

Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 78 – 1 Corinthians 10:1-11:9

Day 386: 1 Corinthians 10:1-6

"Paul ... turns to the history of the people of God recorded in the Scriptures to show that the enjoyment of high privileges does not guarantee entry into final blessing." Morris Thistleton cites Willis who suggests that 10:1-22 addresses the issue of participation in idolatrous cultic events rather than simply the eating of meat offered to idols. Perhaps a minority among the 'strong' had argued that since 'an idol is nothing' so 'it is nothing to us' to participate in idol feasts. Thistleton adds, "This scenario is immensely strengthened by the forceful arguments of N. Walter concerning the presupposition, which could be carried over from a Gentile background. In a syncretistic, pluralistic religious culture, it might be plausible to imagine that all manifestations of 'the sacred' reflected the being of the one God of monotheism. By contrast, Paul insists on the covenantal exclusivism of loyalty to Christ as a definitive revelation of God." Some suggest that 10:1-13 is a carefully constructed unit that was composed prior to its use in its present context – a homily.

Verse 1

Οὐ θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν πάντες ὑπὸ τὴν νεφέλην ἦσαν καὶ πάντες διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης διήλθον,

θέλω wish, will

ἀγνοεω not know, be ignorant, fail to understand

πατήρ, πατρός m father

"Whatever the novelties and discontinuities brought about by the new creation in Christ, Israel and the Christian church belong to a single *history* of God's activity and self-disclosure." Thistleton

νεφέλη, ης f cloud

θαλάσσα, ης f sea

διερχομαι pass through, go through

"Paul now lists the privileges which 'all' enjoyed under Moses. First, they 'all' enjoyed the protection and guidance of 'the cloud,' which represented the presence of God to lead them (Exod 13:21; 14:19-20), and 'all' experienced the redemptive act of God which brought them *out of* bondage in Egypt *through* the Sea of Reeds *by* God's saving action *to* the new state of existence won for God's covenant people." Thistleton

Verse 2

καὶ πάντες εἰς τὸν Μωϋσῆν ἐβαπτίσθησαν ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ καὶ ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ,

The MSS evidence concerning the voice of the verb βαπτίζω is divided between between the passive (adopted by UBS) and the middle ἐβαπτίσαντο favoured by Metzger and Wikgren. Metzger says, "it is more probable that copyists replaced the middle ἐβαπτίσαντο (which corresponds to Jewish practice, according to which the convert baptised himself) with the passive (which is the usual expression in the case of Christian baptism, e.g. 1:13,15; 12:13 etc.), than vice versa."

"The experience of being guided by the cloud, and of passing through the Red Sea (Ex.14) had the effect of uniting the people to Moses in such a way that they are said to have been *baptised into Moses* ... Just as baptism has as one effect, the bringing of a man under the leadership of Christ, so did the participation in the great events of the Exodus bring the Israelites under the leadership of Moses." Morris. Cf. Ex. 14:31

Verse 3

καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν βρῶμα ἔφαγον,

πνευματικος, η, ον spiritual here in the sense of supernatural

βρωμα, τος n food, solid food

ἔφαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl ἐσθω and ἐσθω eat, consume

I.e. the manna. Spiritual in the sense of provided by God.

Verse 4

καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν ἔπιον
πόμα· ἔπινον γὰρ ἐκ πνευματικῆς
ἀκολουθούσης πέτρας· ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ
Χριστός.

πινω drink

πομα, τος n drink

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a
disciple

πετρα, ας f rock, solid rock

"The allusion ... is not a simple one... But Paul understands Christ to have been the source of all the blessings the Israelites received as they journeyed. So he can think of the Rock, Christ, as following them, and continually giving them drink. The reference to spiritual food and drink may well, as Calvin and others have thought, be made in the light of Holy Communion. Israel had her equivalent of both sacraments." Morris

On 'now the rock was Christ', Witherington comments, "'Was' indicates that the divine Christ was really a part of Israel's history, providing them with life-giving water." And Bandstra comments, "Christ himself, the pre-existent Christ, was present with the Israelites in their wilderness journey... [Christ was] as much the source of the spiritual food and drink of the Israelites as he is the one present in the Lord's Supper at Corinth."

Verse 5

ἀλλ· οὐκ ἐν τοῖς πλείοσιν αὐτῶν
εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεός, κατεστρωθησαν γὰρ ἐν
τῇ ἐρήμῳ.

πλειων, πλειον ογ πλεον more, most, the
majority, many, a larger number

εὐδοκεω be pleased, take
delight/pleasure in

κατεστρωθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
καταστρωννυμι strike down, put to
death

Cf. Num 14:16. "The verb καταστρωννυμι lends a picturesque touch. It really means 'to spread out'. Paul pictures the wilderness strewn with corpses. This is not simply a natural death. It is God's sentence against the rebels." Morris

ἐρημος, ου f deserted place, uninhabited
region, desert

Verse 6

ταῦτα δὲ τύποι ἡμῶν ἐγενήθησαν, εἰς τὸ
μὴ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἐπιθυμητὰς κακῶν, καθως
κάκεῖνοι ἐπεθύμησαν.

τυπος, ου m pattern, example, type

'Formative model' Cf. 1 Thess 1:7

ἐγενήθησαν Verb, aor indic, 3 pl γινομαι
εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι
ἐπιθυμητης, ου m one who desires
κακος, η, ον evil, bad, wrong, harm

εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἐπιθυμητὰς κακῶν
'with a view to our not craving for evil things.'

κάκεῖνος, η, ο contraction of και ἐκεῖνος
and that one, he also, they also
ἐπιθυμεω long for, desire, lust after

Cf. Num 11:4-34. "Lusting" for the diet of
Egypt "hints at the attraction of the Corinthian
idol feasts." Findlay

Day 387: 1 Corinthians 10:7-13**Verse 7-13**

Thistleton suggests that the four warning
examples used by Paul in vv.7-13 highlight sin
as not mere acts but as misdirected desire
(ἐπιθυμια).

