

## Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 73 – 1 Corinthians 2:1-3:17

### Day 361: 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

#### Verse 1

Κἀγω ἐλθων πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἦλθον  
οὐ καθ' ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας  
καταγγέλλων ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ.

κἀγω a compound word = και ἐγω

The emphatic κἀγω indicates that Paul himself exemplified the principle which he had been expounding – in contrast with the manner in which the sophists introduced themselves at Corinth.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι  
ὑπεροχη, ης f position of authority; καθ  
ὕ. λογου with high sounding words  
σοφια, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence

'High sounding rhetoric or a display of cleverness' The words may include the ironic suggestion that such cleverness may result in what is above people's heads. Paul renounces preaching for effect.

καταγγελλω proclaim, make known,  
preach

"Preaching the word is not delivering edifying discourses, beautifully put together. It is bearing witness to what God has done in Christ for man's salvation." Morris 'Preaching' here does not imply a particular form (cf 11:26; Acts 13:5; Rom 1:8 for the diverse ways in which the term is used). It is probable that the context for Paul's communication of the message at Corinth was not some public building but the household or private home. "But the proclamation remains 'public' in the sense that it does not communicate esoteric teaching to some inner group of initiates, but an announcement of events and state of affairs to all who would hear. In this sense the gospel is universal. The central content concerns a declaration of God's deeds in Christ." Thistleton

μυστηριον, ου n secret, mystery (of something formerly unknown but now revealed)

The weight of textual evidence is fairly evenly divided between μυστηριον and μαρτυριον. Metzger says, "From an exegetical point of view the reading μαρτυριον του θεου though well supported, is inferior to μυστηριον, which has more limited but early support. The reading μαρτυριον seems to be a recollection of 1:6, whereas μυστηριον here prepares for its usage in v.7." This argument is rejected by Fee who asks why any scribe would substitute the less expected *witness* for the more familiar *mystery*. Thistleton says, "No one can exclude either possibility, but ... we lean towards *mystery*."

#### Verse 2

οὐ γὰρ ἔκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ  
Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον  
ἔσταυρωμένον.

κρινω judge, pass judgement on  
εἰδεναι perf act infin οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

Thistleton takes issue with most translations which link οὐ with εἰδέναι or with τι. He considers that οὐ belongs with ἔκρινα and implies that Paul *had not* come with a plan to use the methods outlined above. The only plan he had come with was to proclaim the crucified Christ.

ἔσταυρωμενον see 1:23

There is no implied contrast with Paul's experience in Athens. On the contrary, Paul refers to his settled method, whether in Galatia, Athens or Corinth.

#### Verse 3

κἀγω ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ καὶ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν  
τρόμῳ πολλῶ ἐγενόμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς,

ἀσθενεια, ας f weakness, illness  
φοβος, ου m fear  
τρομος, ου m trembling

Maybe stressing that Paul saw himself as one standing *before God* with fearful sense of responsibility to deliver God's message. Though "No doubt, if we draw on the narratives in Acts, the temporary absence of Paul's co-workers Silas and Timothy (Acts 17:15; 18:5) added a psychological dimension of loneliness or isolation which exacerbated Paul's fear and trembling (cf. the absence of Titus in 2 Cor 2:13)." Thistleton

πολυσ, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου  
much, many

"Paul is precisely not a visiting orator come to entertain the crowds as an audience-pleasing performer." Thistleton

#### Verse 4

καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖ[ς] σοφίας [λόγοις] ἀλλ• ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως,

κήρυγμα, τος η what is preached,  
message, proclamation

πειθοῖς Adjective, m dat pl πειθος, η, ον  
persuasive, skillful

It is difficult to decide between the variant readings (eleven in all) here. In particular between the reading ἐν πειθοι σοφιας 'with the persuasiveness of wisdom' (πειθοι being the dative singular) and ἐν πειθοις σοφιας λογοις 'in persuasive wise words.' In the end "the result makes little serious difference for the thrust of the verse." Thistleton

ἀποδείξις, εως f proof, demonstration

ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως  
'brought home powerfully by the Spirit.' "Paul relies on the power of the Holy Spirit at work in convincing hearts and minds of the truth of ὁ λογος και το κηρυγμα μου." Thistleton

#### Verse 5

ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ• ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ.

