

## Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 82 – 1 Corinthians 14:26-15:19

### Day 406: 1 Corinthians 14:26-33a

#### Verse 26

Τί οὖν ἐστίν, ἀδελφοί; ὅταν συνέρχησθε, ἕκαστος ψαλμὸν ἔχει, διδασχὴν ἔχει, ἀποκάλυψιν ἔχει, γλώσσαν ἔχει, ἔρμηνείαν ἔχει· πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω.

Τί οὖν ἐστίν, ἀδελφοί 'What should be done, then, my friends.'

ὅταν when, whenever

συνερχομαι come together, meet

Dunn believes that the following describes a "typical gathering for worship," but the stress is on ὅταν συνέρχησθε ... πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

Many MSS add ὕμων after ἕκαστος. The shorter text is more likely to be earlier. ἕκαστος here with various ἔχει phrases means 'one contributes a psalm, another a teaching ...' It is not clear whether these are pre-prepared or spontaneous items.

ψαλμος, ου m psalm, song

διδασχη, ης f teaching, what is taught

ἀποκάλυψις, εως f revelation

"A revelation (NRSV, REB, NIV, NJB, KJV/AV) seems to suggest an act of divine disclosure on the spot. The word may indeed include this, but it does not exclude the communication of what came to be revealed by God through some experience or through biblical reflection prior to the act of worship itself." Thistleton

ἔρμηνεια, ας f interpretation, translation

Thistleton sticks here with the view he has expounded in 14:2,4,6,11,13 and 18-22. See his comment on v.27 below.

οἰκοδομη, ης f upbuilding, edification

A refrain throughout this chapter, cf. 3,5,12,26.

γινέσθω Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 3 s  
γίνομαι

#### Verse 27

εἴτε γλωσση τις λαλεῖ, κατὰ δύο ἢ τὸ πλεῖστον τρεῖς, καὶ ἀνά μέρος, καὶ εἷς διερμηνεύετω·

"We have argued consistently that all (or at least virtually all) the relevant passages in 12:1-14:26 which use διερμηνεω or ἐρμηνεω (especially 14:6 and 14:13) are more likely to refer to the persons who speak in tongues as themselves articulating what had otherwise been inexpressible in everyday speech... The syntax makes this understanding entirely compatible with this verse, even if on its own the Greek could be understood either in the traditional way or in the terms proposed here." Thistleton

εἴτε if, whether

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυοιν two

πλεῖστος, η, ον (superl. of πολυς) most, large; το π. at the most

τρεῖς, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

ἀνα prep used distributively with acc. each, each one

ἀνα μέρος may mean either 'in turn' i.e. one at a time, or 'by shares' i.e. each one being given a fair share of the time.

μερος, ους n part, piece, in part, partly

εἷς Thistleton suggests refers back to the τις at the beginning of the verse, 'let the one who speaks put it into words.'

διερμηνεω interpret, explain, translate

#### Verse 28

ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ᾖ διερμηνευτής, σιγάτω ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἑαυτῷ δὲ λαλείτω καὶ τῷ θεῷ.

ᾖ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

διερμηνευτης, ου m interpreter

Thistleton, following Weiss, suggests that the sense is 'if he/she is not an interpreter' i.e. 'if he or she (the speaker in tongues) cannot put it into words...'

σιγαω keep silent, be/become silent

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον reflexive pronoun, himself, herself, itself

Here meaning 'privately.'

#### Verse 29

προφηται δὲ δύο ἢ τρεῖς λαλείτωσαν, καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν·

'In the case of prophets, however,...' (bringing out the contrast implied by δε).

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other  
 διακρινω judge, evaluate, discern

"The utterance of a prophet is not to be given uncritical acceptance, but to be tested by those qualified." Morris.

