

# The Structure of Paul's Letters

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by  
Robert Arthur Bailey

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In memory of my parents,  
Arthur and Helen,  
God's evangelists  
to me

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### Poetic structures of parallelism

In an era of virtually no punctuation, not even spaces between words, sentences, and paragraphs, and when all letters were capital letters, Paul used internal structures of symmetrical parallelism. These structures are like Hebrew poetry, which is not based on meter or rhyme, but on parallelism of clauses, a symmetry of form and sense. They emphasize, organize, and clarify his thoughts. The repetition and emphasis in parallelism are especially helpful in text intended mostly to be heard rather than read, as Paul's letters were. They help listeners to remember and retain the main points of a text they hear read to them and cannot look back on as it is read. They also help a careful reader to see his outline and the units of thought that go together to make a whole structure of thought.

In all of the Pauline letters, structures of symmetrical parallelism (also called chiasmus, symmetrical inversion, or concentric symmetry) are used to organize the entire letter, and also to organize the subdivisions, often to three or more levels. In physics and mathematics, this use of symmetrical parallelism would be known as a "fractal, a geometric pattern that is repeated at ever smaller scales" (The American Heritage Dictionary, fourth edition, 2000). An example in nature of a symmetrical parallelism repeated at ever smaller scales is a fern leaf. Many fern leaves consist of a long stem from which smaller leaves extend on both sides. The smaller leaves are an image of the larger leaf. And those smaller leaves also have a stem from which tiny leaves extend on both sides, an even smaller image of the larger leaf. Patterns like that are widespread in nature, science, and art, but the extent of its use in written language in Paul's letters is unusual. Two other examples are shown in the next section.

These structures call for translations, paragraphing, and outlines appropriate to the structures and their themes. But many of them are obscured and unnoticed in popular English translations. This translation follows Paul's word sequences more closely in order to retain more of Paul's structures. Only in Greek could all the details of Paul's structures be seen and shown.

Paul's basic structure and how it is obscured are illustrated by 2 Cor 5:7, "For by faith we walk, not by sight." "Walk" is at the center, surrounded symmetrically by the two alternatives, "by faith, not by sight." But virtually every popular English translation, except the Revised English Bible, rearranges it unsymmetrically, "We walk by faith, not by sight," putting the initial emphasis on "walk" instead of "faith" as Paul wrote it.

The fact that all thirteen of the Pauline letters use similar structures means that if any of the six disputed letters were written by other authors, all of those other authors were aware of Paul's structures and followed them carefully. Two of Paul's undisputed letters, 2 Corinthians and Philippians, may be compilations of more than one original letter. They are his only letters with two main bodies, separated by other subjects that, in his other letters, come at the end of the letter. If any of them are compilations, it means that those compilers were aware of Paul's structures and carefully compiled in a way that would result in the symmetrical structures that Paul used. Four of Paul's undisputed letters, 1 Thess, 1 and 2 Cor, and Phlp, may contain an insert or compilation added by an editor before being released for publication by the recipient church. If so, all of those editors were also aware of Paul's structures, because all of those four apparent inserts attempt to preserve a structure of symmetrical parallelism. In those cases we have explained what the structures are as is, and also what they would have been before any apparent compilation or insert. (It is interesting that none of the six disputed letters of Paul have a widely recognized insert or compilation.)

This work is far from being a complete and perfect identification of the poetic structures in Paul's letters. But hopefully it is a helpful advancement of that project.

**Two examples of structures of symmetrical parallelism similar to those Paul used:**

## Psalm 23

(1979 Book of Common Prayer)

7 pairs around a center, arranged 1234567Center7654321

The **Lord** is my shepherd;

I shall not be in want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.

He revives my soul

and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I shall fear no evil;

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me;

you have anointed my head with oil,

and my cup is running over.

Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the **Lord** for ever.

## An old Swedish grace

arranged ABCCBA

I Jesu namn  
till bords vi ga  
valsigna Gud den mat vi fa.  
Gud till ara, oss till gagn  
sa fa vi mat  
I Jesu namn

In Jesus' name  
to table we go  
God bless the food we receive.  
To God honor, to us gain  
so receive we food  
in Jesus' name.

**Translation**

Except where noted, this translation follows Nestle-Aland's 27<sup>th</sup> edition of the Greek text (*Novum Testamentum Graece*, 1993), omitting any words that NA27 placed in brackets as doubtful, but not necessarily following the punctuation proposed by NA27. (Virtually no punctuation was in the original Greek.) It uses a degree of literalness comparable to the King James Version, and, like the KJV, uses *italics* to indicate text not in the Greek source.

Everything but proper names is translated into English, including "Christ" and "Satan," which, although they are often used as names, are actually titles, like "Lord." It is customary to leave the Greek title, "Christ," untranslated when it applies to Jesus and to translate it when it applies to others. That practice obscures both its meaning and that the same term is also applied to others (see 2 Cor 1:21). "Lord," "holy," and "spirit" are translated consistently regardless of whom those terms may refer to. The use of the definite article, *the*, before "spirit" and "Anointed" follows Paul's usage as closely as possible.

In the first century, when Paul wrote his letters, all Greek letters were written as capitals. The distinction between uppercase and lowercase letters had not yet been invented. William Tyndale, the

first to translate the New Testament from Greek to English, followed the early Greek text in not capitalizing “son” or “spirit” in his 1534 translation. This translation follows Tyndale’s example in that respect. Virtually all English translations, beginning with the 1599 Geneva Bible and the 1611 KJV, capitalize “spirit” when it is believed to refer to God’s Holy Spirit. It is not capitalized when it is believed to refer to another spirit. As a result there is considerable diversity among the many translations concerning which references are capitalized. Some references to “spirit” may be construed to refer to either or both God’s spirit and a disciple’s spirit. Also, that subjective search, of whether each reference to “spirit” is a reference to God or not, diverts attention from a major theme of these letters, which is the unity of “God our Father,” “our Lord Jesus Anointed,” and God’s “holy ones,” all of whom share the same spirit. Similarly, the term “son of God” is applied both to Jesus and to his disciples (see Rom 8:14).

Quotations or allusions to scripture or other writings are shown in quotation marks. The references can usually be found in NA27 or the various study Bibles.

Greek used the same word for both brother and sister with an ending that shows gender, number, and case. If the plural included both genders, the masculine form was used. As a result, the term “sisters” appears only once in Paul’s letters, in 1 Tim 5:2.

### **Chronological sequence**

The canonical sequence of the thirteen letters attributed to Paul is by decreasing length—in two sequences: letters to churches and letters to individuals, with the longest, Romans, coming first, and the shortest, Philemon, coming last. But our understanding of these letters would be enhanced if we knew their chronological sequence and their relationships to each other. The history of Paul’s life in Acts is helpful in this process for at least the seven undisputed letters, and to a more limited extent for the other six. Paul’s letters themselves are helpful also. The discussion in Paul’s letters of the collection for the poor in Jerusalem is first mentioned in 1 Cor 16:1 after it had been initiated in Galatia and was being launched in Corinth before troubles arose in Galatia. Galatians later addresses those troubles in Galatia and reminds the Galatians of Paul’s support for the collection that had been initiated by the elders at Jerusalem, not by Paul (Gal 2:10). 2 Cor 8:1-6; 9:1-2 report the progress of the collection and its participants without mentioning Galatia. Romans 15:25-28 reports the completion of the collection and its participants without mentioning Galatia. Another helpful clue, as discussed in the Introduction to Romans, is that Paul in his earlier letters, 1 Th, 1 Cor, Gal, and 2 Cor, addressed his letter to the *church* or *churches* of those places. His only subsequent letter even indirectly addressed to a *church* is Philemon, where Paul adds: “and to the church in your house” (and 2 Th which was modeled closely after 1 Th). There are many differences of opinion regarding the probable sequence (and authorship) of Paul’s letters, but there is also substantial agreement in many respects. The approximate chronological sequence used here, which will be discussed as we proceed, is as follows: 1 Th, 1 Cor, Gal, 2 Cor, Rom, Phlp, Phlm, 2 Th, Col, Eph, Titus, 1 & 2 Tim.

The ranges of dates for chronological events related to Paul’s letters are based on Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 1997, p. 428, and Luedemann, *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles, Studies in Chronology*, 1984, pp. 108, 172.

### **Authorship**

Of the thirteen letters explicitly attributed to Paul, the authorship by Paul is undisputed for the first seven. For the other six, the authorship by Paul is disputed by a significant portion of scholars, as summarized by Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 1997, in his comments on “Authenticity” in the “Summary of Basic Information” for each of Paul’s letters. If any of these were not written by Paul, we are faced with the question of why authors of works of such importance would want to attribute their work to another. To explore that question, it may be helpful to explore

the related question of why the authors of so many major works of scripture chose to remain anonymous. Attributing one's work to another is a form of anonymity.

In the New Testament, nine books comprising two thirds of the text are anonymous: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Hebrews, and 1, 2, and 3 John. The Hebrew Bible similarly has substantial portions that are anonymous or that are attributed to someone who may not have been the actual author of the text in its present form. Why such an extraordinary amount of anonymity? Two examples may be helpful. The author of the Gospel of John, who never uses the word "apostle" and does not name seven of the apostles (James, John, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot), attributes the Gospel to "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 21:20,24). A question we may ask is whether one of those seven unnamed apostles would have singled himself out from the other apostles in that fashion. A similar expression occurs in the books of Moses. In Numbers 12:3 the author comments: "Now Moses was extremely humble, the humblest man on earth." Would the humblest man on earth have described himself that way?

When writing about a great saint who is deceased and has become revered—especially when the author is conscious that what is written may become "Scripture"—humility seems to have suggested a preference for anonymity, either directly, or indirectly by attributing the work to a saint who is prominent in the work being written.

Paul's undisputed letters were written when he was often hunted or imprisoned by his enemies, when even leaders in the churches he had founded were questioning his authority and disagreeing with his teachings, and before any other portions of the New Testament were written. So he had little reason to expect his letters to be collected and canonized for thousands of years.

In the six disputed letters, his conflicts with the churches have noticeably receded. In 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, and Ephesians he is thankful for their love and faithfulness. In the three pastorals he gives instructions for the pastoral care of the churches. Colossians, Ephesians, and 2 Timothy indicate that Paul is in prison suffering for the churches and the good news, and each has one or more hymns commemorating Paul's ministry to the church somewhat differently than a similar hymn in Phlp 1:27-2:18. In all of them he is presented more as a revered saint of the church. Such a view of Paul suggests the possibility that these letters may have been written after his death, after his letters had begun to be collected, when his followers wanted to memorialize what he had done for the church and to incorporate his teachings into texts for instruction and ordination. If that is the case, the authors have maintained their anonymity (and humility) by attributing their work to him. A seventh letter, Hebrews, which has always been grouped with Paul's letters, is anonymous, but has an ending that sounds like Paul's endings and mentions Timothy, Paul's closest associate, as a close associate of the unnamed author. That is anonymity with a less direct form of attribution.

Paul saw the risen Lord, 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8, and knew him "according to flesh," 2 Cor 5:16; (Acts 7:58-8:3).

### **The cities of Paul's work**

Paul's strategy was to focus on the metropolitan centers, so the good news could spread out from them. At the time of Paul, the five largest cities of the Roman Empire were Rome, Alexandria, Antioch of Syria, Ephesus, and Corinth, all on the Mediterranean Sea. Paul spent a year or more in each of those cities, except for Alexandria, which had a large Jewish population. Most of Paul's letters were written from Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus. His home base was Antioch (Gal 2:11).

### **"Anointed Jesus," a distinctively Pauline phrase**

The Pauline letters use the phrase "Anointed Jesus" 83 times, more frequently than "Jesus Anointed," which appears 78 times. "Anointed Jesus" appears nowhere else in the New Testament except six times in Acts: 3:20; 5:42; 17:3; 18:5,28; and 24:24. The first five instances in Acts are used in a different sense. Although the words "Anointed Jesus" are together in Greek, they are used

to say that the Anointed *is* Jesus, rather than to refer to Anointed Jesus. The sixth instance, in Acts 24:24, is a quote of Paul by the author of Acts, who knew what was distinctive about Paul's teaching. So referring to Jesus as "Anointed Jesus" is uniquely Pauline. All thirteen letters attributed to Paul use that phrase except 2 Thessalonians, which uses "Jesus Anointed" nine times.

Paul refers to Jesus in a great variety of ways, often with only one word: "Jesus," "Anointed," or "Lord," as well as with many combinations and sequences of those words. For example, in 2 Cor 4:5-15 he uses "Jesus" alone seven times, intermixed, preceded, and followed by other appellations. He often uses a variety of references to Jesus in one paragraph. Some of his uses of "Anointed Jesus" are deliberately chosen for purposes of symmetry or progression. For example, he pairs it symmetrically with "Jesus Anointed" in the opening address of 1 Cor, 2 Cor, Rom, Phlp, Phlm, Eph and Titus (but Titus reverses the sequence), and the closing of Phlp and Phlm. In Phlp 2:1,5,11 he uses it in a progression from shorter to longer references. Paul's freedom to use "Jesus Anointed" and "Anointed Jesus" interchangeably shows that Paul was using "Anointed" as a title, like "Lord." But in the later books of the NT, "Anointed" evidently had become used as a name. Names, like "Jesus," are not usually translated, but titles are.

### Theme

Paul's good news is that God has given us all a relationship with himself and with each other through Abraham's and Jesus' faithfulness (Gal 3:6-9,14; Rom 15:8; Gen 22:18). We are holy, not because of anything we have done, nor because of who we are, but because of whose we are. And that gift of relationship also gives us an example, a motivation, a "call," to fulfill that relationship by being faithful partners with the one whose we are, and with Abraham and Jesus whose faithfulness has brought us into this family, and with each other.

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**Structure**

The overall structure is ABCCBA. The two central divisions are also ABBA:

- 1:1 Address and blessing
- 1:2-4 Thanksgiving and prayer
- 1:5-3:13 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's coming and the Thessalonians' response
  - 1:5-10 Good news came to the Thessalonians, and their response
  - 2:1-20 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's coming and closeness to the Thessalonians (excl 13-16)
  - 3:1-5 Paul, bereft, sent Timothy back to the Thessalonians
  - 3:6-13 Good news of their response came back to Paul, who longs to return to them
- 4:1-5:22 Encouragement on the Lord's coming and appeals for the Thessalonians' response
  - 4:1-12 Appeals on relationships with God and each other
  - 4:13-18 Encouragement on those who have died before the Lord's coming
  - 5:1-11 Encouragement on the coming of the Day of the Lord
  - 5:12-22 Appeals on relationships with leaders, each other, and God
- 5:23-24 Peace benediction
- 5:25-28 Request for prayer, greeting, and blessing

**Background**

1 Thessalonians was written by Paul on his second missionary journey, probably from Corinth within AD 39-52, after Paul had been forced to leave Thessalonica and soon after Timothy returned to Paul and Silvanus in Corinth (see 1 Th 2:17-18; 3:6 and Acts 17:1-18:5, where Silvanus is called "Silas"). So 1 Thessalonians is the first part of the NT to be written.

Thessalonica was a provincial capital, the largest city of Macedonia, and a crossroads of commerce. It was on the Via Egnatia, a Roman road that linked Rome with Constantinople. Paul's first visit to Thessalonica was on his way from Antioch of Syria, across what is now Turkey, to Corinth. Antioch, at the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea, was a Roman capital and a chief commercial city. Corinth was the Roman capital and chief commercial city of Achaia (southern Greece). Antioch and Corinth were two of the five largest cities of the Roman Empire. Paul was forced to leave Thessalonica sooner than he wanted after a riot attributed to the Jews by Acts 17:5-10, and attributed to the Gentiles by 1 Th 2:14. He was sent for safety to nearby Berea but the Jews of Thessalonica stirred up trouble there too, so Paul was sent to the Aegean coast and on to Athens by sea (Acts 17:10-15). At Athens Paul and Silvanus sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to strengthen and encourage the new disciples and then to return (1 Th 3:1-2). Timothy caught up with Paul and Silvanus at Corinth (1 Th 3:6; Acts 18:5), where they had gone after preaching in Athens, the university city (1 Th 3:1; Acts 18:1).

Both 1 and 2 Thessalonians are addressed as from Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy. Silvanus joined Paul in Jerusalem (Acts 15:22) and then accompanied him on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:40). Timothy joined them early on that journey at Lystra (Acts 16:1-3). In Acts, Silvanus is last mentioned in 18:5, when, according to Acts, he and Timothy caught up with Paul in Corinth after their forced departure from Thessalonica and separation at Berea. Paul stayed at Corinth for eighteen months (Acts 18:11), and we know from 2 Cor 1:19 that Silvanus was with Paul for all or most of that time. Timothy went on to accompany Paul on his third missionary journey and was with Paul when he wrote Philippians and Philemon from prison, probably in Rome. But all we know about Silvanus after his time with Paul in Corinth is that 1 Pet 5:12-13 tells us he was the letter carrier for Peter, who was then in "Babylon" (Rome).

## Theme

This letter was written to strengthen and encourage the new disciples in Thessalonica that Paul had been forced to leave prematurely, and to continue his contact with them.

Paul mentions the “good news” (*evangelī-*) seven times: 1:5; 2:2,4,8,9; 3:2,6. Four times he uses the term “give thanks” or “thanksgiving” (*eucharist-*): 1:2; 2:13; 3:9; 5:18. In none of those instances does he speak of “sins” or “forgiveness.” In fact, the Greek word for sin appears only once, in 2:16, and the Greek word for forgiveness does not appear at all. So what is that “good news,” and what is Paul giving thanks for?

Paul’s overall theme is the unity of God’s “holy ones” with “our God and Father” and with each other in “our Lord Jesus Anointed” (as in John 14:20). That unity and all that flows from it is the good news. It is what Paul gives thanks for. That unity is clearly portrayed in 1:1 and 1:2-4. Another of many examples is 3:13: “so as to establish your hearts blameless in holiness in the presence of our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy *ones*.” It is a complete unity, and the good news is that it includes the church, which is primarily Gentile (1:9). The church is in God and in the Lord Jesus (1:1) and is called into God’s own kingdom and glory (2:12). The church “will always be with *the Lord*” (4:17). They are fellow workers with God (3:2). God gives his holy spirit to them (4:8).

