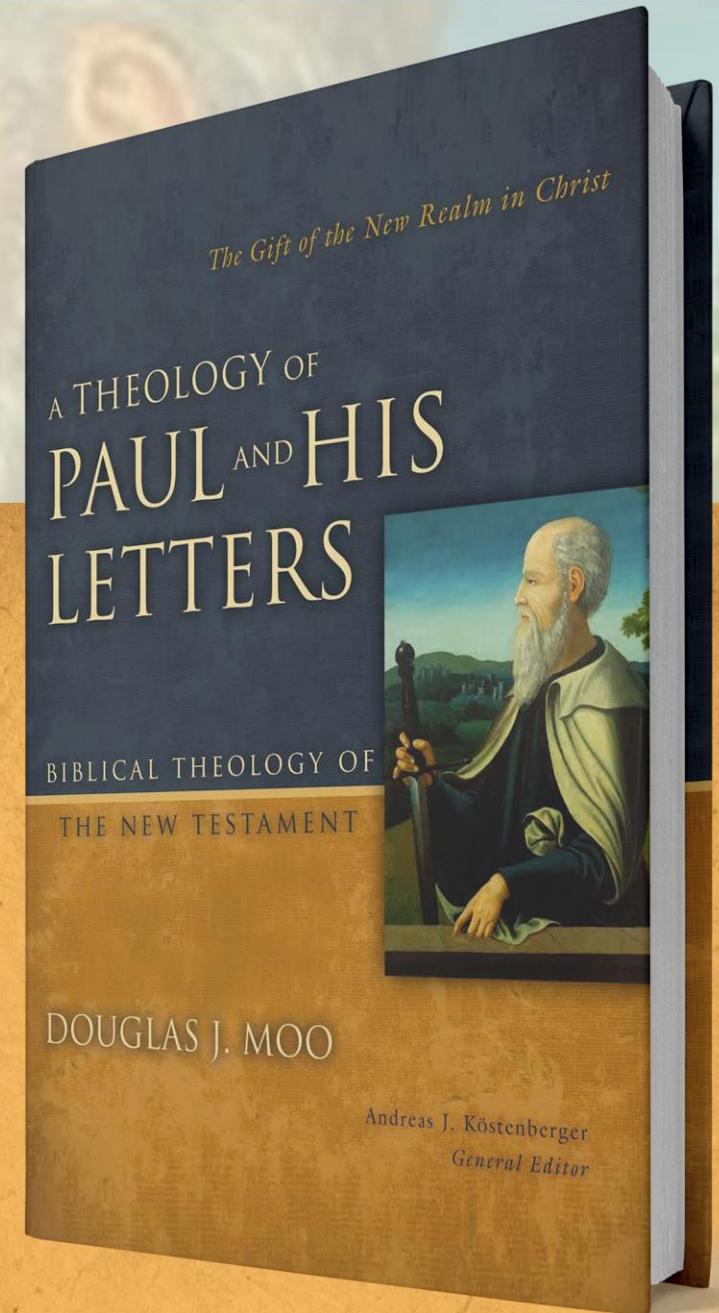


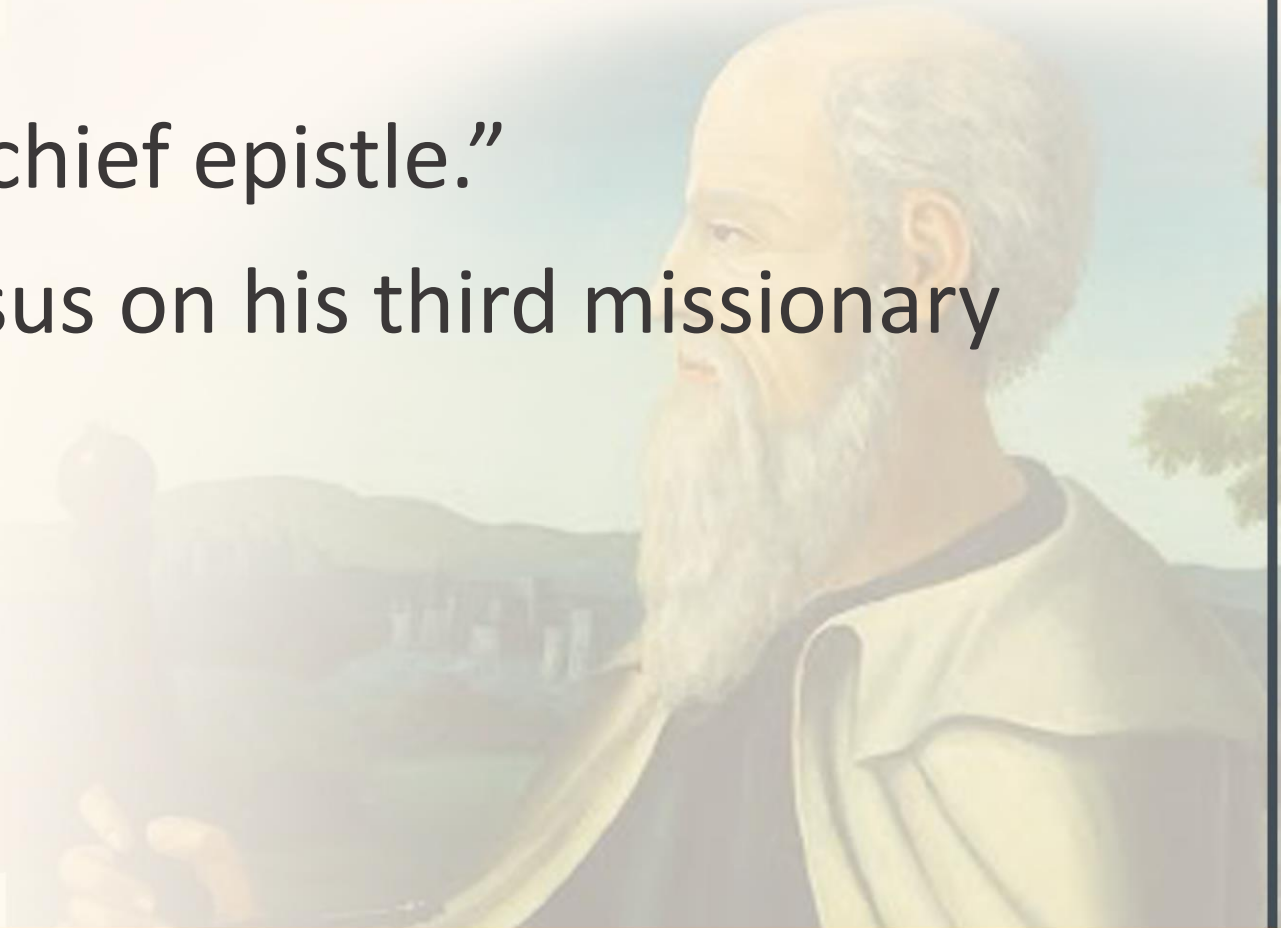
CHAPTER 7

1 Corinthians



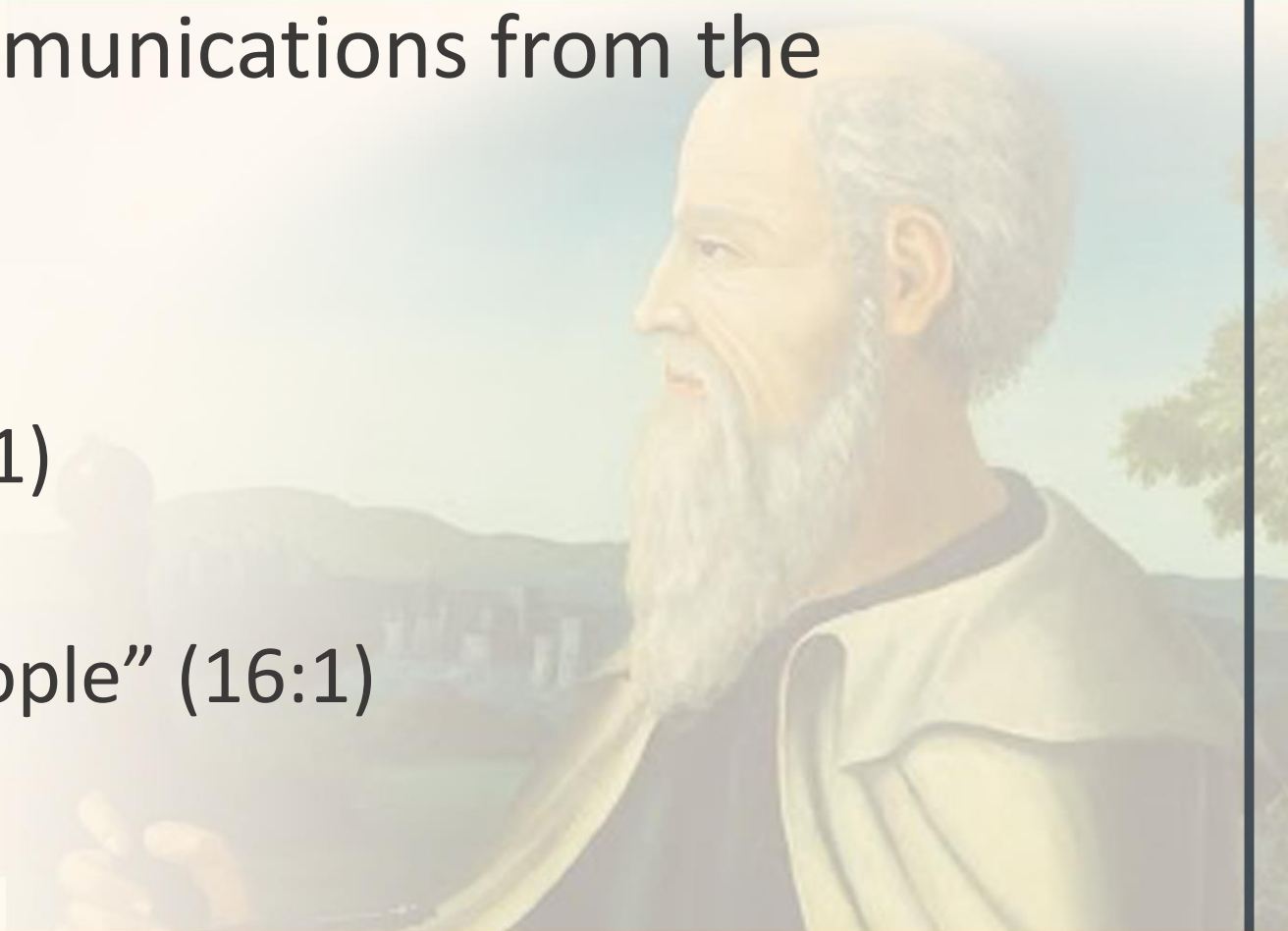
Locating the Letter

- This letter is considered a “chief epistle.”
- Paul wrote it while in Ephesus on his third missionary journey.

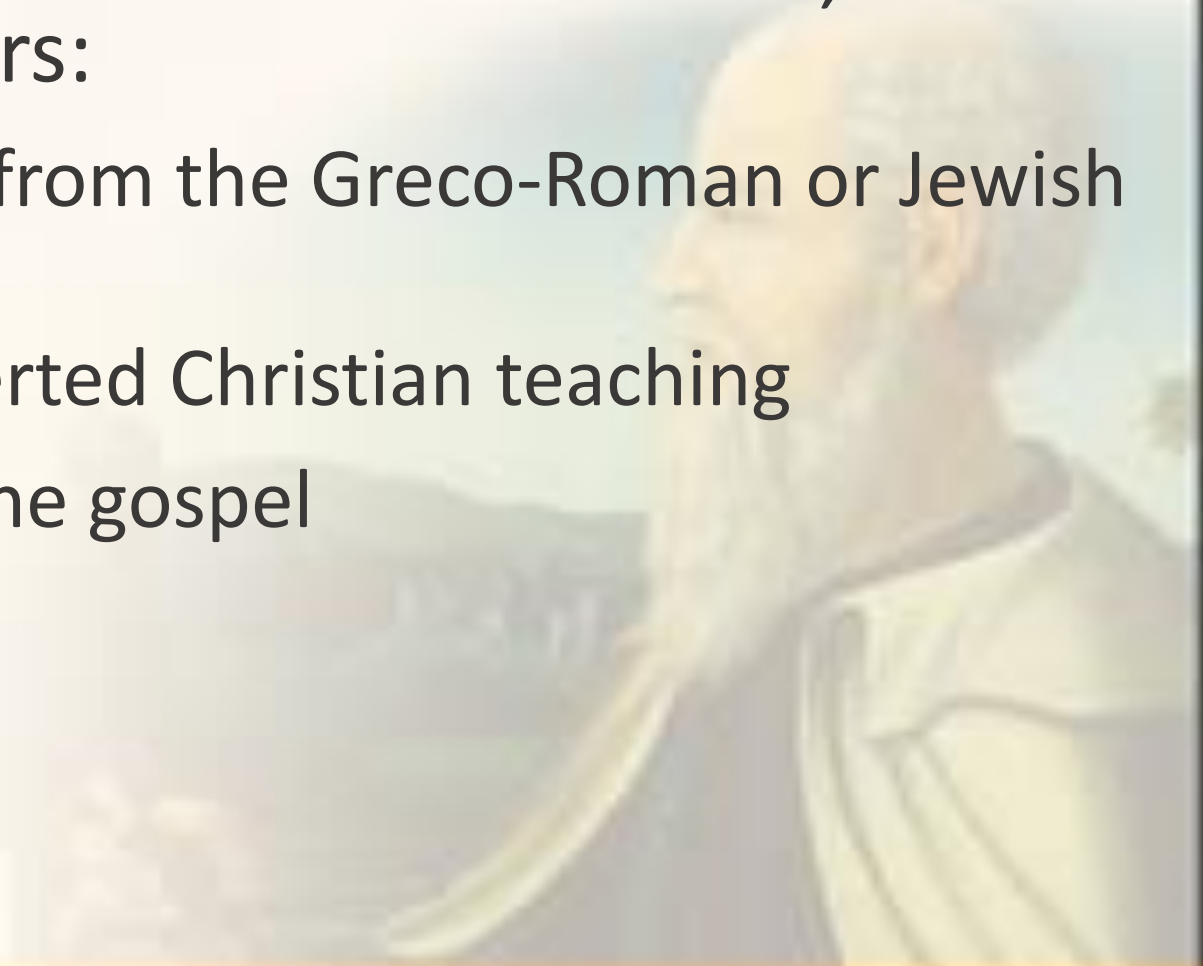


Isolating the Issues

- Paul was responding to communications from the Corinthians about
 - “Sexual relations” (7:1)
 - “Virgins” (7:25)
 - “Food sacrificed to idols” (8:1)
 - “Gifts of the Spirit” (12:1)
 - “Collection for the Lord’s people” (16:1)
 - “Apollos” (16:12)