Verse 7

μηδὲ εἰδωλόατραί γίνεσθε, καθως τινες
αὐτῶν· ὡσπερ γέγραπται, Ἐκάθισεν ὁ
λαὸς φαγεῖν καὶ πεῖν, καὶ ἀνέστησαν
παίζειν.

μηδε nor μηδε ... μηδε neither ... nor
εἰδωλοατρης, ου m idolater
ὡσπερ as, even as

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω
καθίζω intrans sit down, sit

λαος, ου m people, a people

φαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐσθιω and ἐσθω
eat, consume

πειν Verb, aor act infin πινω drink

ἀνιστημι intrans (in 2 aor & all midd) rise,
stand up

παίζω dance, play

The Hebrew verb of Ex 32:6 means *to make sport*. "...allowing for a probable triple meaning: (i) 'letting their hair down' in the absence of Moses with nuances of (ii) idolatrous dancing before the golden calf, and (iii) sexual license approaching **orgy** – all in contrast to the theological and ethical restraint and sober *self-control* (cf. 9:24-27) demanded of God's covenant people... If it were not for the probable cultic dimension, we might try to capture the double meaning in modern English by *got up to have a romp* (cf. *romp in the hay*), or (in quotation marks) *got up to have 'fun and games.'*" Thistleton

"The warning against idolatry is very much to the point in view of the troubles at Corinth with which Paul is dealing. He quotes Ex.32:6, where the reference to eating and drinking and playing (i.e. dancing) point to a typical idol festival." Morris

"It is precisely the 'turn on' which idolatrous cultic festivals gave to an overrelaxed, psychotic mind-set that leads Paul to tackle the issue so forcefully. Such 'participation' could damage and destroy all that the Christian community represented." Thistleton.

"N Walter facilitates our understanding of the position of 'the strong.' Not only did they wish to avoid appearing 'narrow,' overscrupulous, and oversensitive to their families and friends, especially those of influence; they also argued that since 'we all know that God is one' (8:3-6) any manifestation of 'the sacred' or of 'religion' surely reflects the immanent being of the one universal God, who has more than one face. After all, Paul believed that they were not to withdraw from the world. The setting of the private meals causes no problem: the issue concerns εἰδωλοθυτον, but an idol 'is nothing.' On the other hand, does participation in pagan cultic practices constitute εἰδωλολατρία? For Paul the answer is clear: because he draws on the biblical tradition he believes *both* that idols have no real existence *and* that they represent sinister, demonic powers of evil, not least because gods fashioned by humankind provide religious sanction for all kinds of wishful indulgence. Hence against syncretistic assumptions drawn from the Gentile world, Paul confronts his readers with the scriptural tradition of a covenant loyalty to the God of Israel which is different from Graeco-Roman 'religiosity.' The Christian sacraments specifically anchor faith to *Christ*." Thistleton

Verse 8

μηδὲ πορνεύωμεν, καθὼς τινες αὐτῶν ἐπόρνευσαν, καὶ ἔπεσαν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ εἴκοσι τρεῖς χιλιάδες.

μηδε see v.7

πορνευω commit sexual immorality

"This is not a new subject, for *fornication* formed part of much idol worship. Sacred prostitutes were found at many shrines, and Corinth had an unenviable notoriety in this respect." Morris

ἔπεσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl πιπτω
fall, fall down, fall to one's ruin

εἴκοσι twenty

τρεῖς, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
χιλιας, αδος f (group of) a thousand

See Numbers 25:1-9, though Numbers speaks of twenty *four* thousand. There is no satisfactory explanation for the 'missing thousand.' "Most modern commentators contend that Paul is not troubled to provide an exact memory and may well have conflated his thought with a further allusion to Num 26:62." Thistleton

Verse 9

μηδὲ ἐκπειράζωμεν τὸν Χριστόν, καθὼς τινες αὐτῶν ἐπείρασαν, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ὄφρων ἀπολλυντο.

ἐκπειραζω put to the test, tempt

The present subjunctive perhaps has the force of 'no longer put to the test'

Χριστον is attested by many MSS, including the earliest, p⁴⁶. However, a number of MSS, including \aleph and B read κυριον, reflecting the OT text. It is easier to see how Χριστον could have been amended to κυριον than vice versa.

ὄφις, εως m snake, serpent

ἀπολλυντο Verb, imperf midd indic, 3 pl

ἀπολλυμι destroy, kill; midd perish, die

'They were perishing' See Numbers 21:5f.

"The presumption is incisively and movingly brought out in Jurgen Moltmann's *Theology of Hope*. Drawing on the work of Walther Zimmerli and Gerhard von Rad on divine promise and hope in the OT, Moltmann insists that for Israel in the wilderness, as for the pilgrim church of Christ, the future is promised but not yet. Hence 'Presumption is the premature self-willed anticipation of what we hope from God; despair is the premature arbitrary anticipation of non-fulfilment.' By contrast to each, Christian faith lays hold on divine promise. In this context (1 Corinthians 8-10) it adopts neither the presumptions of 'the strong' nor the anxious timidity of 'the weak,' but moves forward in both wariness and confidence, with self-discipline and trust. Believers, Moltmann asserts (with Paul), live as the 'exodus church.'" Thistleton

Verse 10

μηδὲ γογγύζετε, καθάπερ τινες αὐτῶν ἐγόγγυσαν, καὶ ἀπώλοντο ὑπὸ τοῦ ὀλοθρευτοῦ.

γογγυζω grumble, complain, mutter

καθαπερ as, just as

ἀπώλοντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl

ἀπολλυμι

ὀλοθρευτης, ου m destroying angel

Reference is probably to Numbers 16 (though Thistleton thinks that the reference is to Num 14:2-4 – if any *specific* reference is intended).