ἡ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι  
δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

"A faith based on human argument would be built on sand' (Godet). This does not mean that argument or persuasion can play no role; it means that something more is involved that speaks to the heart as well as to the mind and creates a new reality (δυναμις θεου) for the believer." Thistleton

### Day 362: 1 Corinthians 2:6-9

#### Verses 6-16

Paul is taking up catchwords that were being bandied about at Corinth and is seeking to redefine them and reclaim them for the gospel. This is certainly the case with σοφια and may also be true of τελειος and πνευματικος (v.11).

#### Verse 6

Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου οὐδὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου τῶν καταργουμένων•

"In the tradition of Proverbs this [wisdom] denotes habits of judgment applicable to life. It concerns the formation of a Christian mind, which issues in a right action... Paul associates the use of the term at Corinth with what amounts to a self-centred, at times childish, attempt to manipulate things to one's own advantage. True wisdom from God, however, is sought by those who are sufficiently adult (τελειος) to exercise it responsibly for the good of all." Thistleton

λαλεω speak, talk

τελειος, α, ον complete, perfect, mature

"Paul recognises that not all Christians have full understanding. There are 'babes' among them (3:1), but the wisdom of which he speaks is appreciated by those who are mature in faith. To them he can impart 'all the counsel of God' (Acts 20:27)." Morris

Thistleton thinks τελειος is used by Paul to mean those who are 'spiritual adults' as opposed to those who behave as spiritual children. "Spiritual adulthood entails perceiving that wisdom comes from God as a gift in Christ (1:30) which enables the self to live responsibly and wisely for others and for the good of the whole community."

αἰων, αἰωνος m age, world order,  
eternity

οὐδε neither, nor

ἀρχων, οντος m ruler, official, authority

Thistleton includes an extended discussion of the various views of τῶν ἀρχοντων. He first considers the following three:

- i) Demonic powers;
  - ii) Earthly political rulers;
  - iii) Rulers as angelic custodians of nations – both supernatural and political.
- He favours a fourth interpretation, namely:
- iv) Rulers of this world order as sociopolitical powers in a structural collectivity that transcends given human individuals.

In developing this view in contrast with the others he says, "Of the three interpretations considered above, the second has most to commend it, but the resonances of the third cannot simply be swept aside as irrelevant. Paul stands closer to Jewish apocalyptic than to Western individualism... Humankind is more than a collection of individual entities or agents, but a corporeity within which evil and evil forces become endemic and structural. Moreover, Jesus Christ, for Paul, was not crucified simply by Pilate or Herod or individual leaders, but as a cosmic event on which God addressed all forces of evil from which liberation could subsequently come (Rom 8:38-39)."

καταργεω render ineffective, cancel, do away with

### Verse 7

ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ, τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην, ἣν προωρισεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων εἰς δόξαν ἡμῶν·

λαλεω speak, talk  
μυστηριον see v.1

"It does not signify a puzzle which man finds difficult to solve. It signifies a secret which man is wholly unable to penetrate. But it is a secret which God has now revealed." Morris  
God's wisdom is Christ crucified (vv. 7b & 8). It stands apart from all human wisdom and is unattainable by unassisted human reason.

ἀποκεκρυμμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s  
ἀποκρυπτω hide, keep secret  
προοριζω foreordain, decide from the beginning, decide beforehand

"... It stresses the plan of God and the sovereignty of God." Morris

δοξα, ης f glory

δοξα may be another one of the Corinthian catchphrases. Paul links δοξα with the cross. The glory of God is manifest "in his free, sovereign, choice (προωρισεν, he marked out beforehand) to give himself in mercy and love in the revealed mystery of the cross of the Christ. But this 'being for others' (Bonhoeffer, Jungel) results in believers sharing in the having-died-with and being-raised-with Christ, as sharing in the radiancy of his self-giving." Thistleton

### Verse 8

ἦν οὐδεις τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἔγνωκεν, εἰ γὰρ ἔγνωσαν, οὐκ ἂν τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης ἐσταύρωσαν.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing  
ἀρχων see v.5

ἔγνωσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl γινωσκω  
ἂν particle indicating contingency  
σταυρω crucify

The proper background to an understanding of this verse is Jewish apocalyptic with its contrast between this age and the age to come. The 'Lord of glory' is an apocalyptic figure who has brought in the age to come, the age of glory, by his death. "The cross is a triumph which manifests Jesus as Lord of glory, for through the cross he absorbed and draws out the sting of death and of the powers (1 Cor 15:55). The Son is glorified, Stauffer urges, 'on Good Friday itself.'" Thistleton. Cf. Col 2:15.

