

1st Corinthians 1:1-31

introduction

From J. Vernon McGee we get: “Paul addressed this epistle to the church which was in the city of Corinth. He wrote it from Ephesus around A.D. 55-57 (more likely 57). Carnal Corinth was the sin center of the Roman Empire in Paul’s day. It was labeled “Vanity Fair.” Its location was about forty miles west of Athens on a narrow isthmus between the Peloponnesus and the mainland. It was the great commercial center of the Roman Empire with three harbors, of which two were important: Lechaenum, about one and one half miles to the west, and Cenchrea, about eight and one half miles to the east. Since the time of Paul, a canal has been put through the isthmus, and Corinth is no longer an important city...In Paul’s day there were about four hundred thousand inhabitants in Corinth. It was located on this important isthmus, as we previously mentioned, and the commerce of the world flowed through the two harbors connected with the city of Corinth. The population consisted of Greeks, Jews, Italians, and a mixed multitude. Sailors, merchants, adventurers, and refugees from all corners of the Roman Empire filled its streets. A perpetual “Vanity Fair” was held here. The vices of the East and of the West met and clasped hands in the work of human degradation [in Corinth]. Religion itself was put to ignoble uses. A magnificent temple was built for the Greek goddess Aphrodite, or Venus as we know her by the Roman name. In it were a thousand priestesses who ministered to a base worship. Those thousand so-called priestesses were actually nothing in the world but prostitutes. Sex was a religion there. I believe that Corinth could teach this generation about sex. However, I think this generation already knows enough with it ‘ad nauseam’ today...On Paul’s third journey he spent a long period of time in Ephesus. It was in Ephesus that he did some of his outstanding work as a missionary. Probably that area was more thoroughly evangelized than any other. However, this caused the Corinthians to become disturbed. They were baby Christians, and they were urging Paul to come to them. Apparently Paul wrote a letter [to them] to correct some of the errors that had come into that church. They, in turn, wrote to Paul asking questions that they wanted answered about political issues, religion, domestic problems, heathenism, and morality. Paul answered them and responded to more reports which were brought to him. We do not have that first letter which Paul wrote to them. The letter that followed the reports brought to him is the letter we know today as 1 Corinthians. That is the epistle we are about to study. Later on Paul wrote the letter we now call 2 Corinthians. The keynote of this epistle is the supremacy of Christ, the Lordship of Jesus. That is so important for us to note, because that is the solution to the problems. You will find here that He is the solution to correct

moral, social, and ecclesiastical disorders.” [THRU THE BIBLE, Vol. V, pp.1-2, selected passages.]

1st Corinthians 1:1-9, an introduction

Verses 1-9, “Paul, called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, *that you may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God *is* faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Who, What was Paul?

From J. Vernon McGee we get these comments, “Will you notice in your Bible that the little verb “to be” is in italics, which means it is not in the original. It should read, “Paul, called an apostle.” This declares what kind of an apostle he is. He is called apostle. God called him; the Lord Jesus Christ waylaid him on the Damascus road. Then the Spirit of God taught him yonder in the desert of Arabia. He is a *called* apostle...” [THRU THE BIBLE, Vol.V, p.4, col.1, part 2]

What is Sanctification?

Verse 2, “To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus” The next question we get into is this question of “sanctification.” Some say we’re sanctified upon Baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit, as initial believers. Others say our “sanctification” is a lifelong process. Who’s right? By these verses, it looks like it’s immediate and permanent. But hold on now, not so