"The 'others' are to 'distinguish between' (i) *prophetic speech which is God-given and coheres with the gospel of Christ and the pastoral situation* and (ii) *speech which is merely self-generated rhetoric reflecting the speaker's disguised self-interests, self-deceptions, or errors, albeit under the guise of supposed 'prophecy'!*... The authentic is to be 'sifted' from the inauthentic or spurious, in the light of the OT scriptures, the gospel of Christ, the traditions of all the churches, and critical reflections. Nowhere does Paul hint that preaching or 'prophecy' achieves a privileged status which places them above critical reflection ... *It is never infallible.*" Thistleton  
 Who are the *others* who are to make the judgement? The use of ἄλλος in the following verse might suggest the other prophets, but a wider use of the term is here probably intended. Allo understands 'the others' "principally" (but not exclusively) as "the leaders of the congregation."

### Verse 30

ἐὰν δὲ ἄλλω ἀποκαλυφθῆ καθημένω, ὁ πρῶτος σιγάτω.

ἀποκαλυφθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s  
 ἀποκαλυπτω reveal, disclose  
 καθημαι sit, sit down, live  
 πρῶτος, η, ον first, earlier

"It is quite conceivable that what is 'disclosed' or *revealed* to the second speaker is that the first has now unwittingly drifted into self-deceptive, manipulative, mistaken, or merely self-important discourse and has ceased to communicate what God's Spirit has revealed." Thistleton

σιγαω see v.28

### Verse 31

δύνασθε γὰρ καθ' ἓνα πάντες προφητεύειν, ἵνα πάντες μανθάνωσιν καὶ πάντες παρακαλῶνται,

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

"The dispute here is not whether all or some may prophesy; it is whether 'everyone' who has the gift of using prophetic speech also has the reflective and critical self-awareness and control to begin and especially 'to stop' (v.30) when the circumstances which are going on outside the speaker's immediate prophetic awareness warrant it. Paul insists that there are no exemptions to the rule that prophetic speech, like speaking in tongues, *remains subject to the ethics of controlled speech*, even if this necessitates a critical awareness of what one is doing, and what others are doing, when one's utterance is 'inspired' or 'given' by God." Thistleton

μανθανω learn, find out

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

### Verse 32

καὶ πνεύματα προφητῶν προφηταὶς ὑποτάσσεται·

ὑποτασσω put in subjection; pass. be  
 subject, submit to

"Just as those speaking with 'tongues' had the ability to keep silent when they chose, so it is with prophecy. It is not an irresistible divine compulsion that comes upon a man." Morris

### Verse 33

οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀκαταστασίας ὁ θεὸς ἀλλὰ εἰρήνης.

ἀκαταστασια, ας f disorder, insurrection  
 εἰρηνη, ης f peace

"Probably we should place a full stop after *peace*, and take what follows with the next verse. There are not wanting those who favour the division of the AV, but it is difficult to think that such a high-sounding principle as the one we have been examining should be given simply as the custom of the churches." Morris

## Day 407: 1 Corinthians 14:33b-40

### Verse 33b-36

"The translation and exegesis is immensely complex. Contextual factors are vital, including presuppositions about what the addressees were *assumed* to understand by language of which we know only Paul's part of the dialogue. Nevertheless, the main themes of 'controlled speech' and 'order' (14:24-40) continue." Thistleton

**Verse 33b**

Ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων,

Paul is appealing to the Corinthians to conform to what is general practice in the churches. For his description of the church here cf. 1:2.

**Verse 34**

αἱ γυναῖκες ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις σιγάτωσαν, οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν· ἀλλὰ ὑποτασέσθωσαν, καθως καὶ ὁ νόμος λέγει.