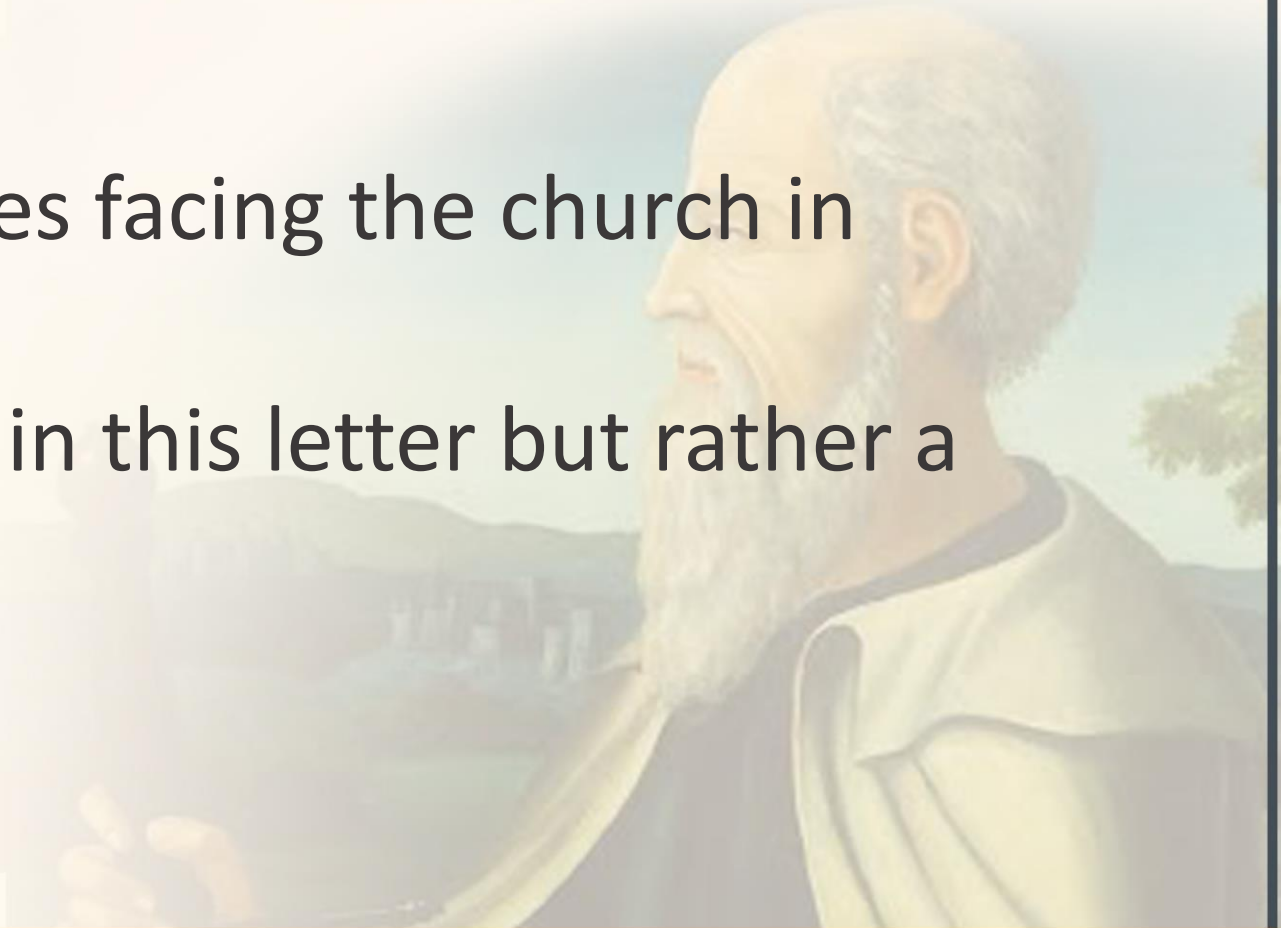


- Paul also rebuked the Corinthians for their behavior, which he had heard about from others:
 - Being influenced by ideologies from the Greco-Roman or Jewish world
 - Having misunderstood or perverted Christian teaching
 - Allowing the culture to shape the gospel



Analyzing the Argument

- Paul addressed several issues facing the church in Corinth.
- There is not a single theme in this letter but rather a variety of themes.

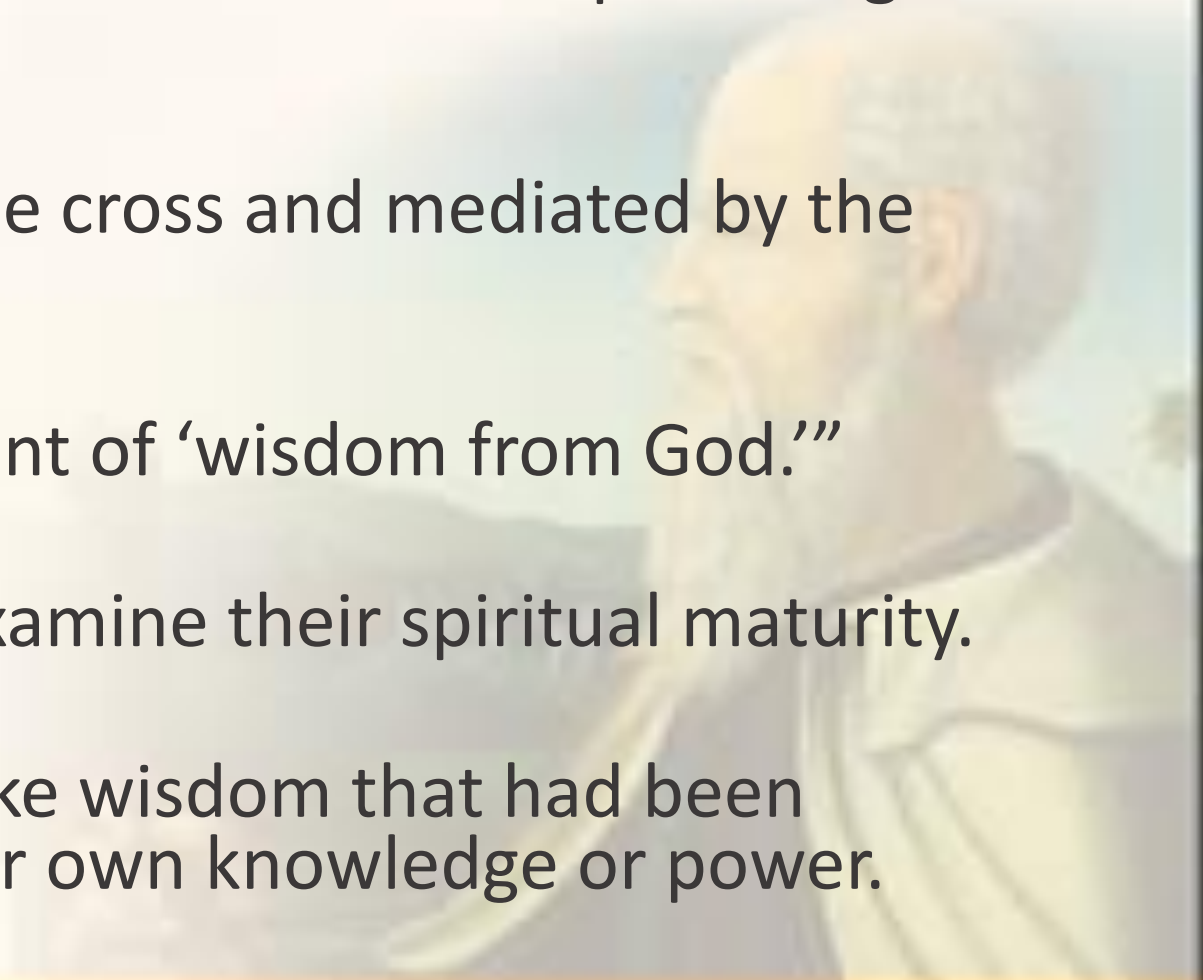


The New Identity: Divisions, Wisdom, and the Message of the Cross (1:1–4:21)

- Introduction and Appeal for Unity (1:1–17)
 - Paul mentioned Sosthenes in his letter and emphasized the church's holiness.
 - Paul thanked God for providing for the Corinthians' spiritual needs.
 - Paul had heard from the members of Chloe's household (possibly slaves) that the Corinthians were experiencing disunity in the church.
 - There were four Christian leaders in the church, and the members were divided about whom to follow.

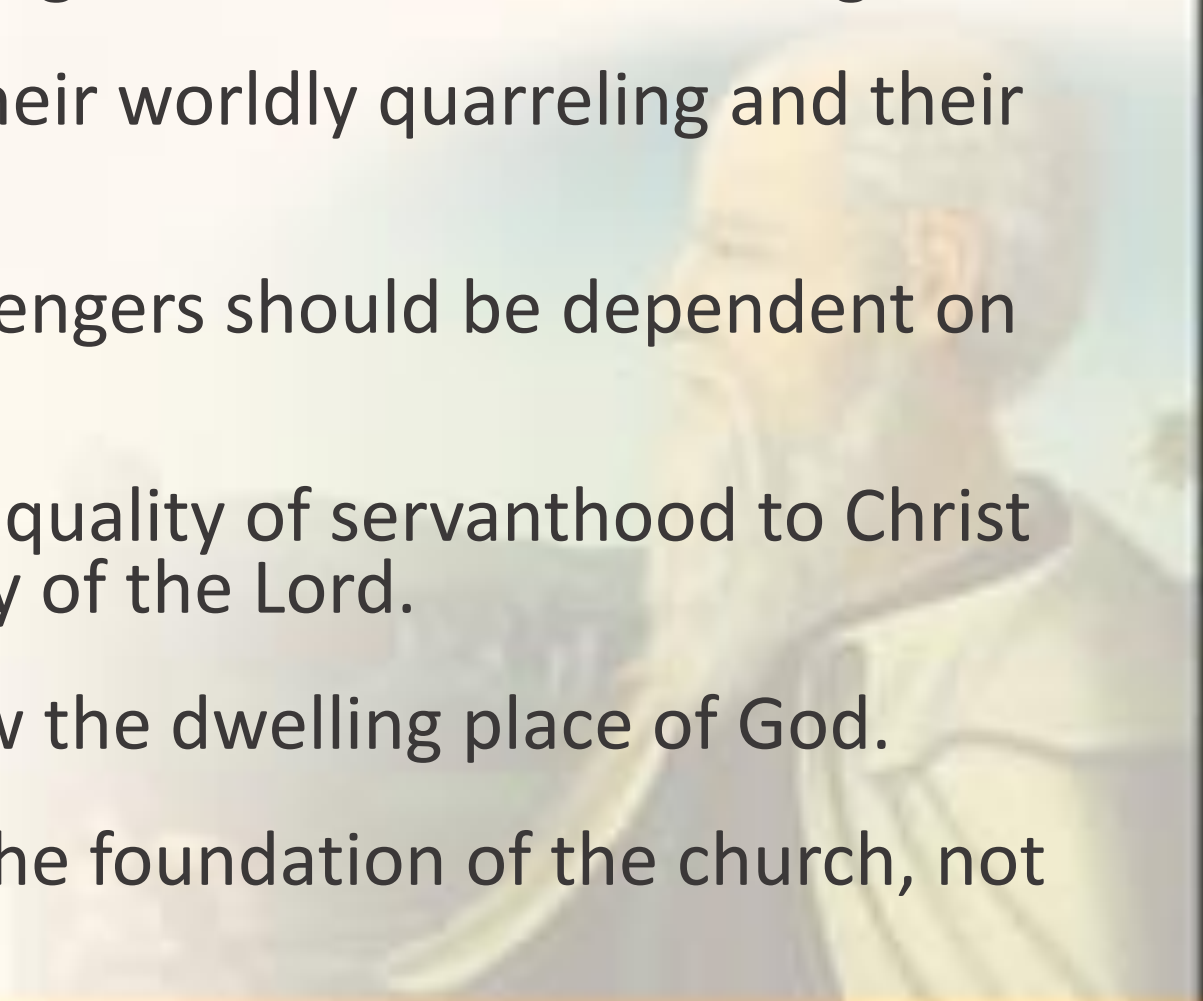
• The Christian Message (1:18–2:16)

- Paul used three themes to rebuke the Corinthians' quarreling: wisdom, the cross, and the Spirit.
- Wisdom should be "defined by the cross and mediated by the Spirit."
- "Christ crucified is the embodiment of 'wisdom from God.'"
- Paul encouraged his readers to examine their spiritual maturity.
- He emphasized that apostles spoke wisdom that had been revealed by the Spirit, not by their own knowledge or power.