The church is referred to as: “brothers” (seventeen times) [Greek used the same word for both brother and sister with an ending that shows gender, number, and case. If the plural included both genders, the masculine form was used. As a result, the term “sisters” appears only once in Paul’s letters, in 1 Tim 5:2.]; “assembly” from *ekklesia* = “called out from” (by God) (1:1); “followers of us and of the Lord” (1:6); “followers of God’s churches” (2:14); “loved by God” (1:4); “elected” or “chosen” (1:4); “his holy ones” (3:13); “taught by God” (4:9); and “sons of light” (5:5).

The purpose of Jesus’ death—“our Lord Jesus Anointed, who died for us, so that . . . together with him we may live” (5:9b-10)—is portrayed as bringing them into that unity by his death and resurrection, in which they share by their faithfulness in sufferings to which “we are appointed” (3:3) and by their faithfulness in responding to “God, who gives his spirit, the holy *spirit*, to you” (4:8). This theme of being united with Jesus in his death and resurrection is a recurring theme in Paul’s letters (see, for example, Phlp 3:10-11).

Paul refers to the spirit as God’s spirit (4:8), and as the spirit of God’s “holy ones” (all five references to “spirit”: 1:5,6; 4:8; 5:19,23). This is summarized in 1 Cor 6:17, where Paul says: “But one who is united with the Lord is one spirit *with him*.”

## Allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70

An allusion is made in 2:16b to some notable display of God’s vengeance on the Jews. The most notable such display, by far, was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70. But this letter was written within 39-52, which would limit this reference to something like the expulsion of Jews from Rome by Claudius in 49, mentioned matter-of-factly in Acts 18:2. But that lacks the finality implied by 2:16b. For the reasons given in the footnote on 2:13-16, this allusion may have been inserted soon after 70, when this letter began to be circulated to other churches. The existence of this allusion here may be one reason why the author of Acts chose to end his story of Paul prior to Paul’s death. There is general agreement that Acts was written after 70 and before 100. The principal objection to dating Acts after 80 is the omission of Paul’s death. But the author of Acts had good reason to omit the date of Paul’s death, as discussed in the introduction to 2 Timothy. If he also knew of this allusion, he would have had another reason to omit the date of Paul’s death.

# 1 Thessalonians

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

## Address and blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul and Silvanus and Timothy,  
 To the *assembly* **called out from**<sup>2</sup>  
*the* Thessalonians  
 in God *the* Father  
 and *the* Lord Jesus  
**Anointed**:<sup>3</sup>

Grace to you and peace. [ABA]

## Thanksgiving and prayer<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> We give thanks to God always for all of you,  
 making mention, in our prayers, unceasingly <sup>3</sup> remembering [ABA]  
 your  
 faith's<sup>5</sup> work  
 and love's labor  
 and hope's steadfastness,  
 our Lord Jesus Anointed's,<sup>6</sup>  
 in the presence of our God and Father,  
<sup>4</sup> knowing, brothers loved by God, that you are chosen.

## Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's coming and the Thessalonians' response<sup>7</sup>

### Good news came to the Thessalonians, and their response<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For our good news did not come to you in word only,  
 but also in power  
 and in holy spirit  
 and much assurance,  
 as you know how we came to you for you.

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-4 ABCDCBA. The first of six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 5:25-28.

<sup>2</sup> 1:1 Literally, *ekklesia* = "called out from" (usually translated "church"), equivalent to "Anointed" in 1:1 and "chosen" in 1:4. This and the Greek word *synagoge* = "gathered together" are both used frequently in reference to the congregation of God's people in the LXX (the "Septuagint," the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible that Paul used).

<sup>3</sup> 1:1 *Anointed*. It is customary to leave the Greek word for this title untranslated when it applies to Jesus and to translate it when it applies to others. Unfortunately that practice obscures both its meaning and the fact that the same term is applied to both Jesus and his followers (see 2 Cor 1:21).

<sup>4</sup> 1:2-4 ABCDEDCBA. The second of six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 5:23-24.

<sup>5</sup> 1:3 *Faith*. This English word does not adequately convey the meaning of this Greek word, as illustrated by the usual translations of "faithfulness" or "faithful" when it applies to God, as in 1 Th 5:24 and Rom 3:3. And here it results in "work." Paul also pairs it with "obedience," as in Rom 1:5; 10:16; 16:26. See Gen 22:18.

<sup>6</sup> 1:3 *Our Lord Jesus Anointed's*. The three pairs of qualities in verse 3 are preceded by the genitive "your" in an unusual word sequence and are followed by the genitive "our Lord Jesus Anointed's," indicating that all three are shared by both the Thessalonians and Jesus.

<sup>7</sup> 1:5-3:13 ABBA. The third of six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 4:1-5:22. In the first section the good news came to the Thessalonians; in the last, good news came back to Paul. The two central sections focus on Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's coming and closeness to them, and Timothy's return to them.

<sup>8</sup> 1:5-10 ABA. Parallel with 3:6-13. A's: coming to them, B: they became followers.

- 6 And you became our followers and the Lord's,  
 having received the word in much affliction with *the* holy spirit's joy;  
 7 so that you became an example to all the faithful in Macedonia and in Achaia.  
 8 For from you sounded out the Lord's word, not only in Macedonia and Achaia,  
 but in every place your faithfulness toward God has gone forth,  
 so that we have no need to say anything.
- 9 For they themselves tell about us what kind of coming in we had among you  
 and how you turned to God from idols,  
 to serve a God living and true,  
 10 and to look for his son from the heavens,  
 whom he raised from *the* dead,  
 Jesus, who delivers us  
 from the coming vengeance.

### Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's coming and closeness to the Thessalonians<sup>9</sup>

- 2** For you yourselves know, brothers, our coming among you, that it was not empty. [ABA]
- 2 Rather, after we had suffered and were shamefully treated, as you know, at Philippi,  
 we drew courage through our God to tell you God's good news  
 amidst much conflict.
- 3 For our appeal *was* **not** from error **nor** from impurity **nor** through deception;  
 4 but as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the good news,  
 so we speak, not as pleasing people, but God, who examines our hearts.
- 5 **Nor** did we ever come with a word of flattery, as you know,  
**nor** with a cloak for greed (God *is* witness),  
 6 **nor** seeking glory from people, neither from you nor from others,  
 7 although we were able to impose *our* weight as Anointed's apostles,  
 but we became babes among you.
- As a nursing mother cares for her own children,<sup>10</sup>  
 8 so also devoted to you,  
 we were pleased to share with you not only God's good news,  
 but also our own selves because you had become dear to us.
- 9 Remember, brothers, our labor and toil working night and day,  
 so as not to burden any of you,  
 we preached to you God's good news.
- 10 You *are* witnesses, and God *also*,  
 how devoutly and justly and blamelessly,  
 among you who have faith  
 we behaved,  
 11 just as you know,
- how, each one of you, as a father his own children,  
 12 urging you and encouraging and witnessing,  
 that you walk worthy of the God who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

<sup>9</sup> 2:1-12,17-20 ABCDEDCBA. Parallel with 3:1-5. A's: Paul's coming and the Lord's coming. The meaning of "not empty" in the first A is provided in the last (and in 2:13-14a). B's: suffering and conflict, C's: their appeal (3 negatives vs 3 positives), D's: you and God are witnesses (3 negatives vs 3 positives), E: giving you God's good news and ourselves.

<sup>10</sup> 2:7 As Moses told God he was unable to do alone for Israel. See Num 11:12-14; Gal 4:19; 1 Cor 3:1-2.

{<sup>13</sup> And for this reason also  
we give thanks to God  
without ceasing

that receiving  
*the* word,  
heard from us,  
of God  
you accepted *it*

not *as* a human word,  
but as it is truly,  
God's word,

which also is at work  
in you  
who have faith.

<sup>14</sup> For you became followers, brothers,  
of God's churches  
that are in Judea in Anointed Jesus.

For the same *things* you suffered,  
both you from your own people  
as also they from the Jews,

<sup>15</sup> who also the Lord  
killed  
Jesus and the prophets,

and us drove out  
and God displease  
and everyone oppose,

<sup>16</sup> hindering us  
to the Gentiles to speak that they may be saved,  
to fill up their sins always.

But has come upon them  
the vengeance  
in full. }<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> 2:13-16 ABCDEEDCBA. The last five sections tend to be contrasts of the first five. Paul's theme in 2:1-12 of his closeness to the Thessalonians is continued in 17-20. So 2:13-16, concerning God's vengeance on the Jews, is an interruption. Why are the only references to sin and the Jews in this letter brought up in the middle of that discussion? To announce that God's vengeance had come on the Jews? God's vengeance was still future in 1:10. And the coming of "our Lord Jesus" and God's kingdom were still future in 2:12,19. Why so final here, when in Rom 11:26 he says, "all Israel will be saved"? Why would Paul thank God in 2:14 that they "became followers ... of God's churches that are in Judea" after thanking God in 1:6 that "you became followers of us and of the Lord"? Is that an entree to talk about the Jews? And why would Paul emphasize in 2:13 that his word was God's word after what he had said in 1:5-8? This appears designed to parallel 1:2-10, forming an ABA structure with 1:2-10 and 2:1-12. It comes just before an apparent new topic in 2:17-3:13 of Paul's desire to see them again. But it disrupts the flow of thought in 1:5-3:13, and especially in 2:1-20. And word sequences in 2:13-16 are more unusual than in the rest of the letter.

17 But we, brothers, orphaned from you for a short time,  
 in person, not in heart,  
 all the more were we eager to see your face with great desire.  
 18 For we wanted to return to you,  
 I, Paul, again and again,  
 but the Adversary blocked us.

19 For what *is* our hope or joy  
 or “crown of boasting?”—  
 what indeed but you?—  
 in the presence  
 of our Lord Jesus  
 at his coming?  
 20 Yes, you are  
 our glory  
 and joy.

**Paul, bereft, sent Timothy back to the Thessalonians**

**3** Therefore when we could wait no longer,  
 we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone,  
 2 and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s fellow worker in the Anointed’s good news,  
 to strengthen and encourage you in your faithfulness  
 3 that no one be unsettled by these afflictions.

For you yourselves know  
 that for this we are appointed.  
 4 For even when we were with you, we forewarned you  
 that we would suffer affliction,  
 just as it has happened as you know.

5 For this reason, when I could wait no longer,  
 I sent to find out about your faithfulness,  
 in case somehow the tester had put you to the test and in vain had been our work.

**Good news of their response came back to Paul, who longs to return to them**

6 But now Timothy has come to us from you,  
 and has brought good news to us of your faithfulness and love,  
 and that you have good remembrance of us always, longing to see us, just as also we you.

7 Because of this we have been encouraged, brothers, by you in all our distress and hardship  
 through your faithfulness,  
 8 for now we live if you stand firm in *the* Lord.  
 9 What thanksgiving can we return to God for you—  
 for all the joy we feel because of you before our God,  
 10 night and day praying most earnestly  
 that *we* may see your face and complete what is lacking in your faithfulness?

11 May our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear our way to you.  
 12 May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as also  
 we for you,  
 13 so as to establish your hearts blameless in holiness in the presence of our God and Father at the  
 coming of our Lord Jesus “with all his holy *ones*.”

**Encouragement on the Lord's coming and appeals for the Thessalonians' response<sup>12</sup>****Appeals on relationships with God and each other<sup>13</sup>**

**4** Accordingly, brothers, we ask you and we urge in *the* Lord Jesus,  
 that as you received from us  
     how you ought to behave  
     and to please God,  
     just as you are behaving,  
 that you progress more and more.

<sup>2</sup> For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

<sup>3</sup> For this is God's will,  
 your holiness:

    that you abstain from sexual immorality;

<sup>4</sup> that each of you know how to control your own body in holiness and honor,

<sup>5</sup> not in passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God;

<sup>6</sup> that no one wrong or take advantage in this matter of a brother,

    because *the* Lord *is* an avenger of all these *things*,

    as we have also told you before and affirmed.

<sup>7</sup> For God did not call us for immorality,

    but to holiness.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, whoever rejects *this* rejects not human authority but God, who gives his spirit, the holy *spirit*, to you.

<sup>9</sup> Now concerning brotherly love, you have no need *for us* to write to you,  
 for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.

<sup>10</sup> For indeed you are doing this for all the brothers throughout Macedonia.

But we urge you, brothers, to progress more and more,

<sup>11</sup> and to aspire

    to live quietly,

    and to mind your own affairs,

    and to work with your hands,

as we charged you,

<sup>12</sup> so that you may behave respectably toward outsiders, and be dependent on no one.

<sup>12</sup> 4:1-5:22 ABBA. Parallel with 1:5-3:13. The A's are appeals on their relationships with each other and God in anticipation of the Lord's coming. The B's are encouragement on the Lord's coming.

<sup>13</sup> 4:1-12 ABBA. Parallel with 5:12-22. The A's are general and summary appeals for progress. The B's are appeals for holiness and brotherly love.



### Encouragement on those who have died before the Lord's coming<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Now we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, concerning those who fall asleep, so that you may not grieve as others who have no hope.

<sup>14</sup> For if we have faith that Jesus died and rose,

so also God, through Jesus, will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

<sup>15</sup> This we tell you on *the* Lord's word, that we the living who remain to the Lord's coming, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

<sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself,  
with a shout of command,  
with an archangel's voice,  
and with God's trumpet call,  
will come down from heaven,  
and the dead in Anointed  
will rise first.

<sup>17</sup> Then we the living who remain,  
together with them we will be caught up in clouds to the Lord's reception in *the* air,  
and so we will always be with *the* Lord.

<sup>18</sup> Therefore encourage one another with these words.

### Encouragement on the coming of the Day of the Lord<sup>15</sup>

**5** Now concerning times and dates, brothers, you have no need *for anything* to be written to you.

<sup>2</sup> For you yourselves know well  
that *the* Day of *the* Lord is coming like a thief at night.

<sup>3</sup> When they say, "Peace and security,"  
then sudden destruction comes upon them as birth pains upon a woman with child,  
and they will certainly not escape.

<sup>4</sup> But you, brothers, are not in darkness that the day should overtake you like a thief.

<sup>5</sup> For you all are sons of light and sons of day.  
We are not of night nor of darkness.

<sup>6</sup> So then let us not sleep, as the others,  
but let us watch and be sober.

<sup>7</sup> For the sleeping sleep at night, and the drunken are drunk at night.

<sup>8</sup> But we, being of *the* day, let us be sober,  
having put on a breastplate of faithfulness and love, and a helmet, *the* hope of salvation.

<sup>9</sup> For God has not appointed us for vengeance,  
but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Anointed,

<sup>10</sup> who died for us, so that whether we wake or sleep, together with him we may live.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you are doing.

<sup>14</sup> 4:13-18 ABCDEFGHHGFEDCBA. Parallel with 5:1-11.

<sup>15</sup> 5:1-11 ABCCBA. A's: confidence. B's: destruction or salvation. C's: sons of day, not of night.

**Appeals on relationships with leaders, each other, and God<sup>16</sup>**

12 We ask you, brothers,  
to respect those who labor among you and have charge of you in *the* Lord and admonish you,  
13 and to regard them very highly in love for their work's sake.

Be at peace among yourselves.

14 We urge you, brothers:

Warn the idle.

Encourage the fainthearted.

Help the weak.

Be patient with all.

15 See that, no one, evil, for, evil, to anyone, repays. [ABCDCBA]

Rather, always the good seek for one another and for all.

16 Always rejoice.

17 Without ceasing pray.

18 In everything give thanks, for this *is* God's will in Anointed Jesus for you.

19 The spirit do not quench.

20 Prophetic utterances do not despise.<sup>17</sup>

21 Everything test.

The good keep.

22 From every form of evil abstain.

**Peace benediction<sup>18</sup>**

23 Himself, the God of peace,

may he make holy

you

entirely,

and *the* whole

of your spirit and soul and body

blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Anointed be kept.

24 Faithful *is* he who calls you, who also will bring *it* about.

**Request for prayer, greeting, and blessing<sup>19</sup>**

25 Brothers, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.

27 I charge you by the Lord

that this letter be read to all the brothers.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Anointed *be* with you.

<sup>16</sup> 5:12-22 ABA. A's: Relationships with leaders and God, B: relationships with others.

<sup>17</sup> 5:20 *Prophetic utterances*. Inspired preaching for upbuilding, encouragement and comfort. 1 Cor 14:3.

<sup>18</sup> 5:23-24 ABCDDCBA. The fifth of the six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:2-4.

<sup>19</sup> 5:25-28 ABCBA. The last of the six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:1.

## Structure

The overall structure is ABCBA. The central division, the main body, is ABCDDCBA:

1:1-3 Address and blessing

1:4-9 Thanksgiving

1:10-15:58 Eight concerns about the unity of Anointed's body at Corinth

1:10-4:21 Divisions caused by rivalries, and the Anointed's crucifixion

1:10-16 Were you baptized in Paul's name?

1:17-2:16 Was Paul crucified for you?

3:1-4:21 Is the Anointed divided?

5:1-6:20 Maintain the integrity of the Anointed's body

5:1-13 Incest! Clean out the old leaven to celebrate our Passover

6:1-11 Do you dare go to law against a brother, and that before unbelievers?

6:12-20 How can you unite Anointed's body with a prostitute's body?

