

The All-inclusive Christ as the Wisdom of God

First Corinthians presents crucial points of the truth that center upon the all-inclusiveness of Christ, who is the answer to all the problems that were present in the church in Corinth. In His all-inclusiveness, Christ is the expression and realization of the mystery of God, even the depths of God. These depths are not merely objective; rather, they become subjective in our experience by becoming wisdom to us from God with respect to righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. When we experience Christ as sanctification in our soul, our mind becomes the mind of Christ, as demonstrated by Paul in his responses to the problems in Corinth. Yet, despite all its problems from the human perspective, the church in Corinth from the divine perspective still serves as a model for the practical church life.

FIRST CORINTHIANS IS QUITE UNIQUE IN ITS UNVEILING OF THE ALL-INCLUSIVE CHRIST. THE CHURCH IN CORINTH WAS FULL OF SERIOUS PROBLEMS, BUT PAUL DEALS WITH THEM BY MINISTERING A UNIQUE SOLUTION—A WONDERFUL PERSON—THE ALL-INCLUSIVE CHRIST.

Concerning the crucial points of truth in 1 Corinthians, we have been called into the fellowship of Christ, that is, into the participation, the enjoyment, of Christ as our portion. Christ brings us into the depths of God by dispensing the divine blessings into us, blessings that eye has never seen and ear has never heard and which have never come up in our heart. This dispensing imparts the organic life of God into us, which makes us God's cultivated land, a farm to grow Christ so that precious materials can be produced for God's building. The building of God, the church, is the increase of Christ, the enlargement of Christ in His unlimitedness. As the enlarged Christ, He becomes unleavened bread to be a feast to us. We must keep this feast with Christ as our nourishment and enjoyment. This enjoyment is possible because we have been joined to the Lord as one spirit. In our oneness with the Lord in our tripartite being, His word can become our word, and whatever we utter can be His word. Living in such oneness with the Lord is a matter of running the race to obtain the reward. The enjoyment of Christ is for our fellowship with all the saints, especially in our eating and drinking of Him. God is embodied in the bread and the cup. We eat Him, we drink Him, and thus we enjoy Him. This is for our fellowship of the blood of Christ and of the body of Christ. In the Body of Christ there is a universal headship in three aspects: woman is subordinate to

man, man is under the headship of Christ, and the head of Christ is God. These aspects refer to the relationships in the divine government. Under the government of God, the Lord's supper is carried out with a proper order and a proper eating to remember the Lord. In our testifying remembrances of our experiences of the Lord in our meetings, there are divine operations, ministries, and gifts. This is the Triune God moving in us for the accomplishment of His eternal purpose to build up the church. This move is possible only because Christ, the second man, the last Adam, became the life-giving Spirit through the process of resurrection. All these crucial points of truth reveal that Christ to us is all-inclusive.

First Corinthians is quite unique in its unveiling of the all-inclusive Christ. The church in Corinth was full of serious problems, but Paul deals with them by ministering a unique solution—a wonderful person—the all-inclusive Christ. In 1 Corinthians Paul unveils many aspects of the all-inclusive Christ for the believers' enjoyment: the portion of the called saints; the power of God for the church to enjoy the resurrected and ascended Christ; the wisdom of God for the church to experience as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; the Lord of glory for the church's expression; the deep things of God for the church to know; the unique foundation for the church to be built up; the reality of the Passover feast for the church to eat and enjoy; the reality of the unleavened bread for the church to be sanctified; the spiritual food, drink, and rock for the church to be supplied; the head of every man for the church to participate in God's administration; the corporate Body for the church to function; the firstfruits, the second man, and the last Adam for the termination of the old man and for the generation of the church; and the life-giving Spirit for the organic application of all of Christ's accomplishments for the full salvation of the church.

Christ's accomplishments need to be revealed to us through the Spirit, who searches all things, even the depths of God. The Spirit unveils the secret, hidden,

mysterious, and concealed things that God has prepared for us—the depths of God. The Spirit, who searches all things, searches the depths of God and reveals them to us for our spiritual understanding and experience. When we experience the depths of God, Christ’s mind becomes our mind. The mind of Christ is actually Christ Himself, for the person of Christ, the God-man, is manifested in His mind. Although the Corinthians were genuine—blood-washed and Spirit-regenerated—Christians, their living did not issue from the mind of Christ. They lived a life mostly according to worldly wisdom—a life according to their philosophical concepts, ethical culture, or doctrinal knowledge—not a life of taking Christ as their unique center and their God-allotted portion.