fast. You know how you're never supposed to base a doctrine on one verse alone. J. Vernon McGee does a good job of explaining our sanctification. "Paul calls them **"sanctified in Christ Jesus."** The term *sanctification* is used in several different ways [in the Bible], as we have already seen in Romans. Here it is ***positional sanctification***, which is the position we have in Christ. When sanctification is joined to God the Father or God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, then it is generally positional. When sanctification is connected with the Holy Spirit, then that is ***practical sanctification***...[The sanctification Paul is talking about] is a position we have in Christ. If you have trusted Him, He has been made over to you your sanctification. You are as saved right now as you will be a million years from now, because you are saved in Christ. You cannot add anything to that. There is also a *practical* sanctification, which is something that varies. These Corinthians don't sound like sanctified saints. The work of the Holy Spirit was not very much in evidence in their lives. But they were *positionally* sanctified in Christ Jesus..." [ibid. p.4, col.2, par.2, 4-5] Now here is where it gets sticky. There are those who teach a ***faith + nothing*** doctrine (many Protestants teach this, and it is an extreme error). The end product of our growth in Christ is not faith, per se, but it is Agape. The Protestants and many Evangelicals erroneously take the *positional* sanctification whole-heartedly, while ignoring the *practical* sanctification, which in his Epistle to the Galatians Paul strongly warned, if it---practical sanctification---isn't there, you as a believer ***will not be*** in the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21). Some, many of these Corinthian brethren were still not *practically sanctified*, they were still involved, many of them, in the sins Paul described in Galatians 5:19-21. If they continued in that sinful state, Paul stated very clearly they would not be in the Kingdom of God. But Paul also stated in 1st Corinthians 1:2 that these baby Christians were *positionally* "sanctified in Christ Jesus." Many a doctrinal debate pro and con has gone back and forth over this one issue, which J. Vernon McGee explained pretty well. Were the Corinthian brethren sanctified? The answer is both yes and no. Yes they were *positionally sanctified*, and no, they were not *practically sanctified*, they had a long way to go to be that. *Practical sanctification* takes a lifetime of overcoming and growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, *positional sanctification* is immediate, upon the believer's Baptism and acceptance of Jesus Christ into his or her life. For more on practical sanctification and what it involves, see

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/whatisgrace/whatisgraceintro.htm>.

What is a saint?

They were **"called to be saints," verse 2.** "Just as Paul was a *called* apostle, they were *called* saints. We are also called saints...The word *saint* actually means "set aside to God." Every Christian should be set aside to God...On what basis is a child of God a saint or holy? On the basis that he is for the use of God. This is the

position that we have. I repeat again, one is not a saint on the basis of what one does... [ibid. p.4, par.6]

The Church's Apostolic name: 'Unto the church of God at Corinth'

Notice this is addressed to **“the church of God at Corinth.”** If you look up “church of God” in Strong’s Concordance, you will see it’s used 12 times in Paul’s epistles (see Acts 20:29; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Cor. 10:32; 1 Cor. 11:22; 1 Cor. 15:9; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:13; 1 Ti. 3:5, 15; 1 Cor. 11:16; 1 Cor. 16:1; 1 Thess. 2:14; 2 Thess. 1:4). It was apparently the apostolic name for God’s Church, what I would call the Apostolic Church of God. It was composed of many semi-autonomous congregations which Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Peter started up, both in Judea and other parts of the Roman Empire, Asia Minor especially. So “Church of God” was the apostolic name given to the apostolic Christian Church of the 1st century under the Apostles.

Charis and Shalom

“Grace be unto you, and peace...” This was a common greeting in Paul’s letters, the word *charis* was a greeting in the Greek world, and meant “grace.” *Shalom* was the Hebrew greeting, and meant “peace” in Hebrew. Some of my Israeli friends start their letters or emails “Shalom.” So this greeting in Hebrew is still used.

Verse 5, “that you were enriched in everything by him in all utterance and all knowledge...” J. Vernon McGee nails this one on the head. And I see so much of this in the churches, a lot of head-knowledge of believers, without them truly having Christ in their hearts, no agape being demonstrated. He says, “The important thing is to have the Word of God in our hearts. That does not necessarily mean to memorize it. It means to obey it. If Christ is in your heart, you are obeying Him, and you are thinking upon Him. He occupies your mind and your heart. Some of the meanest little brats that I have ever met have memorized over a hundred verses of Scripture [and I have met a lot of adult “brats” with the same problem]. That doesn’t mean no one should memorize Scripture just because some mean brats have memorized it. It does mean that simply memorizing Scripture is not what is meant by hiding it in your heart. You hide it in your heart, my friend, when you obey Him, think about Him, are occupied with Him [like David was, just read the

Psalms]... When He becomes Lord in your life, it will solve many of your problems. That is what Paul is going to talk about in this epistle.