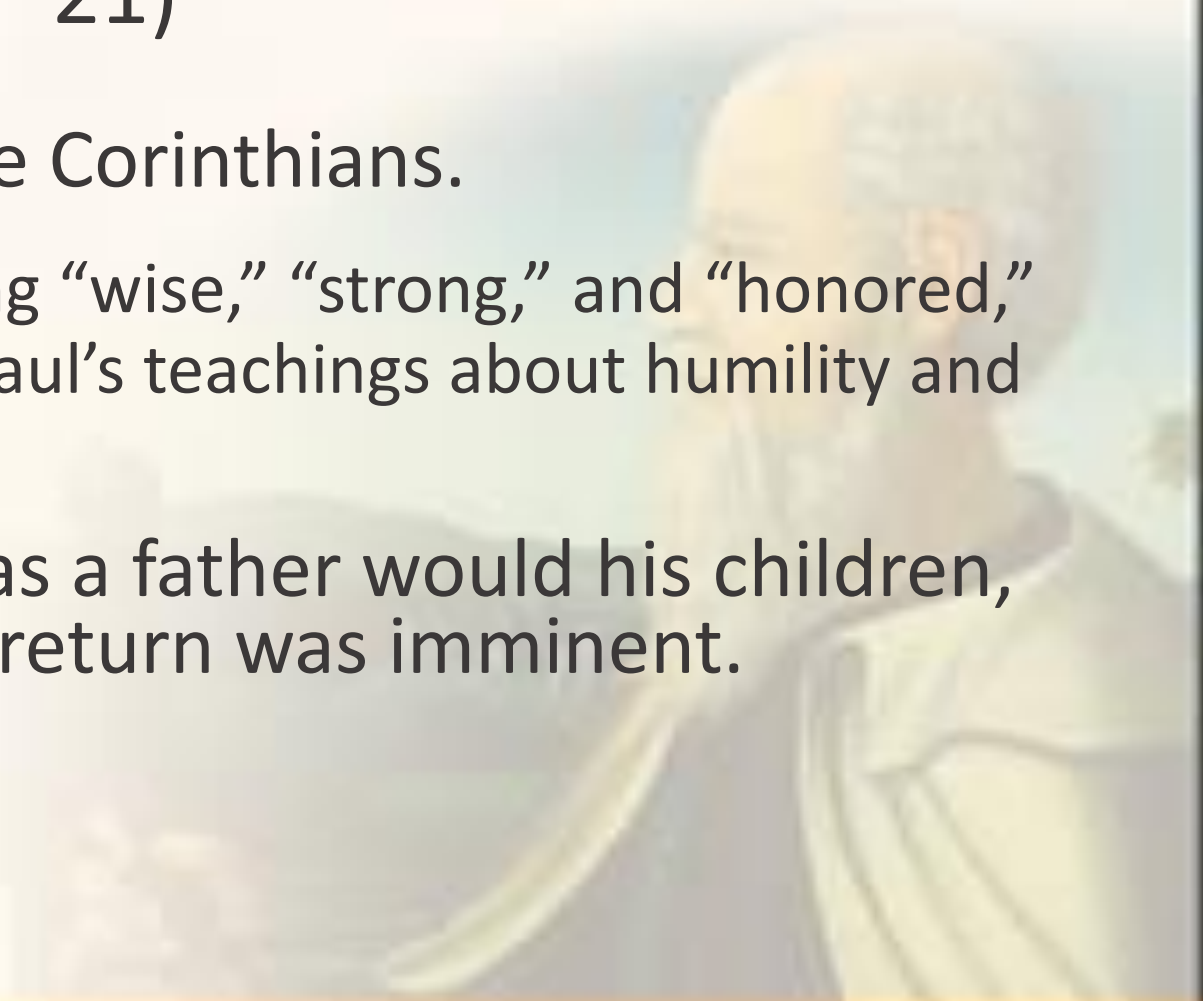
• The Christian Messenger (3:1–17)

- Paul reminded the Corinthians that Christian messengers were assigned roles by God and work together to build God's kingdom.
- He rebuked the Corinthians for their worldly quarreling and their pride in their spiritual state.
- Paul stressed that Christian messengers should be dependent on God.
- He taught them that the leaders' quality of servanthood to Christ will be brought to light on the day of the Lord.
- Paul stated that the church is now the dwelling place of God.
- He reminded them that Jesus is the foundation of the church, not the human church leaders.



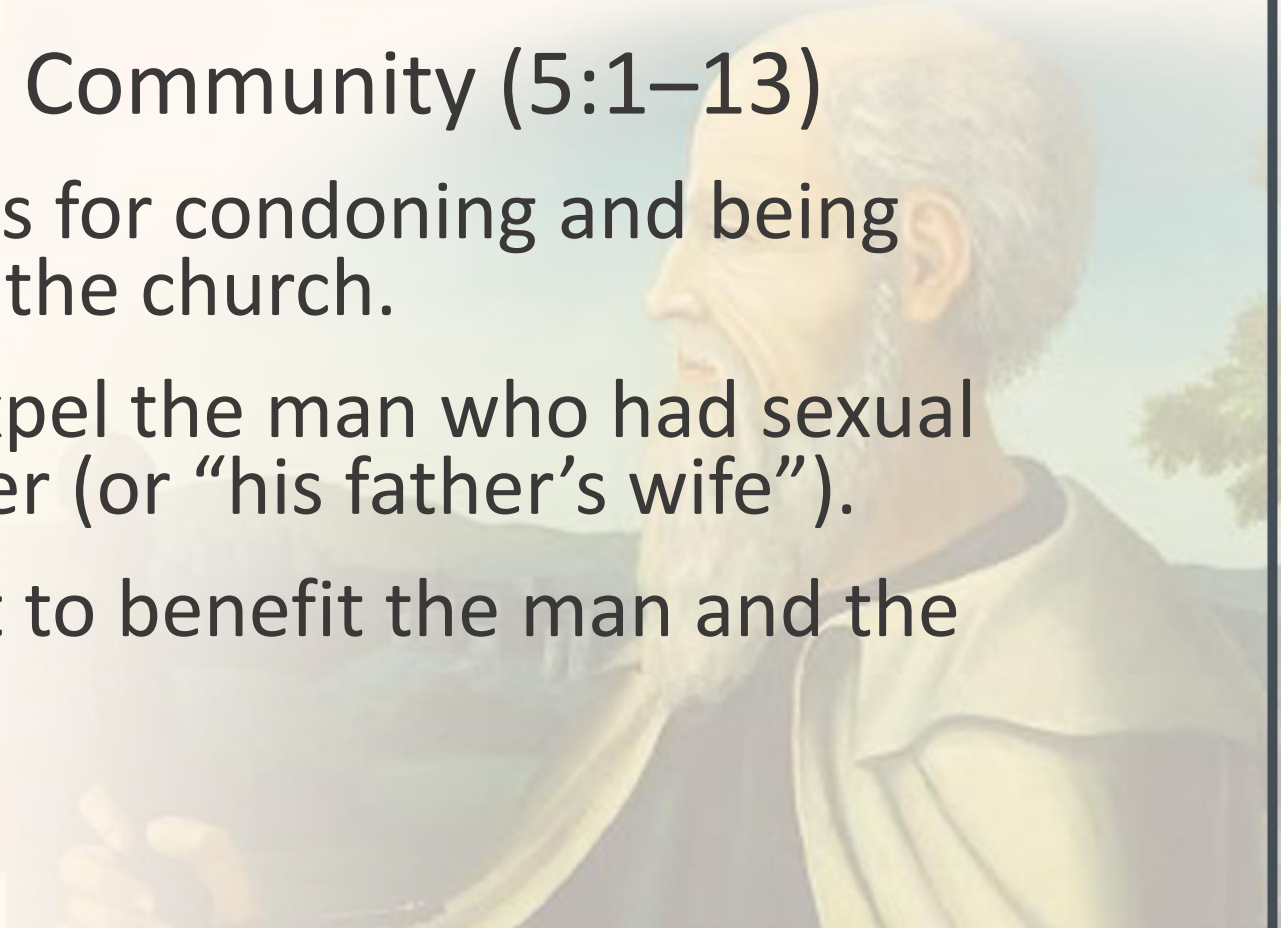
- Paul and the Corinthians (4:1–21)

- Paul used sarcasm to warn the Corinthians.
 - They were boasting about being “wise,” “strong,” and “honored,” all of which were contrary to Paul’s teachings about humility and surrender to Christ.
- Paul scolded the Corinthians as a father would his children, and he warned them that his return was imminent.



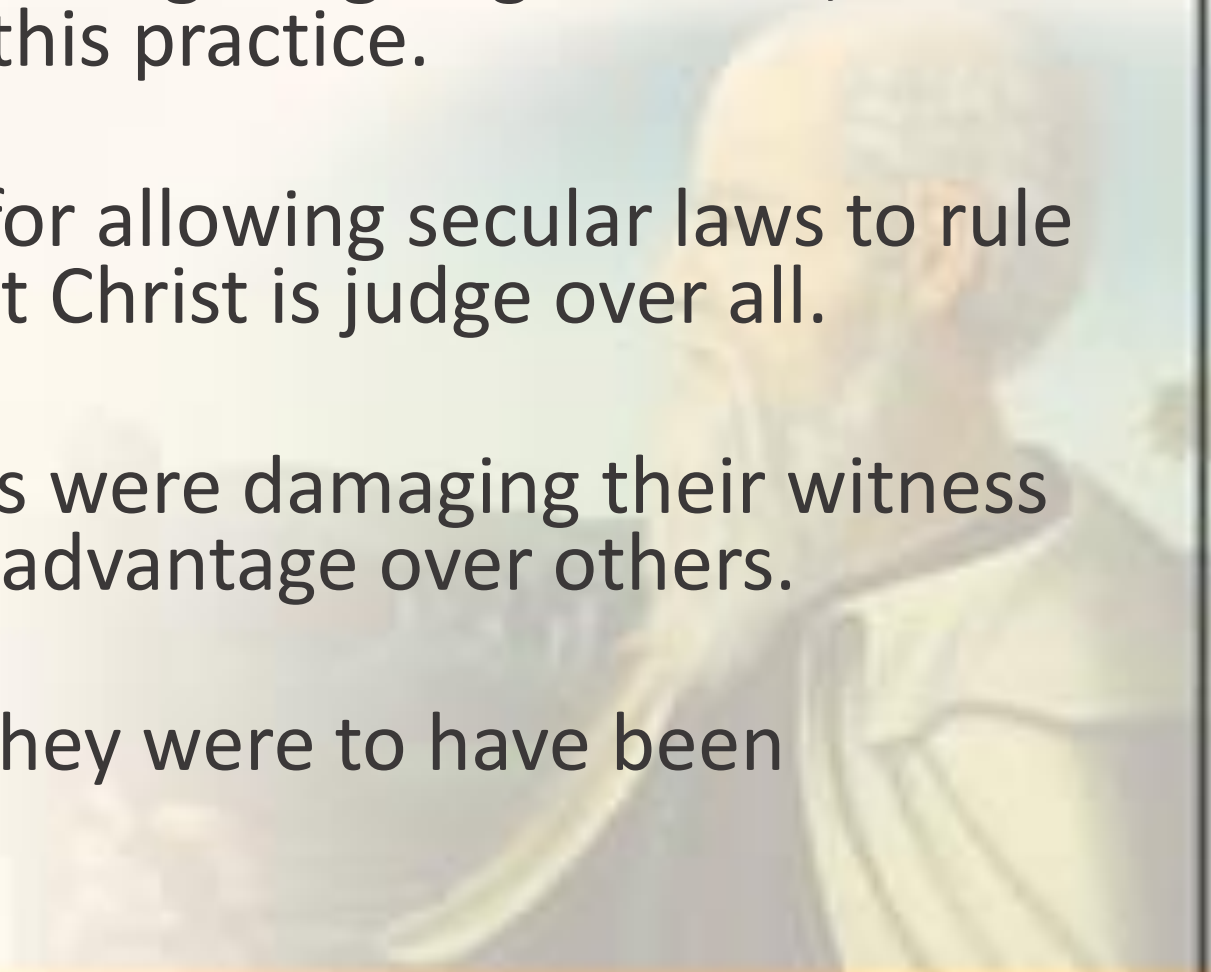
A New Identity and a New Lifestyle (5:1–6:20)

- Preserving the Purity of the Community (5:1–13)
 - Paul rebuked the Corinthians for condoning and being prideful of sexual sin within the church.
 - He ordered the church to expel the man who had sexual relations with his stepmother (or “his father’s wife”).
 - This punishment was meant to benefit the man and the church.