Verses 34-35 are displaced to after v.40 in a number of Western MSS, leading some, including Fee, to suggest that these verses are an early marginal gloss which found its way into the text in two different places. Such arguments are highly tenuous given the weight (or lack of weight) of the evidence. Other commentators (including Hayes and Barrett) suggest that the whole section vv 33b-36 is an interpolation. Ross, pointing out that only a handful of related MSS have these verses dislocated and none omit them, concludes "We are bound to accept the unanimous testimony of the manuscripts, however deeply we may regret that Paul expressed this opinion." A second means by which some seek to avoid the difficulties of vv.33b-36 is exemplified by Odell-Scott who suggests that in verses 34-35 Paul is quoting a Corinthian view which he rejects. The ἦ at the beginning of v.36 introducing a resounding rhetorical rejoinder. This suggestion does not fit with v.33b. Ellis and Witherington stress that vv. 34 and 35 continue significant themes and use a significant amount of vocabulary from the previous verses – they are a continuation of the one argument.

γυνή, αἰκος f woman, wife

σιγατώσαν Verb, pres act imperat, 3 pl

σιγαώ see v.28

ἐπιτρέπω let, allow, permit

ὑποτασώ see v.32

But Paul's appeal is not to mere custom. He appeals here to the law. Some suggest that the appeal is to Gen 3:16 but Bruce, followed by Thistleton, argues forcefully that the reference is to the creation narrative and to creation order (Gen 3:16, they argue, is descriptive (not prescriptive) of the *fallen* human condition). The principle is therefore of continuing importance and application even though its expression may change with cultural norms. What is the principle? It depends in part on what is demanded of the Corinthians in women 'keeping silent'. There are several views, but in light of 1 Tim. 2:11-14 it may be best to understand this as a prohibiting the women from passing judgement in the assembly on words of prophecy (v.29).

"We must therefore firmly keep in view that since 11:5 makes it clear that Paul approves of women using 'prophetic speech' their *silence* may allude either to 'stopping speaking' or more probably to the possibility of sitting in judgment over prophetic speech which may come from their husbands, i.e., 'sifting prophetic speech,' or to a constant invention of 'questions' cf. v.35) under the guise of 'sifting' what has been said." Thistleton Paul calls for 'order' in the churches. The issue is not so much whether they may speak as it is the abuse of their right to speak.

**Verse 35**

εἰ δέ τι μαθεῖν θέλουσιν, ἐν οἴκῳ τοῦς ἰδίους ἄνδρας ἐπερωτάτωσαν, αἰσχρὸν γάρ ἐστίν γυναικὶ λαλεῖν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ.

μαθεῖν Verb, aor act infin μαθῶ see v.31

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own

ἄνηρ, ἄνδρος m man, husband

ἐπερωτάω ask, interrogate, question

αἰσχυρος, α, ον disgraceful, shameful

Again, we need to be careful to distinguish the abiding principle from its cultural expression. What is meant by ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ? The definite article is not used here (compare v.33b). Paul may therefore be using the term in its general sense and appealing to recognised custom — 'it is shameful for a woman to speak [or to speak in a manner challenging what has been said by others] in an assembly [of men and women]'.

**Verse 36**

ἢ ἄφ' ὑμῶν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξηγήθην, ἢ εἰς ὑμᾶς μόνους κατήντησεν;

μονος, η, ον adj only, alone

καταντάω come, arrive, reach, attain

Paul rebukes the arrogance of the Corinthians in flouting all custom. "They must not think that they alone know what is Christian. The customs and thinking 'in all the churches of the saints' (verse 33) must be given due force." Morris

"It is a tragedy of church life that some are so weighed down by history that church activity becomes mere replication and routinisation while others are so concerned with novelty and 'relevance' that historical roots do not receive the respect that they deserve as part of a corporate memory and corporate identity." Thistleton

### Verse 37

Εἴ τις δοκεῖ προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνευματικός, ἐπιγινωσκέτω ἃ γράφω ὑμῖν ὅτι κυρίου ἐστὶν ἐντολή·

δοκεω think, suppose, have reputation  
εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι  
πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual  
ἐπιγινωσκω understand, recognise  
ἐντολή, ης f command, instruction

The theme of discerning the genuine from the false continues. The Corinthians must discern the truth of what Paul is saying.