### Verse 9

ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται, Ἦ ὀφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν καὶ οὐκ ἤκουσεν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη, ἃ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.

The syntax of this verse is difficult, lacking a main verb. Frid suggests that ἀλλὰ introduces a contrast with the ignorance of the powers and introduces an implied contrast, 'but we know.' Thistleton prefers to understand the second ἃ as functionally equivalent to ὅσα 'such great things.' I.e. 'Things which eye has not seen, ear has not heard and no heart imagined, such great things has God prepared for those who love him.'

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

The quotation is probably a "rather free citation of Is 64:4 with reminiscences of other scriptural passages." Morris. Cf. Is 65:17 also Jer 3:16.

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὁραω trans  
see, observe, perceive, recognise;  
intrans make sure, see to

οὐς, ὠτος n ear, hearing

ἀνέβη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀναβαινω  
ἑτοιμαζω prepare, make ready

**Day 363: 1 Corinthians 2:10-16****Verses 10-16**

"Verses 10-16 ... make up his [Paul's] first sustained reflection on the Spirit,' (Collins) especially as the source of revelation. This section sets a framework for later reflection on the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12-14 as well as in the resurrection chapter (15:42-57; cf. 15:12-28, 38-41). In all these passages the work of the Spirit remains inseparable from the work of God as revealed in Christ. By contrast, a wedge was driven by some at Corinth between 'spirituality' and Christ crucified." Thistleton

**Verse 10**

ἡμῖν δὲ ἀπεκάλυψεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος· τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα πάντα ἐραυνᾷ, καὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ.

The ἡμῖν is emphatic – perhaps an intended contrast with claims by "some inner esoteric circle of a privileged category within the church." Thistleton

ἀποκαλύπτω reveal, disclose  
ἐραυνᾶω search, examine, try to find out

"The ... activity ascribed to God's Spirit by means of the verb ἐραυνᾶω (third present indicative ἐραυνᾷ, the Alexandrian spelling of the classical ἐρευνᾶω, ἐρευνᾷ) does not mean searching to discover here, but the activity of exploring God's purposes thoroughly in order to reveal them." Thistleton

βαθος, ους n depth, greatness

The depths of God's own self – his mind, purpose and plan. 'God's inmost heart.'

**Verse 11**

τίς γὰρ οἶδεν ἀνθρώπων τὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ; οὕτως καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐδεὶς ἔγνωκεν εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ.

οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

ἀνθρώπων must be construed with τις 'who among human persons...'

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing  
ἔγνωκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s γινώσκω

Thistleton argues that Paul is here not talking about components of a person (body, spirit etc.) – this does not fit the analogy with God. "The spirit is within not in the sense of location, but in the sense of partly hidden stances of which an outsider or another human person may be unaware unless the person concerned chooses to reveal them by word, gesture or action. The point of analogy does not turn on human spirit within/ divine spirit within, but on the possession of an exclusive initiative to reveal one's thoughts, counsels, stance, attitudes, intentions, or whatever else is 'within' in the sense of hidden from the public domain, not in the sense of location... The logic of Paul's thought is that if, by analogy, one person cannot know the least accessible aspects of another human being unless that person is willing to place them in the public domain, even so we cannot expect that God's own thoughts, God's own purposes, God's own qualities, or God's own self could be open to scrutiny unless his Spirit makes them accessible by an act of unveiling them."

**Verse 12**

ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου ἐλάβομεν ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν·

ἐλάβομεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl  
λαμβάνω

'spirit of the world' – spirit of worldly wisdom that Paul was dealing with above.

"This is the essential difference between the Stoa and Paul. The former thinks of an innate and inborn divine nature; the latter, of a divine, supernatural equipment given... He who possesses the Spirit of God can really and truly know God." Weiss, cited by Thistleton.

Weiss thinks that the phrase πνεῦμα τοῦ κοσμοῦ should be read against this background and that it means 'world spirit' – the world conceived as an organic whole, animated by a rational force called 'spirit.'