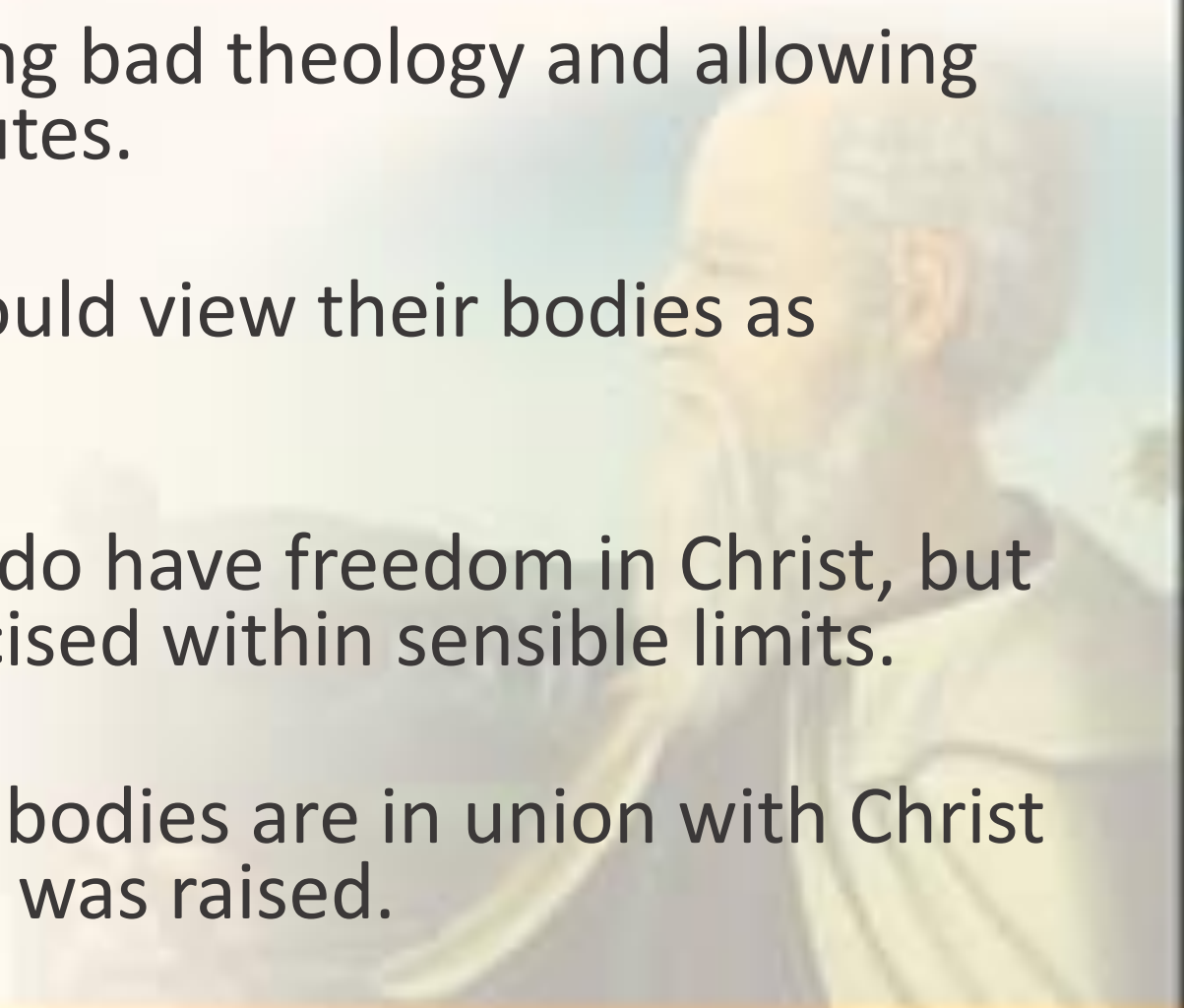
- Lawsuits and Inheriting the Kingdom (6:1–11)

- The Greco-Roman culture encouraged “going to court,” and the Corinthians had adopted this practice.
- Paul scolded the Corinthians for allowing secular laws to rule them and reminded them that Christ is judge over all.
- He taught that the Corinthians were damaging their witness to the world by trying to gain advantage over others.
- He also reminded them that they were to have been transformed by Christ.



- Glorifying God with the Body (6:12–20)

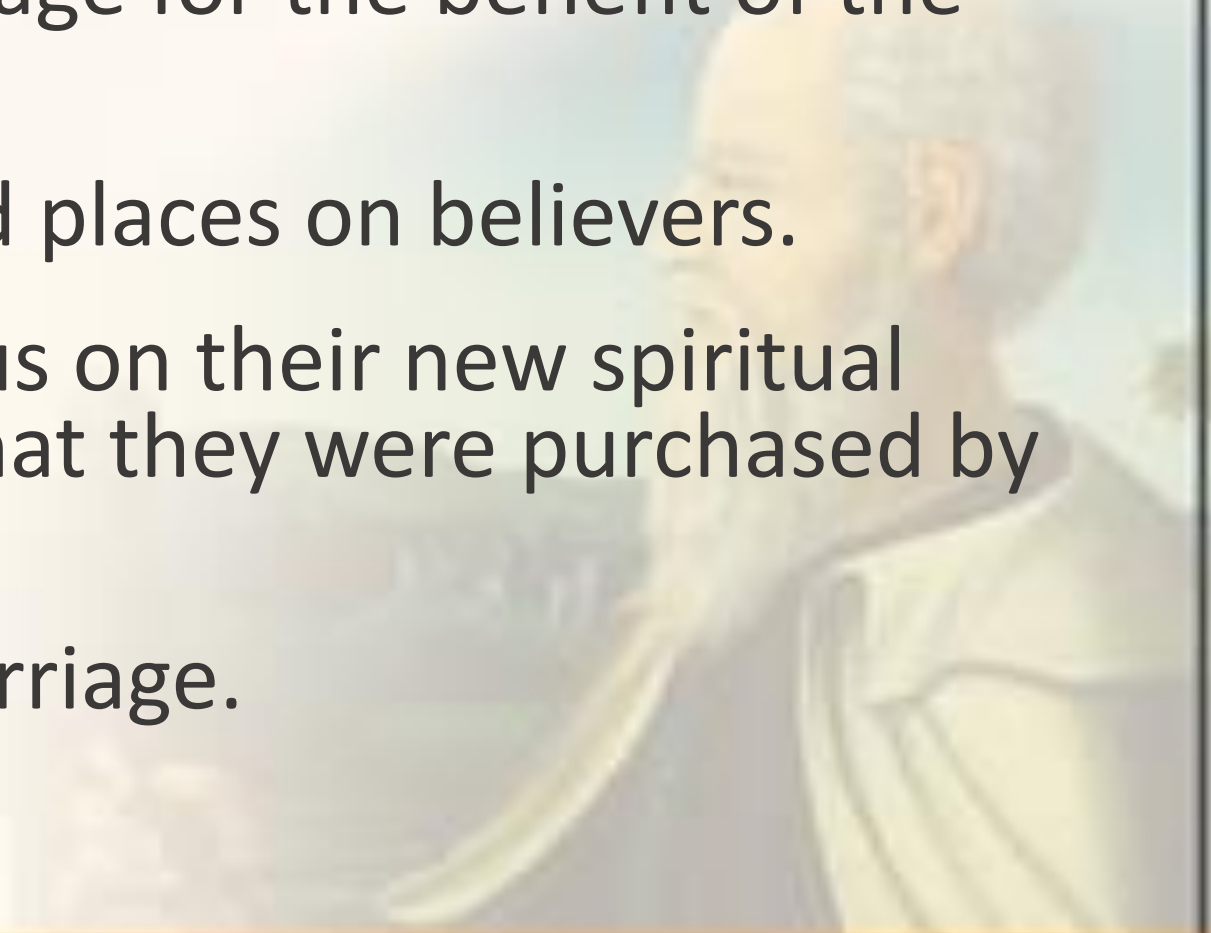
- The Corinthians were following bad theology and allowing men to have sex with prostitutes.
- Paul taught that believers should view their bodies as belonging to God.
- He confirmed that Christians do have freedom in Christ, but that freedom should be exercised within sensible limits.
- He reminded them that their bodies are in union with Christ and would be raised as Christ was raised.



Implications of the New Identity for Marriage and Sex (7:1–40)

- This chapter is often quoted in support of celibacy.
- Paul taught that it is not a sin to remain unmarried, but those who are married should remain married.
- Paul asserted that sex within marriage is appropriate and expected.
- He repeated that believers are not free to do whatever they want with their bodies because their bodies should be used to glorify Christ.

- Paul taught that Christians should not marry unbelievers. However, if they were already married to unbelievers, they should stay in the marriage for the benefit of the unbeliever and the children.
- Paul emphasized the call God places on believers.
- He encouraged slaves to focus on their new spiritual status and reminded them that they were purchased by Christ.
- He once again addressed marriage.

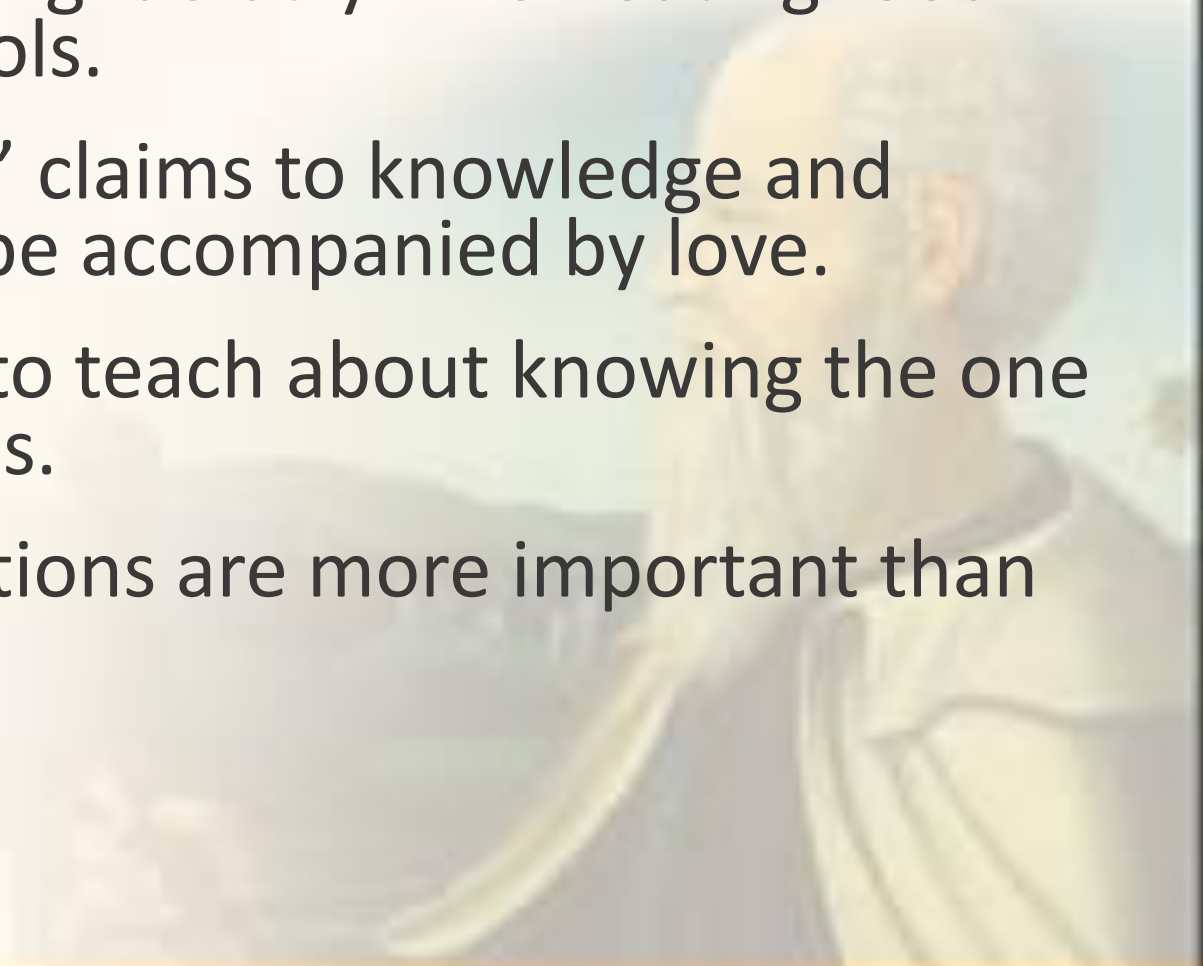


The New Identity: Liberty and Love (8:1–11:1)

- Paul addressed food that had been sacrificed to idols.
- It was common practice for Corinthians to offer food to pagan idols and then sell it in the marketplace. The church asked Paul if they could eat this food.
- Some scholars believe Paul replied with three answers:
 1. They could eat the food from the market.
 2. They should not eat food in the temple.
 3. They could eat meat placed before them in a pagan's house.