Last verse of Paul's introduction---our fellowship, partnership in Christ---what it means

Verse 9, “God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” “Have you noticed that the Lord Jesus Christ is mentioned in this section in practically every verse? Actually, it isn't practically every verse; it is *every* verse. This is the ninth reference to Him in nine verses. It is obvious that Paul is putting an emphasis upon the person of the Lord Jesus Christ... We are called “unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord”... The word is the Greek word *koinonia*, and is used by Paul again and again. Actually, the word can have several different meanings. It can mean fellowship as we understand it today. It can be used to mean a contribution. In Romans 15:26 he says they made a certain *koinonia* for the poor saints which were in Jerusalem, and there it means a contribution. In 1 Corinthians 10:16 the word *koinonia* is used in connection with Communion [the Passover service, with the Bread, Wine and footwashing service, actually called Passover in the original Greek text]. He is speaking of the Lord's Supper and writes: “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the [*koinonia*] communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the [*koinonia*] communion of the body of Christ?” [Comment: The Messianic Jews know what this “cup of blessing” meant and means, and it was one of the cups of wine which was partaken of in the Passover service, which has now been transformed by Jesus Christ at his last supper into a Christian observance. But it is a Christian Passover observance, which Paul and the early Christian Churches of God observed once a year on the 14h Nisan. See <http://www.unityinchrist.com/history2/earlychurch1.htm>]

We're all in direct partnership with Jesus Christ

“*Koinonia* can also mean a partnership, and I believe that is the way it is used here in this ninth verse. **“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the [partnership] fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.”** Now this is without doubt one of the greatest privileges that is given to us. If you are in Christ, if you have come to Him and accepted Him as your Savior, then you are in partnership with Christ. He is willing to be our partner. Therefore this means an intimate relationship to Christ. There are different kinds of partnerships... There can be a

partnership in business...Then there is marriage with a partnership in a love relationship. This should be a very close, intimate relationship. There is a passage in the Old Testament that makes me smile because I know God had man and wife in mind when He wrote it. He said among other things that they were not to hitch an ox and an ass together for plowing. They were not to plow together. Well, in marriage I have seen many an ox and an ass hitched up together! That ought not to be, because marriage is a partnership. ***What does it mean, then, to be in partnership with the Lord Jesus?*** For one thing, it means that in business you own things together with Him. Everything that I own belongs to Jesus Christ. It belongs to Him as much as it does me. Therefore, He is interested in what I own. Now I must confess that there was a time when I owned a few things that I don't think He cared about...I have a nice Chevrolet car because a wonderful dealer helped me get it. When I drove out with it, it was mine, but I told the Lord Jesus that it was His too. He has taken many a ride in it with me, by the way. Whatever I have is His also. I thank Him for my house, and I thank Him for taking care of it because it is His too, you see. Whatever I have is His. The marriage partnership means different things. It means having mutual interests. I'm in that kind of partnership with the Lord Jesus, too. That means that Christ is interested in me, and I am interested in Him. That carries it to a pretty high plane, you see. Also, we have a mutual devotion. His resources are mine, and mine are His. He doesn't get very much, but He owns me. I have presented my body to Him. Now that answers quite a few questions for me about where I can go and what I can do. For example, I used to smoke quite a bit [J. Vernon McGee talking here]. Now I have metastatic cancer in the lungs, and it would be pretty foolish for me to smoke now. However, long ago when I made the discovery, not just that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, but also that Christ belongs to me and I belong to Christ, I wanted to give Him the best body that I could. That is when I gave up smoking. That decided the question for me. Do you see that our decisions are made on a higher plane than simply "Dare I do this?" or "Ought I do that?" We belong to Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ belongs to us." [THRU THE BIBLE, Vol.V, p.6, col.1, par.9, col.2, par. 1-5, sel. portions, p. 7, col.1, par.1-2] I have a comment to make about health, what we eat, drink etc. In the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, we believe and understand that God's 'health-food' laws written in Leviticus 11 apply in a similar manner of giving Jesus the best body possible, and that our bodies are a temple for the Holy Spirit. Studies have been done, comparing the length of life-spans for those who do and do not eat food declared as "unclean" in Leviticus 11. And those who do not eat unclean food live, on average, five years longer than those who do eat unclean food. Now that I'm in my 60s, five years makes a big difference. Dr. Paul Dudley White, President Eisenhower's heart doctor, was my next-door neighbor while I was growing up, and he would always quote from Leviticus, telling people "don't eat the fat", have a low-fat diet. He'd quote that right out of the Book of Leviticus! Boy would that irritate some people today. Up until his death, though, he was the leading specialist on heart disease. And he got many people into riding bicycles to exercise their hearts and keep fit. Pork is a meat that is virtually laced with fat, right inside the meat, fat you cannot trim off. Cancer patients (my dad and sister were) are given a list of "do not eat" items. Almost all