"Paul's axiom is entirely logical. God's Spirit does not contradict himself. He does not undermine his own prior disclosures and thereby cause 'confusion' or disorder (v.33a). If a prophet's utterance contradicts *apostolic* utterances (let alone biblical tradition), does not that of itself disenfranchise the currency of the prophetic utterance?" Thistleton  
"The bearing of this on the way the New Testament writers viewed their inspiration should not be overlooked." Morris

### Verse 38

εἰ δέ τις ἄγνοεῖ, ἄγνοεῖται.

ἄγνοεω not know, fail to understand  
ἄγνοεῖται Verb, pres pass indic, 3 s  
ἄγνοεω

There are variant readings here. The AV reflects the pres *act* imperat, 'let him be ignorant'. The passive is well attested and makes the better sense, 'anyone who ignores this, let him be ignored.' Metzger comments, "Although the external evidence may not first seem to favour ἄγνοεῖτω, several important representations of the Alexandrian texts unite to support the indicative. The alternation between active and passive forms of the same verb accords with Paul's usage in 8:2-3, whereas the use of the imperative form may have been suggested by Rev 22:11. In any case, the imperative gives a less forceful meaning than ἄγνοεῖται."

### Verse 39

ὥστε, ἀδελφοί [μου], ζηλοῦτε τὸ προφητεύειν, καὶ τὸ λαλεῖν μὴ κωλύετε γλωσσῶν·

ὥστε so that, with the result that

Thistleton thinks μου should be retained.

ζηλω be jealous of, be very concerned about

'be eager to'

κωλυω hinder, prevent, forbid

### Verse 40

πάντα δὲ εὐσχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω.

εὐσχημονως properly, respectably

"The cognate noun εὐσχημοσυνη clearly means, *propriety, decorum, what is presentable in public*, and we do not doubt that Paul has in mind both *reverence and dignity appropriate to address to and from God*, and a *missionary or evangelistic* rather than strictly aesthetic dimension... 'fittingly' perhaps best conveys the Greek." Thistleton

τάξις, εως f order, division

κατὰ τάξιν 'in an orderly manner'

γινέσθω Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 3 s  
γίνομαι

"Everything in it [worship] must be done in as seemly a manner as possible, and with due regard for order." Morris

**Day 408: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8****Chapter 15**

Thistleton cites Barth who says that this chapter "forms not only the close and crown of the whole epistle, but also provides the key to its meaning from which light is shed onto the whole." It concerns the nature of the Gospel which centres in the cross and resurrection. It demonstrates that the gospel concerns the sovereign grace of God who "gives life to the dead" (Rom 4:17). Thistleton writes, "Paul could not introduce a theology of the resurrection before the notion of the cross as the 'ground and criterion' of Christian identity and lifestyle had been fully reappropriated. A context of religious triumphalism and complacency leaves no conceptual space for the 'transformative reversal' of death and resurrection. Resurrection epitomises 1:31, 'let the person who glories, glory in the Lord,' Divine action is directed toward the *dead*, who cannot contribute to their welfare. This underlines both divine sovereignty and divine grace."

What were the erroneous beliefs which Paul addresses in this chapter? This is the subject of much debate but it would seem that there were people who were so influenced by Greek modes of thinking that they would not allow for any place in their hope and understanding for a resurrection *of the body* (cf. Acts 17:32). It may well have been that they alleged rather than the resurrection had already occurred (cf. 2 Tim 2:18). Thistleton, outlining this view, says, "If Christian believers have already been raised with Christ to a new mode of life, all that happens at death is the dissolution of the physical body, while the already existing 'pneumatic' or 'spiritual' nature continues its existence without the husk of the body. In various forms this approach is linked with an overrealised eschatology and sometimes with spiritual enthusiasm." Further than these possibilities it is difficult to be clear about the views of those at Corinth which Paul seeks to correct in this chapter.