7:1-40 Responsibilities of marriage, circumcision, and slavery

7:1-16 Marriage to a believer or an unbeliever

7:17-24 Circumcision and slavery

7:25-40 Engagement to a virgin, marriage, and remarriage

8:1-13 Do not let your liberty become a stumbling block to the weak

9:1-27 Paul gives up his rights so he may be a partner of the good news to win over the more

10:1-11:34 Responsibilities of community relationships

10:1-13 Spiritual food and drink of Israel, and their unresponsiveness

10:14-22 The meaning of sharing in the Lord's supper

10:23-11:1 Eating and drinking to God's glory with neighbors

11:2-16 Relationships and authority in worship

11:17-22 Eating and drinking to God's glory in church

11:23-26 The meaning of sharing in the Lord's supper

11:27-34 Spiritual food and drink of the church, and their unresponsiveness

12:1-14:40 Making one body of many members who have different gifts

12:1-31 Many gifts from one spirit, God's; many members are one body, Anointed's

13:1-14:1a Love, the greatest gift, that enables all the other gifts

14:1b-40 Strive that you may excel in spiritual gifts for building up the church

15:1-58 The division caused by death, and the Anointed's resurrection

15:1-11 Witnesses to the Anointed's resurrection

15:12-34 Resurrection is linked with resurrection of Anointed and God's power over death

15:35-49 Resurrection is linked with new, heavenly, and spiritual life in God's creations

15:50-58 Participants in the Anointed's resurrection

16:1-18 Gift for Jerusalem, travel plans, and commendations

16:1-4 The gift for Jerusalem

16:5-9 Paul's plans to come to them

16:10-18 Commendation of letter carriers, and summary of letter

16:19-24 Greetings and blessing

The first and last primary divisions are the address and blessing, and the greetings and blessing. The second and fourth are the thanksgiving, and the gift for Jerusalem, travel plans, and commendations. The center, arranged ABCDDCBA, consists of eight concerns about the unity of Anointed's body at Corinth, 1:10-4:21, 5:1-6:20, 7:1-40, 8:1-13, 9:1-27, 10:1-11:34, 12:1-14:40, and 15:1-58, each of which is also a symmetrical parallelism. The first concern views divisions caused by rivalries in the light of the Anointed's crucifixion. It is parallel with the eighth, which views division (separation) caused by death in the light of the Anointed's resurrection. The second urges to maintain the integrity of the Anointed's body (against incest, lawsuits between brothers before the unjust, and prostitution). It is parallel with the seventh, making one body of many members who have different gifts. The third is about the responsibilities of marriage, circumcision, and slavery. It is parallel with the sixth about the responsibilities of community relationships. The central two focus on love, theirs and his, a key to unity. The fourth urges them: Do not let your liberty (to eat food offered to idols) become a stumbling block to the weak. That is parallel with the fifth about Paul giving up his rights so he may be a partner of the good news to win over the more.

### **Background**

Paul had first visited Corinth on his second missionary journey (within AD 39-52) and stayed about 18 months, founding a community of disciples there (Acts 18:1-18). On his third missionary journey (within 48-58), while he stayed at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-20:1), which is about 250 miles east of Corinth by sea, he wrote a letter to Corinth, which Paul mentions in 1 Cor 5:9-11. He then received a reply, which Paul mentions in 1 Cor 7:1. So 1 Corinthians is Paul's second letter to Corinth, written from Ephesus (16:8), and sent by the hands of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, who had come from Corinth (16:15-18). Paul had sent Timothy on ahead (4:17), probably by land because he assumed the letter would arrive before Timothy (16:10-11), implying the letter was sent by sea. It responds to comments and questions in the letter from Corinth (6:12-13,18; 7:1,25; 8:1; 10:23; 12:1; 16:1,12) and also to oral reports of problems at Corinth (1:11; 5:1; 11:18; 15:12) reported to Paul by "Chloe's people" (1:11) and probably also Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus.

This letter was written after the collection for the poor in Jerusalem was requested by the Jerusalem council and before the opposition to Paul developed in Galatia (16:1). Both 2 Cor 8:1-4; 9:1-2 and Romans 15:25-26 discuss the completion of the collection and the participating churches, but do not mention Galatia, indicating that they were written after Galatians.

Corinth was the Roman capital and chief commercial city of Achaia (southern Greece). It was one of the five leading cities of the Roman Empire, the others being Rome, Alexandria, Antioch of Syria, and Ephesus.

### **Theme**

This letter continues the theme begun in 1 Thessalonians: the unity of God's "holy ones" with "God our Father" and with each other in "our Lord Jesus Anointed." This is summarized in 1:9: "Faithful *is* God, by whom you have been called out into partnership with his son, Jesus Anointed, our Lord," and again in the chiasmus in 1:29-31. The eight concerns that form the body of this letter are all related to that overall theme. That unity includes both Jews and Greeks (1:24; 9:20-21; 12:13).

The role of God's spirit as a spirit shared by God, by Anointed Jesus, and by God's holy ones, as a way of expressing their unity, is summarized in 6:17,19: "he who is united with the Lord is one spirit *with him* . . . do you not know that your [plural] body is a temple of the holy spirit among you, which you [plural] have from God?" See also 12:1-13.

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

## Address and blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul, called *to be* an apostle of **Anointed Jesus** by God's will, and brother Sosthenes,  
<sup>2</sup> To the called out *assembly* of God that is in Corinth,  
 made holy  
 in **Anointed Jesus**,  
 called *to be* holy,  
 with all those who call on the name of our Lord **Jesus Anointed** in every place, theirs and ours:  
<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and *the* Lord **Jesus Anointed**.

## Thanksgiving<sup>2</sup>

<sup>4</sup> I give thanks to my God always  
 concerning you,  
 for God's grace  
 given to you  
 in **Anointed Jesus**,  
<sup>5</sup> that in every *way*, you have been enriched in him, in all speech and all knowledge,  
<sup>6</sup> as the testimony of the Anointed was confirmed among you,  
<sup>7</sup> so you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Anointed.  
<sup>8</sup> He also will confirm you  
 until *the* end, blameless, on the Day of our Lord Jesus.  
<sup>9</sup> Faithful *is* God,  
 by whom you have been called out into partnership  
 with his son, **Jesus Anointed**, our Lord.

## Eight concerns about the unity of Anointed's body at Corinth<sup>3</sup>

### 1. Divisions caused by rivalries, and the Anointed's crucifixion<sup>4</sup>

#### 1a. Were you baptized in Paul's name?

<sup>10</sup> I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Anointed, that you all agree  
 and that there not be divisions among you,  
 that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose.  
<sup>11</sup> For it was made clear to me about you, my brothers, by Chloe's people, that there are  
 rivalries among you.  
<sup>12</sup> I mean that each of you says, "I am Paul's," or "I *am* Apollos's," or "I *am* Cephas's,"  
 or "I *am* Anointed's."  
<sup>13</sup> Is the Anointed divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or in Paul's name were you baptized?  
<sup>14</sup> I give thanks that I baptized none of you  
 except Crispus and Gaius,  
<sup>15</sup> so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name.  
<sup>16</sup> I also baptized the household of Stephanas.<sup>5</sup>

Beyond that I do not know whether I baptized any other.

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-3 ABCDCBA. Note symmetry of "Anointed Jesus" in 1:1-2a with "Jesus Anointed" in 1:2b-3, also in 1:4,9.

<sup>2</sup> 1:4-9 ABA. The second of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 16:1-18.

<sup>3</sup> 1:10-15:58 ABCDDCBA. The central of five divisions of this letter.

<sup>4</sup> 1:10-4:21 ABA. The three questions in 1:13 form Paul's outline for this concern. He answers them in inverse order. The first and last deal with divisions of Anointed's body, the center with his crucifixion for them.

<sup>5</sup> 1:16 *Stephanas*, one of the delegates from Corinth, was with Paul (16:15-18) and may have reminded Paul of this while Paul was dictating. But 1:14-16 is ABCBA, so it may have been deliberate, as in Gal 2:6,10.

### 1b. Was Paul crucified for you?<sup>6</sup>

17 Anointed did not send me to baptize but to preach the good news,  
not in wisdom of speech,  
in order not to make meaningless the cross  
of the Anointed.

18 For the message of the cross  
to those being destroyed is foolishness,  
but to those being saved, to us, it is God's power.

19 For it is written: "I will destroy  
the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning  
I will bring to nothing."

20 Where *is the* wise? Where *is the* scribe? Where *is the* debater of this age?  
Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

21 For since in the wisdom of God,  
the world through wisdom did not know God,  
God was pleased, through the foolishness of the message, to save those who are faithful.

22 For Jews ask for signs,<sup>7</sup>  
and Greeks seek for wisdom.

23 But we preach Anointed crucified,  
to Jews a stumbling block,  
and to Gentiles foolishness,

24 but to those who are called,  
both Jews  
and Greeks,

Anointed, God's power and God's wisdom.

25 For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom,  
and God's weakness *is* stronger than human strength.

26 Consider your calling, brothers, that not many *were* wise according to flesh,  
not many powerful,  
not many of noble birth.

27 But the foolish of the world God chose, to shame the wise,  
and the weak of the world God chose, to shame the strong,

28 and the lowborn of the world and the disdained God chose, those that are  
nothing, to reduce to nothing those that are something,

29 that no flesh may boast before God.

30 By him,  
you are

in Anointed Jesus, who was made wisdom  
for us

by God, and justfulness and holiness and deliverance,

31 so that, as it is written: "Let the one who boasts, boast in *the* Lord."

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<sup>6</sup> 1:17-2:16 ABCBA: 1:17-21, 1:22-25, 1:26-31, 2:1-8, 2:9-16. The first section is on God's wisdom (Anointed's cross) and the world's wisdom. The last is on God's spirit and the world's spirit. The second and fourth contrast men's wisdom with God's power in Anointed crucified. The center addresses the Corinthians as in Anointed Jesus, contrasting the seemingly foolish, weak, and lowborn with the seemingly wise, strong, and noble. Compare with Phlp 2:1-11.

<sup>7</sup> 1:22-25 Alternation and symmetrical parallelism: ABCABCBCBA, like 1:26-31.

- 2** And I, when I came to you, brothers, I did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom, preaching to you God's mystery.
- <sup>2</sup> I aimed not to know anything among you except Jesus Anointed and him crucified.
- <sup>3</sup> And I in weakness and in fear and in much trembling came to you.
- <sup>4</sup> And my speech and my message *were* not with persuasiveness of wisdom, but in demonstration of spirit and power,
- <sup>5</sup> so your faithfulness should not depend on human wisdom, but on God's power.
- <sup>6</sup> A wisdom, however, we do speak among the mature, a wisdom not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away.
- <sup>7</sup> Rather, we speak God's wisdom, in mystery, the hidden, which God predestined before the ages for our glory,
- <sup>8</sup> which none of the rulers of this age knew, for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
- <sup>9</sup> But as it is written: "What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and into a human heart has not entered, what God has prepared for those who love him,"
- <sup>10</sup> to us God has revealed by the spirit.
- For the spirit searches all *things*, even the depths of God.
- <sup>11</sup> For who knows among people the *things* of a person except the person's spirit that *is* within? So also the *things* of God no one knows except God's spirit.
- <sup>12</sup> We have not received the spirit of the world, but the spirit that *is* from God, so that we may know the *things* bestowed on us by God.
- <sup>13</sup> And we speak of them not in words taught by human wisdom, but taught by spirit, interpreting spiritual *things* to spiritual *people*.
- <sup>14</sup> A natural person does not accept the *things* of God's spirit, for they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand *them* because they are spiritually discerned.
- <sup>15</sup> The spiritual *person* judges all *things*, and is judged by no one.
- <sup>16</sup> For "Who has known *the* Lord's mind? Who will advise him?" But we have Anointed's mind.

1c. Is the Anointed divided?<sup>8</sup>

**3** And I, brothers, I could not talk to you as spiritual,  
but as fleshly, as infants in Anointed.

<sup>2</sup> Milk I fed you, not solid food,  
because you were not yet able,  
even now you are still not able,

<sup>3</sup> for you are still fleshly.

While jealousy and rivalry *are* among you, aren't you fleshly and behaving humanly?

<sup>4</sup> For when someone says, "I am Paul's," and another, "I *am* Apollos's," aren't you human?

<sup>5</sup> What then is Apollos? And what is Paul?

Servants through whom you believed,  
even as the Lord assigned to each.

<sup>6</sup> I planted, Apollos watered,  
but God caused the growth.

<sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants is anything nor the one who waters,  
but God who causes the growth.

<sup>8</sup> The one who plants and the one who waters are one,  
and each his own pay will receive according to his own work.

<sup>9</sup> We are God's fellow workers;

God's field, God's building, are you.

<sup>10</sup> According to God's grace given to me,  
as a wise master builder I laid a foundation,  
and another is building on *it*.

Each must take care how he builds on *it*.

<sup>11</sup> For no one can lay another foundation than is laid,  
who is Jesus Anointed.

<sup>12</sup> **If someone** builds on the foundation  
*with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

<sup>13</sup> the work of each  
will become known,  
because the day will make it clear.

For it will be revealed by fire,

and the work of each,

what sort it is,

the fire will test:

<sup>14</sup> **If someone's** work endures, that he has built, he will receive pay.

<sup>15</sup> **If someone's** work is burned up he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved,  
yet so as by fire.

<sup>16</sup> Don't you know that you are God's temple,<sup>9</sup>  
and God's spirit dwells among you?

<sup>17</sup> If someone destroys God's temple,  
God will destroy him,

for God's temple is holy,

which you are.

<sup>8</sup> 3:1-4:21 ABCDCBA. In the first A he addresses them as infants and speaks of feeding them milk. In the last he addresses them as children and asks if they want to be spanked. B's: he and those who brought them the good news are servants; they are more honored. C's: God's workers will be judged by God. D: no one should boast in people.

<sup>9</sup> 3:16-17 In these verses, "you" is plural and "temple" is singular. Individuals are members of that one temple, not individually temples by themselves. See 3:9-15; 6:15-20; 10:17; 12:12-31.



18 Let no one deceive himself.

If someone among you thinks himself wise in this age,  
foolish let him become in order to become wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God.

For it is written: "He catches the wise in their own craftiness,"

20 and again: "*The* Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

21 So no one should boast in people.

For all *things* are yours,

22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or *the* world  
or life or death or present or future,

all *are* yours,

23 and you *are* Anointed's, and Anointed *is* God's.

**4** In this way should one regard us:

as assistants of Anointed and stewards of God's mysteries.

2 Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

3 It matters little to me that I may be judged by you or by a human court.

I do not even judge myself.

4 I am not aware of anything against myself,

but I am not justified by that.

He who judges me is *the* Lord.

5 Therefore do not pass any judgment ahead of time, until the Lord comes,

who will bring to light the hidden *things* of darkness

and will reveal the purposes of hearts,

and then praise will come to each from God.

6 These, brothers, I have applied figuratively to myself and Apollos for you,

so that in us you may learn, "Not beyond what is written,"

so that you are not puffed up in favor of one against another.

7 For who confers distinction on you?

What do you have that you did not receive?

And if you received *it*, why do you boast as if not receiving *it*?

- 8 Already you are full.  
 Already you are rich.  
 Without us you have become kings!  
 And I wish you were kings,  
 so that we also might be kings together with you!
- 9 For I think God has exhibited us apostles as last,  
 as if sentenced to death,  
 for we have become a spectacle to the world and to angels and to people.
- 10 We *are* fools for Anointed's sake,  
 but you *are* wise in Anointed.  
 We *are* weak,  
 but you *are* strong.  
 You *are* honored,  
 but we *are* dishonored.
- 11 To this hour  
 we are hungry,  
 and thirsty,  
 and dressed in rags,  
 and beaten,  
 and homeless.
- 12 And we labor hard, working with our own hands.  
 When cursed we bless.  
 When persecuted we endure.
- 13 When slandered we speak kindly.  
 Like rubbish, of the world, we have become, of all, *the* scum, [ABCBA]  
 to this day.
- 14 Not to make you ashamed am I writing these, but as my dear children I admonish *you*.
- 15 For though you may have ten thousand guardians  
 in Anointed,  
 yet not many fathers.  
 For in Anointed Jesus  
 through the good news I fathered you.
- 16 I appeal therefore to you, be followers of me.
- 17 For this reason I have sent you Timothy,  
 who is my dear and faithful child in *the* Lord,  
 who will remind you of my ways in Anointed,  
 as I teach *them* everywhere in every church.
- 18 As though I would not come to you, some have become puffed up.
- 19 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord is willing,  
 and I will find out not the talk of those who are puffed up, but the power.
- 20 For not in talk *is* God's kingdom but in power.
- 21 What do you want? With a rod should I come to you, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?

## 2. Maintain the integrity of the Anointed's body<sup>10</sup>

### 2a. Incest! Clean out the old leaven to celebrate our Passover<sup>11</sup>

**5** Widely reported is sexual immorality among you,  
and immorality of such kind not *found* even among the Gentiles,  
that someone has his father's wife.

<sup>2</sup> And you, puffed up you are and not rather have you been sorrowful,  
so that he should be removed from your midst who has done this deed.

<sup>3</sup> I, for my part, absent in the body but present in the spirit,  
already I have passed judgment,

as though present,

on him who has done such as this—

<sup>4</sup> in the name of the Lord Jesus:

when you and my spirit are gathered together,  
with the power of our Lord Jesus—

<sup>5</sup> to hand over such a one to the Adversary

for destruction

of the flesh,

so that *his* spirit

may be saved

on the Day of the Lord.

<sup>6</sup> Not good *is* your boast.

Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

<sup>7</sup> Clean out the old leaven, so you may be a new lump *of dough*, as you are unleavened.

For our Passover has been sacrificed:

Anointed.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore let us celebrate the festival,

not with old leaven, not with leaven of malice and depravity,

but with unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

<sup>9</sup> I wrote you in *my* letter not to associate with *the* sexually immoral,

<sup>10</sup> not at all *meaning* the sexually immoral of this world,

or the greedy and robbers, or idolaters,

since you would then need to go out of the world.

<sup>11</sup> But now I have written you not to associate with anyone called a brother

who is sexually immoral or greedy or an idolater or slanderer or drunkard or robber,  
with such not even to eat.

<sup>12</sup> For what *is it* to me to judge those outside?

Are you not to judge those inside?

<sup>13</sup> God judges those outside.

“Put out the evil *one* from among yourselves.”