Verse 11

ταῦτα δὲ τυπικῶς συνέβαινε ἐκείνοις, ἐγράφη δὲ πρὸς νοουθεσίαν ἡμῶν, εἰς οὓς τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων κατήντηκεν.

τυπικῶς by way of example, as a warning

συμβαίνω happen, come about
ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those
νουθεσία, ας f instruction, warning
τέλος, οὐς n end, conclusion, termination

αἰώνων gen pl αἰών, αἰώνος m age, world order, eternity

κατανατῶ come, arrive, reach, attain

Hering argues that the meaning is that the two ages, the old age and the New Creation, have here touched each other. The Corinthians live in the intersection of the ages, in the 'already but not yet' of the Christian's existence. For the ethical implications, see JP Sampley's *Walking between the Times: Paul's Moral Reasoning*. "We may transpose Sampley's terminology to match the issues which Paul addresses more closely. The 'not yet' dimension addresses a *Corinthian theology of presumption*, especially on the part of the 'strong'; *freedom* is all; God will not allow us to fall; we belong *wholly* to the age of the new creation, no less than our counterparts in Graeco-Roman cults who have been redeemed from the world and elevated to a new plane of existence. People who thought that they 'stood' needed to 'take heed lest they fell.' The 'now' dimension addresses a *Corinthian theology of doubt and anxiety*, especially on the part of the 'weak,' for whom the socioeconomic realities of dependency on the powerful (now often powerful in the church) seem not to have changed very much. Life goes on. To both Paul explains that they are incorporated within a cosmic story of grace to Israel and to the church in which God decisively redeems his people but also requires that they journey as pilgrims 'through' but not 'of' the world, with realism about self-discipline and trust in the divine promise... The church, too, has its 'tests' in a pilgrim journey." Thistleton

Verse 12

ὥστε ὁ δοκῶν ἐστάναι βλέπῃ μὴ πέσῃ.

ὥστε so that, with the result that
δοκεῶ think, suppose

ἐστάναι Verb, perf act infin ἵστημι and ἵστανω stand, stand firm, hold ground.

I.e. one who thinks that their position is secure.

βλεπῶ see, look, be able to see, beware of

πέσῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s πιπτῶ see v.8

Verse 13

πειρασμὸς ὑμᾶς οὐκ εἴληφεν εἰ μὴ ἀνθρωπίνος· πιστὸς δὲ ὁ θεός, ὃς οὐκ ἔασει ὑμᾶς πειρασθῆναι ὑπὲρ ὃ δύνασθε, ἀλλὰ ποιήσει σὺν τῷ πειρασμῷ καὶ τὴν ἔκβασιν τοῦ δύνασθαι ὑπενεγκεῖν.

πειρασμός, οὐ m trial, test, temptation

Thistleton thinks that in context the meaning is 'trial' rather than 'temptation', though he stresses that the two are not wholly distinct.

εἴληφεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s λαμβανῶ here in sense of take hold of
ἀνθρωπίνος, η, ον human, characteristic of mankind

The 'cravings' which they experience are part and parcel of being human. "God's people are still frail and *all-too-human*, as over against the unrealism of 'enthusiasm' and an overrealised eschatology (see under τα τελη των αιωνων in v.11). They are still 'on the journey' of everyday life, with its vulnerability and need for discipline (cf. 1:7-9; 1:18, etc)." Thistleton

πιστός, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, reliable
ἔαω allow, permit, leave, let go
πειρασθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin πειραζῶ test, tempt
ἐκβασίς, εως f way out

"Israel or Christian believers can never claim that they could not help themselves in the face of pressure to abandon covenant faithfulness, for God will ensure, as part of his own covenant faithfulness, that he will not simply leave them to face impossible odds. His grace provides ever new opportunities for human faithfulness. Yet Paul will not allow this faithfulness to be manipulated by human presumption. The believer must respond not by expecting all 'temptation' to be removed, but by taking the 'exit path' which God provides, marks, and renders the believer *able* (δυνασθε) to use." Thistleton

ὑπενεγκεῖν Verb, aor act infin ὑποφέρω endure, bear up under

"Verse 13 is neither simply an 'encouragement' nor a further warning. It serves both ends, but also functions as a reminder of God's covenant faithfulness to his people even when they were being tempted to break that covenant ... God's faithfulness helps them 'bear up under' (ὑποφερω) the temptation." Gardner. Cf. 1:8,9a.

Day 388: 1 Corinthians 10:14-22

Verse 14

Διόπερ, ἀγαπητοί μου, φεύγετε ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας.

διόπερ emphatic form of διο therefore indeed, for this very reason

ἀγαπητος, η, ον beloved
φευγω flee, run away from, avoid

Present imperative implies continuous action. The verb used implies, "be rid of this sin with all speed." Chrysostom

"The preposition ἀπο before the articular phrase conveys a metaphor of location and active flight which picks up the preceding allusion to ἐκβασις in v.13. The 'way out' (v.13) conjures up the image of an army caught (εἰληφεν) in a defile and urged to flee at all speed through a mountain pass."

Thistleton

εἰδωλολατρία, ας f idol worship, idolatry

Verse 15

ὡς φρονίμοις λέγω· κρίνατε ὑμεῖς ὃ φημι.

φρονιμος, ον wise, sensible

Paul appeals to their 'common sense.'