**Verse 1**

Γνωρίζω δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν, ὃ καὶ παρελάβετε, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἐστήκατε,

γνωρίζω **make known, disclose, know**

"I give you to know" Dale Martin suggests that this is a rebuke for the 'strong' who are proud of their knowledge. Paul's opening word of this chapter suggests that their knowledge is defective or incomplete.

On εὐαγγέλιον see Dunn *The Theology of Paul*, pp 164-169 who argues that the term is rare outside of the NT and within the NT is largely (60 out of 76 occurrences) Pauline. He concludes "it is probable that it was Paul himself who coined the usage of a new technical term for his own proclamation." Nevertheless, the *content* of Paul's message is not novel to Paul. "Paul endorses the shared pre-Pauline tradition which both *proclaims the death and resurrection of Christ and interprets it in terms of the saving and transforming power of God as this receives explanation and intelligibility within the frame of reference provided by the [Old Testament] scriptures.*" Thistleton

παρελάβετε Verb, aor act ind, 2pl  
 παραλαμβάνω **take, receive, accept**  
 ἐστήκατε Verb, perf act indic, 2 pl ἴστημι  
 intrans in pf **stand, stand firm**

"REB's 'have taken your stand' indicates *present* stability on the basis of past action as well as present state." Thistleton

**Verse 2**

δι• οὗ καὶ σώζεσθε, τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν εἰ κατέχετε, ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ εἰκὴ ἐπιστεύσατε.

Paul moves from the gospel as declared (its objective content) to the gospel in its effects (its saving power).

σώζω **save, rescue, heal**

The present tense has continuous force. "There is a sense in which salvation is once for all ... and there is also a sense in which it is progressive (e.g. 1:18; 2 Cor 2:15). It is to this progressive character of salvation that Paul directs attention." Morris  
 The focus here is on the future. The gospel to which they responded when it was first proclaimed is the gospel which still saves. They have no need of any other.

κατέχω **hold fast, keep**

τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν εἰ κατέχετε 'if you hold fast to the substance of the gospel that I proclaimed to you.'

ἐκτός εἰ μὴ **except, unless**  
 εἰκη adv. **in vain, for nothing**

"If men's grasp on the gospel is such that they are not really trusting in Christ, their belief is groundless and empty. They have not saving faith." Morris

**Verse 3**

παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν πρωτοῖς, ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον, ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφάς,

παραδίδωμι hand or give over, deliver up  
πρωτος, η, ον first, foremost, prominent

ἐν πρωτοῖς 'first and foremost', 'of first importance'

παρέλαβον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl  
παραλαμβάνω receive, accept

Paul stresses the way in which he has not made up the gospel but has passed it on faithfully. Neither do the Corinthians have any liberty to alter the message. *"The juxtaposition of confession in the saving efficacy of the cross and the divine vindication or glorification of Christ in the resurrection feature in virtually all of these passages as an emergent core pattern of the earliest Christian confessions or creeds within the pages of the New Testament."* Thistleton

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s  
ἀποθνήσκω die, face death

"Edwards ... sees in this verse 'a distinct statement that the doctrine of Christ's death was a propitiatory sacrifice for sin 'as' an essential aspect of the gospel (cf. 1:17; 2:2; Gal 3:1; Rom 4:25)... The word ὑπὲρ expresses the same notion as τιμῆς [bought with a price] in 6:20... Here therefore, as in 2 Cor 5:21, ὑπὲρ is synonymous with ἀντι."  
Thistleton

On 'for our sins, Calvin comments, "That is to say, He took our curse upon himself ... a sacrifice of expiation of our sins."

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

κατὰ τὰς γραφάς Cf. Gal 1:4, also Lk 24:25-27, 44-46. On the import of this phrase, see CH Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*. The allusion may particularly be to Is 53. though Blomberg notes that "the first Christian writers saw *all* of the Scriptures pointing to Christ."

**Verse 4**

καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη, καὶ ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς,

ἐτάφη aor pass indic, 3 s θαπτῶ bury

*"Underlines not only the reality of Christ's death but also the reality of his resurrection: had he not been 'buried', the genuine occurrence of either or both might lie more readily open to question."* Thistleton  
In context it alludes to the reality of the empty tomb.