<sup>10</sup> 5:1-6:20 ABA. Parallel with 12:1-14:40 on making one body of many members who have different gifts. The first and last sections are about improper relationships of believers with others. The center is about adverse relationships between brothers and improper relationships with unbelievers. The center is linked with the two adjoining sections by the comments about judging in 5:12-13 and about rights in 6:12.

<sup>11</sup> 5:1-13 ABBA, using the Anointed's crucifixion, our Passover, as the basis for this discussion of incest.

**2b. Do you dare go to law against a brother, and that before unbelievers?<sup>12</sup>**

**6** Do any of you dare, when you have a dispute against another, to go to law before the unjust and not before the holy *ones*?

<sup>2</sup> Or do you not know that the holy *ones* will judge the world?

And if the world will be judged by you, are you incompetent of *the* smallest cases?

<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that we will judge angels?

Then why not ordinary matters?

<sup>4</sup> If then you have lawsuits for ordinary matters,

do you select as judges those of no standing in the church?

<sup>5</sup> For shame I say *this* to you.

*Is there* not one such among you, no one wise, who is capable to judge between his brothers?

<sup>6</sup> But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers?

<sup>7</sup> It is already entirely a defeat to you that you have lawsuits against one another.

Why not rather be wronged?

Why not rather be defrauded?

<sup>8</sup> But you wrong and defraud, and that to brothers!

<sup>9</sup> Or do you not know

that *the* unjust will not inherit God's kingdom?

Do not be deceived.

Neither *the* sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexuals <sup>10</sup> nor thieves nor greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor robbers will inherit God's kingdom.

<sup>11</sup> And such were some of you.

But you were washed, but you were made holy, but you were justified,  
in the name of the Lord Jesus Anointed  
and in the spirit of our God.

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<sup>12</sup> 6:1-11 ABBA. A's: you are capable, B's: why have lawsuits against brothers or before the unjust?

**2c. How can you unite Anointed's body with a prostitute's body?**

<sup>12</sup> “Everything for me is lawful,”<sup>13</sup>

but not everything is beneficial.

“Everything for me is lawful,”

but I will not be dominated by any.

<sup>13</sup> “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food,”

and God will do away with both one and the other.

The body *is* not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

<sup>14</sup> God both raised the Lord and will raise us through his power.

<sup>15</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Anointed?

Should I then make the members of the Anointed members of a prostitute?

Not at all!

<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that he who is united with a prostitute is one body *with her*? For it says, “The two will become one flesh.”

<sup>17</sup> But one who is united with the Lord is one spirit *with him*.

<sup>18</sup> Flee sexual immorality.

“Every sin that a person does is outside the body.”

But the immoral person against his own body sins.

<sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a temple<sup>14</sup> of the holy spirit among you, which you have from God,

and you are not your own?

<sup>20</sup> For you were bought at a price.

Glorify God then in your body.

<sup>13</sup> 6:12 The quotations in 6:12,13,18 are probably from their letter to Paul (see 7:1), followed by his responses.

<sup>14</sup> 6:19-20 In these verses, “you” and “your” are plural, “temple” is singular. See note on 3:16.

### 3. Responsibilities of marriage, circumcision, and slavery<sup>15</sup>

#### 3a. Marriage to a believer or an unbeliever<sup>16</sup>

**7** Now concerning what you wrote: “*It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*”

<sup>2</sup> But because of sexual immoralities, every **husband** should hold his own **wife**, and every **wife** should hold her own **husband**.

<sup>3</sup> To his **wife** the **husband** should give what is due, and likewise the **wife** to her **husband**.

<sup>4</sup> The **wife** does not have authority over her own body, but the **husband** *does*, and likewise the **husband** does not have authority over his own body, but the **wife** *does*.

<sup>5</sup> Do not deprive one another, except by mutual consent for a time, so that you may be free for prayer and that you may come together again, so that the Adversary may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

<sup>6</sup> I say this by way of concession, not of command.

<sup>7</sup> I wish that all were even as myself, but each has his own gift from God, one in this way and one in another way.

<sup>8</sup> I say to the unmarried and to the widows, *it is good for them if they stay as I am.*

<sup>9</sup> But if they are not self-controlled, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn.

<sup>10</sup> But to the married I command (not I but the Lord<sup>17</sup>): A **wife** should not separate from *her* **husband**,

<sup>11</sup> but if she does separate, she must remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband, and a **husband** should not divorce *his* **wife**.

<sup>12</sup> To the rest I say, I, not the Lord:

If any **brother** has a **wife**, an unbeliever, and she is willing to live with him, he should not divorce her.

<sup>13</sup> And if any **wife** has a **husband**, an unbeliever, and he is willing to live with her, she should not divorce *her* husband.

<sup>14</sup> For the unbelieving **husband** is made holy by the **wife**, and the unbelieving **wife** is made holy by the **brother**.

Otherwise your children would be unclean, but now are holy.

<sup>15</sup> But if the unbeliever leaves, let *the partner* leave. The **brother** is not bound, or the **sister**, in such *cases*.

God has called you to peace.

<sup>16</sup> For how do you know, **wife**, whether you will save *your* **husband**? Or how do you know, **husband**, whether you will save *your* **wife**?

<sup>15</sup> 7:1-40 ABA. Parallel with 10:1-11:34 on responsibilities of community relationships.

<sup>16</sup> 7:1-16 ABCCBA. A's, better to be married. B's, by mutual consent. C's, better to remain as you are. The first four assume both are believers, the last two that one is an unbeliever. In the last two, the sequences of the four categories (believing husband, unbelieving wife, believing wife, unbelieving husband) are perfectly inverted.

<sup>17</sup> 7:10 Mark 10:11-12; Mat 5:32; 19:9; Luke 16:18.

### 3b. Circumcision and slavery<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> But as the Lord has apportioned to each, as God has called each, so let each live, and so I direct in all the churches.

<sup>18</sup> Was someone called already circumcised?

Let him not undo his circumcision.

Was someone called in uncircumcision?

He should not be circumcised.

<sup>19</sup> Circumcision is nothing  
and uncircumcision is nothing,  
but *the* keeping of God's commandments.

<sup>20</sup> Let each remain in that calling in which he was called.

<sup>21</sup> Were you called while a slave? Do not let it concern you,  
but—also if you can become free—be more useful.

<sup>22</sup> One who in *the* Lord  
was called *while* a slave,  
a freedman  
of *the* Lord is.

Likewise one who *while* free  
was called, a slave  
is of Anointed.

<sup>23</sup> With a price you were bought.  
Do not be slaves of people.

<sup>24</sup> Let each, in what he was called, brothers, remain in that before God.

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<sup>18</sup> 7:17-24 ABABA. The first B is on circumcision, the second B is on slavery. An interesting pairing.

### 3c. Engagement to a virgin, marriage, and remarriage<sup>19</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Now concerning the virgins, I have no command of the Lord, but I give an opinion as one who has received the Lord's mercy to be faithful.

<sup>26</sup> Accordingly I think this is fitting because of the present necessity, that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is.

<sup>27</sup> Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free.

Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

<sup>28</sup> But if you do marry, you do not sin. And if the virgin marries, she does not sin. But such will have trouble in the flesh, and I *would* spare you.

<sup>29</sup> I say this, brothers, the time is shortened; from now on, those who have wives should be as though not having,

<sup>30</sup> and those who weep as though not weeping,

and those who rejoice as though not rejoicing,

and those who buy as though not owning,

<sup>31</sup> and those who deal with the world as though not dealing, for the manner of this world is passing away.

<sup>32</sup> I want you to be free of anxiety.

The unmarried man is anxious for the Lord's things, how he may please the Lord. <sup>33</sup> But the married man is anxious for the world's things, how he may please *his* wife,

<sup>34</sup> and he is divided.

And the unmarried woman, and the virgin, is anxious for the Lord's things, in order to be holy both in the body and in the spirit. But the married woman is anxious for the world's things, how to please *her* husband.

<sup>35</sup> I say this for your own benefit, not to put a restriction on you, but for good order and devotion to the Lord without distraction.

<sup>36</sup> If someone thinks he is behaving dishonorably toward his virgin if she passes her time of marriage, and so it has to be, he should do what he desires. He does no wrong. Let them marry.

<sup>37</sup> But he who stands firm in his heart, having no necessity, and has control over his own desire, and decides in his own heart to keep his virgin, will do well.

<sup>38</sup> So both he who marries his virgin does well, and he who does not marry will do better.

<sup>39</sup> A wife is bound for as much time as her husband lives.

But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she desires, only in *the* Lord.

<sup>40</sup> But she is happier if she stays as she is, in my opinion, and I think I also have God's spirit.

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<sup>19</sup> 7:25-40 ABBA. A's, better not to marry. B's, reasons.



**4. Do not let your liberty become a stumbling block to the weak<sup>20</sup>**

**8** Now concerning food offered to idols, we know that “we all have knowledge.”

Knowledge puffs up,  
but love builds up.

<sup>2</sup> If someone thinks he knows something, he does not yet know as he should know.

<sup>3</sup> But if someone loves God, this one is known by him.

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, concerning eating food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in *the* world”  
and that “no God but one.”

<sup>5</sup> Though there are so-called gods,  
whether in heaven or on earth,  
even as there are many gods and many lords,

<sup>6</sup> yet for us: one God, the Father, from whom all things, and we for him,  
and one Lord, Jesus Anointed, through whom all things, and we through him.

<sup>7</sup> But not in everyone *is* this knowledge.

Some, accustomed until now to idolatry, eat *it* as an offering to an idol,  
and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

<sup>8</sup> Food will not bring us close to God.

Neither if we do not eat are we worse off, nor if we do eat are we better off.

<sup>9</sup> Take care lest somehow this liberty of yours becomes a stumbling block to the weak.

<sup>10</sup> For if someone sees you who has this knowledge in an idol’s temple dining,  
will not the conscience of him who is weak be “built up” to eat what is offered to idols?

<sup>11</sup> Destroyed then is  
the weak  
by your knowledge,  
the brother  
for whom Anointed died.

<sup>12</sup> When like this you sin  
against the brothers,  
and wound their conscience when it is weak,  
against Anointed  
you sin.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore if food is the downfall  
of my brother,  
I would not ever eat meat,  
so that not for my brother  
I may be the downfall.

<sup>20</sup> 8:1-13. ABBA. Parallel with 9:1-27. A’s, love outranks knowledge. B’s, knowledge and food do not count most.

5. Paul gives up his rights so he may be a partner of the good news to win over the more<sup>21</sup>

9 Am I not free?

Am I not an apostle?

Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?

Are you not my work in *the* Lord?

<sup>2</sup> If to others I am not an apostle, at least to you I am.

For you are my seal of apostleship in *the* Lord.

<sup>3</sup> My answer to those who question me is this: <sup>4</sup> Do we not have a right to eat and drink?

<sup>5</sup> Do we not have a right to take along a sister, a wife, like the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas?

<sup>6</sup> Or do only I and Barnabas not have a right not to work?

<sup>7</sup> Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense?

Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit?

Or who tends a flock and does not eat from the milk of the flock?

<sup>8</sup> *Is it* by human authority I am saying these *things*? Or does not also the law command these *things*?

<sup>9</sup> In the law of Moses it is written, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain."

Is God concerned for oxen?

<sup>10</sup> Or is he not surely speaking for us?

Yes, for us it was written, "in hope should the plowman plow and the thresher *thresh* in hope of having a share."

<sup>11</sup> If we have sown spiritual things among you, *is it* much if we reap your material things?

<sup>12</sup> If others share in *this* claim on you, *do* not we more?

But we have not used this right, rather we endure everything, so that we may not cause any obstacle to the Anointed's good news.

<sup>13</sup> Don't you know that those who perform the temple duties eat from the temple, *and* those who serve at the altar share in the altar *offerings*?

<sup>14</sup> So also the Lord commanded those who preach the good news to live from the good news.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>15</sup> But I have not used any of these *rights*.

Nor have I written this that such should be done for me. I would rather die.

My boast no one will take away!

<sup>16</sup> For if I preach the good news,  
there is no boast for me,  
for necessity is laid on me.

For woe to me  
if I do not preach the good news!

<sup>17</sup> If I do this willingly, I have a reward,

but if unwillingly, I have been entrusted a responsibility.

<sup>18</sup> What then is my reward?

That when I preach the good news, free of charge I may make the good news in not using my right in the good news.

<sup>21</sup> 9:1-27 ABCBA. In 1-2 he affirms his apostleship, in 3-14 he states his rights as an apostle, in 15-18 his refusal to use those rights, in 19-22 his freedom and purpose in so doing, and in 23-27 his purpose to be fully an apostle.

<sup>22</sup> 9:14 Mat 10:9-10; Luke 10:7

- 19 Being free from everyone, to everyone I have enslaved myself, that I may win over the more.  
20 I became to the Jews as a Jew, that Jews I may win;  
    to those under law as under law,  
    not being myself under law,  
    that those under law I may win;  
21 to those without law as without law,  
    not being without God's law but subject to Anointed's law,  
    that I may win those without law.  
22 I became to the weak weak, that the weak I may win.  
To all I have become all *things*, that by all means I may save some.
- 23 All *these* I do for the sake of the good news, that I may be a partner of it.  
24 Don't you know that in a race the runners all run, but *only* one receives the prize?  
    Run in such a way that you may win.  
25 Every athlete exercises self-control over all *things*,  
    they, a perishable crown to receive,  
    but we, an imperishable.  
26 So I do not run aimlessly;  
    I do not box as beating air.  
27 But I beat my body and enslave *it*,  
so that after preaching to others, I myself may not somehow be disqualified.

## 6. Responsibilities of community relationships<sup>23</sup>

### 6a. Spiritual food and drink of Israel, and their unresponsiveness

- 10** I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers  
**all** were under the cloud,  
 and **all** passed through the sea,  
<sup>2</sup> and **all** were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,  
<sup>3</sup> and **all** ate the same spiritual food,  
<sup>4</sup> and **all** drank the same spiritual drink, drinking from a spiritual following rock, and the rock  
 was the Anointed.  
<sup>5</sup> But not with most of them was God pleased, for “they were struck down in the wilderness.”  
<sup>6</sup> These became examples for us:  
 that we may **not** desire evil as they desired.  
<sup>7</sup> And do **not** become idolaters as some of them, as it is written: “The people sat down  
 to eat and drink and rose up to play.”  
<sup>8</sup> And let us **not** indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty  
 three thousand fell in one day.  
<sup>9</sup> And let us **not** test the Anointed as some of them did and were killed by snakes.  
<sup>10</sup> And do **not** grumble as some of them did and were killed by the destroyer.  
<sup>11</sup> These as an example happened to them and were written for instruction for us, on whom the  
 ends of the ages have come.  
<sup>12</sup> Therefore one who thinks he stands should beware not to fall.  
<sup>13</sup> No trial has overtaken you except *what is* human.  
 But faithful *is* God, who will not let you be tested beyond what you are capable of,  
 but with the trial will also provide the way out,  
 so that you may be able to endure.

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<sup>23</sup> 10:1-11:34 ABCDCBA. A’s: spiritual food and drink of Israel and the church and their unresponsiveness, B’s: the meaning of sharing in the Lord’s supper, C’s: eating and drinking to God’s glory with neighbors and in church, D: relationships and authority in worship. The center of the center is 11:10, the authority of women in worship.

### 6b. The meaning of sharing in the Lord's supper

- 14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak as to *the* sensible, judge for yourselves what I say.
- 16 The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the Anointed's blood?  
The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the Anointed's body?
- 17 Because one loaf, one body are we the many,  
for we all share from the one loaf.
- 18 Consider Israel according to flesh. Are not those who eat the offerings sharers in the altar?
- 19 So what am I saying? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?  
20 Rather, that what they sacrifice *is* "to demons and not to God,"  
and I do not want you to be sharers with demons.
- 21 You cannot drink *the* Lord's cup and *the* cup of demons,  
you cannot share in *the* Lord's table and *the* table of demons.
- 22 Or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

### 6c. Eating and drinking to God's glory with neighbors

- 23 "Everything is lawful," but not everything is beneficial.  
"Everything is lawful," but not everything builds up.
- 24 Do not seek your own *benefit*, but that of the other.
- 25 Eat whatever is sold in *the* meat market, in no way questioning for the sake of conscience.  
26 For "the Lord's *is* the earth and its fullness."
- 27 If someone invites you of the unbelievers and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you,  
in no way questioning for the sake of conscience.
- 28 But if someone should tell you, "This was offered in sacrifice," do not eat for the sake of the one who informed *you* and for the sake of conscience— 29 conscience, I say, not your own, but of the other.
- Why is my freedom determined by another's conscience?
- 30 If I in gratitude partake, why am I criticized for that for which I give thanks?
- 31 Because, whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, you must do all to God's glory.
- 32 Be without offense to Jews and to Greeks and to God's church,  
33 just as I myself try to please everyone in everything, not seeking my own benefit but that of the many, that they may be saved.
- 11** Be followers of me as I also *am* of Anointed.

### 6d. Relationships and authority in worship

<sup>2</sup> I commend you that all my *ways* you have remembered and, as I delivered *them* to you, the traditions you are keeping.

<sup>3</sup> But I want you to know that of every man the head is the Anointed,  
and *the* head of a wife *is her* husband,  
and *the* head of the Anointed *is* God.

<sup>4</sup> Every man who prays or prophesies having *something hanging* down from *his* head<sup>24</sup> disgraces his head.

<sup>5</sup> And every woman who prays or prophesies<sup>25</sup> with uncovered head disgraces her head,  
for it is one and the same as if she were shaved.

<sup>6</sup> For if a woman does not cover herself, she should also be sheared.

But if *it is* disgraceful for a woman to be sheared or shaved, she should cover herself.

<sup>7</sup> For a man is not obligated to cover *his* head,  
being God's image and glory.

But the wife is *her* husband's glory.

<sup>8</sup> For man is not from woman but woman from man,

<sup>9</sup> nor was man created for the woman but woman for the man.

<sup>10</sup> For this reason the woman is obligated to have *a sign of* authority on *her* head for the sake of the angels.

