Avail Himself of These Privileges (9:12b–14)**

12b But we have not made use of this right. Instead we endure all things so that we will not cause any hindrance to the gospel of Christ. 13 Don't you understand that those who perform holy services eat from the offerings of the temple? Don't those who serve regularly at the altar receive a portion of that which is sacrificed at the altar? 14 Likewise the Lord has also arranged for those who preach the gospel to receive their living from the gospel.

### **Paul Has Freely Taught the Gospel (9:15–18)**

15 But I have not used any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to obtain them, for I would rather die than that—no one will deprive me of my reason for pride. 16 For if I preach the gospel, I have no reason for pride, for I am under obligation, and woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward. But if unwillingly, I have been entrusted with a commission. 18 So what is my reward? To offer the gospel free of charge when I preach, without taking advantage of my authorized rights in the gospel.

### **Paul Has Done Everything He Could to Win Converts to Christ (9:19–23)**

19 For although I am free from all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I can gain more converts. 20 To the Jews, I became like a Jew, so that I could gain converts among the Jews. To those under the Law, I became like one under the Law—although I was myself not under the Law—so that I could gain converts among those under the Law. 21 To those without the Law, I became like one without the Law, although I was not without the law of God but was rather subject to the law of Christ, so that I could gain converts from those without the Law. 22 To the weak, I became weak, so that I could gain converts among the weak. I became all things to all people so that I might at least save some from death. 23 I do all these things on account of the gospel, so that I might share in its blessings.

### **Do All You Can to Win the Prize of Salvation (9:24–27)**

24 Don't you understand that in a race, everyone runs, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you will win the prize. 25 Everyone who competes in sports prepares himself through self-discipline, and they do this so that they can receive a perishable prize, but we will receive an imperishable one. 26 Accordingly I, for my part, do not run as one uncertain of his goal, nor do I box as one swinging at shadows. 27 Instead, I discipline my body and bring it under control, so that having preached to others, I myself do not somehow end up disqualified.

### **The Example of the Exodus (10:1–5)**

1 Now I don't want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea. 2 And all of them were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 All of them ate the same spiritual food 4 and all of them drank the same spiritual drink, for they were all drinking from that spiritual rock which was following them, and that rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, so they were struck down in the wilderness.

### **Paul's Application—a Warning against Idolatry (10:6–13)**

6 These things happened as an example for us, so that we would not crave evil things like they did. 7 So do not worship idols like some of them did, as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and got up to play." 8 We should not engage in illicit sex like some of them did, and twenty-three thousand of them were destroyed in a single day. 9 And we should not put Christ to the test like some of them did, and they were killed by snakes. 10 Do not murmur like some of them did, and they were killed by the Destroyer. 11 These things happened to serve as a warning to them, and they were written down as an admonition for us, on whom the end of the age has come. 12 And so anyone who thinks he is standing firm, let him beware that he does not fall. 13 No temptation has come upon you except that which is common to all mankind. But God can be trusted—he will not let you be tempted beyond that which you are able to overcome, but with that temptation he will provide a means of escape so that you will be able to endure.

### **The Prohibition against Attending Pagan Temple Feasts (10:14–22)**

14 For this very reason, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols. 15 I am speaking to you as sensible people. Carefully consider what I am saying. 16 The cup of blessing that we bless, isn't it a sharing in the blood of Christ? And the bread that we break, isn't it a sharing of the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one loaf of bread, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share in that one loaf of bread. 18 Consider the people of Israel. Aren't those who eat the sacrifices partners with the altars? 19 What am I implying? That food offered to idols is anything or that an idol itself is anything? 20 No. I am saying that what they offer

on the altar, “they offer to demons and not to God,” and I don’t want you to be partners with demons. 21 You cannot drink both the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot participate in the Lord’s supper and the supper of demons. 22 What! Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are certainly not stronger than him, are we?