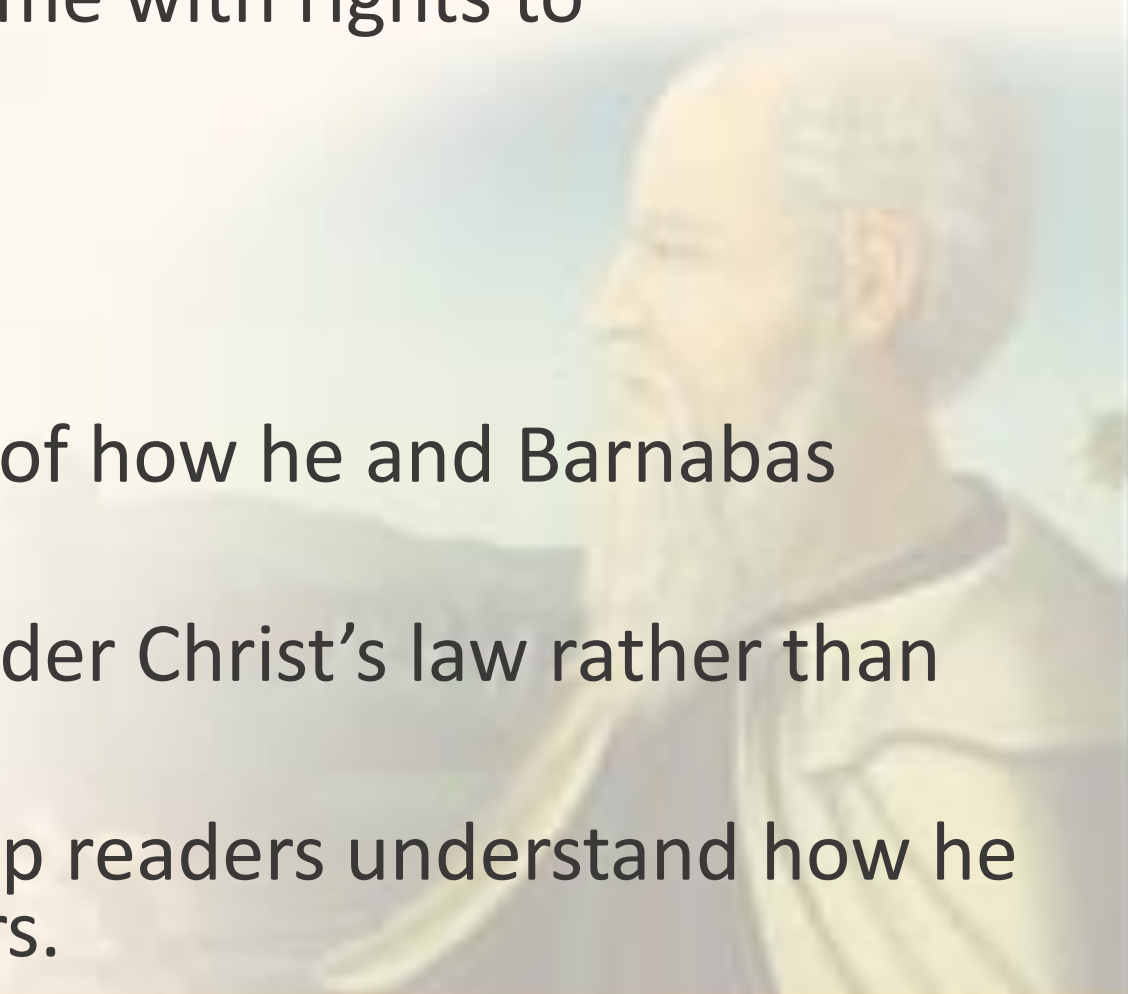
- Knowledge and the “Other” (8:1–13)

- Paul warned against committing idolatry when eating food that had been sacrificed to idols.
- He addressed the Corinthians’ claims to knowledge and taught that knowledge must be accompanied by love.
- Paul used the Old Testament to teach about knowing the one true God, which includes Jesus.
- He taught that a believer’s actions are more important than the food he eats.



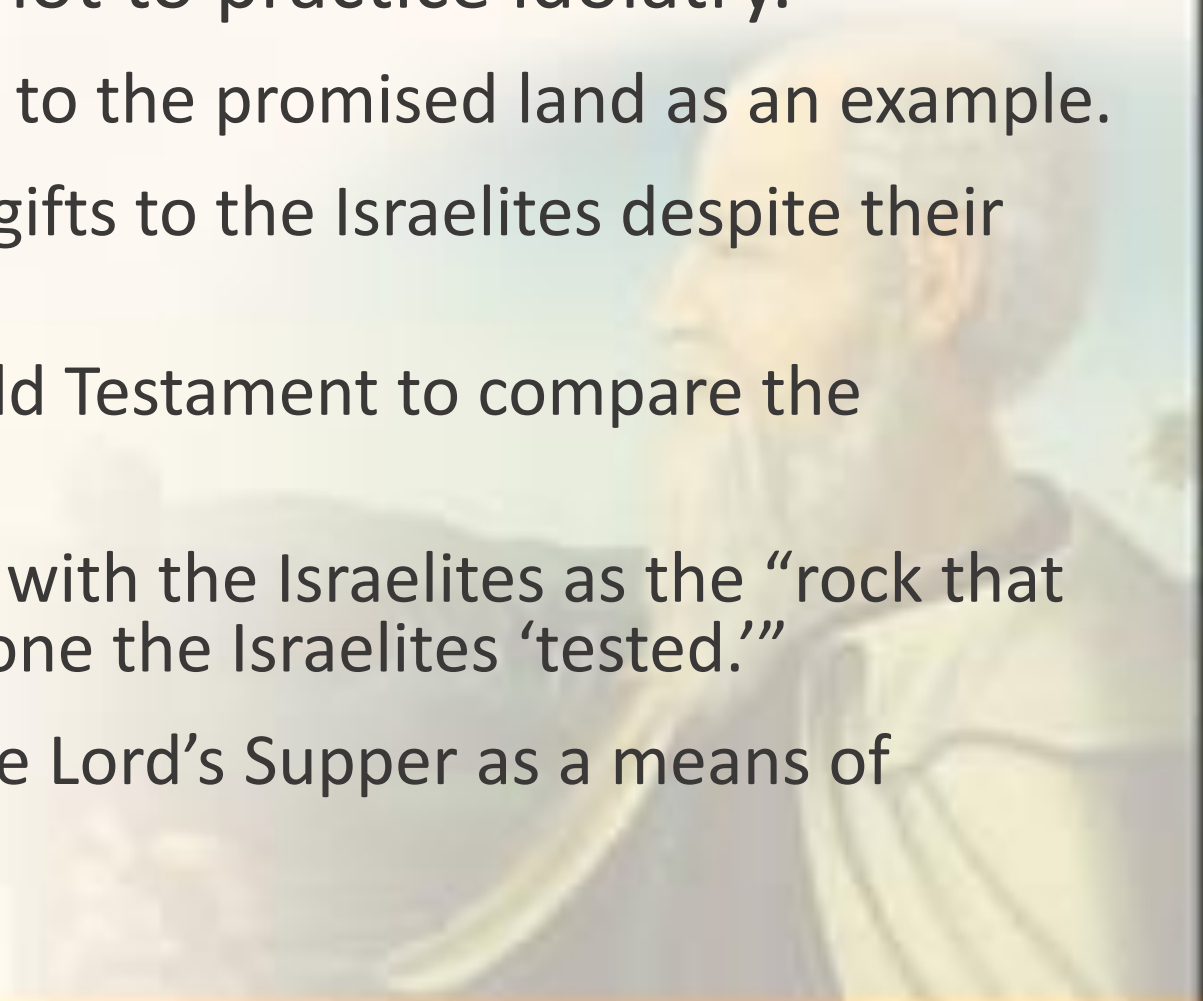
- On Giving Up “Rights” (9:1–27)

- Paul defended his apostolic ministry.
- He believed that apostleship came with rights to
 - Eat and drink
 - Travel with a wife
 - Receive support
- Paul reminded the Corinthians of how he and Barnabas chose not to use these rights.
- He taught that he was living under Christ’s law rather than the Torah.
- He used athletic imagery to help readers understand how he worked and sacrificed for others.



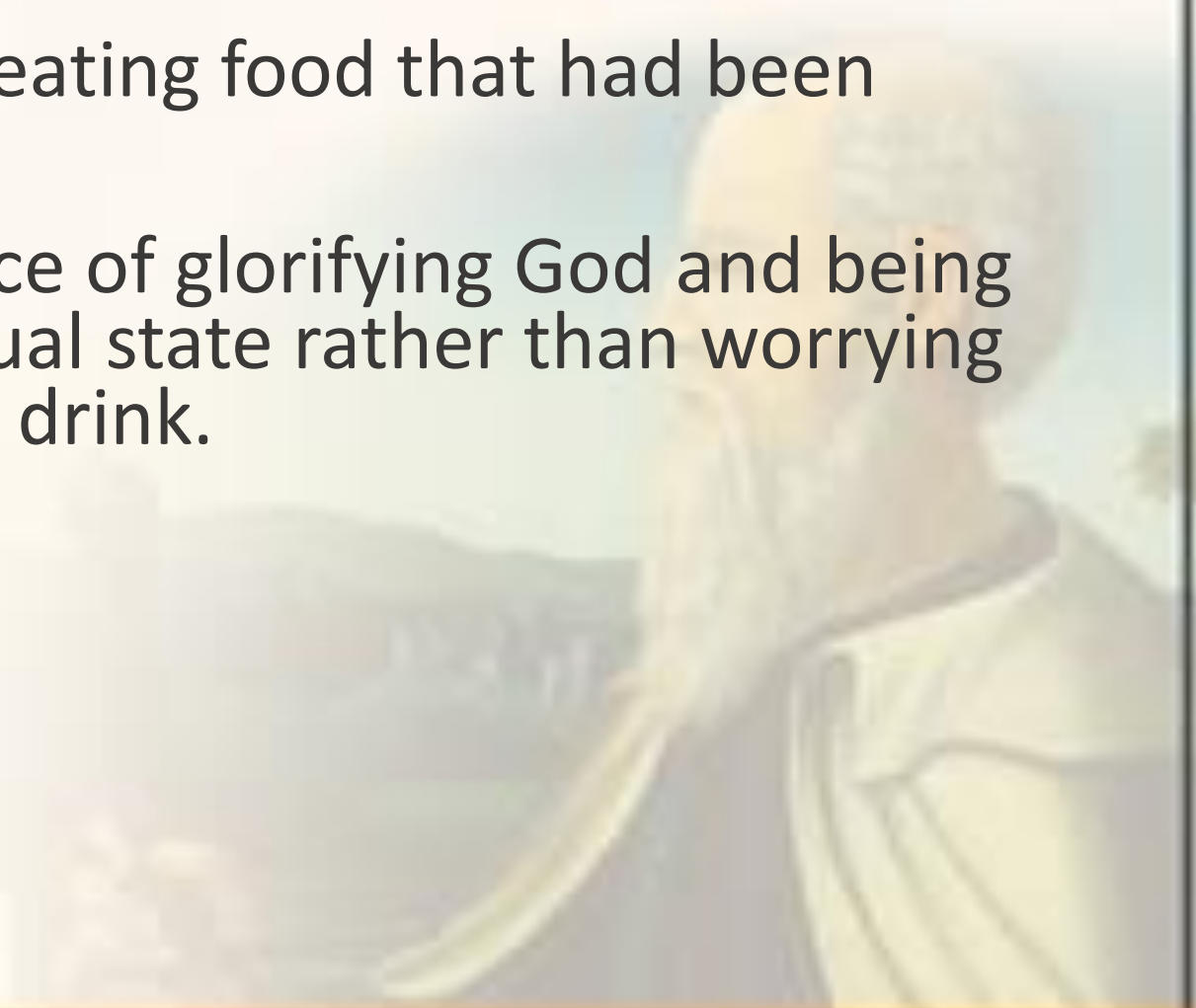
- Warning about Idolatry (10:1–22)

- Paul warned the Corinthians not to practice idolatry.
 - He used the Israelites' journey to the promised land as an example.
 - He taught that God had given gifts to the Israelites despite their idolatry.
 - He referenced and cited the Old Testament to compare the Corinthians and the Israelites.
- Paul said that Christ was present with the Israelites as the “rock that accompanied Israel” and as the “one the Israelites ‘tested.’”
- He also addressed partaking in the Lord’s Supper as a means of benefiting from Christ’s sacrifice.