ἐγήγερται perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγείρω  
raise

Note the perfect tense and its implication — he *is* risen.

τρίτος, η, ον third

κατὰ τὰς γραφάς "relate[s] this divine act of vindication and sovereign action to *the theme of promise*. Its occurrence rests not only on divine power and divine grace, but also on *divine faithfulness* to vindicate his obedient messianic agent." Thistleton. Thistleton also stresses that the resurrection of Christ is foundational to the life of the people of God both now, and on the last day. "Rom 8:11 summarises the Pauline logic formulated more fully in 1 Corinthians 15: 'if the Spirit of *him who raised Jesus from the dead* dwells in you, then *the God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead* will also give life to your mortal bodies through his indwelling Spirit' (REB, my italics). God will raise *the in-Christ corporeity who are identified with Christ* in the event in which *God raised Christ*."

**Verse 5**

καὶ ὅτι ὤφθη Κηφᾶ, εἶτα τοῖς δωδεκά·

ὤφθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ὄραω trans  
see, observe, perceive; pass. appear

Κηφας, α m Cephas (Aramaic equivalent of Πέτρος, rock).

εἶτα adv. then, and then

δωδεκα twelve

The 'twelve' is a general name for the apostles even though there were no longer twelve. 'The twelve' is not a Pauline term (Paul uses the phrase 'the apostles'). Its use here suggests a pre-Pauline confession.

**Verse 6**

ἔπειτα ὤφθη ἐπάνω πεντακοσίους ἀδελφοῖς ἐφάπαξ, ἕξ ὧν οἱ πλείονες μένουσιν ἕως ἄρτι, τινὲς δὲ ἐκοιμήθησαν·

ἔπειτα then, afterwards

ἐπάνω adv. over, more than

πεντακοσιοι, αι, α five hundred

This may be a reference to the incident recorded in Mat 28:16ff

ἐφάπαξ adv. once for all time, at one time

μενω remain, stay

ἕως until

ἄρτι now, at the present

The phrase "is clearly calculated to provide further evidential support for the resurrection of Jesus; anyone who is disposed to be sceptical will find a formidable gallery of witnesses wanting to testify that they have seen him alive" Paul did not regard the resurrection "as some sort of ineffable truth beyond history; rather, it was an event ... for which historical eyewitness testimony was readily available. Hayes

κοιμαομαι sleep, fall asleep, die

For this use of *sleep*, see 1 Thess 4:13f. he term "carries with it the grammar of being *awakened* at the resurrection."

### Verse 7

ἔπειτα ὄφθη Ἰακωβῶ, εἶτα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις πᾶσιν·

"Nothing more is known of the appearance to *James*. Nor is it certain which *James* is meant. Most think that it is *James the Lord's brother*, and that it was this appearance which led to his conversion and through him to that of his brothers." Morris

"That ... *Jesus 'appeared to James'* ... evidently produced in *James* a revolutionary effect comparable to that which a similar experience later produced in *Paul himself*." Bruce

### Verse 8

ἔσχατον δὲ πάντων ὡσπερὶ τῷ ἐκτρωματι ὄφθη καί μοι.

ἔσχατος, η, ον last; ἔσχατον παντων last of all

ὡσπερὶ as, as though

ἐκτρωμα, τος η abnormal birth, miscarriage

"The emphasis lies in the *undeserved grace of God* (explicated further on v.10), who chooses to give life and new creation to those reckoned as dead, or, in *Paul's case*, both a 'miscarried, aborted fetus' whose stance had been *hostile* to *Christ* and to the people of *God*." Thistleton  
"This abortive birth makes the grace of *God* all the more evident in *Paul's case* than if he had grown up in *Christ* little by little, step by step." Calvin