κρινω judge, pass judgement on
φημι say

Verse 16

τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστὶν;

"We argue that, as in the case of 'apostleship,' to *participate*, or to *have a share in*, 'the body' and 'blood of Christ' is neither merely a self-referring allusion to belonging to the church nor an argument which depends on a quasi-physical sacramental theology of the Lord's Supper. Rather, it places at centre stage (i) the commonality (with the concern for 'the other') and (ii) the exclusivity (in the framework of covenant loyalty) of a *cruciform lifestyle* which witnesses to *identification with Christ in ...* [his] dying for 'others' and being raised by God. Hence Paul sets up a dialectic between sharing in the 'blood' or constituting 'one loaf' (10:16,17) and receiving a 'cup' of *thanksgiving* or 'a cup for which God be blessed' which together mark the 'offering to God' not of the Lord's Supper as such but of the *life and lifestyle* which expresses its Christomorphic, Christocentric orientation in such a way that 'you cannot take part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons' (10:21, NIV). William Lane declares that 'covenant is the key to Paul's conflict with Corinth.'" Thistleton

ποτηριον, ου n cup

εὐλογία, ας f blessing, praise

"Coheres precisely with the context of the Passover meal as the framework for the interpretation of the Lord's Supper."

Thistleton

Most commentators associate this with the third cup of the Passover meal, though some think the reference is to the fourth.

εὐλογεω speak well of, bless

οὐχι not, no; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.

κοινωνια, ας f fellowship, sharing in, participation

Barrett says that the meaning cannot be conveyed in a single English word, it requires 'common participation.'

"Communal participation in the body and blood of Christ entails manifesting publicly the sacrificial lifestyle of Christ, as seen in his blood (i.e. his death) and body (i.e., self-giving public life)." Thistleton

αἷμα, ατος f blood

Meyer suggests "Paul names the cup first ... because he means to speak at more length about the bread." As Thistleton adds, "The sequence here simply serves his flow of expression."

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food
κλαω break (only of bread)
σωμα, τος n body

The 'broken bread' signifies 'the body of Christ as he abandoned it to the cross.' Wolff.

Verse 17

ὅτι εἰς ἄρτος, ἐν σῶμα οἱ πολλοί ἐσμεν,
οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἄρτου
μετέχομεν.

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

'many as we are, we are one body.'

μετεχω share in, eat, belong to

Verse 18

βλέπετε τὸν Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα· οὐχ οἱ
ἐσθίοντες τὰς θυσίας κοινωνοὶ τοῦ
θυσιαστηρίου εἰσίν;

βλεπω see, look

'Consider'

Some consider that the reference is still to the incident of the golden calf (so Hayes) but others (Hering, Barrett) think that there is no *specific* reference intended here.

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature
ἐσθιω and ἐσθω eat, consume
θυσια, ας f sacrifice, victim
κοινωνος, ου m partner, sharer
θυσιαστηριον, ου n altar

Cf. Heb 3:14.

Verse 19

τί οὖν φημι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτόν τί ἐστίν; ἢ
ὅτι εἰδωλόν τί ἐστίν;

φημι say, affirm, declare

εἰδωλοθυτον, ου n meat offered to idols

The last clause of v.19, ἢ ὅτι εἰδωλόν τί ἐστίν is omitted from p⁴⁶ x* C* and 33. Metzger thinks the omission is accidental through homoeoteleuton.

ἢ ορ

εἰδωλον, ου n idol

"In modern conceptual terms Paul means that neither εἰδωλοθυτον nor εἰδωλον possesses *ontological existence* or *metaphysical reality*. In modern and postmodern parlance they constitute *social constructs*." Thistleton

Verse 20

ἀλλ' ὅτι ἃ θύουσιν, δαιμονίους καὶ οὐ θεῶ
[θύουσιν], οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς
τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι.

θυω slaughter, sacrifice, kill

δαιμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit, god

θελω wish, will

"He will not dispute the contention of the Corinthians that an idol is not a god at all. But he will not agree that therefore idols can safely be treated as nothing more than so many blocks of wood and stone. The *devils* make use of men's readiness to worship idols. Thus when men sacrifice to idols, it cannot be said that they are engaging in some neutral activity that has no meaning. They are in fact sacrificing to evil spirits, like the people spoken of in Deut 32:17. To share food is to establish fellowship. Thus they are entering into *fellowship* with *devils*. Paul does not wish this to happen to his Corinthian friends."

Morris

Godet writes, "Jupiter, Apollo, Venus, certainly are not real beings; but Satan is something. Behind all that mythological phantasmagoria there lie concealed malignant powers, which, without being divinities, are nevertheless very real, and very active, and which have succeeded in fascinating the human imagination and in turning aside the religious sentiment of the heathen nations to beings of fancy... The words of the apostle do not imply the idea that every false god worshipped by the heathen corresponds to a particular demon; they signify merely that heathen religions emanate from those malignant spirits, and that consequently the man who takes part in such worship puts himself under their influence."

"Christ by his victory on the cross has disabled these demonic forces and liberated his people from their influence, but his people might foolishly put themselves in situations where this influence was still potent." Bruce

Verse 21

οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν καὶ
ποτήριον δαιμονίων· οὐ δύνασθε
τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν καὶ τραπέζης
δαιμονίων.

ποτηριον see v.16

πινω drink

τραπεζα, ης f table, food, meal

Cf. Mal 1:7,12.

μετεχω see v.17

"The use of οὐ δύνασθε conveys (i) a *logical* cannot (the two possibilities logically exclude each other); (ii) an *empirical* cannot (something will be destroyed if you try to do both); and (iii) an *institutional* cannot (Christians cannot, and still be *counted* as 'Christian').