Theissen, again, cited by Thistleton, "perceives a parallel between the rulers of this present world order (2:6) and the spirit of the world (2:12). Both stand in contrast to the tradition of the wisdom of God as that which escapes the powerful, the influential, and the experts of the world order who shape the world to be what it is: 'wisdom is withdrawn from the "wise and understanding" (Matt 11:25), from the "educated, powerful and well-born" (1 Cor 1:26)... It is scarcely a coincidence that wisdom and anti-wisdom are confronted ... in the epistle of James. The community ... behind James also counts itself among the poor (James 2:5-7); in 3:15-17 it also opposes ... "wisdom which is earthly, unspiritual, devilish ... where jealousy and selfish ambition exist ... disorder ... But the wisdom from above is first pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason..."

εἰδῶμεν Verb, perf act subj, 1 pl οἶδα  
χαρισθέντα Verb, aor pass ptc, n nom/acc pl  
χαρίζομαι grant, give, give freely

The Spirit has been given us to enable us to know and understand and enter into all that God has given us through Christ and the cross. This, adjusting slightly the words of Hering, is 'the great charter for Christian theology.'

### Verse 13

ἄ καὶ λαλοῦμεν οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς  
ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις ἀλλ' ἐν  
διδακτοῖς πνεύματος, πνευματικοῖς  
πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες.

λαλεῶ speak, talk

διδάκτος, η, ον taught, imparted  
ἀνθρωπίνος, η, ον human, characteristic  
of mankind  
σοφία, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence

Not learned philosophical discourse.

πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual, pertaining to  
the spirit

συγκρίνοντες Verb, pres act ptc, m nom pl  
συγκρίνω compare, interpret, explain

What is the gender of πνευματικοίς? It could be neuter, 'explaining spiritual things by spiritual means', or masculine, 'explaining spiritual things to spiritual people.'

Robertson and Plummer list the following alternatives:

- i) Taking πνευματικοίς as neuter:
  - a. Combining spiritual things (words) with spiritual things (subject matter)
  - b. Interpreting (explaining) spiritual things by spiritual things, meaning:
    - (i) Interpreting OT types by NT themes
    - (ii) Interpreting spiritual truths by spiritual language

- (iii) Interpreting spiritual truths by spiritual faculties.
- ii) Taking πνευματικοίς as masculine:
  - a. Suiting (matching, fitting) spiritual matters to spiritual hearers
  - b. Interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual hearers.

The NIV translates it as, "expressing spiritual things in spiritual words."

Thistleton says that πνευματικός must be understood as meaning 'of the Spirit (of God)' and not as the more bland 'spiritual'. He translates the phrase 'interpreting things of the Spirit to people of the Spirit and says, "Paul not only interprets whatever the Holy Spirit of God has revealed to those in whose lives the Spirit is co-working in applying the revelation; Paul also matches 'what they are ready to take,' or 'words which they can hear without misconstrual' to their state of readiness."

### Verse 14

ψυχικός δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ  
πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ, μωρία γὰρ αὐτῷ  
ἐστίν, καὶ οὐ δύναται γνῶναι, ὅτι  
πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται.

ψυχικός, η, ον natural, physical,  
unspiritual

The contrast is with πνευματικός. The meaning is therefore 'the natural person', i.e. the person without the Spirit, the person with merely human capabilities – 'the person who lives on an entirely human level.'

μωρία, ας f foolishness

Cf. 1:23.

γνῶναι "(second aorist infinitive active) is used as an ingressive aorist to mean to get to know, to acquire a knowledge of." Thistleton

πνευματικῶς spiritually, by means of the  
Spirit

ἀνακρίνω examine, judge, evaluate

### Verse 15

ὁ δὲ πνευματικός ἀνακρίνει [τὰ] πάντα,  
αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται.

πνευματικός see v.13

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν see v.11

Thistleton thinks v.15 may be Paul repeating a quotation or catchphrase from a group at Corinth, "although this by no means implies that Paul necessarily dissents from it, provided that it is contextualised within his wider theology of the Holy Spirit and the Christian life... As 'spiritual people,' many at Corinth saw themselves 'judging everything' but as 'being judged by no one.'... The phrase αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπὸ οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται would thus be understood differently by Paul than some at Corinth. In the view of some at Corinth, it would signify a certain immunity or invulnerability from correction and critique. For Paul, however, it signifies at the very least that there are depths and dimensions to life in the Spirit which the person who lives on an entirely human level (v.14) simply cannot fathom. Aspects of Christian existence remain an enigma, unless others share the same insight of the Spirit of God."