**On Eating Meat from the Marketplace and as a Guest (10:23–33)**

23 “Everything is permissible,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible,” but not everything is useful. 24 Don’t seek to benefit yourself, but to benefit others. 25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without asking questions of conscience, 26 for the earth is the Lord’s and everything that is in it. 27 If any unbeliever invites you to dinner, and you want to go, eat whatever is set before you without questions of conscience. 28 But if someone says to you, “This is from a sacrifice,” then don’t eat it because of the one who informed you and because of conscience. 29 I don’t mean your own conscience, but because of the other person’s conscience. For why should my freedom of choice be condemned by another’s conscience? 30 If I eat with gratitude, why should I be condemned for food that I have given thanks for? 31 Therefore, whatever you eat or drink or do, do them all for the glory of God. 32 Do not give offence to either Jews or Gentiles or the Church of God, 33 just like I try to please everyone in everything, not seeking my own benefit, but the benefit of the many, so that they might be saved.

**Covering the Head in Worship (11:1–16)**

1 Follow my example as I myself follow Christ’s example. 2 Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and hold fast to the traditions just as I have passed them on to you. 3 But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of every woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God. 4 Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. 5 But any woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for it is the same thing as having her head shaved. 6 For if a woman does not cover her head, then she should get her hair cut off. Now if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should keep her head covered. 7 For a man should not cover his head, since he is the image and glory of

God, but the woman is the glory of the man. 8 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man, 9 neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for man. 10 For this reason a woman ought to have control over her head because of the angels. 11 Nevertheless, neither is woman independent of man nor man independent of woman in the Lord. 12 For just as woman came from man, so also man comes through woman. But all things come from God. 13 Judge for yourselves, is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? 14 Doesn't nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, 15 but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? Because long hair is given her for a covering. 16 Now if anyone is disposed to argue about this, we have no such custom, neither do any of the churches of God.

#### **Abuses at the Lord's Supper (11:17–22)**

17 Now in giving the following instruction, I do not commend you, because you hold your meetings in such a way that they are not beneficial, but rather the opposite. 18 For in the first place, when you meet together as a church, I hear that there are dissensions among you, and, in part, I believe it. 19 For there must indeed be factions among you so that it becomes evident which of you is genuine. 20 Consequently, although you meet together in the same place, it is not really to partake of the Lord's Supper, 21 because when it is time to eat, each goes ahead with his own meal, and some go hungry and others get drunk! 22 Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or are you showing contempt for the church of God and humiliating those who do not have anything? What should I say to you? I will certainly not commend you in this action!

#### **The Institution of the Lord's Supper (11:23–26)**

23 For I received from the Lord what I have passed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, 24 gave thanks and broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 Likewise, after the meal he took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



### **Partaking of the Lord's Supper Unworthily (11:27–34)**

27 Consequently, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily, will be guilty of sin against the body and blood of the Lord. 28 So each person should examine himself, and in this way partake of the bread and drink the cup. 29 For whoever eats and drinks without due regard for the body, eats and drinks condemnation against himself. 30 For this reason, many of you are weak and sick, and quite a few are even dead. 31 But if we would regularly examine ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, so that we might not be condemned with the rest of the world. 33 And so, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. 34 If someone is hungry, let him eat at home so that when you meet together it will not be to your condemnation. Now as for the other things, I will give detailed instructions when I come.

### **The Testimony of Jesus (12:1–3)**

1 Now concerning spiritual matters, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. 2 You know that when you were nonmembers that you were constantly enticed being led astray to idols that could not speak. 3 So I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is the Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

### **Spiritual Gifts (12:4–11)**

4 Now there are a variety of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are a variety of ways of serving, but the same Lord. 6 There are a variety of activities, but the same God, who produces all of them in everyone. 7 Each person is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one the gift of speaking wisely is given through the Spirit, to another the gift of speaking knowledgeably in accordance with the same Spirit. 9 To another faith by the same Spirit, to another the gifts of healing by the very same Spirit, 10 to another the performing of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the ability to translate languages. 11 But one and the same Spirit produces all these things, who, in accordance with his own will, allocates them privately to each individual.