"The parallelism between ποτηριον κυριου πινειν and τραπεζης κυριου μετεχειν is instructive. We noted above the emphasis of Cullmann and Robinson on 'sharing Christ's cup' (in Mark 10:38,39) as communal participation in the 'cup' of *his baptism as Messiah* into suffering, death and resurrection. It is *impossible* (in all three senses) to participate in Christ, his redemptive act of self-giving in suffering and death, his resurrection mode of existence through the Holy Spirit (15:44; cf. Rom 8:11), and his love for others, and simultaneously to participate in the seductive, assertive, manipulative powers of evil which inspire idolatry by substituting themselves in the place of God... 'The pattern of the Messianic life is one of suffering and glory' [Thornton] Those who share τραπεζης δαιμονιων manifest the opposite principle: not the giving of the self for the benefit of 'the weak' (as is the issue in 8:12,13) but self-edification, self-fulfilment, or self-enjoyment (cf. Deuteronomy 32) at the expense of others, even if something else is put into the place of that which belongs to God alone (ειδωλον, cf. V.19)." Thistleton

Verse 22

ἢ παραζηλοῦμεν τὸν κύριον; μὴ ἰσχυρότεροι αὐτοῦ ἔσμεν;

"A κοινωνια in the blood and body of Christ may mean a sharing in the results of Christ's sacrificial death... What the Corinthians had not realised through arrogance and complacency was the fact that the cup also committed them to covenant judgment when they sinned." Gardner

ἢ οἱ

παραζηλωσω make jealous

ἰσχυροτερος, α, ον stronger - comparative from ἰσχυρος

"The last clause is solemn, but it adds a touch of irony if *'the strong'* so press their self-confidence as to imply that they are 'stronger' (ἰσχυροτεροι) than God... The disloyalty and absurdity of this triumphalist, self-centred theology is exposed.

Day 389: 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

Verse 23

Πάντα ἔξεστιν, ἀλλ• οὐ πάντα συμφέρει. πάντα ἔξεστιν, ἀλλ• οὐ πάντα οἰκοδομεῖ.

ἔξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is lawful, it is proper

Cf. 6:12. Paul is here probably quoting a Corinthian slogan.

συμφερω impersonal verb it is better, it is profitable, it is useful

οἰκοδομεω build, build up, encourage

Verse 24

μηδεις τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ζητεῖτω ἀλλὰ τὸ τοῦ ἑτέρου.

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον reflexive pronoun, himself, herself, itself

ζητεω seek, search for

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

This is part of following Christ (cf. Matt 22:37-40; Rom 14:7; 15:2; Gal 6:2; Phil 2:1-4,5-7).

Verse 25

Πάν τὸ ἐν μακέλλῳ πωλούμενον ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν, μακελλον, ου n meat market

"In a city such as Corinth scarcely any other meat would be for sale except that supplied from the Temple." Murphy-O'Connor

πωλεω sell, barter

ἀνακρινω examine, question, judge

συνειδησις, εως f conscience

Verse 26

τοῦ κυρίου γὰρ ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς.

γη, γης f earth

πληρωμα, τος n fulness, completeness

Cf. Ps 24:1.

Verse 27

εἴ τις καλεῖ ὑμᾶς τῶν ἀπίστων καὶ θέλετε πορεύεσθαι, πᾶν τὸ παρατιθέμενον ὑμῖν ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν.

Paul seems to have in mind particularly the situation where several Christians may be present at a meal.

ἀπιστος, ον unfaithful, unbelieving

θελω wish, will

πορευομαι go, proceed

παρατιθημι place before, put before

"In this verse the fundamental principle is affirmed of living in gospel *freedom unless either* (i) covenant disloyalty to God *or* (ii) damage to a fellow believer is entailed thereby." Thistleton

Verse 28

ἐὰν δέ τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ, Τοῦτο ἱερόθυτόν ἐστιν, μὴ ἐσθίετε δι' ἐκείνον τὸν μηνύσαντα καὶ τὴν συνειδήσιν –

ἱεροθυτος, ον offered in sacrifice

ἐσθίετε the imperfect carries the force 'make a practice of not eating it.'

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, he, she, it

μηνεω make known, inform, report

Later MSS insert here a repetition of the quotation from Ps 24:1 given in v.26.

Verse 29

συνειδήσιν δὲ λέγω οὐχὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ ἑτέρου. ἵνατί γὰρ ἡ ἐλευθερία μου κρίνεται ὑπὸ ἄλλης συνειδήσεως;

οὐχὶ (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no

ἑαυτος see v.24

ἕτερος see v.24

ἵνατι why? for what reason?

ἐλευθερία, ας f freedom, liberty

κρινω judge, pass judgement on, condemn

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

The latter part of the verse may seem paradoxical. It is helpfully translated by Godet, "For what advantage can there be in my liberty being condemned ..."

"Paul gives serious warning that if we use our freedom just as we like, and thereby cause offence to our neighbours, the result will be ... that this matchless gift of God will be condemned ... ruining our freedom by making wrong use of it." Calvin

Verse 30

εἰ ἐγὼ χάριτι μετέχω, τί βλασφημοῦμαι ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐγὼ εὐχαριστῶ;

χάριτι Noun, dat s χάρις, ιτος f grace, unmerited favour

Thistleton says that the meaning here is 'with thanksgiving.'

μετεχω share in, eat, belong to

βλασφημεω speak against, slander, insult

εὐχαριστεω thank, give thanks

"This passage has profound implications for the very nature of freedom, debated by Augustine and Pelagius, by Luther and Erasmus, and by people in every generation. Yet by the same token it speaks eloquently to issues as practical as the purchase of large properties, expensive possessions, the use of alcohol in specific situations, and so forth. At one level the Christian is free: it is not other people's judgments, as such, which should determine one's own. On the other hand, always to ask about the impact or effect of these things on the self-awareness (confidence, vulnerability, insecurity, negative reaction) of *the other* must play a part in the believer's decision about how the *freedom* which God has granted is to be *constructively used*." Thistleton

Verse 31

εἴτε οὖν ἐσθίετε εἴτε πίνετε εἴτε τι ποιεῖτε, πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ ποιεῖτε.