Many of today’s believers are just as preoccupied with the wisdom of this age and are similarly ignorant of the wisdom of God. Wisdom in 1 Corinthians is God’s transmission of the all-inclusive Christ into our tripartite being so that He becomes our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption for the producing of the Body of Christ. By the progressive dispensing of the crucified and resurrected Christ into our very being, God makes Christ everything to us and meets our every need—past, present, and future. In order to deal with our sinful past, Christ was dispensed as righteousness into our human spirit. After regenerating our spirit, Christ, as the life-giving Spirit, is sanctifying our soul by imparting Himself as the divine life into our mind, emotion, and will. Ultimately, at His second coming, Christ will be full redemption to us; our mortal body will be transfigured into an incorruptible, glorious, and powerful immortal body, like the body of Christ’s glory, forever free from the taint of death evidenced in the problems that characterized the church in Corinth on the negative side.

Paul responds to these problems with the wisdom of God through the mind of Christ. In every section of 1 Corinthians Paul addresses a specific problem by manifesting the mind of Christ. Paul’s mind was aligned with the corporately focused mind of Christ. His responses turned the saints in Corinth from their individualistic preferences, which produced divisions in the Body of Christ; from their puffed-up attitude of tolerating an evil brother, which leavened the whole lump of the church; from their reliance on worldly judgments to resolve legal disputes that should have been forborne for the sake of maintaining peace in the Body; from their abuse of the body in eating and fornication, which marred the corporate indwelling of the Spirit; from their selfish desire for changes in their God-ordained status; from their eating of things sacrificed to idols, which stumbled the brothers, the members of the Body of Christ; from their lack of respect for the headship of Christ over the Body in God’s governmental administration; from their disorderly eating and drinking of the Lord’s supper, which fostered further

divisions in the Body of Christ; from their puffed-up prioritization of the gift of tongues, which brought in confusion and hindered the building up the church; from their careless circulation of heresies related to the resurrection of the believers, which undermined the corporate subduing of death under the feet of the church; and from their lack of understanding the need for material giving that encourages a practical fellowship among the local churches. In his responses to the problems in Corinth, Paul manifested the mind of Christ in his renewed mind.

Despite all its human problems, the church in Corinth, from the divine perspective, still stands as a model of the practical church life. Indeed, it was the many problems in Corinth that motivated Paul to compose and send his correspondence, and as a result of his response, there is a divine, scriptural template, a model, for the proper church life as the practical local expression of the universal Body of Christ. First Corinthians describes the church in terms of her divine and human constituents, universal inclusivity and local practicality, organic nature and practical expression, unique ground of oneness, and meetings as a model of a corporate human living in the context of the divine economy. The church contains the nature of both divinity and humanity. The humanity constituting the church is a justified, sanctified, and redeemed humanity. In this regard Paul speaks of the church of God which is in Corinth. The term *church* is both universal and local. *The church of God* may be considered a universal reference. However, Paul specifically appends the phrase *which is in Corinth*, indicating that the church of God can be located in a definite place, in a locality. The church of God in a locality is part of the organic Body of Christ; the believers are this Body of Christ collectively and members individually. All these members are indispensable, having different strengths and functions. Their functioning is nullified by the presence of division, and today Christians are divided on the basis of allegiances to a person, to a system of church administration, to a practice, or to a way of carrying out meetings. Seeking Christians can counter this downward trend by following the pattern presented in the New Testament and in the confirming utterances of subsequent faithful witnesses, both of which identify the city as the base and ground for the oneness of the church to be practically carried out. This practicality is particularly manifested in the meetings of the church. The pattern in 1 Corinthians indicates that in addition to coming together for the Lord’s supper, the believers also come together for the exercise of spiritual gifts. First Corinthians provides a practical model of the church life. Following the key elements of this model of the practical church life is the first step toward fulfilling God’s eternal intention for the all-inclusive Christ to be experienced and manifested. **AFC**

by the Editors