**One Body with Many Parts (12:12–26)**

12 For just as the body is one and yet has many parts, and all the parts of the body, although they are many, are a single body, so too is Christ. 13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or free, and we all have been given to drink of the very same Spirit. 14 Now the body is not just a single part, but many. 15 If the foot were to say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not part of the body,” is it then, because of that, not part of the body? 16 And if the ear were to say, “I am not an eye, I am not part of the body,” is it then, because of that, not part of the body? 17 If the entire body were an eye, how would it hear? If the entire body were an ear, how would it smell? 18 But in fact God has assembled each of the parts of the body just as he wanted. 19 But if they were all a single part, where would the body be? 20 So now there are many parts, but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” Furthermore, the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you.” 22 On the contrary, even more so, those parts of the body that seem to be less important are essential, 23 and as for those parts of the body we think are insignificant, we bestow upon them even more respect, and those parts of our body that should not be displayed are treated with greater respect. 24 Now the parts of our body that are respectable do not need this. But God has assembled the body together into a harmonious whole, giving much greater honor to the inferior part, 25 so there will be no divisiveness in the body; instead the individual parts of the body will be equally concerned about each other. 26 If one part of the body suffers, then all parts suffer together. If one part of the body is honored, then all parts rejoice together.

**The Order of Officers and Gifts in the Church (12:27–31)**

27 Now you yourselves are the body of Christ, and each one of you are a part of it. 28 God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helpful deeds, leadership skills, the ability to speak other languages. 29 Certainly all are not apostles, nor are all prophets, nor are all teachers, nor are all able to perform miracles. 30 Certainly all do not have the gift of healing, nor are all able to speak other languages, nor are all able to interpret. 31 You should earnestly strive for the greatest spiritual gifts. And now I will show you a far better way.

### **The Necessity of Love (13:1–3)**

1 If I were to speak in the tongues of men or even of angels, but did not have love, I would have become like a noisy gong or a clashing cymbal. 2 And if I should have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I should have complete faith so that I could move mountains, but did not have love, I am nothing! 3 And if I should give away all my possessions, and if I should give over my body that I be burned, but did not have love, I would gain no benefit.

### **Characteristics and Actions of Love (13:4–8a)**

4 Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous, does not brag, is not conceited. 5 Does not behave rudely, is not self-serving, is not easily angered, does not hold a grudge. 6 It does not delight in wickedness, but delights in truth. 7 It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8a Love never fails.

### **The Permanence of Love (13:8b–13)**

8b If there are prophecies, they will pass away; if there is speaking in tongues, it will cease; if there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we now understand imperfectly, and we prophesy imperfectly. 10 But when perfection comes, that which is imperfect will pass away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I set aside childish things. 12 Because now we see indirectly in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I understand imperfectly, but then I will understand completely even as I have been completely understood. 13 And now these three things endure, faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of them is love.

### **The Importance of Divine Inspiration and Tongues (14:1–12)**

1 Seek after love and strive for spiritual gifts, and especially that you might speak with divine inspiration. 2 Because one who speaks in another language is not speaking to other people but to God, for no one understands him; he is speaking mysteries by the Spirit. 3 However, one who speaks by divine inspiration is speaking to people for their edification, encouragement, and consolation. 4 One who speaks in another language edifies himself, but one who speaks by divine inspiration edifies the entire church. 5 I wish all of you could speak in other

languages, but I would much rather have you speak by divine inspiration. One who speaks by divine inspiration is greater than one who speaks in other languages, unless he also interprets, so that the whole church can receive edification. 6 Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you speaking in other languages, how will I help you, unless I speak to you by revelation or knowledge or divine inspiration or doctrine? 7 In the same way, lifeless things that produce sound, such as a flute or harp, if they do not produce distinct notes, how will anyone recognize what is played on the flute or harp. 8 For indeed, if a trumpet produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare themselves for battle? 9 So it is also with you, unless you speak intelligibly with your tongue, how will what you have said be understood? For you will just be speaking into the air. 10 There are indeed all sorts of languages in the world, and none of them are devoid of meaning. 11 So if I do not understand the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. 12 So you also, since you are eager for spiritual gifts, should seek for an abundance of them for the edification of the church.