of the “do not eat” items on their doctor-lists show up in Leviticus 11 on God’s list of “do not eat.” You might give that some serious thought. I’m not trying to be legalistic or anything, it’s just Christians are owned by Jesus, and it is his desire that we be healthy. It’s your choice though, cancer is a nasty way to go, and heart attacks are not very pleasant either. If I died tomorrow, my work for the Lord on this website would cease instantly. Partnership with Jesus means more than it appears on the surface. Take it seriously. On the subject of alcohol, the Bible teaches *extreme moderation* in consumption (not abstinence as some erroneously teach). If you find you can’t abide by that, it is better to give it up entirely. Remember, you are not your own.

Divisions Within the Body of Christ

J. Vernon McGee says, “I don’t know of a church today that does not have problems, and many of them are the same as those that the Corinthian believers faced.” His comment for the next verse was *“Centrality of Christ Crucified Corrects Divisions”*. Verses 10-16, **“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions [margin: ‘Greek’, *schisms* or *dissensions*] among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe’s household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, ‘I am of Paul,’ or ‘I am of Apollos,’ or ‘I am of Cephas,’ or ‘I am of Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say I had baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanus. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.”** “The word for “divisions” is *schisma*. It means there should be no open break, no fracturing of the church, which is done by fighting, by gossip, criticism, hatred, or bitterness. Believe me, friend, I see that in many contemporary churches. These things cannot be in your life if Jesus Christ is your partner. **Let “there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”** What is **“the same mind”**? Well, it is the mind of Christ (see Phil. 2:5-8). The word for “contentions” here is *eris*. Now Eris was the goddess of strife and wrangling. There was strife, quarreling, schisms, and wranglings in the church at Corinth. Paul got his information firsthand---he named his source---he said he got his information from Chloe. My friend, if you are going to make a charge [context here, within a church], back it up with your name like Chloe did...One must admire Chloe there in Corinth. Chloe told it as it was, brought it out into the open, and said, ‘There is trouble in our church, bad trouble, and it needs to be dealt with.’...*The trouble with the church in Corinth was that they had a bunch of baby Christians*...Divisions

were being caused by believers following different leaders of the church. They formed cliques around certain men...We know quite a lot about Paul. He was intellectual, he was brilliant, and he was courageous---but apparently not attractive physically. Simon Peter [Cephas] was fiery. He had been weak at first, but he became a rugged preacher of the gospel. He had a great heart and was very emotional. Apollos was one of the great preachers of the apostolic church. He was not an apostle and has not been given much recognition, but he was a great preacher...All three of these men had strong personalities, but they did not cause the divisions. They all contended together for the faith. They maintained the unity of the Spirit, and they all exalted Jesus Christ. It was the members of the church in Corinth who were guilty of making divisions...Do you realize that you and I are living in a day when the church has been destroyed [by Satan] from the inside? The problems are not on the outside today.” Listen to what J. Vernon McGee says here, carefully. He names two central causes for the divisions which are occurring and have occurred within the Body of Christ. Both are deadly, and both are from within. “Innumerable churches have long since been destroyed by liberals in the pulpit.” That’s one cause, and it has contributed to the death of whole denominations, not just churches. Now the second cause, yet again from within. “If the man in the pulpit is sound in faith, you’ll find the troublemakers in the pew. That is where strife is stirred up. This does more damage to the cause of Christ than alcohol or atheism or worldliness. In many churches they are doing what they did in the mountains of Kentucky and Tennessee...” [Remember the Hatfield’s and the McCoy’s?] [THRU THE BIBLE, Vol.V, pp. 8-9, selected passages]

What is Jesus About To Do With His Divided Body of Believers?