- Food Sacrificed to Idols Again (10:23–11:1)

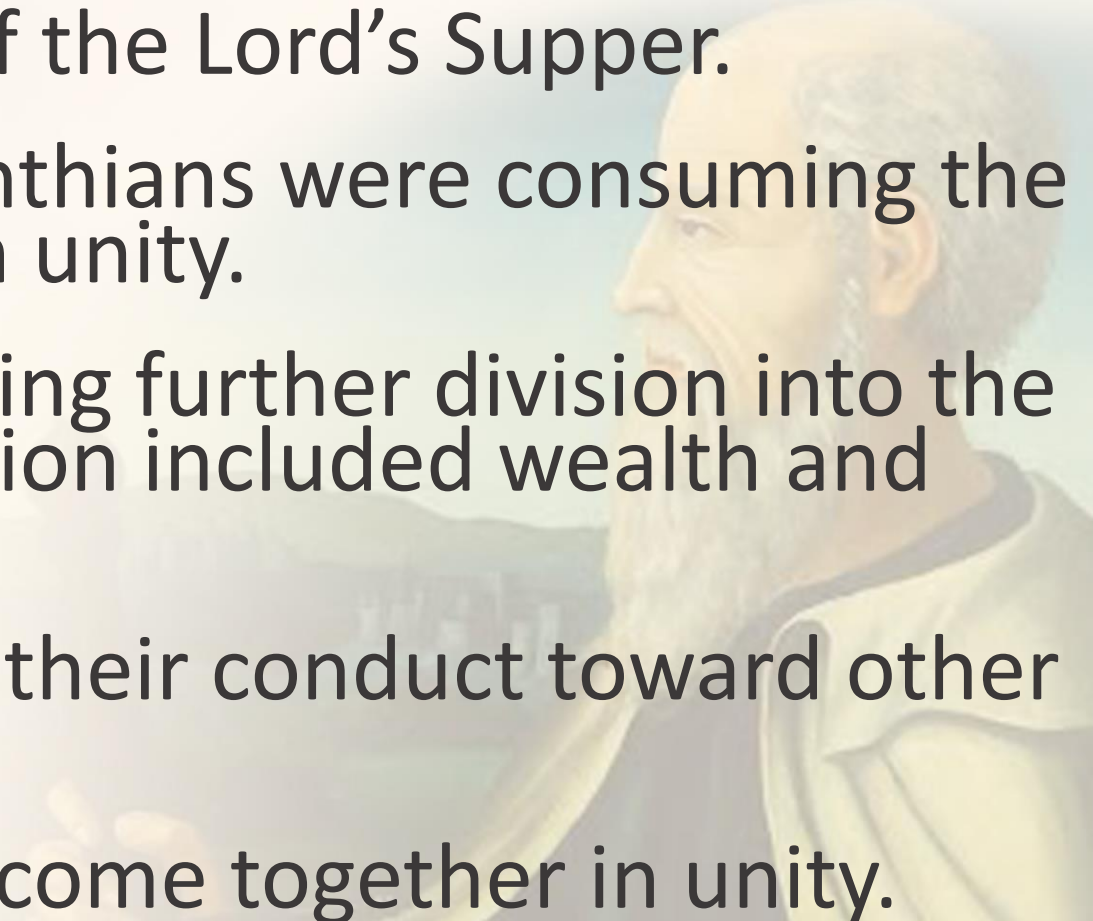
- Paul returned to the issue of eating food that had been sacrificed to idols.
- He emphasized the importance of glorifying God and being concerned with others' spiritual state rather than worrying about the matter of food and drink.



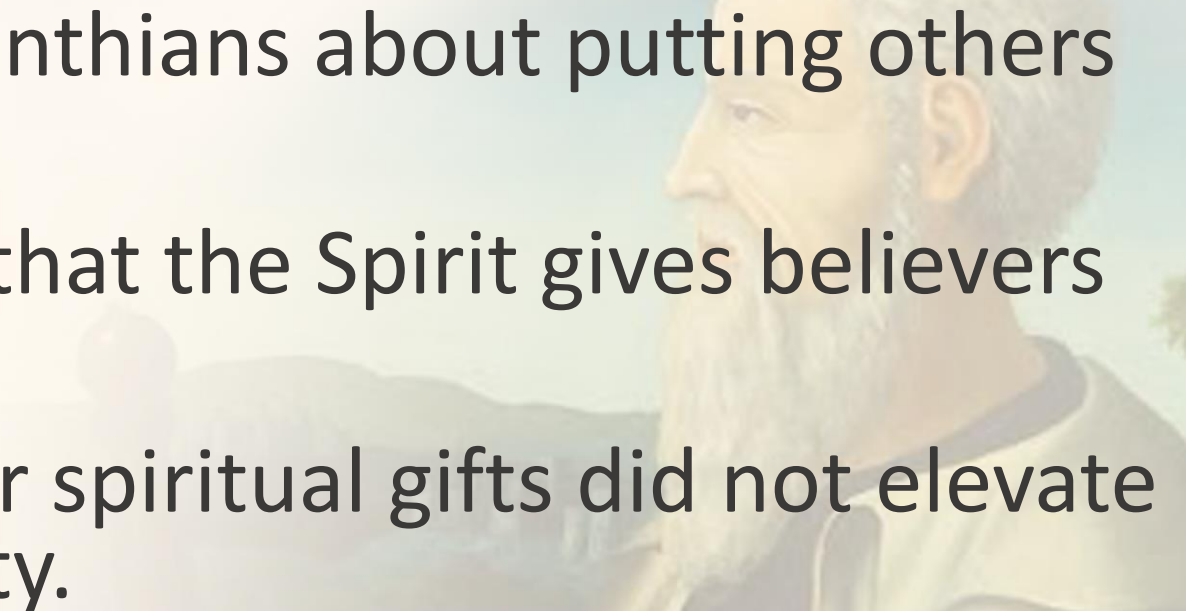
The New Identity and Gender Relationships (11:2–16)

- Paul addressed women who were not wearing appropriate head coverings in worship.
 - He discussed gender relationships:
 - Women should cover their heads in worship because of “the relationship in which they stand to men.”
 - Husbands and wives are interdependent.
 - He argued that men should not have long hair and women were given hair as a covering.
 - He referred to Christian convention regarding head coverings.
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The New Identity and the New Community: Celebrating the Lord's Supper (11:17–34)

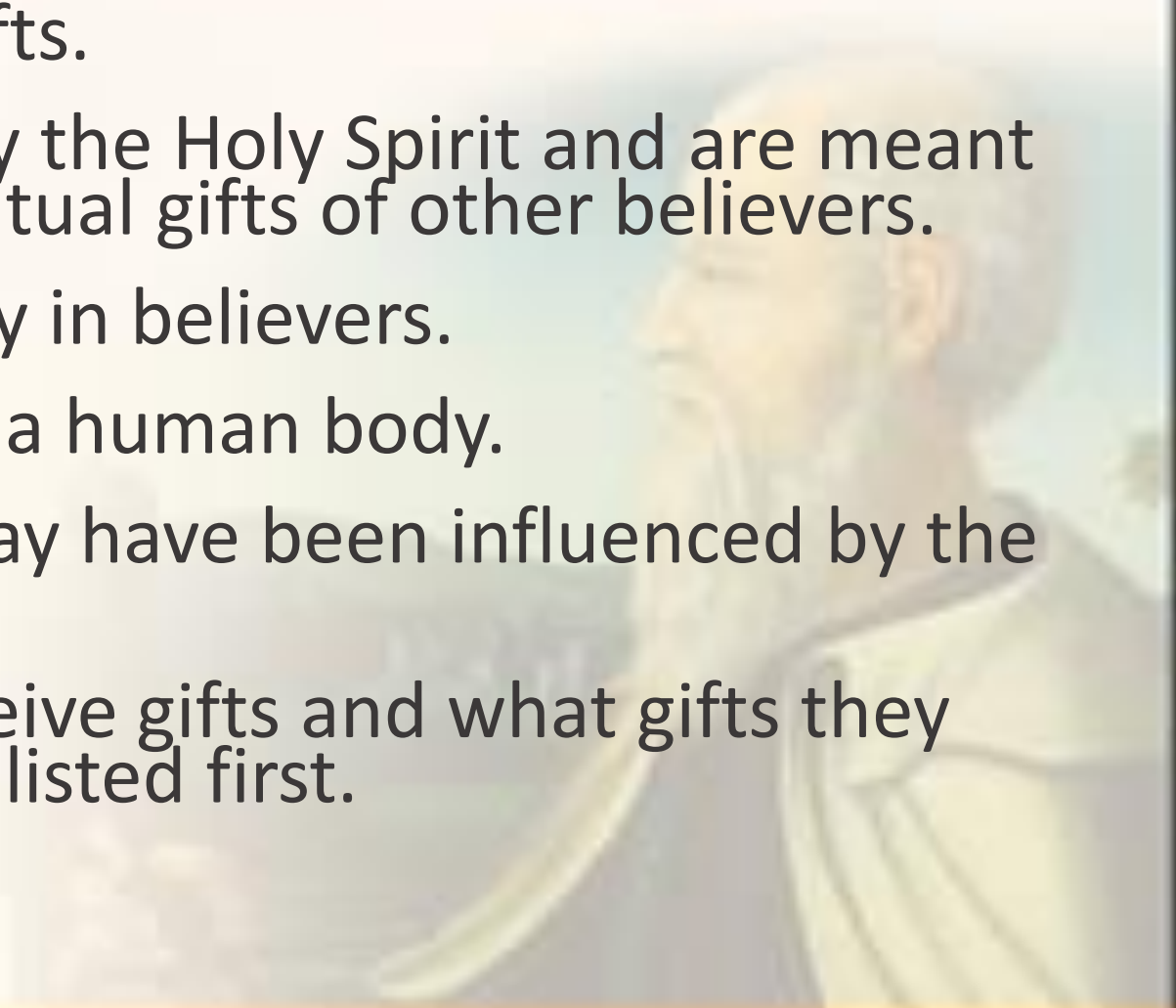
- Paul moved to the subject of the Lord's Supper.
 - It is thought that some Corinthians were consuming the meal privately rather than in unity.
 - Paul rebuked them for bringing further division into the Corinthian church. This division included wealth and status.
 - He exhorted them to assess their conduct toward other Christians.
 - He reminded them again to come together in unity.
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The New Identity and the New Community: One Spirit, One Body, Many Gifts (12:1– 14:40)

- Paul began to teach the Corinthians about putting others before themselves.
 - He addressed spiritual gifts that the Spirit gives believers so they can help others.
 - He reminded them that their spiritual gifts did not elevate their status in the community.
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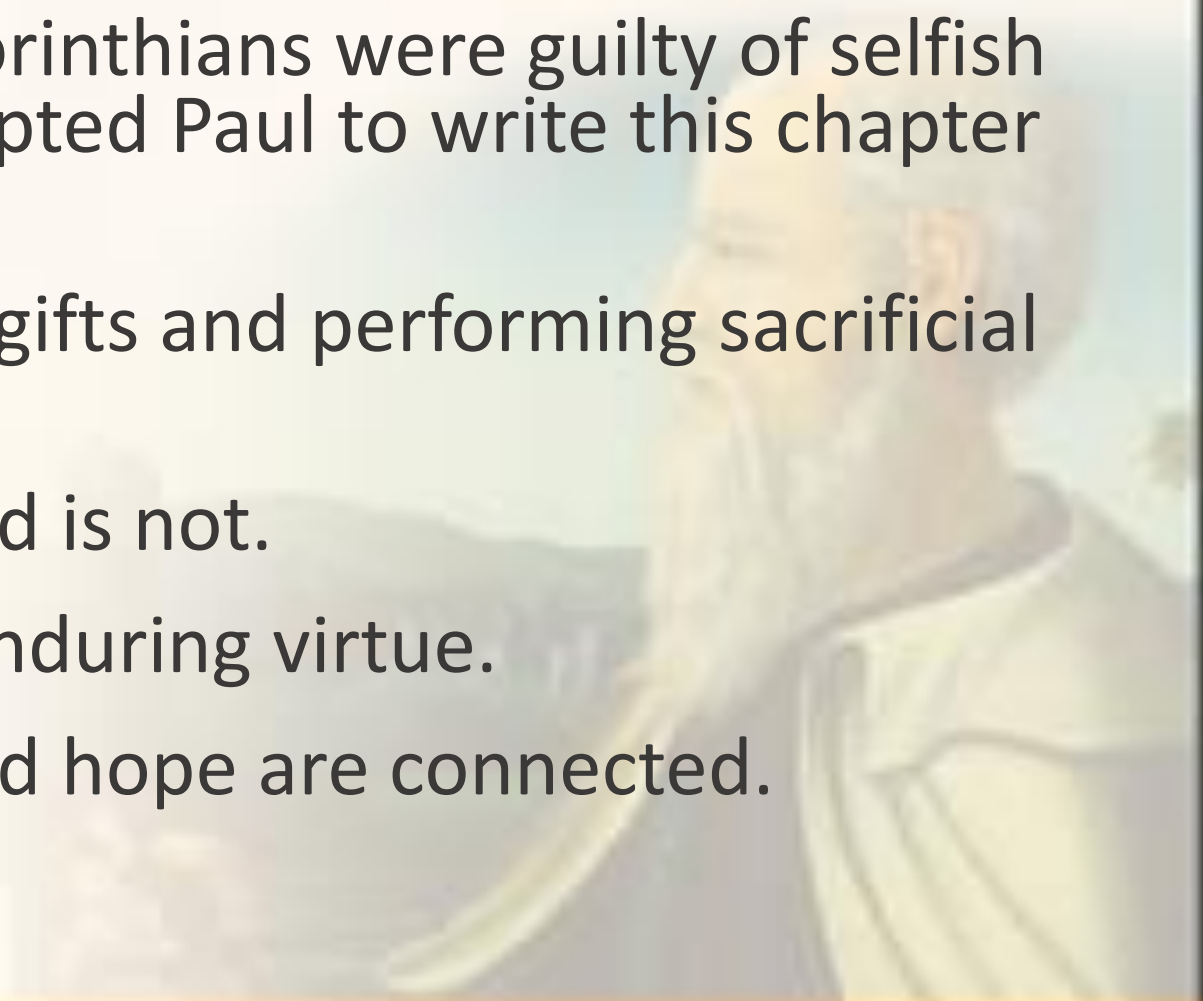
•The Unity and Diversity of the Body (12:1–31)

- Paul taught about spiritual gifts.
- The spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit and are meant to be combined with the spiritual gifts of other believers.
- The Spirit also maintains unity in believers.
- Paul compared the church to a human body.
- The metaphor of the body may have been influenced by the Eucharist.
- He listed the people who receive gifts and what gifts they might receive. Apostles were listed first.