<sup>11</sup> However neither *is* woman independent of man nor man independent of woman in *the* Lord.

<sup>12</sup> For as the woman *is* from the man, so also *is* the man *born* through the woman, but all things *are* from God.

<sup>13</sup> Judge for yourselves, is it fitting for a woman uncovered to pray to God?

<sup>14</sup> Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a dishonor to him?

<sup>15</sup> But if a woman wears long hair it is her glory?

For *her* long hair has been given for a covering.

<sup>16</sup> But if anyone is disposed to be argumentative, we have no such custom, nor God's churches.

### 6e. Eating and drinking to God's glory in church

<sup>17</sup> In this instruction I do not commend *you*, because not for the better but for the worse you come together.

<sup>18</sup> First of all, when you come together in church,  
I hear there are divisions among you  
and in some part I believe it.

<sup>19</sup> For there must be dissensions among you  
so the genuine may be known among you.

<sup>20</sup> When you come together, therefore, it is not to eat the Lord's supper.

<sup>21</sup> For each has his own supper first in the eating,  
and one is hungry and another drunk.

<sup>22</sup> Don't you have houses in which to eat and drink?

Or do you despise God's church and humiliate those who have nothing?

What should I say to you? Should I commend you? In this I do not commend *you*.

<sup>24</sup> 11:4 This could be either long hair or a veil. Verses 14-15 identify long hair as the "covering." It is extraordinary for Paul to suggest that God had given a woman long hair as her acknowledgment of her husband's authority while she prays to God or preaches, while at that time women were kept separate and silent in synagogue, as is confirmed by the traditionalist insertion at 1 Cor 14:33b-35.

<sup>25</sup> 11:4,5 *Prophesies*. Inspired preaching for upbuilding, encouragement and comfort. See 14:3.

### 6f. The meaning of sharing in the Lord's supper

- 23 For I received from the Lord  
 what I also handed over to you:  
 that the Lord Jesus,  
 on the night he was handed over,  
 he took bread,
- 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke *it* and said,  
 "This is my body that *is* for you.  
 This do in remembrance of me."
- 25 In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying,  
 "This cup is the new covenant in my blood.  
 This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of me."
- 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,  
 the death of the Lord you proclaim,  
 until he comes.

### 6g. Spiritual food and drink of the church, and their unresponsiveness

- 27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily  
 will be answerable for the body and the blood of the Lord.
- 28 A person should examine himself and so eat of the bread and drink from the cup.
- 29 For the one eating and drinking judgment on himself  
 eats and drinks without discerning the body.
- 30 Because of this many among you *are* weak and sick and some are falling asleep.
- 31 If we discerned ourselves we would not be judged,  
 32 but when we are judged by *the* Lord,  
 we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned with the world.
- 33 Therefore, my brothers,  
 when you come together  
 in order to eat,  
 wait on one another.  
 34 If anyone is hungry,  
 he should eat at home,  
 so that not into condemnation  
 do you come together.  
 And the rest I will set in order when I come.

## 7. Making one body of many members who have different gifts<sup>26</sup>

7a. **Many gifts from one spirit, God's; many members are one body, Anointed's**<sup>27</sup>

**12** Now concerning the spiritual *gifts*, brothers,

I do not want you to be uninformed.

<sup>2</sup> You know when you were Gentiles, to mute idols how you were led, being led astray.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore I make known to you  
that no one speaking in God's spirit  
says "Cursed Jesus,"  
and no one can say "Lord Jesus"  
except in holy spirit.

<sup>4</sup> Varieties of gifts there are, but the same spirit.

<sup>5</sup> And varieties of services there are, but the same Lord.

<sup>6</sup> And varieties of works there are, but the same God who works all *things* in everyone.

<sup>7</sup> To each

is given the manifestation of the spirit  
for the common good:

<sup>8</sup> to one through the spirit is given a word of **wisdom**,  
to another a word of **knowledge** according to the same spirit,

<sup>9</sup> to someone else **faithfulness** in the same spirit,

to another gifts of **healing** in the one spirit,

<sup>10</sup> to another workings of **miracles**,

to another **prophecy**,<sup>28</sup>

to another **discernment** of spirits,

to someone else kinds of **tongues**,

to another **interpretation of tongues**.

<sup>11</sup> All these

produces the one and the same spirit,  
distributing to each his own as it wishes.

<sup>12</sup> For as the body  
is one

and has many members,

and all the members

of the body,

being many,

are one body,

so also the Anointed.

<sup>13</sup> For in one spirit

we all

into one body were baptized,

whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free,

and all

one spirit

we were given to drink.

<sup>26</sup> 12:1-14:40 ABA. The first section discusses the variety of "spiritual" gifts. The last discusses the differences among the gifts. The center addresses another gift, love, necessary to make one body out of many members:.

<sup>27</sup> 12:1-31 ABCBA. The A's: lists of the spiritual gifts for the common good. The B's: there are many members but one body, Anointed's. The center: each individual member is essential to the body.

<sup>28</sup> 12:10 *Prophecy*. Inspired preaching for upbuilding, encouragement and comfort. See 14:3.



14 And the body  
is not one member  
but many.

15 If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not *part* of the body,” not because of that is it not *a part* of the body.

16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not *part* of the body,” not because of that is it not *a part* of the body.

17 If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing?

If *the whole were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling?

18 But as it is, God placed the members,  
each one  
of them,  
in the body  
as he wished.

19 But if they were all  
one member,  
where *would be* the body?

20 But as it is, *there are* many members,  
but one body.

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,”  
nor again, the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

22 But much more the members of the body thought to be weaker are necessary,  
23 and the *members* of the body we think to be less honorable these with greater honor we clothe,  
and our unrepresentable *members* receive greater modesty, 24 *which* our representable *members* do not need.

But God has put together the body,  
to the inferior *members* giving greater honor,

25 that there may be no division in the body,

but *that* the members may have the same care for one another.

26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer together;  
if a member is glorified, all the members rejoice together.

27 You are Anointed’s body,  
and members individually.

28 And those God has placed in the church:

first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracle workers, then gifts of healing, helpers, leaders, kinds of tongues.

29 *Are* all apostles? *Are* all prophets? *Are* all teachers? *Are* all miracle workers? 30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

31 **Strive for the greater gifts.** 29 But a still more excellent way I *will* show you—

<sup>29</sup> 12:31 This highlighted phrase and its partner in 14:1b are known as an “inclusion,” or “framing.” It is a literary device that marks the beginning and end of a unit of thought. It is a form of oral punctuation.

7b. Love, the greatest gift, that enables all the other gifts<sup>30</sup>

**13** If in the **tongues** of mortals I speak and of angels,  
**but I do not have love,**

a noisy gong I am or a clanging cymbal.

<sup>2</sup> And if I have *the gift of prophecy* and understand mysteries all and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains,

**but I do not have love,**

I am nothing.

<sup>3</sup> And if I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast,

**but I do not have love,**

I gain nothing.

<sup>4</sup> **Love**

is patient,

kind is

**Love.**

It is not jealous,

is not pompous,

is not puffed up,

<sup>5</sup> does not behave disgracefully,

seeks not its own,

is not provoked to anger,

keeps no record of wrong,

<sup>6</sup> does not rejoice over injustice,

but rejoices with the truth.

<sup>7</sup> It bears all things,

believes all things,

hopes all things,

endures all things.

<sup>8</sup> **Love** never fails.

If **prophecies**, they will pass away; if **tongues**, they will cease; if knowledge, it will pass away.

<sup>9</sup> For we know in part and prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup> but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

<sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I thought as a child, I reasoned as a child; when I became a man I put away the *ways* of a child.

<sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror, indistinctly, but then face to face.

Now I know in part, but then I will understand as I am understood.

<sup>13</sup> Now lasting is faith, hope, **love**; these three; and greatest of these *is love*.

**14** Pursue **love**.

<sup>30</sup> 13:1-14:1a ABA. The first section: the gifts are ineffective without love; the center: the qualities of love; the last: love is lasting while the gifts are temporary. It is closely connected to the adjoining chapters. Chapter 12 ends with references to prophets and tongues and a recommendation to strive for the "greater" gifts. The first section begins with tongues and prophecy, and the third section refers to prophecies and tongues, both putting prophecy closer to love, which is at the center. 14:1b resumes with prophecy and tongues and prefers prophecy. Together, they indicate that prophecy is a greater gift than tongues, but both are empty without love, and both are temporary, while "love never fails." The Corinthians probably asked how to control prophecy and tongues in church. Paul answers those specifics in 14:26-40, but first he gives them chapters 12 and 13.

**7c. Strive that you may excel in spiritual gifts for building up the church<sup>31</sup>**

**Strive for the spiritual *gifts***, and even more that you may prophesy.

<sup>2</sup> For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to people but to God,  
for no one understands, but in spirit he speaks mysteries.

<sup>3</sup> But one who prophesies speaks to people for upbuilding and encouragement and comfort.

<sup>4</sup> One who speaks in a tongue builds up himself,  
but one who prophesies builds up *the* church.

<sup>5</sup> I want you all to speak in tongues, and even more that you may prophesy.

Greater *is* one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues unless he interprets so the church may be built up.

<sup>6</sup> Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues,  
what good will I do you  
unless I speak to you either in revelation or in knowledge or in prophecy or teaching?

<sup>7</sup> Likewise, lifeless things that give a sound, whether flute or harp,  
if they do not give a difference in the sounds,  
how will it be known what is played on the flute or the harp?

<sup>8</sup> And if a trumpet gives an indistinct sound,  
who will get ready for battle?

<sup>9</sup> So also you, unless you give by the tongue a clear word,  
how will it be known what is spoken?

For you will be talking into air.

<sup>10</sup> Ever so many kinds of languages are in *the* world, and none without meaning.

<sup>11</sup> If then I do not know the meaning of the language,  
I will be a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker a foreigner to me.

<sup>12</sup> So also you, since you are zealous for spirits,  
for building up the church  
strive that you may excel.

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<sup>31</sup> 14:1b-40 ABCBA. 1b-5, 6-12, 13-19, 20-25, 26-40. The A's prefer prophecy and permit tongues with interpretation. The B's are reasons and explanations why prophecy is more useful than tongues. C: if one speaks in tongues he should pray he may interpret. The first A can be viewed as the proposition, the next three sections as reasons, and the last section as the resume.

13 Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret.

14 If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful.

15 What then?

I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray also with the mind.

I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing also with the mind.

16 Otherwise, when you bless with *the* spirit,  
one who is in the place of the uninstructed,  
how will he say the “Amen” to your thanksgiving,  
since he does not know what you are saying?

17 For you may give thanks well, but the other is not built up.

18 I give thanks to God *that* I speak in tongues more than all of you,

19 but in church

I would rather say five words with my mind,  
so I may instruct others also,  
than ten thousand words in a tongue.

20 Brothers, do not be children

in thinking,

but in evil be infants

and in thinking

be adults.

21 In the law it is written:

“With other tongues and with lips of others will I speak to this people,  
and not even then will they listen to me,  
says *the* Lord.”

22 So the tongues are for a sign not to the believers  
but to the unbelievers,  
and prophecy  
not to the unbelievers  
but to the believers.

23 If then the whole church meets together and all speak in tongues,  
and *the* uninstructed or unbelievers come in,  
will they not say you are out of your minds?

24 But if all prophesy,

and an unbeliever or uninstructed comes in,

he is convicted by all,

he is called to account by all,

25 the secrets of his heart are opened,

and so falling down on *his* face he will worship God, saying,  
“Surely, God is among you.”

<sup>26</sup> What then, brothers? When you come together,  
each has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, *or* an interpretation.  
(Let all *things* be done for building up.)

<sup>27</sup> If in a tongue someone speaks, *let it be only* by two, or at the most three, and in turn,  
and let one interpret.

(<sup>28</sup> But if there is no interpreter,  
he must keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.)

<sup>29</sup> Let two prophets or three speak,  
and let the others weigh *what is said*.

<sup>30</sup> If to another *something* is revealed who is sitting by, the first should be silent.

<sup>31</sup> For you can one by one all prophesy, so all may learn and all may be encouraged.

(<sup>32</sup> Indeed, spirits of prophets to prophets are subject,  
<sup>33</sup> for not of disorder is God, but of peace.)

{As in all the churches of the holy *ones* <sup>34</sup> the women in the churches must keep silent.  
For it is not permitted for them to speak. Rather, they must be subordinate,  
as also the law says.

<sup>35</sup> If they want to learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home.

For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.

(<sup>36</sup> Did God's word go forth from you? Or did it come only to you?)

<sup>37</sup> If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual,  
he should recognize what I write to you  
that it is *the* Lord's command.

<sup>38</sup> If anyone does not acknowledge *this*, he is not acknowledged.))<sup>32</sup>

<sup>39</sup> So, brothers, be zealous to prophesy  
and do not forbid speaking in tongues.

(<sup>40</sup> All *things* should be done properly and orderly.)

## 8. The division caused by death, and the Anointed's resurrection<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> 14:33b-38 This does not relate to the exposition or control of spiritual gifts, the subject of chapters 12-14, and does not discuss the use of tongues and prophecy, the subject of 14:1b-40, and especially of 14:26-40 and its parallel, 14:1b-5. And 14:33b-35 is more restrictive and inconsistent with 11:5,13. So 14:33b-38 is an interruption. The author of 14:33b-38 appears to have tried, by location and content, to fit this into the ABBA structure for 14:26-40, making it ABCBA. All five sections conclude with a parenthetical comment on constructiveness or orderliness (14:36-38 in the new fourth section). The three central sections each contain a command about keeping silent in church (14:28,30,34). And the word "prophet" in 14:37 matches the word "prophets" in 14:29 and "prophesy" in 14:39. Some manuscripts place 14:34-35 after 14:40, probably because it was recognized to be an interruption. The table-pounding in 14:36-38 is more fitting for 14:33b-35 than for 14:26-33a. See notes on 1 Th 2:13-16; 1 Cor 11:4; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; 1 Tim 2:11-12.

<sup>33</sup> 15:1-58 ABBA. The first section lists the witnesses to the resurrection of Anointed, the last tells of God's final victory over death when all his own will become participants in that resurrection. The resurrection of Anointed's followers is linked in the second with the resurrection of Anointed and God's power over death; in the third with new life, heavenly life, and spiritual life in God's creations.

8a. **Witnesses to the Anointed's resurrection**

**15** I declare to you, brothers, the good news that I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you continue,

2 through which also you are saved on the word I preached to you if you hold fast, unless in vain you believed.

3 For I handed on to you as of first importance, which also I received:

that Anointed **died** for our sins  
in accordance with the scriptures,  
4 and that he was **buried**,

and that he was **raised** the third day  
in accordance with the scriptures,  
5 and that he **appeared** to Cephas,<sup>34</sup>

**then** to the twelve.

6 **After that he appeared** to over five hundred brothers at once, most of whom are still alive, but some have fallen asleep.

7 **After that he appeared** to James,  
**then** to all the apostles,

8 and last of all, as though to one born abnormally, he **appeared** also to me.

9 For I am the least of the apostles, not worthy to be called an apostle because I persecuted God's church.

10 But by God's grace

I am what I am,

and his grace to me has not been empty.

On the contrary, I have worked harder than all of them,  
yet not I,

but God's grace with me.

11 Therefore, whether I or they, so we preach, and so you believed.

8b. **Resurrection linked with resurrection of Anointed and God's power over death**<sup>35</sup>

12 If Anointed is proclaimed that from *the* dead he has been raised,  
how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?

13 If there is no resurrection of *the* dead,  
neither has Anointed been raised.

14 If Anointed has not been raised, empty then *is* our message, empty also *is* your faith.

15 And we are found even *to be* false witnesses of God,  
because we testified against God that he raised the Anointed,

whom he did not raise  
if in fact *the* dead are not raised.

16 For if *the* dead are not raised,  
neither has Anointed been raised.

17 If Anointed has not been raised, useless *is* your faith, you are still in your sins.

18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Anointed are lost.

19 If in this life, in Anointed we are hoping only, most pitiable of all are we.

<sup>34</sup> 15:5-8 Note the symmetrical pattern of appearances that pairs Paul with Peter.

<sup>35</sup> 15:12-34 ABCBBA. A's, whether Anointed has been raised. B's, if he has not. C's, God's power over death.

20 But now Anointed has been raised from *the* dead,  
*the* first of those who have fallen asleep.  
 21 For since through a man *came* death, also through a man *came* resurrection of  
*the* dead.  
 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in the Anointed all will be made alive,  
 23 but each in his own turn, first Anointed,  
 next those *who are* the Anointed's, at his coming.

24 Then the end,  
 when he hands over the kingdom to *his* God and Father,  
 when he has deposed every ruler and every authority and power.  
 25 For he must reign until "he has put all *his* enemies under his feet."  
 26 *The* last enemy to be destroyed *is* death,  
 27 for "he subjected all things under his feet."  
 When it says that "all things have been subjected,"  
*it is* clear that it excepts the one  
 who subjected all things under him.  
 28 When all things are subjected under him,  
 then the son himself will be subjected under the one  
 who subjected all things under him,  
 so that God may be all in all.

29 Otherwise, what will they bring about who are baptized for the dead?  
 If *the* dead are not raised at all,  
 why are they baptized for them?  
 30 And why are we in danger every hour?  
 31 I die daily, by the pride in you that I have in Anointed Jesus our Lord!  
 32 If in a human way I fought wild beasts in Ephesus,  
 what good *is it* to me?  
 If *the* dead are not raised,  
 "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

33 Do not be led astray:  
 "Bad company corrupts good morals."  
 34 Come to your senses justly and sin not,  
 for some are ignorant of God.  
 To your shame I say *this*.

### 8c. Resurrection is linked with new, heavenly, and spiritual life in God's creations

35 But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? In what kind of body do they appear?"

36 You fool, what you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

37 And what you sow,

not the body that will be

do you sow,

but naked grain, perhaps of wheat or of some other.