### **The Importance of the Gift of Prophecy (14:13–25)**

13 Therefore, anyone who speaks in another language should pray that he may also interpret. 14 For if I pray in another language, my spirit prays, but my mind is unproductive. 15 So what should I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing praises with my spirit, but I will also sing praises with my mind. 16 Otherwise, if you say a blessing with the spirit, how can an investigator say “Amen” on the blessing, since he does not know what you are saying? 17 Indeed you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other is not edified. 18 I thank God I speak in tongues more than all of you. 19 But in a meeting, I would rather speak five words with my mind, so that I might instruct others, than speak ten thousand words in another language. 20 Brothers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking, instead be as a child in regard to evil, but be mature in your thinking. 21 In the Law it is written, “By people with a foreign language and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord.” 22 And so speaking in other languages is not a sign for those who believe, but for those who do not believe. Speaking by divine inspiration, on the other hand, is not for unbelievers, but for

believers. 23 So if the whole church meets together and everyone is speaking in other languages, and investigators or unbelievers come in, won't they say you are out of your mind? 24 On the other hand, if all are speaking by divine inspiration, and some unbeliever or investigator comes in, he will be convinced by all and examined by all. 25 The hidden things of his heart will be disclosed, and he will fall upon his face and will worship God, exclaiming that "Truly God is among you!"

### **Orderly Worship (14:26–33a)**

26 So what should you do, brothers and sisters? When you meet together, each contributes a hymn, or a lesson, or a revelation, or a speaking in another language or an interpretation. All of these things should be edifying. 27 If someone speaks in another language, then two, or at most three, should speak, one at a time, and someone should interpret. 28 But if there is no interpreter, he should keep silent in the church meeting and speak to himself and to God. 29 Two or three who are divinely inspired should speak, and the others should carefully evaluate what they say. 30 If someone who is sitting down receives a revelation, then the first person should stop speaking. 31 For you can all speak by divine inspiration one after the other, so that all can learn and all can be encouraged. 32 The spirits of prophets are subject to prophets, 33a for God is a God of peace, not disorder.

### **Counsel to Disruptive Women (14:33b–35)**

33b As in all the churches of the saints, 34 women should keep silent in church meetings, for they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. 35 If they want to find out about something, they can ask their own husbands at home, because it is shameful for a woman to speak in a church meeting.

### **Conclusion (14:36–40)**

36 Did the word of God originate with you, or are you the only ones to whom it has come? 37 If anyone thinks he is divinely inspired or a spiritual person, he should recognize that what I write to you is a commandment of the Lord. 38 But if anyone disregards it, he should be disregarded. 39 And so, my brothers and sisters, be eager to speak with divine inspiration, and don't prevent anyone from speaking in

other languages. 40 Let all things be done correctly and in an orderly manner.

### **Christ's Resurrection (15:1–11)**

1 Now I am reminding you, brothers and sisters, of the gospel which I preached to you, which you also accepted, on which you also stand firm, 2 and by which you are also saved, if you hold fast to the message that I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For I passed on to you those things of greatest importance, which I also received, namely that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised up on the third day according to the scriptures, 5 that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, although some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all he appeared also to me, as to one untimely born. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God. 10 Nevertheless, by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I have worked harder than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God which is with me. 11 And so, whether I or they, this is the way we preach and this is the way you came to believe.

### **The Dire Consequences of Denying the Resurrection of the Dead (15:12–19)**

12 Now if it is being preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how is it that some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then neither has Christ been raised. 14 But if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith also is in vain, 15 and we are found to be false witnesses of God, because we have testified against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if indeed the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is useless, you are still in your sins. 18 So also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

### **God Raised up Christ as the Firstfruits (15:20–28)**

20 But in reality Christ has been raised from the dead, the first of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also came through a man. 22 For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive. 23 But each in his own turn; first Christ, then those who belong to Christ at his coming. 24 Then the end comes, when he hands over the kingdom to God, even the Father, after he has eliminated every other dominion and every other authority and power. 25 For Christ must rule until God has put all enemies under Christ's feet. 26 The last enemy, death, will be eliminated, 27 for "he has put all things in subjugation under his feet." And when it says "all things are put in subjugation," it is clear that it does not include God, who put all things in subjugation to Christ. 28 And when all things are put in subjugation to God, the Son himself will be subject to God, who put all things in subjugation to Christ, so that God might be all things in all things.