### Verse 16

τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου, ὃς συμβιβάσει αὐτόν; ἡμεῖς δὲ νοῦν Χριστοῦ ἔχομεν.

Cf. Is 40:13.

ἔγνω Verb, aor act indic, 3 s γινωσκω  
 νους, νοος, νοι, νουν m mind, thought,  
 purpose  
 συμβιβαζω advise, instruct

The indwelling Spirit makes Christ known. Cf. Rom 8:9. On the 'mind of Christ' cf. Phil 2:5. It is to possess the 'mode of thought' or 'mind set' displayed in Christ crucified. This is what it means to know God, to be 'spiritual.'

## Day 364: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

### Verse 1

Κἀγω, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἠδυνήθην λαλῆσαι ὑμῖν ὡς πνευματικοῖς ἀλλ' ὡς σαρκίνοις, ὡς νηπίους ἐν Χριστῷ.

ἠδυνήθην Verb, aor pass dep indic, 1 s  
 δυναμαι

λαλεω speak, talk

πνευματικος see v.13

"For Paul the test of whether people are truly 'of the Spirit' is whether the Spirit has formed within them the mind-set of Christ (2:16)."

Thistleton

σαρκινος, η, ον fleshly, belonging to this world

'people moved by entirely human drives'

Thistleton

νηπιος, α, ον baby, infant, child

Thistleton argues that Paul is here not speaking of them as 'babes in Christ' needing to go on and grow but as those who, though in Christ, are behaving in a childish manner. He cites Francis "We shall argue that Paul is rebuking his readers not because they are babes still, and have not progressed further, but because they were in fact being childish, a condition contrary to being spiritual."

Thistleton comments, "If this argument fits Paul's thought, as we believe that it does, the practical point for believers today is not so much a call to maturity (although this may well be an implicate of these verses), but a warning that the self-centred competitive naivete which characterises young children who have not yet learned to respect the interests of the Other will lead to misjudgments about the quality and required methods of Christian proclamation and teaching. A 'childish' mind-set may, e.g., place undue value on the style of a chat-show host, or alternatively the pseudo-learning of a long display of rhetorical theatricals, above gospel content. To be spiritually minded is to bring different criteria to the role and style of preachers and teachers."

### Verse 2

γάλα ὑμᾶς ἐπότισα, οὐ βρώμα, οὐπω γὰρ ἐδύνασθε. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἔτι νῦν δύνασθε,

γαλα, γαλακτος n milk

ποτιζω give to drink

βρωμα, τος n food, solid food

οὐπω not yet

Refers back to Paul's earliest arrival and proclamation – as in 2:1-5.

οὐδε neither, nor

ἔτι still, yet, moreover

"They ought to have made progress by this time. It was all very well for the Corinthians to have been in the position of *babes* when they actually were *babes*, but they should have outgrown that stage long ago." Morris. Thistleton, following Hooker and Fee, argues that the emphasis is not on a need for change in direction but change in perspective. Paul has come under accusation by some that his preaching is mere milk and water stuff compared with the rhetoric of others or the rhetoric they seek. Paul's point is that this is precisely what they need for their nurture.

**Verse 3**

ἔτι γὰρ σαρκικοί ἐστε. ὅπου γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν  
ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις, οὐχὶ σαρκικοί ἐστε καὶ  
κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε;

σαρκικός, η, ον **belonging to this world**

"The -ινος termination [v.13] signifies 'made of ...'; thus in 2 Cor 3:3 tablets 'made of stone', λιθίνος, are contrasted with those 'made of flesh', σαρκίνος. The -ικός ending rather means 'characterised by...'; we see it in ψυχικός of the 'natural' man and πνευματικός of the 'spiritual' man in 2:14f. The difference between σαρκίνος and σαρκικός is like that between 'fleshy' and 'fleshly'. σαρκίνος is the more thoroughgoing word, but there is no blame attaching to it as applied to those who are young in the faith. But σαρκικός, 'characterised by the flesh', when used of those who have been Christians for years, is blameworthy. The mature believer is πνευματικός, characterised by 'spirit'. To be characterised instead by flesh, as the Corinthians were, is the very opposite of what a Christian should be. 'Flesh', of course, as often in Paul, is used in an ethical and moral sense. It indicates the lower aspects of man's nature, as in Rom. 13:14; Gal. 5:13; Eph 2:3, etc." Morris