38 But God gives it a body as he has willed, and to each of the seeds its own body.

39 Not every flesh *is* the same flesh,

but one of people, another flesh of cattle, another flesh of birds, another of fish.

40 *There are* both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies.

But the glory of the heavenly *is* one, and that of the earthly *is* another.

41 One glory *is* of *the* sun, and another glory of *the* moon, and another glory of stars.

Indeed, star differs from star in glory.

42 So also the resurrection of the dead:

It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.

43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory.

It is sown in weakness, it is raised in strength.

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *one*.

45 So also it is written: "The first man Adam became a living soul," the last Adam a life-giving spirit.

46 But not first *was* the spiritual, but the natural, then the spiritual.

47 The first man *was* from earth, of dust; the second man, from heaven.

48 As the *one* of dust, so also those of dust, and as the *one* of heaven, so also those of heaven.

49 And as we have borne the image of the *one* of dust, let us<sup>36</sup> also bear the image of the *one* of heaven.

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<sup>36</sup> 15:49 "Let us bear" has much stronger textual support than the reading preferred by the NA27 Greek text, "we will bear." And it is consistent with 15:2,58. See Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 1994.



### 8d. Participants in the Anointed's resurrection

<sup>50</sup> This I say, brothers:

flesh and blood cannot inherit God's kingdom,  
nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

<sup>51</sup> Listen! I tell you a mystery.

We will not all fall asleep,

but we will all be changed,

<sup>52</sup> in a moment, in a blink of an eye,  
at the last trumpet.

For *the* trumpet will sound,  
and the dead will be raised incorruptible,  
and we will be changed.

<sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption,  
and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

<sup>54</sup> And when this corruptible puts on incorruption,  
and this mortal puts on immortality,  
then will take place the word that has been written:

“Swallowed has been Death by victory.

<sup>55</sup> Where, Death, *is* your victory?

Where, Death, *is* your sting?”

<sup>56</sup> The sting of Death *is* sin,  
and the power of sin *is* the law.

<sup>57</sup> But to God *be* thanks who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Anointed!

<sup>58</sup> Therefore, brothers, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable,  
overflowing in the Lord's work always,  
knowing that your labor is not in vain in *the* Lord.

### Gift for Jerusalem, travel plans, and commendations<sup>37</sup>

#### The gift for Jerusalem<sup>38</sup>

**16** Now concerning the collection for the holy *ones*, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also should do.

<sup>2</sup> On the first day of the week each of you should put aside and save as each has prospered,  
lest when I come

at that time there need be collections.

<sup>3</sup> And when I am there

whoever you approve, with letters I will send them to take your gift to Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> And if it is fitting for me also to go, they will go with me.

<sup>37</sup> 16:1-18 ABA. Parallel with 1:4-9. The first and last sections are both forms of thanksgiving.

<sup>38</sup> 16:1-4 See Gal 2:10; 2 Cor 8:1-6; 9:1-2; and Rom 15:25-31.

**Paul's plans to come to them<sup>39</sup>**

5 I will come to you when I have passed through Macedonia, for I do pass through Macedonia,

6 and perhaps I will remain with you

or even spend the winter,

so that you may send me on wherever I go.

7 For I do not want to see you now in passing,

for I hope to stay some time with you if the Lord permits.

8 I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 for a door has opened to me great and fruitful, and *there are* many adversaries.

**Commendation of letter carriers, and summary of letter**

10 When Timothy comes,

see that he is without fear in your company,

for he is doing the Lord's work as I also *am*.

11 No one, then, should look down on him,

but send him on in peace that he may return to me,

for I am expecting him with the brothers.

12 Now concerning brother Apollos,

I urged him strongly that he should come to you with the brothers,

but it was not at all *his* will that he come now.

He will come when he has opportunity.

13 Watch.

Stand firm in the faith.

Be men.

Be strong.

14 Let all you *do* be done in **love**.

15 I appeal to you, brothers—you know the household of Stephanas,

that it is *the* first fruit of Achaia

and to *the* service of the holy *ones* they have devoted themselves—

16 that you respect such and everyone who helps and labors.

17 I am glad for the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus,

because they have made up for your absence,

18 for they refreshed my spirit and yours.

So give recognition to such as them.

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<sup>39</sup> 16:5-9 Paul evidently changed his mind about this when Timothy returned from delivering this letter, and made an unexpected trip by sea (250 miles) directly to Corinth. That turned out to be a "painful visit" (2 Cor 2:1; 12:14; 13:1-2), and he returned to Ephesus before taking the trip he describes here.

**Greetings and blessing<sup>40</sup>**

<sup>19</sup> Greeting you are the churches of Asia.

Greeting you in *the* Lord greatly is Aquila and Prisca, with the church at their house.

<sup>20</sup> Greeting you are all the brothers.

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

<sup>21</sup> **THEGREETINGBMYOWNHANDPAUL** <sup>41</sup>

<sup>22</sup> If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be cursed.

Our Lord, come!

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus *be* with you.

<sup>24</sup> My love *be* with all of you in Anointed Jesus.

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<sup>40</sup> 16:19-24 The last of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:1-3.

<sup>41</sup> 16:21 When Paul wrote, all letters were capitals, there was no punctuation as we know it, no chapter or verse markings, no spacing between words, sentences, or paragraphs.

**Structure**

The overall structure is ABCBA:

- 1:1-5 Address, blessing, and doxology
- 1:6-2:14 The Anointed's good news is from God, not people
  - 1:6-10 Rebuke and curse
  - 1:11-24 Paul's call and the Anointed's good news are from God, not people
  - 2:1-10 The leaders in Jerusalem imposed nothing on Paul
  - 2:11-14 Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch
- 2:15-4:31 "The truth of the good news"
  - 2:15-21 Law versus Anointed's faithfulness
  - 3:1-5 Who has bewitched you?
  - 3:6-14 Abraham's and Jesus' faithfulness versus law
  - 3:15-29 God's promise to Abraham versus the law of Moses
  - 4:1-11 Son versus slave
  - 4:12-20 They are courting you for no good purpose
  - 4:21-31 Law versus God's promise
- 5:1-6:17 The good news is in the Anointed's cross, not in law and flesh
  - 5:1-15 Freedom rather than circumcision, love rather than law
  - 5:16-26 Walk in the Anointed's spirit, not under law and flesh
  - 6:1-10 Support one another, and fulfill the Anointed's law
  - 6:11-17 Crucified rather than circumcised, a new creation rather than law
- 6:18 Blessing

Paul's customary second division of thanksgiving, and the corresponding next-to-last division of benediction, commendation, gift, greetings, etc, have been omitted. Paul is upset.

**Background**

The original Galatians settled in what is now central Turkey in the third century BC. By 25 BC the Roman province of Galatia included the more southerly (but inland) districts of Pisidia and Lycaonia with the cities of Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Paul's first missionary journey with Barnabas, who is mentioned in Gal 2:1,9,13, was within AD 37-49 and included those four cities in Galatia (Acts 13,14). (Paul's conversion was within 30-36.) On their return to Antioch of Syria a controversy arose on whether Gentile believers were required to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses (Acts 14:26-15:1, Gal 2:11-14), the main subject of this letter. So Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem within 47-52 to resolve that issue with the apostles and elders (Acts 15, Gal 2:1-10). Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22) included those same cities in Galatia, where Acts says they passed on the decisions reached by the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:36-16:4). But since Paul's summary of the council's decisions in Gal 2:1-10 does not include the details of the formal letter from the apostles and elders at Jerusalem to the churches of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, given in Acts 15:23-29, some scholars believe that Gal 2:1-10 refers to an earlier meeting than Acts 15:1-35. But Paul says in Gal 2:1 that that trip to Jerusalem was his first in fourteen years, and the elders and substance of the decisions described by Gal 2:1-10 and Acts 15:1-35 are similar.

Paul could not have used the council decision as reported in Acts 15:23-29 as support for his position in this letter. It would have been inconsistent with his argument in this letter, that his good news did not come from people, but only through God's revelation of Jesus Anointed to Paul (Gal 1:1,11-12,16; 2:2). Paul does refer diplomatically to that decision in Gal 2:6: "on me those of repute imposed nothing." The council decision agreed substantially with Paul's position and did not require Paul to change his position. So Paul neither used the council decision as a basis for the position he

had received by revelation, nor did he imply that the Jerusalem council had in any way bowed to Paul—a diplomatic treatment. It is significant that Paul tells the Galatians that he had been preaching his good news for 14 years (2:1) before going to the Jerusalem meeting described in Gal 2:1-10, and reminds them that he had preached his good news to them “at the first” (4:13).

We tend to assume that Paul’s opponents in this letter may include Cephas (Peter) and James because they are named in 2:11-14 and because 2:11-14 is placed after the council meeting in 2:1-10. But the incident in 2:11-14 may have been what led to the meeting described in 2:1-10, as explained in the footnote to 2:11-14. Acts 15 indicates that the matters in dispute in Galatians were fully resolved long before Acts 15 was written, without any blame on Peter or James. Indeed, they are given full credit for resolving the dispute.

Galatians was written after that Jerusalem council and also after Paul began in Galatia the collection for the poor in Jerusalem, which 1 Cor 16:1 confirms and Gal 2:10 implies. 2 Cor 8:1-15; 9 and Romans 15:25-28 discuss the completion of the collection and the other churches that were participating, but do not mention Galatia. So Paul’s problem with Galatia was not resolved until after the collection was completed and Romans was written. Accordingly we assume Galatians was written after 1 Cor and before 2 Cor and Romans.

### **Theme**

Paul’s overall theme of the unity of the church with “God our Father” and with each other in “our Lord Jesus Anointed” is clearly portrayed in the opening in 1:1-5. In 3:26 that unity is succinctly stated: “For you are all God’s sons, through faithfulness, in Anointed Jesus.” The center, 2:15-4:31, is Paul’s explanation of the Good News, how Jews and Gentiles have been united in Jesus under God’s promise to Abraham. The barrier to unity in Jesus that has so upset Paul here is that some of his Jewish brothers were unwilling to accept Gentile brothers as brothers, unless they “live like Jews” by observing the “works of law” that set Jews apart from Gentiles, such as circumcision and food laws. That issue of the unity of both Jew and Gentile in Anointed Jesus presented itself to Paul at Antioch (Gal 2:11-14) and was partially but not fully resolved at the Jerusalem council (Gal 2:1-10). Paul addressed that theme again more fully as the main theme of Romans, that Jews and Gentiles are equal before God and are united in Anointed. Luke’s explanation in Acts 10:1-11:18 achieves the same result more simply and dramatically, but without a Scriptural basis like Paul presents in Gal 2:15-4:31 and Rom 1:18-15:13 that would be necessary to convince Jews.

### **Spirit**

The role of God’s spirit in this letter is similar to that in 1 Thessalonians. The word “spirit” is used eighteen times: 3:2-3,5,14; 4:6,29; 5:5,16-18,22,25; 6:1,8,18. (The term “holy” is not used in Galatians.) The role of God’s spirit in Galatians is well summarized in 4:6: “And because you are sons, God sent his son’s spirit into our hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’” All eighteen instances of “spirit” can be construed as a spirit shared by God, by Anointed Jesus, and by God’s “sons” as a way of expressing the unity that is Paul’s theme in these letters.

### **A notable omission**

A surprising omission in this letter is Paul’s failure to tell the story of the revelation of Jesus to Paul on the road to Damascus, which is told three times in Acts (9:1-30; 22:4-21; 26:12-21), but not in any of Paul’s letters. That story would have been excellent support for Paul’s argument in Gal 1:1-2:14 that his good news did not come from human authority, but through revelation of Jesus Anointed. He refers (1:15-16) to the time “when [God] was pleased . . . to reveal his son in me,” but leaves out all the details and fails to cite witnesses: “Immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood,” and he also says, “to reveal his son in me,” not “to me.”

Text in *italics> is omitted in the Greek source*

### Address, blessing, and doxology<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul, an apostle—  
 not from a human source nor through human authority  
 but through Jesus Anointed  
 and God *the* Father who raised him from *the* dead—  
<sup>2</sup> and all the brothers with me,  
 To the churches of Galatia:  
<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace  
 from God our Father  
 and *the* Lord Jesus Anointed <sup>4</sup> who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present  
 evil age,  
 by the will of our God and Father,  
<sup>5</sup> to whom the **glory** into the ages of the ages. Amen.

### The Anointed's good news is from God, not people <sup>2</sup>

#### Rebuke and curse<sup>3</sup>

<sup>6</sup> I am astonished that you are so quickly turning away from the one who called you in grace,  
 to a different  
 good news,  
<sup>7</sup> which is not another,  
 but there are some who are disturbing you and want to pervert the Anointed's good news.

<sup>8</sup> But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a good news contrary to the good news  
 we preached to you, **let him be cursed!**

<sup>9</sup> As we said before,  
 and now I say again,

if anyone is preaching a good news to you contrary to the *one* you received, **let him be cursed!**

<sup>10</sup> Now from people am I seeking favor or from God?

Or am I trying to please people?

If I were still pleasing people,

I would not be Anointed's slave.

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-5 ABCDEFEDCBA. The first of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 6:18.

<sup>2</sup> 1:6-2:14 ABBA. The second of five divisions. Parallel with 5:1-6:17. The A's are rebukes. The B's say that, like Moses Dt 18:15,18; Isaiah 49:1-6; and Jer 1:4-10, Paul's call and good news did not come from people.

<sup>3</sup> 1:6-10 ABA. Paul's only letter that begins with a rebuke instead of a thanksgiving (see 1 Th 1:2-4; 1 Cor 1:4-9; 2 Cor 1:3-11; Rom 1:8-17; Phlp 1:3-11; Phlm 4-7; 2 Th 1:3-12; Col 1:3-8; Eph 1:3-14; 1 Tim 1:12-17; 2 Tim 1:3-5).

**Paul's call and the Anointed's good news are from God, not people<sup>4</sup>**

11 Yes, I make known to you, brothers, the good news delivered by me is not of human origin.

12 For I neither from a human source received  
it

nor was I taught,  
but through Jesus Anointed's revelation.

13 For you have heard of my conduct formerly in Judaism,  
that beyond measure

I persecuted God's church and was trying to destroy it,  
14 and I was advancing in Judaism  
beyond many of my age among my people,  
being even more a zealot for the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when he was pleased,  
who set me apart  
from my mother's womb  
and called *me*  
through his grace,

16 to reveal his son in me  
so that I may proclaim him among the Gentiles,  
immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood 17 nor go up to Jerusalem to those *who*  
*were* apostles before me,  
but went away to Arabia and then returned to Damascus.

18 Then after three years  
I went up to Jerusalem to meet Cephas,  
and I stayed with him fifteen days.

19 Any other of the apostles I did not see,  
except James the Lord's brother.

20 What I write to you, behold, before God, I am not lying.

21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia,

22 and I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea that *are* in Anointed.

23 They were only hearing that "He who persecuted us once, now is preaching the faith he once  
tried to destroy,"

24 and they glorified God in me.

---

<sup>4</sup> 1:11-24 ABBA. Parallel with 2:1-10. A's: good news from God, not people. B's: background of Paul, and God's call.

### The leaders in Jerusalem imposed nothing on Paul

**2** Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas<sup>5</sup>, taking Titus also.

<sup>2</sup> I went up in accord with a revelation,  
and I laid before them the good news  
that I proclaim among the Gentiles,

but privately to those of repute, for fear that somehow I might be running or have run in vain.

<sup>3</sup> But not even Titus, who *was* with me, being Greek, was compelled to be circumcised

<sup>4</sup> because of false brothers secretly brought in,  
who slipped in to spy on our freedom  
that we have in Anointed Jesus,

that they might enslave us,

<sup>5</sup> to whom we did not yield obedience even for a moment,  
so that **the truth of the good news** might continue on for you.

<sup>6</sup> As for those reputed to be something  
(whatever they were matters nothing to me;  
God shows no partiality)

on me those of repute imposed nothing—

<sup>7</sup> But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the good news for the uncircumcised,  
just as Peter<sup>6</sup> for the circumcised

<sup>8</sup> (for he who worked in Peter for apostleship for the circumcised  
worked also in me for the Gentiles),

<sup>9</sup> and perceiving the grace given to me,  
James and Cephas and John, those reputed to be pillars,  
gave *their* right hands of partnership to me and Barnabas,  
that we *should go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

<sup>10</sup>—*They imposed* only that we should remember the poor, which very thing<sup>7</sup> I was eager to do.

<sup>5</sup> 2:1 *Barnabas*. See Acts 4:36; 9:26-30; 11:19-30; 12:25-15:39; 1 Cor 9:6; Gal 2:1,9,13; Col 4:10.

<sup>6</sup> 2:7 *Peter*. This and the following verse are the only instances where Paul refers to “Peter.” Paul refers to him as “Cephas” at 1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5 and Gal 1:18; 2:9,11,14.

<sup>7</sup> 2:10 See 1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8:1-6; 9:1-2; and Rom 15:25-31 for Paul’s beginning and fulfillment of this commitment. Evidently Galatia failed to complete their participation in this collection. Here Paul seems to be reminding them, not only of their withdrawal, but also that this collection had been initiated by the elders at Jerusalem, not by Paul.



### Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch<sup>8</sup>

11 When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to *his* face because he was clearly wrong.

12 For before some came from James,  
he was eating with the Gentiles.  
But when they came,  
he drew back and separated himself,  
fearing those of *the* circumcision.

13 And his hypocrisy was shared  
by the rest of *the* Jews  
so that even Barnabas  
was carried away by their hypocrisy.

14 But when I saw they were not walking straight toward **the truth of the good news**, I told Cephas in front of all, “If you, being a Jew, like a Gentile and not like a Jew are living, how do you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

“**The truth of the good news**” (2:5,14)<sup>9</sup>

#### 1. Law versus Anointed’s faithfulness

15 *We who are* Jews by birth and not sinners from *the* Gentiles,  
16 knowing that no one is justified<sup>10</sup> by works of law  
but through Jesus Anointed’s faithfulness,  
we too have put faith in Anointed Jesus,  
so that we may be justified by Anointed’s faithfulness  
and not by works of law,  
“because by works of law no flesh will be justified.”