- Greater than the Gifts (13:1–13)

- The author stated that the Corinthians were guilty of selfish behavior. This behavior prompted Paul to write this chapter on love.
- Love includes using spiritual gifts and performing sacrificial acts.
- Paul outlined what love is and is not.
- He declared that love is an enduring virtue.
- He taught that love, faith, and hope are connected.

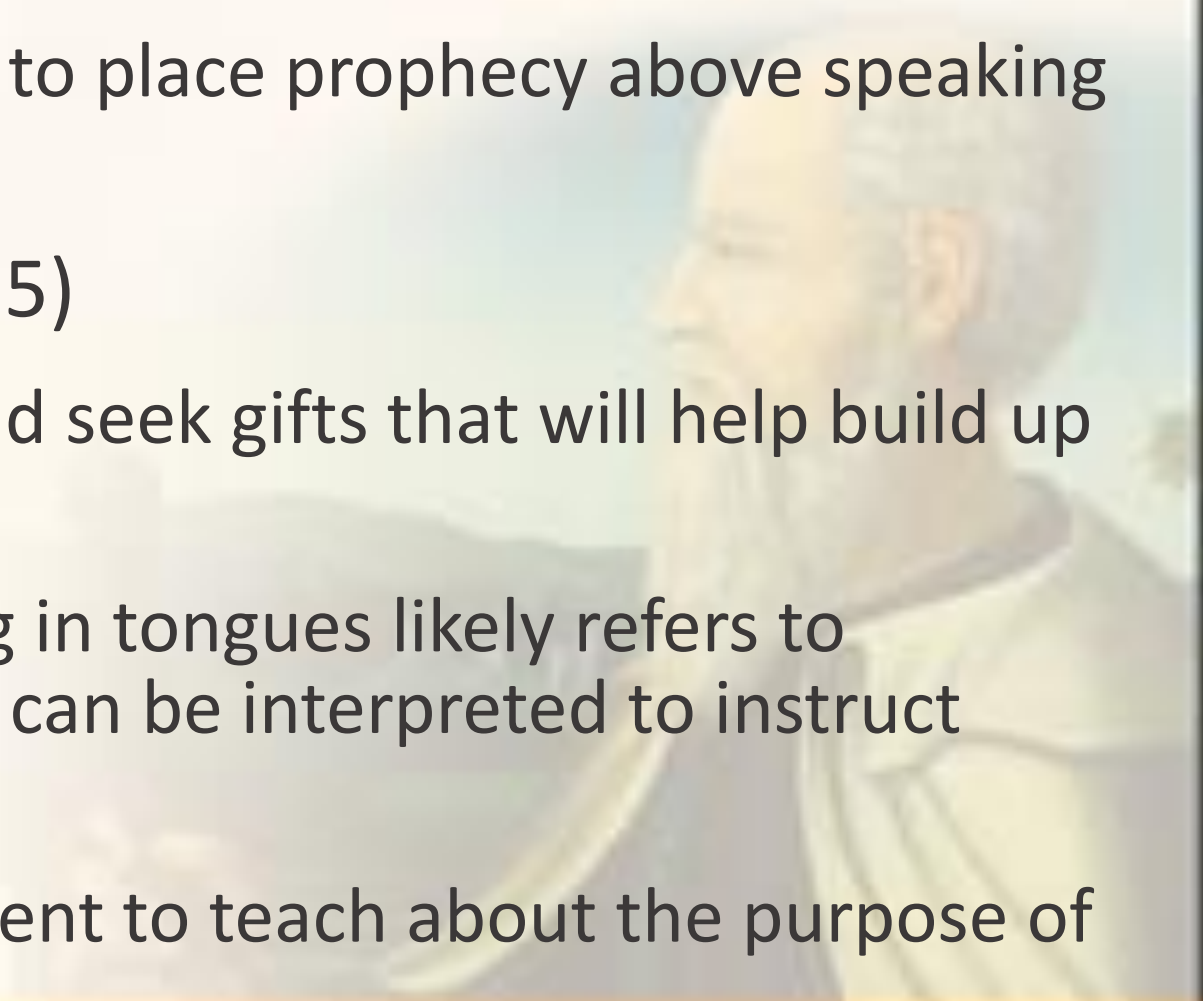


- Prophecy and Tongues (14:1–40)

- Paul said that love should “guide the choice and use of gifts.”
- This application prompted Paul to place prophecy above speaking in tongues.

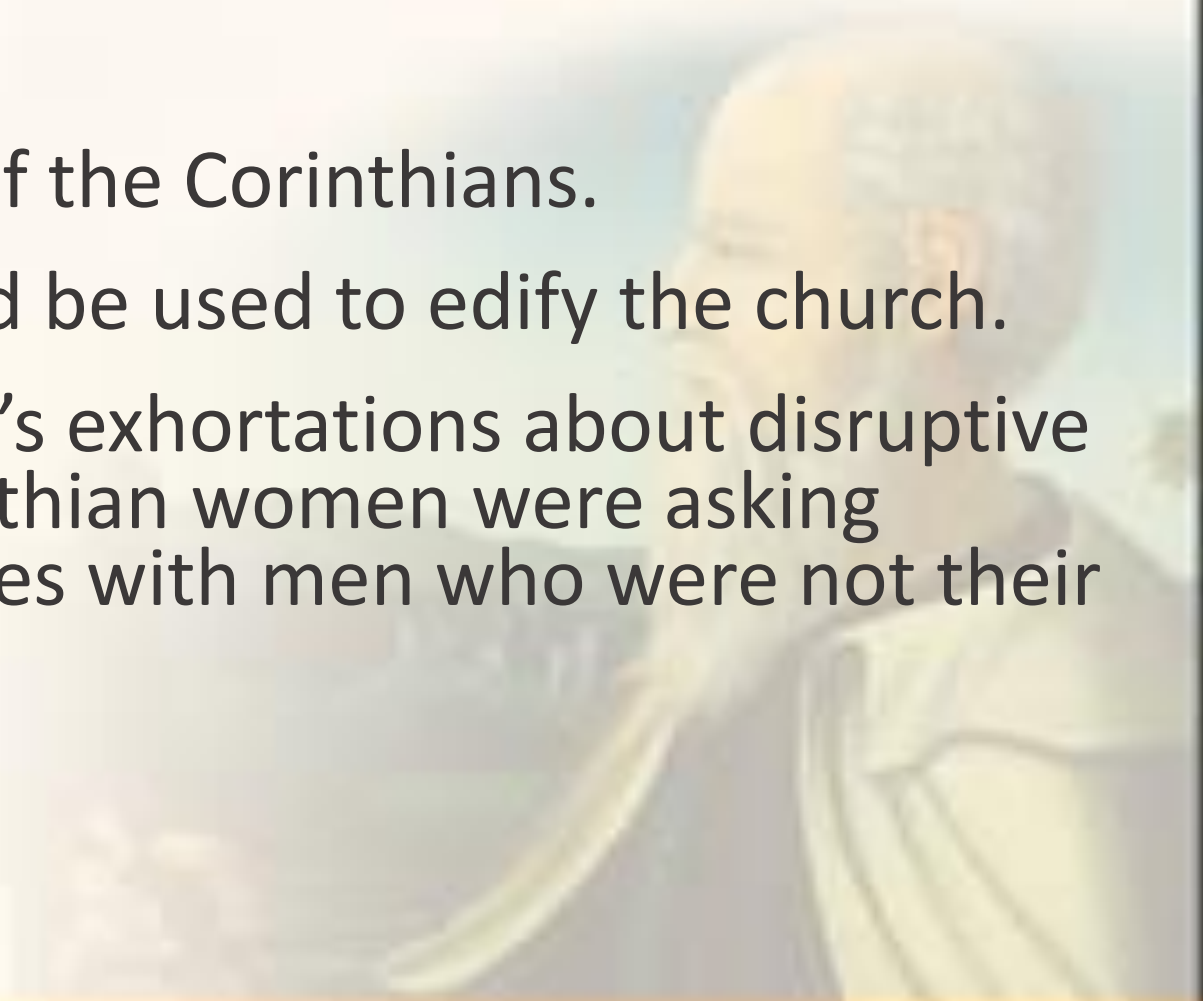
- Building Up the Church (14:1–25)

- Paul taught that believers should seek gifts that will help build up the church.
- The author stated that speaking in tongues likely refers to “language-like utterances” that can be interpreted to instruct others.
- Paul referred to the Old Testament to teach about the purpose of speaking in tongues.



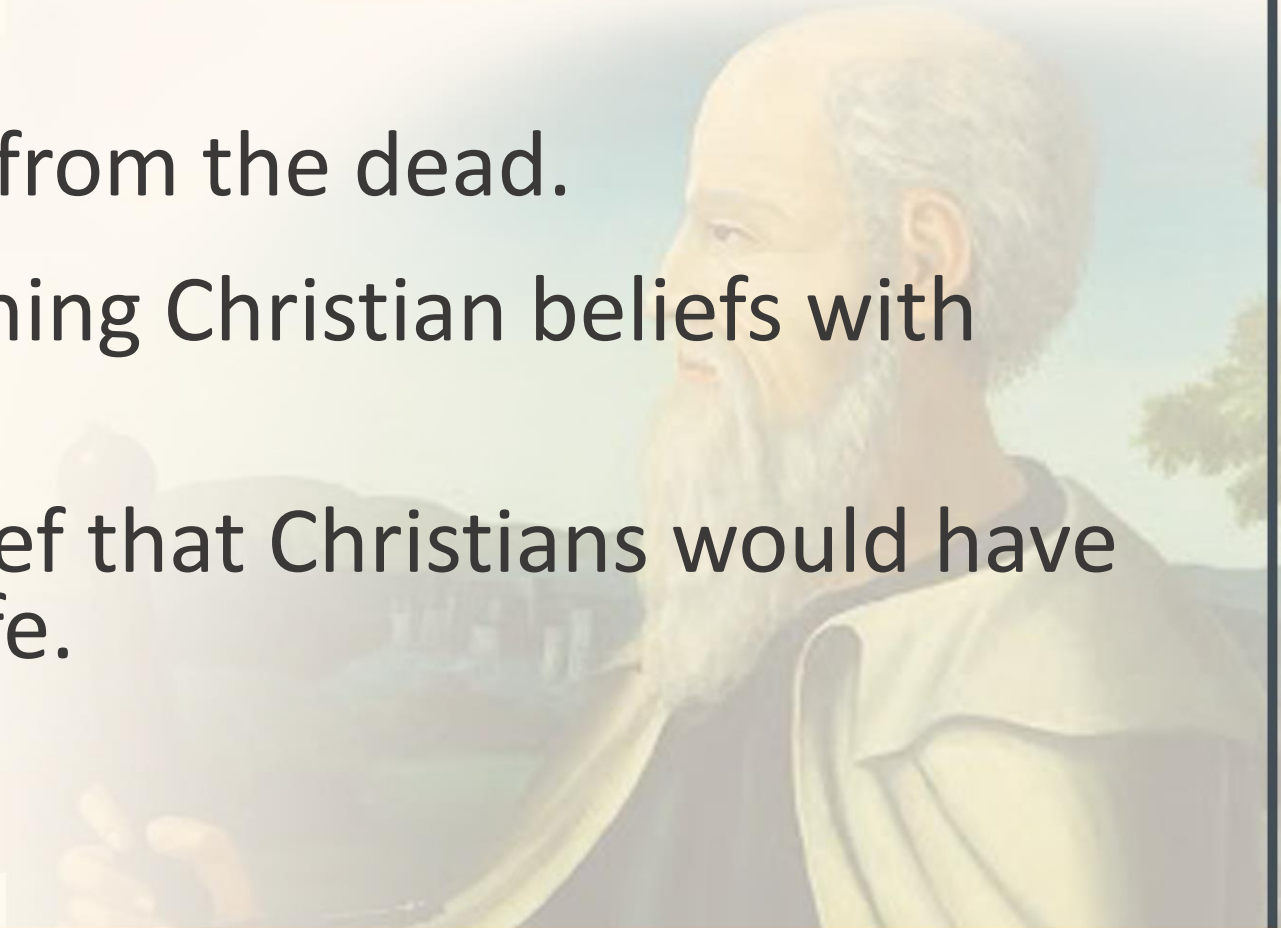
- Order in Worship (14:26–40)

- Paul addressed the worship of the Corinthians.
- He stated that services should be used to edify the church.
- The author believes that Paul's exhortations about disruptive women may mean that Corinthian women were asking questions and discussing issues with men who were not their husbands.