"What is at issue is the anomaly of Christians who are nominally or in principle focused on Christ but in practice and in stance still focused on the interests of the self." Thistleton

ὅπου adv. **where, whereas, while**  
ζῆλος, ου m, and ους n **zeal, jealousy**  
ἐρίς, ιδος f **strife, rivalry**

"Although the reading ἐρίς καὶ διχοστασίαι has early and diversified attestation, the absence of καὶ διχοστασίαι from some early witnesses led the committee to suspect the intrusion of a Western gloss, derived perhaps from the list of vices in Gen 5:20. There being no sufficient reason to account for the omission, if the words were present originally, the shorter reading is to be preferred." Metzger

οὐχὶ (emphatic form of οὐ) **not, no**; used  
in questions expecting an affirmative  
answer.

περιπατεῶ **walk, walk about, live**

'Behaving like any merely human person'

**Verse 4**

ὅταν γὰρ λέγῃ τις, Ἐγὼ μὲν εἶμι Παύλου,  
ἕτερος δέ, Ἐγὼ Ἀπολλῶ, οὐκ ἄνθρωποι  
ἐστε;

ὅταν **when, whenever, as often as**  
ἕτερος, α, ον **other, another, different**

'Are you not all too human?' REB.

"Christ and the Spirit have become decisive determinants for their lives, and yet they continue as if they had no horizon beyond the merely human. The anomaly is huge, and the addressees must now be disabused of some of the fallacious presuppositions about 'Paul,' 'Apollos,' and supposed routes to esteem and prestige on which their incongruous stance rests." Thistleton

**Verse 5**

τί οὖν ἐστὶν Ἀπολλῶς; τί δέ ἐστὶν  
Παῦλος; διάκονοι δι' ὧν ἐπιστεύσατε, καὶ  
ἐκάστω ὡς ὁ κύριος ἔδωκεν.

"Instead of τι the TR following p<sup>46</sup> C D F G and most minuscules, reads τις in both instances. The masculine, however, appears to be a secondary accommodation to suit the personal names; moreover, the implication of the neuter τι in v.7 is decisive for τι in v.5 (since the answer is 'Nothing' the question can scarcely have been 'Who?')." Metzger  
"Paul asks: Now what does all this Apollos-language and Paul language amount to? What is Apollos or Paul? What is their role?" Thistleton

διάκονος, ου m & f **servant, minister**  
πιστεῦω **believe (in), have faith (in)**  
ἐκάστος, η, ον **each, every**

"Paul ... uses each (ἐκάστος) not to argue for an individualistic concept of ministry, but in fact the reverse. Apollos and Paul each perform assigned roles within a corporate ministry." Thistleton then cites Clark who writes, "The task oriented perception of leadership is clearly to be contrasted with the way in which the Corinthians had been viewing their leadership figures. The discussion in both 1 Cor 1:10-17 and 3:1-4 shows how the Corinthians were focusing their attention on the personalities of the apostles, and taking pride in them as men. Paul, rather, concentrates on the particular task each leader is accomplishing."

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s **διδοῦμι**  
**give**

Rupert Davies says that chapters 3 & 4 "Save us from too high a doctrine of the Ministry – from supposing that the Minister is the person who makes the Church... They save us also from too low a doctrine of the Ministry. Ministers are not just full-time servants of the Church ... Ministers are God's agents."

**Verse 6**

ἐγὼ ἐφύτευσα, Ἀπολλῶς ἐπότισεν, ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς ἠΰξανεν·

"The image of the people of God as a field draws on a well-known tradition concerning Israel, perhaps deriving initially from Israel as God's vineyard (Isa 5:7; Ezek 36:9)."

Thistleton

φυτευω plant

ποτιζω give to drink, water

αὕξανω and αὕξω intrans grow, spread, increase, reach full growth; trans make grow, increase

God is the creator of life, and the efficacy of any ministry is dependent on him.

The imperfect, in contrast with the aorists which precede it, indicates a continuing work. The servants of the word come and go but the work of God through them and in those who hear them continues unbroken.

**Verse 7**

ὥστε οὔτε ὁ φυτεύων ἐστίν τι οὔτε ὁ ποτίζων, ἀλλ' ὁ αὐξάνων θεός.

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
οὔτε not, nor (οὔτε ... οὔτε neither ... nor)

**Verse 8**

ὁ φυτεύων δὲ καὶ ὁ ποτίζων ἓν εἰσιν, ἕκαστος δὲ τὸν ἴδιον μισθὸν λήμψεται κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον.