Paul asks the question **“Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” (verse 13)** Christ is not divided, and what’s being pointed out here is that the crucifixion of Christ is the core of Christianity, what J. Vernon McGee calls “the bedrock of Christian unity.” Now there are divisions within the Body of Christ over doctrinal interpretation, and in a sense, this is all well and good. We are told (Romans 14) that the Christian conscience is paramount in our following Christ when it comes to secondary beliefs. But I know of over 375 differing “denominations” of Sabbath-keeping Churches of God which all originated out of the Worldwide Church of God. They all believe basically the same thing doctrinally. It is the pastoral leadership within each of these who have caused the divisions, and allowed them to remain. J. Vernon McGee also brings out that there are many who have divided over secondary issues, causing schisms and strife in the Body of Christ. There is a very interesting passage, one of those golden nuggets of truth I recently discovered in Zephaniah 2:1-3 while I was doing a commentary on the Minor Prophets. Embedded within this Minor Prophet’s ‘word from the LORD’ was a direct command by the pre-incarnate Christ to the

Body of Christ, the Church. It was a command for them to unify themselves, and it was an emphatic command that they unify before the Day of the LORD come upon them unexpectedly. [see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/Zephaniah1.htm> and scroll a short distance to Zephaniah 2:1-3.] Personally, I don't care where you are or who you are within the Body of Christ. In those three short verses, you are being commanded by Jesus Christ to unite. How Jesus Christ is going to help bring this about within the Body of Christ is beyond me, the scope of the task is so huge and beyond being able to accomplish on a human plane alone. But definitely read the article at that link. For those of you within denominations that are so very much alike doctrinally as your sister denominations, you might start considering how you can start to follow Jesus Christ's command for us to unify in Zephaniah 2:1-3, what you can do at your own level. It may be he will "call certain leaders home" because they are in the way. This is not something we humans can or should have any part in. Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of Israel. We are a part of his flock. Gathering and keeping a flock together is the sole responsibility of the shepherd. Sheep that cause division at the top of leadership levels are his responsibility. Sheep dogs that don't do their job, that's his responsibility. If you see Jesus working within a church or denomination, making it more alive, and its leaders doing more to follow Jesus' lead in making healthy spiritual changes, spiritual growth oriented changes, then you can help bring unity by moving to that denomination. If Jesus is going to help bring the unity about he's asking for in Zephaniah 2:1-3, you're going to see a lot of moving around of membership, and some real spiritual changes taking place within certain denominations to more accurately follow the Scriptures. Also the promotion of the Gospel to the world will be one of the key components of healthy parts of the Body of Christ whom he will seek to unify---and it won't be a "health & wealth" gospel. What is that Gospel? see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/misc/WhatIsTheGospel%20.htm>.

*The Cross of Christ, Foolishness to the World---the Jews want a sign,
the Greeks seek wisdom*

Verses 18-25, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.' Where is the wise? Where is scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For the Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the

power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is far wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. “The cross divides men. The cross divides the saved from the unsaved, but it doesn’t divide the saved people [although there is a debate as to whether people ought to wear them, which does tend to divide some within the Body of Christ]...Paul makes it very clear that his method was not in the wisdom of the words of the world, not in the method of dialectics of divisions or differences or opinions or theories, but he just presented the cross of Christ. That brought about a unity of those who were saved. To those who perish, the cross of Christ is foolishness; but to the saved men it becomes the power of God. [He should have said **“men being saved”**, the word **“saved”** is in the present tense in the actual verse, **“being saved”**, i.e. practical sanctification is a life-long process.] The cross of Christ divides the world, but it does not divide the church. Notice that Paul divides mankind into two great ethnic groups; the Jews and the Greeks (meaning Gentiles). He recognizes this twofold division. The Jew represented religion. He had a God-given religion. The Jews felt that they had the truth, and they did---as far as the Old Testament was concerned. The problem was that it became just a ritual to them. They had departed from the Scriptures and followed tradition, which was their interpretation of the Scriptures [i.e. the Talmud and Mishna]. The power was gone. Therefore, when Christ appeared, they asked for a sign. **“Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall be no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth”** (Matt. 12:38-40). The Lord Jesus gave to them the sign of the resurrection.”