17 But if, seeking to be justified in Anointed, we *Jews* ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Anointed then a minister of sin?  
Not at all!

18 For if what I have torn down I am building up again, I show myself a transgressor.

19 For I through law to law I died,  
that for God I may live.  
With Anointed I have been crucified,  
20 yet I live, no longer I, but in me lives Anointed.  
And what I now live in flesh, I live by the faithfulness of God’s son,  
who loved me and gave himself for me.

21 I do not nullify the grace of God!  
For if through law *is* justfulness, then Anointed died for nothing.

<sup>8</sup> 2:11-14 This incident may be what led to the meeting at Jerusalem described in 2:1-10. If so, it is presented afterwards here, (1) for symmetry with 1:6-10, (2) because the same issue had arisen again later, and (3) because it leads directly into the issue of Paul’s good news addressed in 2:15-4:31.

<sup>9</sup> 2:15-4:31 ABCDCBA. The central of five divisions of this letter. A’s: two covenants are contrasted. B’s: contrast of false teachers with Paul’s teaching. C’s: again two covenants are contrasted. D: promise versus law.

<sup>10</sup> 2:16 *Justified*. A legal technical term meaning “acquitted” or “found innocent of the charge.” Used in Gal 2:16-5:4 and Rom 2:13-8:33. Paul appears to use it to refer to members of God’s family, as in Gal 3:23-29 and Rom 3:27-4:2.

## 2. Who has bewitched you?

**3** O foolish Galatians!

Who has bewitched you,

before whose eyes Jesus Anointed was openly portrayed as crucified?

<sup>2</sup> This only I want to learn from you:

By works of law did you receive the spirit, or by hearing of *Anointed's* faithfulness?

<sup>3</sup> Are you so foolish?

Having begun

in spirit,

now in flesh

are you completed?

<sup>4</sup> So much have you experienced in vain? If indeed in vain?

<sup>5</sup> He, then, who supplies

to you

the spirit

and works miracles

among you,

by works of law *does he do so* or by hearing of faithfulness?

## 3. Abraham's and Jesus' faithfulness versus law

<sup>6</sup> As "Abraham put faith in God

and it was counted to him as justfulness,"

<sup>7</sup> so be sure that they *who are* from faithfulness, those are Abraham's sons.

<sup>8</sup> The scripture, foreseeing that by faithfulness God would justify the Gentiles,

foretold *the* good news to Abraham,

*saying*, "In you will all the Gentiles be blessed."

<sup>9</sup> So they from faithfulness

are blessed

with the faithful Abraham.

<sup>10</sup> For as many as are from works of law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all the things written in the book of the law to do them."

<sup>11</sup> And that by law no one is justified before God *is* evident, because "The just *one* by faithfulness will live."

<sup>12</sup> And the law is not from faithfulness, but "The *one* who does them will live by them."

<sup>13</sup> Anointed freed us from the law's curse, being made a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed *is* everyone who is hanged on a tree,"

<sup>14</sup> so that to the Gentiles

the blessing

of Abraham

may come

in Anointed Jesus,

so that

the promise

of the spirit

we may receive

through *his* faithfulness.

#### 4. God's promise to Abraham versus the law of Moses<sup>11</sup>

- 15 Brothers, as a man I say: even a man's confirmed covenant  
no one annuls or amends.
- 16 Now to Abraham were given the promises and to his seed.  
It does not say, "And to the seeds,"  
as to many,  
but as to one,  
"And to your seed," who is Anointed.
- 17 I am saying this: a covenant previously confirmed by God,  
the law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not annul so as to cancel the promise.
- 18 For if by law *is* the inheritance, then not by promise,  
but to Abraham through promise God gave *it*.
- 19 Why then the law?  
Because of transgressions it was added  
until the seed came to whom *the* promise had been made,  
promulgated through angels by *the* hand of a mediator.<sup>12</sup>
- 20 Now the mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one.
- 21 *Is* the law then against the promises? Not at all!  
For if a law had been given that could give life,  
certainly by law would have been justfulness.
- 22 But the scripture imprisoned all things under sin,  
so the promise by faithfulness of Jesus Anointed may be given to those who are faithful.
- 23 Before *his* faithfulness came we were guarded under law,  
imprisoned  
until the coming of the faithfulness that was to be revealed.
- 24 Therefore, the law has been our custodian toward Anointed,  
so that by *his* faithfulness  
we may be justified [freed or acquitted].
- 25 Now, *his* faithfulness having come, we are no longer under a custodian.
- 26 For you are all God's sons, through faithfulness,  
in Anointed Jesus.
- 27 For as many *of you*  
into Anointed  
have been baptized,  
in Anointed  
you have clothed yourselves.
- 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek,  
there is neither slave nor free,  
there is not male and female,  
for you are all one in Anointed Jesus.
- 29 And if you *are* Anointed's,  
then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to *the* promise.

<sup>11</sup> 3:15-29 ABCBA. A's: inheritance given by promise, not law; God's sons and heirs by promise. B's: the law was a temporary custodian until Anointed. C: the law is not against the promises.

<sup>12</sup> 3:19 *Mediator*. Moses. See Acts 7:35-40,44,53; Heb 2:2.

### 5. Son versus slave<sup>13</sup>

**4** I say, as long as the heir is a child,  
 he is no different from a slave,  
 though lord of all,  
<sup>2</sup> but he is under guardians and administrators  
 until the father's appointed time.

<sup>3</sup> So also we, when we were children,  
 under the elementary principles of the world  
 we were enslaved.

<sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of the time had come,  
 God sent his son,  
 born of a woman,  
 born under law,  
<sup>5</sup> to free those under law,  
 so that we may receive the status of sons.

<sup>6</sup> And because you are sons,  
 God sent  
 his son's spirit  
 into our hearts,  
 crying out, "Abba, Father!"

<sup>7</sup> So no longer are you a slave,  
 but a son,  
 and if a son,  
 also an heir,  
 through God.

<sup>8</sup> But then, not knowing God,  
 you were enslaved  
 to things that by nature are not gods.

<sup>9</sup> Now, knowing God,  
 or rather,  
 being known by God,  
 how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elements  
 to which again afresh you desire to be enslaved?

<sup>10</sup> Days you are observing, and months and seasons and years.

<sup>11</sup> I am afraid for you,  
 that somehow in vain  
 I may have worked hard for you.

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<sup>13</sup> 4:1-11 ABCDCBA. A's: from slaves to heirs, and back again; B's: then, slaves; C's: now, sons; D: "father"

## 6. They are courting you for no good purpose

12 Be as I *am*, for I also *am* as you *are*, brothers, I implore you.

You have not wronged me at all.

13 You know that through an infirmity of the flesh I preached *the* good news to you **at the first**.

14 And your trial in my flesh you did not scorn nor despise,  
but as God's angel, you welcomed me, as Anointed Jesus.

15 Where, now, *is* your joy?

I bear you witness that, if possible, your eyes you would have torn out *and* given to me.

16 Have I therefore become your enemy *by* telling you *the* truth?

17 They are courting you for no good *purpose*,  
rather, they want to shut you out,<sup>14</sup>  
so that you may court them.

18 *It is* good to be courted for good always,  
and not only when I am present with you.

19 My children, for whom again **I labor in birth** until Anointed be formed among you,

20 I would like to be present with you now  
and to change my voice, for I am perplexed about you.

## 7. Law versus God's promise

21 Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not hear the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons,

one by the slave girl and one by the free woman.

23 But the one by the slave girl according to flesh was fathered, while the other by the free woman *was* through promise.

24 These are allegories. For these women are two covenants.

One *is* from Mount Sinai, bearing *children* to slavery, who is Hagar.

25 Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia.

She corresponds to the Jerusalem *of* now,  
for she is a slave with her children.

26 But the other, the Jerusalem above, is free, who is our mother.

27 For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren one, you who do not bear, break out and shout,  
you who suffer no birth pains,

because the many children of the desolate woman *are* more than of her who has the  
husband."

28 And you, brothers, as Isaac, are children of promise.

29 But just as then,

he who through flesh was fathered persecuted him *fathered* through spirit,  
so also now.

30 But what does scripture say? "Drive out the slave girl and her son,  
for the son of the slave girl shall not inherit with the son of the free woman."

31 Therefore, brothers, we are not children of *the* slave girl but of the free woman.

<sup>14</sup> 4:17 *Shut you out*, if you are not circumcised and do not keep the law. See 6:12-13.

**The good news is in the Anointed's cross, not in law and flesh<sup>15</sup>**

**Freedom rather than circumcision, love rather than law<sup>16</sup>**

**5** For freedom Anointed set us free.

Stand firm, therefore,  
and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

<sup>2</sup> Listen! I, Paul, tell you  
that if you become circumcised,  
Anointed will be of no benefit to you.

<sup>3</sup> I testify again  
to every man  
who becomes circumcised,  
that he is obligated  
the **whole law**  
to keep.

<sup>4</sup> You have been separated  
from Anointed,  
you who are being justified by law,  
from grace  
you have fallen.

<sup>5</sup> For we, in spirit,  
by faithfulness,  
*the* hope of justfulness await.

<sup>6</sup> For in Anointed Jesus  
neither circumcision is worth anything nor uncircumcision,  
but faithfulness  
working through love.

<sup>7</sup> You were progressing well. Who thwarted you from obeying *the* truth?

<sup>8</sup> That persuasion *is* not from him who calls you.

<sup>9</sup> A little leaven leavens the **whole lump**.

<sup>10</sup> I have confidence in you in *the* Lord that you will not think otherwise,  
and the one who is disturbing you will bear the condemnation, whoever he may be.

<sup>11</sup> And I, brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still persecuted?  
In that case the scandal of the **cross** has been removed.

<sup>12</sup> I wish they would also castrate themselves who unsettle you!

<sup>13</sup> You were called to freedom, brothers, only not the freedom for opportunity to the flesh,  
but through love be slaves to one another.

<sup>14</sup> For **all the law** is fulfilled in one word, in the:

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

<sup>15</sup> But if you bite and devour one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another.

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<sup>15</sup> 5:1-6:17 ABBA. The fourth of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:6-2:14. The first and last sections are about Anointed having set us free by his cross, so we should live in that cross, and bear the marks of that cross, rather than relying on the law, and the mark of that law, circumcision. The middle two sections present ways of living in Anointed's cross and fulfilling the Anointed's law.

<sup>16</sup> 5:1-15 ABBA: 5:1-6 and 5:13-15 are about freedom and love versus the law. On 5:14 see 6:2. The B's, 5:7-10 and 5:11-12, are about the false teachers versus the Passover (see 1 Cor 5:6-8) and the cross.

### Walk in the Anointed's spirit, not under law and flesh

- 16 I say, then, walk in spirit, and you will certainly not fulfill the desire of flesh.  
 17 For the **flesh** has desires contrary to the **spirit**, and the **spirit** contrary to the **flesh**, for these are opposed to each other so that you may not do what you want.  
 18 But if by spirit you are led, you are not under law.  
 19 Obvious are the **works of the flesh**, which are:  
 sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, rages, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, 21 envyings, drunkenness, orgies, and the like.  
 I warn you as I have warned, that those who do such things will not inherit God's kingdom.  
 22 But the **fruit of the spirit** is:  
 love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.  
 Against such there is no law.  
 24 They *who are* the Anointed's, the flesh have crucified with *its* passions and desires.  
 25 If we **live** in **spirit**, in **spirit** let us also **walk**.  
 26 Let us not be conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

### Support one another, and fulfill the Anointed's law<sup>17</sup>

- 6** Brothers, even if a person is caught in some wrongdoing, you *who are* spiritual restore that one in a spirit of gentleness, watching out for yourself, that even you may not be tempted.  
 2 One another's burdens bear, and so you will fulfill the law of the Anointed.  
 3 For if someone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.  
 4 Each one must examine his own work, and then to himself alone he will have reason to boast, and not to another.  
 5 For each will bear his own load.  
 6 Share, one who is taught the word, with the one who teaches, in all good *things*.  
 7 Be not deceived, God is not mocked.  
 What a person sows he will also reap:  
 8 one who **sows** to his own **flesh**, from the **flesh** will **reap** corruption, but one who **sows** to the **spirit**, from the **spirit** will **reap** eternal life.  
 9 In doing good let us not lose heart, for in due season we will reap if we do not give up.  
 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good for all, especially for the household of the faithful.

<sup>17</sup> 6:1-10 ABCDCBA. A, B, helping others, C, responsibility for what one does, D, support teachers.

**Crucified rather than circumcised, a new creation rather than law**<sup>18</sup>

**11 SEEHOWLARGETOYOULETTERSIHAVEWRITTENBMYOWNHAND**<sup>19</sup>

12 All who want to make a good showing in *the* flesh,  
these compel you to be circumcised,  
only so they may not be persecuted for the Anointed's cross.

13 For not even the circumcised themselves keep *the* law,  
but they want you to be circumcised  
so that in your flesh they may boast.

14 But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Anointed,  
through whom to me *the* world  
has been crucified,  
and I to *the* world.

15 For neither circumcision is anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

16 And all who will follow this principle,<sup>20</sup>  
peace  
on them  
and mercy,  
that is, on God's Israel.

17 Finally, troubles for me let no one make,  
for I the marks of Jesus  
on my body I bear.

### **Blessing**<sup>21</sup>

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Anointed *be* with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

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<sup>18</sup> 6:11-17 ABA. In the outer sections, 11 and 17, Paul speaks of marks on his body which, for him, were the marks of Jesus' cross. He contrasts them in the center with circumcision, the bodily mark of the law. Paul links his "large letters" to the "marks of Jesus on my body" and to persecution "for the Anointed's cross," reminding the Galatians of something he did not need to explain to them, and suggesting to us that he had poor eyesight as a result of injury, when he was stoned (2 Cor 11:25) at Lystra (Acts 14:5-23) on Paul's first missionary journey. Lystra was in Galatia. In Gal 4:13-15 Paul mentions his eyes in connection with an "infirmity of the flesh" when he preached the good news to them "at the first." The same infirmity, "a messenger of the Adversary," is probably described in 2 Cor 12:7-10.

<sup>19</sup> 6:11 When Paul wrote, all letters were capitals, there was no punctuation as we know it, no chapter or verse markings, no spacing between words, sentences, or paragraphs.

<sup>20</sup> 6:16 The conditional peace here complements the conditional curse in 1:8-9.

<sup>21</sup> 6:18 The last of five divisions of this letter, and the shortest of Paul's closings.



## Background

Paul first visited Corinth during his second missionary journey (within AD 39-52) and stayed about eighteen months. On his third missionary journey (within 48-58), he stayed at Ephesus about three years. During that time he wrote his first letter to Corinth, which is mentioned in 1 Cor 5:9-11. In response to feedback from that, he wrote 1 Corinthians, his second letter to Corinth, which dealt with problems at Corinth and, in 1 Cor 16:1-4, urged a gift for Jerusalem. Later, 2 Cor 12:17-18, which may be from Paul's third letter, indicates that Titus had been sent to Corinth to help but Paul was concerned about how he had been received. So Paul went from Ephesus to Corinth by sea (250 miles), ahead of the schedule he had outlined in 1 Cor 16:5-8, for what turned out to be a "painful visit" (2 Cor 2:1; 12:14; 13:1-2). That was his second visit to Corinth, and he evidently returned to Ephesus. Instead of going back directly to Corinth, he sent a letter "with many tears" (2 Cor 2:1-4), his third letter to Corinth, which was carried by Titus and was well received (2 Cor 7:5-16).

Paul finally departed from Ephesus, going through Macedonia (1 Cor 16:5-8; 2 Cor 2:12-13; Acts 20:1). Titus rejoined Paul in Macedonia and gave him joyful news (2 Cor 7:5-16). Paul then wrote 2 Corinthians from Macedonia (possibly from Philippi), his fourth letter to Corinth, and sent it by Titus and two brothers (2 Cor 8:6,16-24). Soon afterwards, Paul arrived in Corinth for his third visit (2 Cor 12:14; 13:1-2). There he spent the winter before returning to Jerusalem with the gift for the poor (Acts 20:2-6,22-24; 1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8,9; Rom 15:25-31), which he had promised James, Peter, and John he would do (Gal 2:9-10).

## Structure

The overall structure is ABCDCBA.

1:1-2 Address and blessing

1:3-7:16 Paul's deferred visit, ministry, rejoicing for good response to tearful letter

1:3-2:13 Encouragement in distress, deferred visit, tearful letter, forgiveness, searching for Titus

1:3-11 Thanks for sharing encouragement in distress

1:12-2:4 Deferred visit, tearful letter, sparing them pain

2:5-11 Forgive the one who caused pain

2:12-13 Searching for Titus

2:14-7:4 Paul's defense of his ministry

2:14-4:4 Paul's ministry of a new covenant, qualifications of himself and his message

4:5-15 Paul's ministry: "Treasure in earthen vessels"

4:16-5:10 Paul's ministry: "By faith we walk, not by sight"

5:11-7:4 Paul's ministry of reconciliation, qualifications, appeal for reconciliation

7:5-16 Encouraged by arrival of Titus and good response to tearful letter

8:1-15 The gift for Jerusalem

8:16-24 Commendation of letter carriers (normally part of the closing)

9:1-15 The gift for Jerusalem, again

10:1-13:10 Response to Paul's opponents at Corinth

10:1-18 Building you up by writing before coming, not commending ourselves

11:1-15 Super-apostles, one who did not burden them, and false apostles

11:16-33 Boasting of thirty foolishnesses and weaknesses, and an escape

12:1-10 Boasting of visions, weaknesses, a thorn in the flesh, and ungranted prayer

12:11-18 Super-apostles, and one who did not burden them

12:19-13:10 Not defending ourselves, but building you up by writing before coming

13:11-13 Greetings and blessing

The first and last primary divisions are the address and blessing, and the greetings and blessing. The second and sixth are two main bodies, both about Paul's ministry. The third and fifth are about the gift for Jerusalem. At the center is the commendation of letter carriers, normally part of the closing. This is probably a composite of Paul's first, third, and fourth letters to Corinth, 1 Corinthians being his second letter. Philippians, which is also probably a composite of more than one letter, is the only other letter of Paul's that has two separated main bodies.