εἴτε if, whether

πινω drink

δοξα, ης f glory

"The Christian is not concerned with the assertion of his rights, but with the glory of God. Eating, drinking, or anything else, must be subordinated to this major consideration." Morris

Thistleton points out that in John's gospel the glory of God is seen most clearly in the death of Jesus (Jn 13:31-32; 17:4). Living for God's glory hence demands a cruciform life.

Verse 32

ἀπρόσκοποι καὶ Ἰουδαίοις γίνεσθε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ,

ἀπρόσκοπος, ον blameless, faultless, inoffensive

'never be a cause of offence,' 'do not cause to stumble' Cf. 8:13.

Ἰουδαίος, α, ον a Jew, Jewish, Judean

Ἕλληγν, ηνος m a Greek, non-Jew

Verse 33

καθὼς κἀγὼ πάντα πᾶσιν ἀρέσκω, μὴ ζητῶν τὸ ἑμαυτοῦ σύμφορον ἀλλὰ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν, ἵνα σωθῶσιν.

κἀγὼ a compound word = καὶ ἐγὼ

ἀρεσκω please, seek to please

The sense here may be 'accommodate.' Thistleton translates, 'I on my part strive to take account of all the interests of everyone.'

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

ἐμαυτοῦ, ἡς reflexive pronoun (not used in nom) myself, my own
 συμφερον, ου n good, advantage, profit
 πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ἡς, ου much, many
 σωθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl σωζω
 save, rescue, heal

Verse 1

μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε, καθως κάγω
 Χριστοῦ.

μιμητης, ου m imitator
 κάγω see 10:33

The imitation exhorted is of conduct spoken of in v.33 above, namely living for others rather than oneself in order that others might be saved. This is what characterised the life of Christ – see Mk 10:45

Day 390: 1 Corinthians 11:2-9

Paul is concerned that some Corinthian women are acting as if every distinction between male and female were abrogated for the Christian, and hence the cultural expressions of those distinctions were unimportant. Paul makes it clear that they are wrong. "It is no part of the life of the Christian needlessly to flout conventions." Morris

There is a continuity of concern here with the previous chapters. The issues are still those of 'rights' and the nature of the Christian life as a life lived 'for others.' Thistleton entitles the chapter (or 11:2-34 to be more precise)

Mutuality and Respect: Men and Women at Worship in Public, and Rich and Poor at the Lord's Supper.

On the complexities of the background to this section, the following extracts from Thistleton may be helpful. "Aline Rousselle's essay 'Body Politics in Ancient Rome' (1992) assumes great importance for the issue of *head coverings, veils, or 'hoods'* (cf. Κατα κεφαλῆς ἔχων, v.4; ἀκατακαλυπτῶ, v.5; κατακαλυπτεταλ v.6; cf. Latin [Jerome] by contrast, *nudo capite*). Augustus reformed family law in ways which affected the status of women some three times between 18 BC and AD 9 (*lex Julia de adulteriis; lex Julia de fundo dotali*, et al.) Horace (d. 8 BC) tells us, on one side, that certain *male* attire or hairstyles were deemed effeminate and overtly sexual, while appropriate head coverings for respectable Roman *women* served as a protection of their dignity and status as *women not to be 'propositioned.'* A Rouselle and Dale Martin both urge that in the case of respected and respectable 'one sees only the face': 'respectable women did nothing to draw attention to themselves ... A veil or hood constituted a warning: it signified that the wearer was a respectable woman and that no man dare approach without risking ... penalties. A woman who went out ... unveiled forfeited the protection of Roman law against possible attackers who were entitled to plead extenuating circumstances.'" "The laws of Augustus to which we have alluded also modified the system of guardianship (*tutela*) of women inherited from the closing years of the Republic. A guardian could authorise (cf. ἐξουσιάζω) a woman's actions, but after the laws approved by Augustus a woman had the right (ἐξουσια) to take legal action against a guardian whose refusal to give authorisation was deemed to be unreasonable. Under Claudius guardianship of freeborn women was abolished, although not for freedwomen." "Judith Gundry-Volf ... argues that neither merely 'egalitarian' nor merely 'hierarchical' interpretations do justice to the complexity of the theological issues for Paul. Paul superimposes three 'maps' of gender relationships which *together* provide a dialectic between mutuality and 'order' or gender differentiation by placing *the whole* within the three 'frames' of the order of creation, society and culture, and gospel eschatology."

"A genuine breakthrough is offered (a) by Gundry-Volf's proposal about the need for a wholeness of understanding of Paul's dialectic in the light of three theological superimposed maps; (b) the careful dating of the conventions of what clothing generates signals of respect for Christian women as human persons, not as sexual objects, in public; (c) the interplay between multivalent meanings of κεφαλή and their interactive metaphorical applications; and (d) our own further suggestion that the theme of self-discipline, restraint, and respect for 'the other,' already prominent in 8:1-11:1, remains central to 11:2-14:40."

"Phil 2:6-11, as pre-Pauline material which Paul endorses, portrays a voluntary renunciation of 'rights' (in this context, genuinely a right). The God-Christ relation has *nothing to do with self-glory* or with affirmation of the self at the expense of the other (cf. The ethical context of Phil 2:6-11; it is *not an involuntary or imposed 'subordination,' but an example of shared love*). This shared love controls the use of freedom, and thereby brings 'glory' to the other by assuming distinctive roles for a common purpose. This is the context that gives currency to the widespread comment that 'the relationship between man and woman is thus in some sense paralleled by that between God and Christ.'"

"Murphy-O'Connor ... convincingly argues that 'men figure equally prominently in this section ... The problem ... involved both sexes.' Paul's concern is not with subordination but with gender distinction. He expresses no less disquiet (probably indeed more) about men whose style is effeminate with possible hints of a quasihomosexual blurring of male gender than about women who likewise reject the use of signals of respectable and respected gender distinctiveness."