Paul and Apollos were *one* in the sense that they were engaged in the one work of God – allies not rivals. "Whereas the Corinthian addressees place each minister in a different category and stand back to evaluate them, Paul places all those who share authentic ministry as God's channels in one category."

Thistleton. However, each of them had their own God-given responsibility. Here is a model of shared ministry.

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own

μισθος, ου m pay, wages, reward

"The most appropriate explanation [of μισθος] is to be found in 3:13-14, and more especially in 4:3-5. There Paul insists that assessments of one's own work are pointless and misleading before all the data are open to view and God has pronounced his definitive verdict at the last day. The reward for those who have then been raised into a mode of existence characterised by the Christ-like transformation brought about fully by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 15:44-49) will be to discover that work done in one's life has remained a condition of some established effect in the new world order of 'what abides' as the fruit of the Spirit or as the work of God's kingdom (1 Cor 13:8-13). This will be *κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον*, in accordance with their own labour, i.e., bear some relation to its nature, authenticity, motivation, and quality." Thistleton. Cf. 1 Cor 9:24,25; Phil 3:14.

λήμψεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s

λαμβάνω

κοπος, ου m work, labour trouble

Emphasises that each labours *for God* and is responsible *to God* – rather than simply to the community.

**Verse 9**

θεοῦ γὰρ ἐσμεν συνεργοί· θεοῦ γεωργιον, θεοῦ οἰκοδομὴ ἐστε.

συνεργος, ου m fellow-worker

Could mean fellow workers *with God*, or fellow workers *together* in service of God. Thistleton thinks the latter is intended here since Paul is "concerned about defending the relationship of apostles *to one another*."

γεωργιον, ου n field, (cultivated) land, act of cultivation

Thistleton breaks the verse here, treating 9c as the commencement of another section, "The Image of the Building and the Testing of the Builders' Work (3:9c-15)"

οἰκοδομη, ης f building, process of building, encouragement

"... Thus Paul may mean that the Corinthians are the field, the building, in which God is at work. Or he may mean that they are God's work in cultivation and building." Morris

**Day 365: 1 Corinthians 3:10-17****Verse 10**

Κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι ὡς σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων θεμέλιον ἔθηκα, ἄλλος δὲ ἐποικοδομεῖ. ἕκαστος δὲ βλέπετω πῶς ἐποικοδομεῖ·

Paul and Apollos are now pictured as co-workers in a building enterprise.

χαρις, ιτος f grace, unmerited favour

'According to the gracious privilege which God gave to me.'

δοθεῖσάν Verb, aor pass ptc, f acc s διδομι  
give

σοφός, η, ον wise, experienced  
ἀρχιτεκτων, ονος m expert builder,  
master builder

Thistleton suggests that the picture is taken from that of a building contract in which, "because of his professional skill one person usually assumed a particular co-ordinating role, maintaining an overview of the work, but not as paymaster." So Paul is pictured as such a 'prime contractor' who used other members of his team to do various parts of the work.

θεμέλιος, ου m (also θεμελιον, ου η)  
foundation, foundation stone

"This foundational work of Paul is explicated in 1 Cor 2:2, where the content of foundational proclamation is the apostolic message of a Christ crucified, without the addition of various human opinions and evaluations. Its christological and Christocentric character is what makes it the solid foundation without which the building would not stand, and certainly would not stand as *that* building." Thistleton

ἔθηκα Perf act indic, 1 s τιθημι place, set,  
appoint

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other  
ἐποικοδομεω build on, build up  
ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every  
βλεπω see, look, be able to see, beware  
of

πως interrog. particle how? in what way?

**Verse 11**

θεμέλιον γὰρ ἄλλον οὐδεὶς δύναται θεῖναι παρὰ τὸν κείμενον, ὅς ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός.

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing;  
οὐδεν not at all

παρα preposition with acc beside, by,  
rather than, contrary to

κειμαι lie, be laid, store up, be stored up

"Any other foundation would not merely make the building precarious; it would cease to exist *as that building*." Thistleton

**Verse 12**

εἰ δέ τις ἐποικοδομεῖ ἐπὶ τὸν θεμέλιον χρυσόν, ἄργυρον, λίθους τιμίους, ξύλα, χόρτον, καλάμην,

The addition of τουτον after θεμελιον in many MSS would appear to be a clarifying insertion.