"*Paul* perceives himself as one who was unable to contribute anything to an encounter in which *God's sovereign grace* was all, even to the extent of giving life to one who was humanly beyond all hope. This precisely reflects the theme of resurrection as *God's sovereign gift of life* to the dead (not to those who already possess capacities of self-perpetuating survival) throughout this chapter." Thistleton

καίγω a compound word = και ἐγω

"*Paul* puts his vision on the road to *Damascus* on the same level as the other resurrection appearances. He thinks of himself as the last in the line of those who have seen the *Lord*." Morris

## Day 409: 1 Corinthians 15:9-11

### Verse 9

Ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι ὁ ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων, ὃς οὐκ εἰμὶ ἰκανὸς καλεῖσθαι ἀπόστολος, διότι ἐδίωξα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ·

ἐλάχιστος, η, ον least, smallest, insignificant

ἰκανός, η, ον worthy, sufficient, fit

διότι because, for,

διώκω persecute, pursue

"As *Munck* and others have shown, *Paul's persecuting the church* underlines the sovereign initiative of *God's grace* as intervening gift and allows no room for so-called psychological explanations concerning supposed subconscious guilt feelings which 'contribute to the experience of sovereign call.' *Paul* compares this call to that of *Jeremiah 'before birth'* (cf. *Gal 1:13-17* and *1 Cor 9:16-18*)." Thistleton

### Verse 10

χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ εἰμι ὃ εἰμι, καὶ ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ ἢ εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ κενὴ ἐγενήθη, ἀλλὰ περισσότερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα, οὐκ ἐγὼ δὲ ἀλλὰ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ [ἡ] σὺν ἐμοί.

χάριτι Noun, dat s χάρις, ιτος f grace

"We come to the heart of *Paul's point*. *Undeserved, unmerited 'grace'* (χαρις) which springs from the free, sovereign love of *God* alone and becomes operative in human life not only determines *Paul's life* and apostolic vocation but also characterises all *Christian experience*, not least the promise of resurrection and the reality of the activity of *Christ as Lord*." Thistleton

ἐμὲ Pronoun, acc s ἐγω

What he is is sheer gift.

κενός, η, ον empty, to no purpose

ἐγενήθη Verb, aor indic, 3 s γινομαι

περισσότερος, α, ον adj here as adv more  
κοπιαώ work, work hard, labour

The grace of God is seen in God's transforming power at work in men and women: it is dynamic, not static. Such grace saves, equips and empowers. "Grace has shaped his entire life and character as an apostolic agent *through whom* God chooses to reach and transform others... The emphasis on 'labour' reminds us that difficulty and cost in Christian work, far from suggesting an absence of God's grace, presupposes the gift of such grace to prosecute the work through all obstacles (see 2 Cor 11:23-17). The theme of grace in and through 'weakness' is one which Paul constantly urges to Corinth." Thistleton

Paul is careful to emphasise that though he has accomplished much, none of it can be credited to him.

**Verse 11**

εἴτε οὖν ἐγὼ εἴτε ἐκεῖνοι, οὕτως κηρύσσομεν καὶ οὕτως ἐπιστεύσατε.

εἴτε if, whether

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those κηρυσσω preach, proclaim

Paul emphasises that there is only one gospel, whether preached by him or the other apostles. This is the gospel they believed. There is none other for them now. "'Ecumenicity' is not the lowest common denominator in a miscellany of individual experiences. For Paul it is defined by the *common kerygma* of a *shared, transmitted gospel tradition*, anchored in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as ἐν πρωτοις (15:3)." Thistleton

**Day 410: 1 Corinthians 15:12-19****Verse 12**

Εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς κηρύσσεται ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται, πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν τινες ὅτι ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν;

νεκρος, α, ον dead

ἐγήγερται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω raise

Note the force of the perfect, 'was raised and continues to live.'

πῶς how? in what way?

Expresses astonishment, 'how can it be that one who has professed to accept the gospel and believe in Christ can now deny the resurrection!'