### **Paul's Arguments for the Resurrection of the Dead (15:29–34)**

29 Otherwise, what are those who are baptized on behalf of the dead doing? If in fact the dead are not raised, why indeed are they being baptized on their behalf? 30 Why are we also constantly in danger? 31 I face death every day, as surely as my pride in you, brethren, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord. 32 If, for merely human reasons, I fought wild beasts in Ephesus, what good is it to me? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." 33 Do not be deceived, "Bad company corrupts good morals." 34 Come to your senses as you should and stop sinning. Some, you see, have no knowledge of God. I am saying this to your shame!

### **The Logical Conceivability of the Resurrection and the Nature of the Resurrected Body (15:35–50)**

35 But someone will say, "How is it possible that the dead are raised? With what kind of a body do they come forth?" 36 How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And what you are sowing is not the body which will be produced, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or something else. 38 But God gives it a body just as he intended,

and each kind of seed has its own body. 39 Not all physical bodies are the same, rather, humans have one kind of physical body, animals another, birds another, and fish yet another. 40 There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. Now the glory of heavenly bodies is one kind, but the glory of earthly bodies is a different kind. 41 One is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars, for one star differs in glory from another star. 42 So too is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown as something perishable, it is raised as something imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in strength. 44 It is sown as a natural body, it is raised as a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 Thus it is also written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul,” The last “Adam” became a life-giving spirit. 46 And the spiritual was not the first, but the natural, then the spiritual. 47 The first man is from the earth, made of dust. The second man is from heaven. 48 Like the earthly man, so also are those who are earthly, and like the heavenly man, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, we will also bear the likeness of the heavenly man. 50 Now this is what I mean, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither can the perishable inherit that which is imperishable.

### **The Nature of the Resurrected Body (15:51–58)**

51 Look, I am telling you a mystery. Not all of us will fall asleep, but we will all be changed 52 in a moment, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 And when this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying will be fulfilled which is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 Where, O Death is your victory? Where, O Death, is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 Thank God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 And so my beloved brothers and sisters, be firm, immovable, always doing your best in the work of the Lord, since you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.



### **A Collection to Aid Christians at Jerusalem (16:1–4)**

1 Now concerning the contributions for the saints, you should do just as I instructed the churches of Galatia. 2 On the first day of the week, each of you should put aside some money at home in proportion to what you have earned, so that a collection will not have to be made after I come. 3 Then when I arrive, I will send whoever you have approved accompanied by letters of introduction to carry the donations to Jerusalem. 4 And if it seems advisable for me to go also, they will go with me.

### **Paul's Plans to Visit Corinth (16:5–12)**

5 But I will come to you after I travel through Macedonia—for I am going to travel through Macedonia—6 and, if possible, I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you can send me on my way wherever I go next. 7 For I do not want to just see you in passing, but I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord should permit it. 8 But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 for a great and effective door has opened for me, although there are many who oppose me. 10 Now when Timothy comes, see that he has nothing to fear when he is with you, for he is doing the Lord's work just as I do. 11 Therefore, no one should despise him. Rather send him on his way in peace so he can come to me, because I am waiting for him with the brethren. 12 Now as for brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was not at all willing to come now, but he will come when he has the opportunity.

### **Final Admonition (16:13–16)**

13 Keep alert, stand firm in the faith, be courageous and strong. 14 Let all you do be done with love. 15 You are aware that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia and they have devoted themselves to serving the saints, so I urge you, brothers and sisters, 16 to also subject yourselves to men such as them as well as to every other who joins in and labors with them.

### **Messages and Greetings (16:17–20)**

17 I am glad at the arrival of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, because they made up for your absence, 18 for they revived both my spirit and yours. You should give recognition to such people. 19 The

churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca send you warm greetings in the Lord as well as the church that meets at their house. 20 All the brothers and sisters here send their greetings to you. Greet each other with a holy kiss.

**The Final Peroration (16:21–24)**

21 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. 22 If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed. Come, O Lord! 23 The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. 24 My love is with all of you in Christ Jesus.