χρυσος, ου m gold, gold coin, gold  
image

ἀργυρος, ου m silver, silver coin, money

λίθος, ου m stone

τιμιος, α, ον precious, valuable, held in  
honour

These "may be precious stones in our sense of the term, used for ornamentation, or they may be costly building materials, like marble." Morris.

There may be an allusion here to Solomon's temple – anticipating the analogy of vv 16,17. However, the addition of hay and straw (thatch) suggests a more general building analogy.

ξύλον, ου n wood, tree, cross, stocks  
χορτος, ου m grass, vegetation, shoot  
καλάμη, ης f straw, stubble

**Verse 13**

ἕκαστου τὸ ἔργον φανερόν γενήσεται, ἢ γὰρ ἡμέρα δηλώσει· ὅτι ἐν πυρὶ ἀποκαλύπτεται, καὶ ἕκαστου τὸ ἔργον ὁποῖόν ἐστιν τὸ πῦρ [αὐτὸ] δοκιμάσει.

ἕκαστος see v.10

φανερὸς, α, ον known, evident, plain,  
visible

δηλω make clear, indicate, inform

"Paul expresses his concern as missionary-pastor that all ministerial or church work should be founded on the reality of a Christ crucified and should endure. The 'testing by fire' connected with the last judgment simply underlines the subsidiary but important point which Paul elaborates in 4:4 and 5, that such is the opaqueness and duplicity of the human heart that even the builders of authentic work will not know definitively 'how they build' until God's own definitive verdict declares this and it becomes publicly visible at the last judgment. Still more to the point, one cannot judge the quality of the work of another builder: others are 'either doing that which will last or that which will perish,' and only time and the day of judgment will determine this. It is telling that even work which someone genuinely builds on the foundation may still turn out to be of no permanent value. Cox surmises that elements of self-interest or building for applause or self-gain can turn even the Christian's building 'upon Christ' into hay or straw. Such building would not be Christ-like." Thistleton

πυρ, ος n fire  
 ἀποκαλυπτω reveal, disclose  
 ὅποιος, α, ον correlative pronoun of what sort, such as  
 δοκιμαζω test, examine, approve, prove, discern

#### Verse 14

εἴ τινος τὸ ἔργον μενεῖ ὃ ἐποικοδόμησεν, μισθὸν λήμψεται·

μενεῖ Verb, pres & fut act indic, 3 s μενω remain, stay, abide  
 ἐποικοδόμησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐποικοδομεω

On μισθος see v.8.

λήμψεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s λαμβανω

#### Verse 15

εἴ τινος τὸ ἔργον κατακαήσεται, ζημιωθήσεται, αὐτὸς δὲ σωθήσεται, οὕτως δὲ ὡς διὰ πυρός.

κατακαήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s κατακαιω burn, burn up, consume  
 ζημιωω pass only lose, suffer loss  
 σωζω save, rescue, heal

"The distinction is not between the lost and the saved, but among the saved between those who have built well and those who have built poorly. *He shall suffer loss* means that he will lose his *reward*, like a workman fined of his wages for poor workmanship." Morris

Compare 1 Thess. 2:19,20 and Phil4:1. Is the reward of the careful workman the enduring fruit of his labour? (Cf. comments on μισθος in v.8.)

For οὕτως δὲ ὡς διὰ πυρός cf. Amos 4:11, 'a brand plucked from the burning.'

#### Verse 16

οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ναὸς θεοῦ ἐστε καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν;

οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

οὐκ οἴδατε suggests Paul's amazed and troubled response to the reports he has received.

ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary, inner part of Jewish Temple

οἰκεω intrans live, dwell; trans live in

The verb and pronoun are plural while ναος is singular. It is the church, the company of God's people, who are here spoken of as the dwelling place of God by his Spirit (though cf. 6:19 for the same picture applied to the individual). Appreciation of this is vital to a right understanding of the following verse.

#### Verse 17

εἴ τις τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ φθείρει, φθερεῖ τοῦτον ὁ θεός· ὁ γὰρ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιός ἐστιν, οἵτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς.

φθειρω corrupt, ruin, destroy  
 φθερεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s φθειρω corrupt, ruin, destroy

ὅστις, ἥτις, ὁ τι who, whoever, anyone,

"To engage in divisions is to 'destroy' the divine society, and consequently to invite God to 'destroy' the sinner." Morris