ἀναστασις, εως f resurrection, raising up

On the views at Corinth which Paul is opposing, see the note at the beginning of this chapter.

**Verse 13**

εἰ δὲ ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται·

The resurrection of Christ is not just an odd event, it is central to an understanding of God's purposes towards mankind.

"These verses underline *Paul's expectation that believing Christians will respect logical coherence and rational thought*. He does not hesitate to appeal to it." Thistleton.

**Verse 14**

εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, κενὸν ἄρα [καὶ] τὸ κήρυγμα ἡμῶν, κενὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν,

κενος, η, ον see v.10

κηρυγμα, τος η what is preached, message, proclamation

"So central are the truth claim and event of the resurrection of Christ that if the linchpin is removed a multiple of dependent derivatives collapses: (i) the content and currency of the gospel; (ii) the authenticity of the Christian faith; (ii) the truthfulness of testimony to the acts of God (v.15); (iv) liberation from the destructive and damaging power of sin (v.17); and (v) the irretrievable loss of believers who have died (v.18)." Thistleton

**Verse 15**

εὐρισκόμεθα δὲ καὶ ψευδομάρτυρες τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι ἐμαρτυρήσαμεν κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι ἤγειρεν τὸν Χριστόν, ὃν οὐκ ἤγειρεν εἴπερ ἄρα νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται.

εὐρισκω find, discover

ψευδομαρτυς, υρος m false witness, one who gives false testimony

μαρτυρεω bear witness, testify

εἴπερ since, if it is true that

ἄρα carries here the classical sense 'as they say'

The gospel is not a system of philosophy or a moral code but the declaration of what God has done in Christ. If the dead are not raised then the whole gospel is a sham and those who preach it are liars.

**Verse 16**

εἰ γὰρ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, οὐδὲ  
Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται·

The importance of this argument is clear from the way in which vv 16 & 17 repeat the points made in vv 13 & 14.

**Verse 17**

εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, ματαία ἡ  
πίστις ὑμῶν, ἔτι ἐστὲ ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις  
ὑμῶν.

ματαιος, α, ον worthless, futile, useless  
ἔτι still, yet

"Christ dead, without resurrection would be a condemned, not a justified Christ. How could he justify others?" Godet

"Ye are yet in your sins, because Christ is yet in your sins. And your faith, committing you to Christ, uniting you to Christ, makes you share with him in whatever is his condition, in whatever is his fate. You cannot be better off than he is." Candlish

"The words can be given a second meaning. If Christ was not raised they would still be living in their sins like any pagan. But they have a new power over sin stemming from faith in the risen Christ. Therefore Christ must have been raised." Morris

**Verse 18**

ἄρα καὶ οἱ κοιμηθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ  
ἀπωλοντο.

κοιμηθέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl  
κοιμαομαι see v.6

ἀπωλοντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl  
ἀπολλυμι destroy; midd be lost,  
perish

There is no new day of awakening for them without the resurrection.

**Verse 19**

εἰ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ ταύτῃ ἐν Χριστῷ ἠλπικότες  
ἐσμὲν μόνον, ἐλεεινότεροι πάντων  
ἀνθρώπων ἐσμὲν.

ζωη, ης f life  
ἠλπικότες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl  
ἐλπίζω hope, hope in

"The perfect ἠλπικότες ἐσμεν ... carries the idea, 'we have set our hope and continue to hope'." Morris

μονος, η, ον i) adj only, alone; ii) adv  
μονον only, alone

Thistleton suggests that the positioning of *μονον* also carries the force of hope *in Christ only*. He seeks to express the double meaning in the translation '... placed hope in Christ with nothing beyond.'

ἐλεεινότερος, α, ον most pitiable  
comparative of ἐλεεινος, η, ον pitiable

"If Christ be not raised, the very peace and reconciliation which make this life at its worst not only tolerable, but even desirable to believers in Jesus, are themselves a delusion." Candlish