"C.R. Hallipike and Edmund Leach ... provide cultural data which associates long hair with undisciplined sexuality, the shaven head with celibacy or 'sexlessness,' and short hair with 'restricted sexuality'."

Verse 2

Ἐπαινῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς ὅτι πάντα μου μέμνησθε καὶ καθὼς παρέδωκα ὑμῖν τὰς παραδόσεις κατέχετε.

ἐπαινεῶ commend, praise

The Western text inserts ἀδελφοί after ὑμᾶς – an obvious interpolation.

μέμνησθε Verb, perf pass indic, 2 pl

μνησθεῖν remember, call to mind

παραδίδωμι hand or give over, deliver up
παραδοσεις, εως f tradition
κατεχω hold fast, keep, restrain

Thistleton cites the suggestion of Hayes that "In their letter to Paul the Corinthian Christians express their intention to follow Paul's instructions about the participation of women in the worship, but seek his further advice about an unexpected complication concerning dress (see introduction to 11:2-16). Paul always stands warmly alongside those who admit to perplexity or seek advice. It is when they claim no need of advice, or act unilaterally with complacency rather than consultation, that he becomes sharply polemical." Thistleton adds, "*Many commentators believe that the tradition for which Paul commends the readers is the eschatological inclusion of men and women as active participants in prayer and prophetic speech, in contrast to the issue of clothing, which Paul believes must still generate signals of gender distinctiveness on the basis of the order of creation, which still holds sway even in the gospel era.*"

Verse 3

θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι ὅτι παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἡ κεφαλή ὁ Χριστὸς ἐστίν, κεφαλή δὲ γυναικὸς ὁ ἀνὴρ, κεφαλή δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ θεός.

θελω wish, will

εἰδέναι Verb, perf act infin οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

ἀνηρ, ἀνδρος m man, husband

"A few commentators defend *husband*, but the overwhelming majority of writers convincingly argue that the issue concerns gender relations as a whole, not simply those within the more restricted family circle."

Thistleton

κεφαλή, ης f head

Thistleton presents a lengthy collation of the debate concerning the meaning of κεφαλή.

There are three basic views:

- i) Head as source of authority;
- ii) origin – as in the 'head' of a river;
- iii) An expression of preeminence, being foremost.

Thistleton favours the third while recognising with Collins that "Paul deliberately uses a *polymorphous concept*, through a word that has *multiple meanings*."

Verse 4

πάς ἀνὴρ προσευχόμενος ἢ προφητεύων
κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων καταισχύνει τὴν
κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ·

προσευχομαι pray

προφητεύω "denotes the public proclamation of gospel truth as applied pastorally and contextually to the hearers." Thistleton

ἢ ἢ

κατὰ κεφαλῆς – '(with something) over the head', i.e. 'with the head covered'. Is Paul speaking here of some form of head-gear or of hairstyles? On the one hand Thistleton cites Oster, "Archeological evidence from Rome itself to the Roman East is unambiguous, Oster urges, in depicting the 'liturgical head covering' of men when they pray or use prophetic speech: 'the practice of men covering their heads in the context of prayer and prophecy was a common pattern of Roman piety and widespread during the late Republic and early Empire. Since Corinth was a Roman colony, there should be little doubt that this aspect of Roman religious practice deserves greater attention by commentators than it has received.'" However, he also gives credence to Murphy-O'Connor saying, "Murphy-O'Connor argues that *κατὰ* with the genitive more naturally denotes *hair which grows 'down from' the head* than that which covers it in a more *static way*, i.e. *on the head*." Thistleton comments, "We are forced to balance the Roman background forcefully urged by Oster against the ethical-cultural background proposed by Murphy-O'Connor in which he sees resonances of male sexuality or effeminacy, i.e., a homosexual semiotic of the male hair style of long, loose hair, or hair tied into a ponytail... We are forced to conclude that although Jerome Murphy-O'Connor's case is strong, we cannot regard it as conclusive, while lexicography and the Roman background cited by Oster, among others, suggests that 'with his head covered' remains in the end more probable, but not decisively so... The most important point of all, however, can too easily be overlooked. *This recent research proves conclusively that 11:4 does not present a merely hypothetical case... the first concern of 11:2-16 is about men, not about women.*"

καταισχύνω put to shame, humiliate,
disgrace

"(i) The Greek refers immediately to the man's physiological 'head' both as an anatomical entity and thence as synecdoche for the whole person. In the first place such a man *devalues himself*, i.e. a head covering like that of the Romans before their gods in public devotion (or just possibly a man whose hair style indicated a loose or self-advertising sexuality) *reduced his 'self respect'* ... and *shamed his own person*. Since, however, as Moxnes rightly argues, self-respect and personal integrity reflect on other people and especially upon one to whom that person is responsible (employer, patron, slave owner, or God), (ii) this 'shames his head' *also* in the sense of appearing thereby to demean *Christ or God as his Lord and Head*... What remains common to vv. 4-7 is *that which distracts attention from God or Christ in public worship* by generating a discordant, semiotic clothing code or hairstyle code which inevitably draws attention to the self in a way which makes the person's 'head' a source of 'shame' for his or her own *self-respect*, the *respect of the congregation*, and the *honour of the Lord who in public worship should be the central focus of thought and attention*. In this *context of worship* Hays's otherwise trivial analogy of attending a formal dinner wearing a baseball cap carries more force than might at first appear: 'perceived as rude and irreverent ... a breach of etiquette...' in vv. 4-7 it constitutes attention-seeking behaviour which thereby dishonour God and shames the self." Thistleton.

James Hurley follows Barrett in arguing that the 'head' refers to Christ.

Verse 5

πάσα δὲ γυνὴ προσευχομένη ἢ
προφητεύουσα ἀκατακαλύπτω τῇ κεφαλῇ
καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς· ἐν γὰρ
ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῇ ἐξυρημένῃ.