A short history of the Greeks and their love of philosophy

“The Greeks were the Gentiles. They represented philosophy. They were the lovers of wisdom. They said they were seeking the truth; they were searching and scanning the universe for truth. They were the rationalists. While the Jews ended up in ritual, the Gentiles ended up as rationalists and had to conform to a pattern of reason. About four hundred years before Christ came, the Greek nation [it wasn’t a nation at that point, but a bunch of squabbling city-states, but they were all Greek] constructed on the horizon of history a brilliance of mind and artistic accomplishment of such dimensions that it still dazzles and startles mankind. It continued for about three centuries. By the time of Christ, the glory of Greece was gone. It just fizzled out. There were men like Pericles, Anaxagoras, Thales, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle who left certain schools such as the Epicurean school, the Stoic school of philosophy, and the Peripatetic school. Then they all disappeared. There followed two thousand years of philosophical sterility and

stagnation in the world. Then there appeared men like Bacon, Hobbes, and Descartes, and there was a rebirth of great thinkers for a brief period of brilliance. This was again followed by decadence, and we are still in it today---even though some of our boys think they are very smart. “What is truth?” asked the fatalistic Pilate. Bacon asked the same question. Philosophy is still asking that question. Philosophy still has no answers to the problems of life. **“Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”** Someone has defined philosophy as a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn’t there. The Greeks sought after wisdom. Today man is still searching for some theory or formula, and he thinks that it is through science that he will get the answers to some of the questions of life [the Unified Field Theory is the BIG scientific riddle they’re trying to solve, where they believe it’s going to answer these questions of life]. Do you think that man today has the answers to the questions of life?...**“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.”**...They would have accepted a deliverer on a white charger who was putting down the power of Rome. But a crucified Christ was an insult to them. That means *defeat*---not victory. They didn’t want to accept that at all. **“As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” (Rom. 9:33).** And Peter wrote this: **“Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed” (1 Pet. 2:7-8).** A crucified Christ was a stumblingblock to the Jew. To the Greeks (or Gentiles) the cross was foolishness, and absurdity. They considered it utterly preposterous and ridiculous and contrary to any rational, worldly system. In Rome there has been found a caricature of Christianity, a figure on the cross with an ass’ head. Also in our day our Savior is being ridiculed...” [THRU THE BIBLE, Vol.V, pp. 10-11, resp.]

God’s ultimate joke on humanity---so who has God called to confound the wise of this world?---this is amazing!

Verses 24-31, **“...but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren, that not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things**

which are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God---and righteousness and sanctification and redemption---that, ss it is written, ‘*He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.*’” All the great minds of the world, the great thinkers and philosophers, cannot seem to correct the problems of life we encounter in this world. But within the active parts of the Body of Christ we are solving those problems right and left, in the power of God. God is training the future divine leadership of the world, who will reign with Jesus Christ at his return, from such people which Paul described here in verses 24-31 (cf. Revelation 5:9-10)! That is amazing. The worldly wise will practically destroy life off this planet, and Jesus will have to return to stop them. Then he and we will take over, and create what they in all their wisdom could not create. That will confound beyond measure the wise and mighty of the world who are fortunate enough to survive the coming calamities their wisdom and might is bringing on the world. God is taking the likes of this church of God at Corinth and creating the future world leaders for the Millennial Kingdom of God. Tell me that won’t confound the wise and mighty of this world. But as Paul brings out in 1st Corinthians, we have to shed our diapers and grow up spiritually. That’s what 1st Corinthians is all about. How can we go about shedding those diapers? See

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/Agape/Agape%20I.htm>