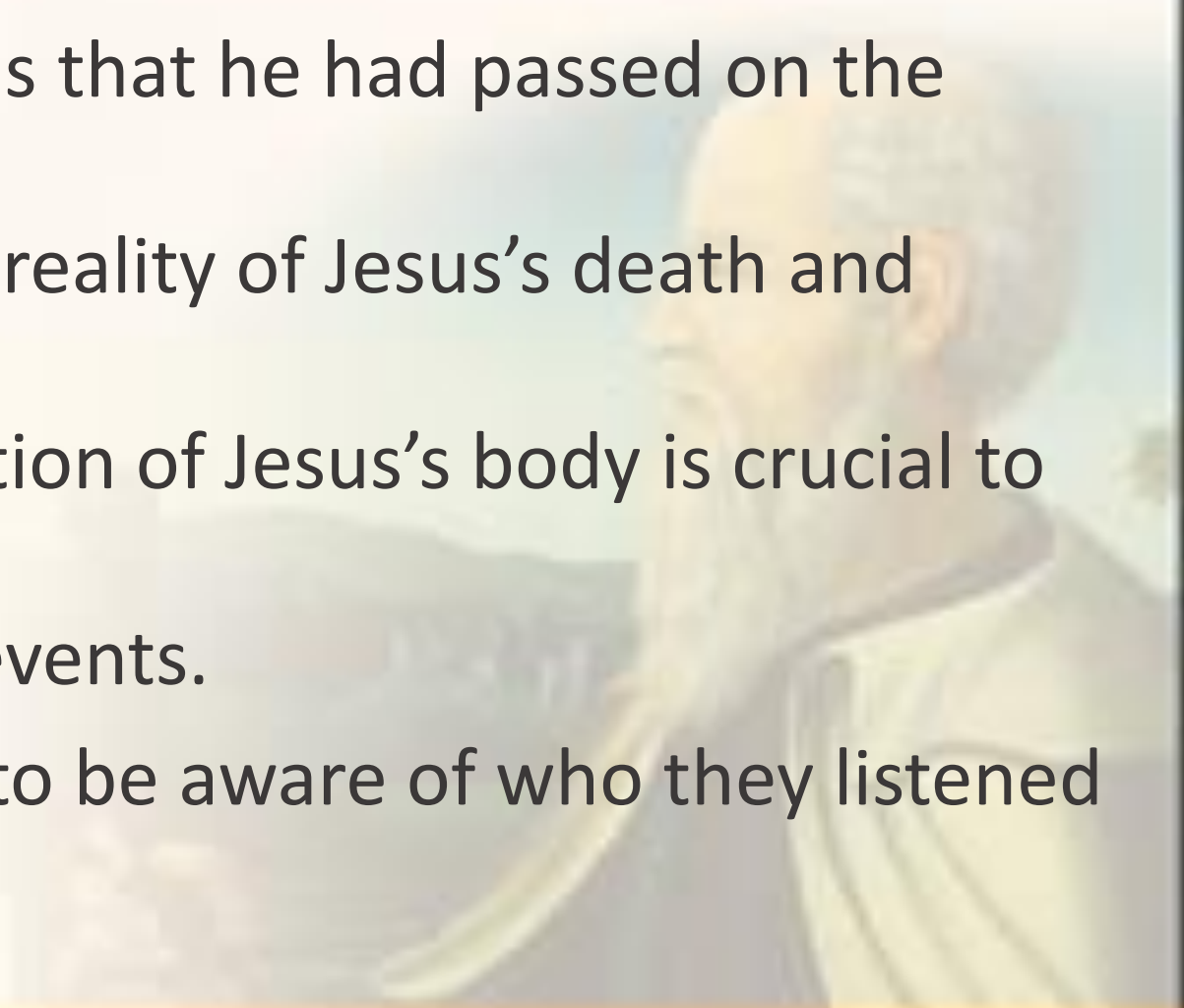
The Future of the New Identity: Resurrection (15:1–58)

- Paul addressed resurrection from the dead.
- The Corinthians were combining Christian beliefs with their worldview.
- They had disdain for the belief that Christians would have a physical body in the afterlife.



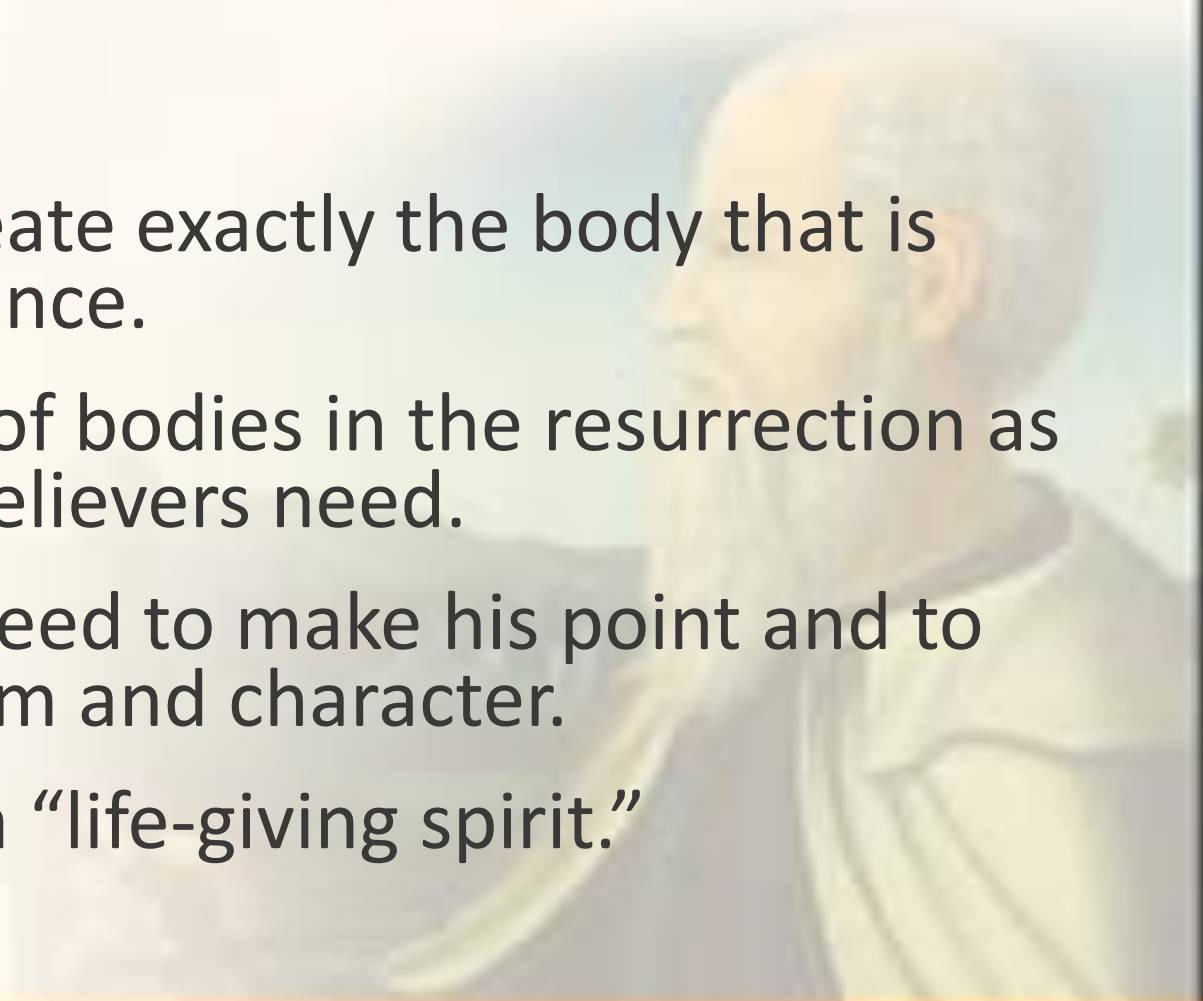
- The Fact of Resurrection (15:1–34)

- Paul reminded the Corinthians that he had passed on the gospel message.
- He emphasized the historical reality of Jesus's death and resurrection.
- Paul taught that the resurrection of Jesus's body is crucial to the Christian faith.
- He outlined the redemptive events.
- He exhorted the Corinthians to be aware of who they listened to and followed.

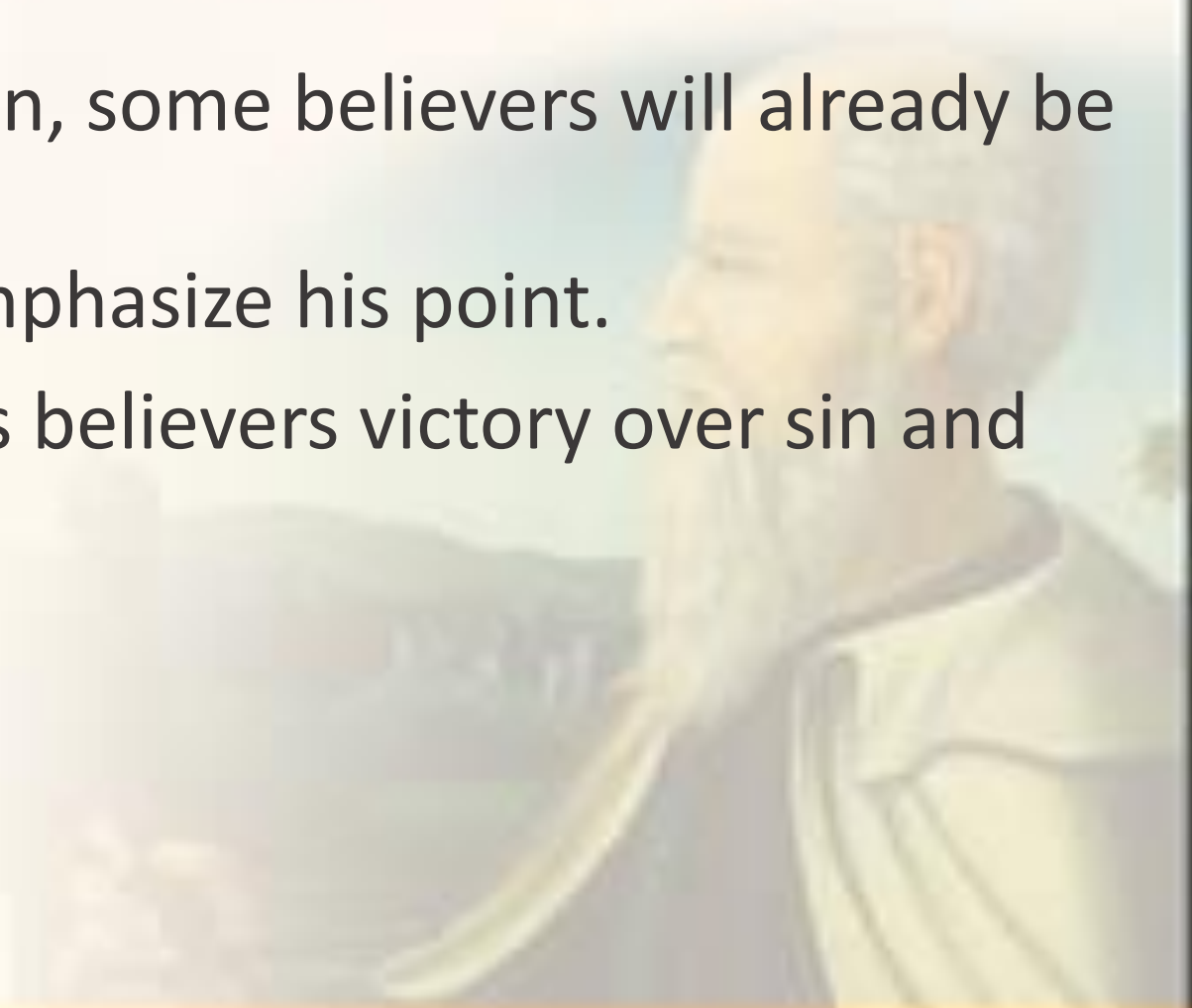


- The How of Resurrection (15:35–58)

- Paul was engaged in a debate with the Corinthians about the resurrection.
- He made two points:
 1. God has the power to create exactly the body that is required in any circumstance.
 2. God will create a variety of bodies in the resurrection as is appropriate for what believers need.
- He used the illustration of a seed to make his point and to demonstrate God's use of form and character.
- He also referenced Adam as a "life-giving spirit."



- At the time of the resurrection, some believers will already be dead and some will be alive.
- Paul quoted Isaiah 25:8 to emphasize his point.
- He explained that Christ gives believers victory over sin and death.



Final Words (16:1–24)

- Paul closed the letter by noting his travel plans, referencing his coworkers, and offering greetings.
- He confirmed that the letter was from him.
- He asked the church to collect money for impoverished Jewish believers.