ἀκατακαλύπτως, ον uncovered

In a similar way, the latter reference to head in this verse would be to the man or her husband, guardian or family.

"To employ a dress code which hints at sexual availability while leading worship is unthinkable. That is not to say, however, that this was the conscious intention of women who attended prophetic speech or prayer at Corinth. It is likely that for them the issue was one of freedom and equality on the basis of the gospel axiom which finds expression in such a passage as Gal 3:28. Sociology of religion confirms the 'order' and 'tradition' often becomes overwhelmed where there is a flood of 'spiritual' or 'charismatic' vitality and dynamism. Hence J Gundry-Volf may plausibly allude to 'the Corinthian pneumatics' praying and prophesying with unfeminine or unmasculine headdress ... in the worship assembly where outsiders might be present and ... thus ... a loss of social acceptability... The pneumatic head-covering practices ignored the social boundaries between male and female and thus brought shame upon themselves and their 'heads.' In other words, *they confused equality with sameness or lack of gender difference*. Collins writes: 'It is probable that the situation was one that resulted from the attitude 'anything goes' (see 6:12; 10:23)... [but] because God has created the human genders in different ways a distinction is to be maintained when the community assembles for worship.'" Thistleton

ἐξυρημένη Verb, perf pass ptc, f dat s
ξυραομαι shave, have oneself shaved

Don Carson argues that the covering spoken of in these verses is not a veil but the hair. A veil is not mentioned until v.15. In Hebrew and Greek society, women wore their hair uncut but bundled up. If they wore their hair hanging loose it was a sign of moral looseness. If a woman was caught in sexual sin her hair was cut off.

"Hayes paraphrases the reconstructed report sent to Paul: 'some of the women, acting in the freedom and power of the Spirit, have begun to remove their head coverings and loose their hair when they prophesy as a sign of their freedom in Christ.' In other words, they want to give socio-symbolic expression to their freedom and equality; Paul insists that a socio-symbolic expression of gender identity cannot be brushed aside in the name of gospel freedom as no longer relevant (cf. Gal 3:28) since (Paul will argue) even the eschatological freedom of the gospel does not revoke expressions of the divine will established in the order of creation, or even sensitivities of perception within a surrounding culture.'" Thistleton

The covering of hair (long hair bound up) is a sign of a woman's faithfulness to her husband. If a woman thinks she is free from her husband she can wear her hair down, but this is just the same as if she had her hair shorn. "The loss of a woman's hair is taken to denote a loss of her *femininity*. By contrast, *covered* hair denotes *self-controlled sexuality*... We conclude that Paul insists on gender *difference* without any necessary inference of gender hierarchy. Fiddes sees the parallels with the order which cites God, Christ, man and woman as primarily one of function and distinctiveness entailing covenant rather than one of hierarchical status." Thistleton

Verse 6

εἰ γὰρ οὐ κατακαλύπτεται γυνή, καὶ κειράσθω· εἰ δὲ αἰσχρὸν γυναικὶ τὸ κείρασθαι ἢ ξυρᾶσθαι, κατακαλυπτέσθω.

κατακαλυπτομαι cover one's head
κειρω shear (sheep); midd. cut one's hair,
have one's hair cut
αἰσχος, α, ον disgraceful, shameful
ξυραομαι see v.5

Verse 7

ἀνὴρ μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ὀφείλει κατακαλύπτεσθαι τὴν κεφαλὴν, εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα θεοῦ ὑπάρχων· ἡ γυνὴ δὲ δόξα ἀνδρός ἐστίν.

ὀφειλω ought, must
εἰκων, ονος f likeness, image
δοξα, ης f glory

For this use of 'glory' cf 1 Cor 15:40,41 which has to do with God designed place in creation. "Paul probably means that the existence of the one brings honour and praise to the other. By creating man in his own image God set his own glory in man ... [Yet] man by himself is not complete ... without a companion ... one who is like him but different from him; one who is uniquely his own 'glory.' ... Man ... 'glories' in her... Paul's point ... is that in the creation narrative this did not happen the other way round." Fee

Thistleton cites Feuillet saying, "In this sense Paul provides no hint of 'inferiority.' *Because of women, man is all the more man, just as because of men woman is all the more woman, and as humankind woman and man manifest the divine attributes* (e.g., of power and love but not 'stereotypically') *as expressions of God's creative being.* Nevertheless, Feuillet also insists, *there is neither confusion nor precise symmetry,* for 'she is different from him,' as Paul uses Gen 2:18-25 to emphasise: 'that which provides the greatness (*la grandeur*) and dignity of woman is of such a nature as that by which she distinguishes herself from man, that is to say, in her own role which has been specifically assigned by the Creator.' Feuillet concludes that this has nothing whatever to do with any supposed 'antifeminism' in Paul, for this differentiation is defined in terms of greatness and glory, not inferiority."

ὑπαρχω *be* (equivalent to εἶμι)

Verse 8

οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀνὴρ ἐκ γυναικός, ἀλλὰ γυνὴ ἐξ ἀνδρός·

Reference here is to God's act of creation – Gen 2:21ff

Verse 9

καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐκτίσθη ἀνὴρ διὰ τὴν γυναῖκα, ἀλλὰ γυνὴ διὰ τὸν ἄνδρα.

κτιζω *create, make*

"Judith Gundry-Volf concludes: 'Paul's main point is that man and woman are both the *glory of one another* and therefore both have an obligation not to cause shame to their 'heads' ... since they are the glory of *different* persons – man is the glory of God, and the woman is the glory of man – they must use different means to avoid shaming their 'heads.' But Paul appeals to creation to show their obligation to bring glory – each to the particular one whose glory they are by creation – which they do through distinctive masculine and feminine hairstyles [or head coverings]' (her italics)." Thistleton