This is a long letter for Paul's fourth letter to Corinth. He had just met Titus, who was on his way back from delivering Paul's third letter; he was on his way to Corinth to be there soon in person, and Titus had brought good news.

Paul's long defense of his ministry (2:14-7:4), including his appeal for reconciliation (6:11-13, 7:2-4), may be the main body of his first letter to Corinth. It interrupts his account of his deferred visit, his letter "with many tears," and his trip to Troas and then to Macedonia in search of Titus, which breaks off at 2:13 and resumes at 7:5. 2:14-7:4 does not reflect the good news of reconciliation reported afterwards in 7:5-16, or his discussion of his deferred visit or his letter "with many tears" which precedes 2:14.

Chapter 9 may be the main part of a short note sent separately before or after 2 Corinthians and before Paul himself arrived at Corinth (8:18-19; 9:4-5), which was inserted after chapter 8 in order to maintain a symmetrical arrangement. It is unlikely that two extended invitations to participate in the gift for Jerusalem were originally presented side by side. Verse 9:1 presumes that chapter 8 is not in the same letter.

The possible divisions of this letter into the fourth, first, and third letters are shown below:

#### Fourth Letter

- 1:1-2 Address and blessing
- 1:3-11 Thanks for sharing encouragement in distress
- 1:12-2:4 Deferred visit, tearful letter, sparing them pain
- 2:5-11 Forgive the one who caused pain
- 2:12-13 + 7:5-16 Encouraged by arrival of Titus and good response to tearful letter
- 8:1-24 The gift for Jerusalem and commendation of letter carriers (see 1 Cor 16:1-18)
- [13:11-13] Greetings and blessing

This overall structure is ABCDCBA. The central division focuses on forgiveness.

#### Main body of First Letter

- 2:14-4:4 Paul's ministry of a new covenant, qualifications of himself and his message
- 4:5-15 Paul's ministry: "Treasure in earthen vessels"
- 4:16-5:10 Paul's ministry: "By faith we walk, not by sight"
- 5:11-7:4 Paul's ministry of reconciliation, qualifications, appeal for reconciliation

#### Main body of Third Letter (described in 2:1-4 "with many tears")

- 10:1-18 Building you up by writing before coming, not commending ourselves
- 11:1-15 Super-apostles, one who did not burden them, and false apostles
- 11:16-33 Boasting of thirty foolishnesses and weaknesses, and an escape
- 12:1-10 Boasting of visions, weaknesses, a thorn in the flesh, and ungranted prayer
- 12:11-18 Super-apostles, and one who did not burden them
- 12:19-13:10 Not defending ourselves, but building you up by writing before coming

It is unlikely that the emotional defense against Paul's opponents at Corinth in chapters 10-13 is in its original location. It comes after two appeals for money for the holy ones at Jerusalem in chapters 8 and 9, and after the good news reported in 7:5-16 that the conflicts with Paul's opponents at Corinth had been resolved. Coming after an appeal for money, the tone of these chapters would

be strange. It is more likely that chapters 10-13 were the main body of the letter Paul wrote to Corinth between 1 and 2 Corinthians, described in 2:1-4 “with many tears.”

Chapters 10-13 twice mention (12:14, 13:1-2) that Paul’s next visit to Corinth will be his third, so they could not have been from his first letter to Corinth mentioned in 1 Cor 5:9-11. They also say twice (10:1-11, 13:10) that he is writing while away, so that when present, he need not be harsh. That fits in well with his description, in 2:1-4, of his third letter written “with many tears.”

### **Structure of the two main bodies**

The structure of the second main body, 10:1-13:10, is ABCCBA.

The first main body, 1:3-7:16, can also be viewed as ABCCBA, like the second main body, if 1:3-2:13 is viewed as the first A, which is reasonably parallel with 7:5-16, the last A. The BCCB at the center of that combined structure is the ABBA in 2:14-7:4, which may be the main body of Paul’s first letter to Corinth. Removing 2:14-7:4, and 10:1-13:10 which may be the main body of the third letter, and 9:1-15, the second appeal for the gift for Jerusalem, leaves what may be the fourth letter, as shown above, arranged as ABCDCBA, with 2:5-11 on forgiveness as the main body at the center. In this view, the fourth letter was carefully divided so that the insertions from previous letters would preserve a symmetrical arrangement overall and matching arrangements in both main bodies. The result is like a camel with two humps which match each other well, both focusing on Paul’s ministry, his qualifications, and his concern for the Corinthians.

### **Theme**

Paul’s theme of unity of God’s “holy ones” with “God our Father” and with each other in “our Lord Jesus Anointed,” is summarized in the introductory thanksgiving (1:3-11) about sharing in suffering and encouragement, and again in 1:21-22 and 5:18-21. Paul’s theme of being united with Jesus in his death and resurrection is summarized in 4:10-12, and also in 5:15, which summarizes the purpose of his death: “And for all he died, so the living no longer for themselves may live but for him who for them died and was raised.”

### **An intriguing omission**

The only instances of the omission of the name of a specific “brother” in Paul’s letters are the three in 2 Cor 8:18,22 and 12:18. In each of those instances the brother is being commended, so Paul had no reason to withhold their names, and every reason to name them. Is this further evidence of an editor, probably at Corinth, who may have had a reason for those omissions?

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

### Address and blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul, an apostle of **Anointed Jesus** by God's will, and brother Timothy,  
To God's called out *assembly* that is in Corinth,  
with all the holy *ones* who are in all Achaia:

**2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and *the* Lord **Jesus Anointed**.

### Paul's deferred visit, ministry, rejoicing for good response to tearful letter<sup>2</sup>

**Encouragement in distress, deferred visit, tearful letter, forgiveness, searching for Titus**

**Thanks for sharing encouragement in distress**

**3** Blessed *be* the God  
and Father  
of our Lord Jesus Anointed,  
the Father of mercies  
and God of all encouragement,  
**4** who encourages us  
in all our distress,  
to enable us to encourage those  
in every distress  
with the encouragement  
by which we ourselves are encouraged by God.

**5** For as overflow the sufferings  
of the Anointed  
to us,  
so through the Anointed  
also overflows our encouragement.

**6** If we are distressed, *it is* for your encouragement and salvation.  
If we are encouraged, *it is* for your encouragement,  
which enables *you* to endure  
the same sufferings  
that we also suffer.

**7** And our hope *is* firm for you,  
knowing that as you are sharers of the sufferings, so also of the encouragement.

**8** We do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the distress that came to us in Asia.  
We were weighed down far beyond *our* strength,  
so that we despaired even of life.

**9** Indeed we had the sentence of death in ourselves  
so we would not rely on ourselves but on God,  
who raises the dead,

**10** who from so great a death rescued us  
and he will rescue, on whom we have hoped, and he will further rescue *us*,  
**11** you also helping together for us by prayer,  
so that by means of many persons  
for the gift to us,  
by many  
thanks may be given on our behalf.

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-2 ABBA. The first of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 13:11-13.

<sup>2</sup> 1:3-7:16 ABA. Parallel with 10:1-13:10, the other main body, both about Paul's ministry.

**Deferred visit, tearful letter, sparing them pain<sup>3</sup>**

12 Our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience,  
that with God's simplicity and sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but with God's grace,  
we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you.

13 For we write you nothing other than what you *can* read or understand.

I hope that you will understand fully, 14 as also you have understood us in part,  
that we are your boast just as you also *are* ours, on the Day of the Lord Jesus.

15 And in this confidence I intended to come to you first,  
so that you might have a second benefit,

16 both by means of you to pass on to Macedonia,  
and again from Macedonia to return to you  
and by you be sent on to Judea.<sup>4</sup>

17 So when I intended that, did I do it lightly?

Or what I plan,  
according to flesh  
do I plan,

so that with me the "Yes, yes" *is* also "No, no"?

18 *As* God *is* faithful,

our word to you is not "Yes" and "No."

19 For God's son, Jesus Anointed, who among you by us was preached, by  
me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not "Yes" and "No."

But in him is "Yes."

20 For all God's promises *are* in him the "Yes."

Therefore, also through him  
*is* the "Amen" to God for glory  
through us.

21 He who establishes us with you in Anointed,  
and has anointed us,  
*is* God,

22 who also sealed us  
and gave the down payment of the spirit in our hearts.

23 I call on God as a witness for my soul,  
that to spare you I have not yet come to Corinth.

24 Not that we are lords over your faithfulness,  
but we are workers with *you* for your joy,  
for by faithfulness you stand firm.

**2** For I resolved this in myself, not to come to you again in pain.

2 For if I pain you, who *is* there to cheer me except the one pained by me?

3 And I wrote as I did so that when I came I might not have pain from those in  
whom I should rejoice,  
confident about all of you  
that my joy is *the joy* of all of you.

4 For out of much distress and anguish of heart I wrote you with many tears,  
not that you might be pained,  
but that you may know the love that I have especially for you.

<sup>3</sup> 1:12-2:4 ABCBA. A's: our testimony to you; B's: linked together with you; C: change of travel plans.

<sup>4</sup> 1:16 Note how much this plan had changed since 1 Cor 16:5-8.

### Forgive the one who caused pain<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> If someone has caused pain,  
not to me has he caused pain,  
but to some extent, that I not exaggerate, to all of you.

<sup>6</sup> Enough for such a one *is* this punishment by the majority.

<sup>7</sup> So now instead you *should* forgive and encourage,  
lest by excessive pain such a one may be overwhelmed.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, I encourage you to affirm *your* love to him.

<sup>9</sup> That is why I wrote, to know the proof of you, whether you are obedient in everything.

<sup>10</sup> To whom you forgive anything, I too.

For indeed what I have forgiven, if anything, I have forgiven by you in Anointed's presence,  
<sup>11</sup> so we may not be taken advantage of by the Adversary, for we are not unaware of his designs.

### Searching for Titus<sup>6</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Coming to Troas

for the good news of the Anointed and a door for me being opened by *the* Lord,

<sup>13</sup> I had no rest in my spirit because I did not find Titus my brother,  
but taking leave from them, I went on into Macedonia . . . [to be resumed at 7:5].

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<sup>5</sup> 2:5-11 ABA. Now parallel with 1:12-2:4. Probably the center of Paul's original fourth letter to Corinth. The news here that the person who "caused pain" has been punished reflects information obtained when Paul met Titus, as described in 7:5-16, where the "punishment" of "the one who did wrong" is mentioned again.

<sup>6</sup> 2:12-13 Evidently Titus carried the letter mentioned in 2:3-4 and 7:8-12, and Paul was looking for his return. The discussion of Paul's deferred visit, his letter of tears, and finding Titus with news of how it was received are resumed at 7:5. From here to there these subjects are not mentioned. This may originally have been part of 7:5-7 (which see).

**Paul's defense of his ministry<sup>7</sup>****Paul's ministry of a new covenant, qualifications of himself and his message<sup>8</sup>**

<sup>14</sup> To God *be* thanks who always in triumph leads us in the Anointed and the fragrance of the knowledge of him makes known through us in every place.

<sup>15</sup> For Anointed's fragrant aroma we are for God among those being saved and among those perishing—

<sup>16</sup> to the latter a fragrance of death to death, to the former a fragrance of life to life.

And for these who *is* **qualified**?

<sup>17</sup> For we are not like the many who peddle God's word,

but as from sincerity,

but as from God before God in Anointed we speak.

**3** Are we beginning again to commend ourselves?

Or do we need, as some *do*, letters of commendation to you or from you?

<sup>2</sup> Our letter, you are, written on our hearts,

known and read by all,

<sup>3</sup> showing that you are

Anointed's letter,

ministered by us,

written not with ink but with spirit of *the* living God,

not on tablets of stone but on tablets of hearts of flesh.

<sup>4</sup> Such confidence we have through the Anointed toward God.

<sup>5</sup> Not that from ourselves

are we **qualified**

to take credit for anything as from ourselves,

but our **qualification**

*is* from God,

<sup>6</sup> who also **qualified** us as ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit.

For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.

<sup>7</sup> Now if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory

so the Israelites could not look intently

at Moses's face

because of the glory

of his face,

the *glory* that is fading away,

<sup>8</sup> how much more will the ministry of the spirit be with glory?

<sup>9</sup> For if in the ministry of condemnation *there was* glory,

much more abounds the ministry of justfulness with glory.

<sup>10</sup> For even what was glorious had no glory in this respect because of the greater glory.

<sup>11</sup> For if what is passing away *was* with glory, much more what endures *is* with glory.

<sup>7</sup> 2:14-7:4 ABBA. This may be the main body of Paul's first letter to Corinth. See Introduction to 2 Cor.

<sup>8</sup> 2:14-4:4 ABBA. Parallel with 5:11-7:4, 2:14-16a: ministry to the saved and unsaved. 2:16b-3:5: Paul's letter of commendation. 3:6-11: the ministry Paul is commended for. 3:12-4:4: ministry to the veiled and unveiled.

12 Therefore, having such hope, we proceed very openly,

13 and not as Moses put a veil over his face

so the Israelites could not look intently at the end of what was fading away.

14 But closed were their minds.

For to this very day the same veil over the reading of the old covenant remains,  
not lifted because *only* in Anointed is it taken away.

15 But to this day, when Moses is read, a veil over their heart lies.

16 “But when one turns to *the* Lord, removed is the veil.”

17 Now the Lord is the spirit, and where the spirit of *the* Lord is, *there is* freedom.

18 We all, with unveiled face,

the Lord’s glory

seeing as in a mirror,

into his image

we are being transformed

from glory into glory,

as from *the* Lord’s spirit.

**4** Accordingly, having this ministry because we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart.

2 Rather, we have renounced the hidden *things* of shame, not walking in craftiness nor falsifying the word of God,

but by disclosure of the truth commending ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God.

3 And if it is veiled, our good news, for those who are perishing it is veiled,

4 in whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of the faithless, so they may not see *the* light of the good news of the glory of the Anointed, who is an image of God.



**Paul's ministry: "Treasure in earthen vessels"<sup>9</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> For not ourselves do we preach,  
 but Jesus Anointed *as* Lord,  
 and ourselves *as* your slaves  
 for **Jesus**.

<sup>6</sup> For *it is* the God who said,  
 "Out of darkness let light shine,"  
 who has shone in our hearts with light  
 of the knowledge of the glory of God  
 on *the* face of Anointed.

<sup>7</sup> We have this treasure in earthen vessels,  
 that the excellence of the power may be God's  
 and not from us.

<sup>8</sup> In everything afflicted but not crushed,  
 perplexed but not despairing,  
<sup>9</sup> persecuted but not forsaken,  
 knocked down but not defeated,

<sup>10</sup> always the death of **Jesus**  
 in *our* body carrying about,  
 so that also the life of **Jesus**  
 in our body  
 may be shown.

<sup>11</sup> Always we the living to death are handed over for the sake of **Jesus**,  
 so that also the life of **Jesus**  
 may be shown

in our mortal flesh.

<sup>12</sup> So death in us  
 is at work,  
 but life in you.

<sup>13</sup> Having the same spirit of faithfulness, as is written: "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

<sup>14</sup> knowing that he who raised  
**Jesus**<sup>10</sup>  
 also us  
 with **Jesus**

he will raise and present *us* with you.

<sup>15</sup> For all things *are* for you, so that grace, increasing through the thanksgiving of many, may overflow to God's glory.

<sup>9</sup> 4:5-15 ABBA. Parallel with 4:16-5:10. A's: preaching Jesus for your sake. B's: dying and living for Jesus.

<sup>10</sup> 4:14 The textual evidence is closely divided on whether "Lord" should precede the sixth instance of "Jesus" (of seven) in 4:5-15. See Metzger's *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (1994).

**Paul's ministry: "By faith we walk, not by sight"<sup>11</sup>**

<sup>16</sup> Therefore we do not lose heart; even though our outer self is wasting away, our inner *self* is renewed day by day.

<sup>17</sup> For our momentary light affliction, beyond all comparison an eternal weight of glory is producing for us,

<sup>18</sup> as we look not to what is seen but to what is not seen.

For what is seen *is* temporary, but what is not seen *is* eternal.

**5** For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tent is taken down,  
we have a building from God,  
a house not made with hands,  
eternal, in the heavens.

<sup>2</sup> For in this *tent* we groan,  
with our dwelling from heaven longing to be clothed,  
<sup>3</sup> since clothed,<sup>12</sup>  
we will not be found naked.

<sup>4</sup> For we who are in *this* tent groan, being weighed down,  
not that we wish to be unclothed,  
but to be clothed upon,  
so that the mortal may be swallowed up by life.

<sup>5</sup> He who prepared  
us  
for this very *purpose*  
*is* God,  
who gave  
us  
the down payment of the spirit.

<sup>6</sup> So we are always confident  
and know that while we are at home in the body  
we are away from home with the Lord,  
<sup>7</sup> for by faith  
we walk,  
not by sight.

<sup>8</sup> We are confident  
and would rather be away from the body  
and at home with the Lord.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore also we endeavor, whether at home or away,  
to be pleasing to him.

<sup>10</sup> For we all must appear before the judgment seat of the Anointed,  
so that each may receive recompense  
according to what he did in the body, whether good or bad.

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<sup>11</sup> 4:16-5:10 ABCBA. Parallel with 4:5-15. A's: not losing heart while in the body. B's: but would rather be with the Lord. C: the down payment.

<sup>12</sup> 5:3 The reading preferred by the editors of the NA27 Greek text, for "internal" reasons, is *unclothed*, although *clothed* has far stronger external support. See Metzger's *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (1994).

**Paul's ministry of reconciliation, qualifications, appeal for reconciliation<sup>13</sup>****Paul's ministry of reconciliation**

- 11 Knowing, therefore, the fear of the Lord, others we persuade.  
 To God we are well known, and I hope also to your consciences to be well known.
- 12 Not again ourselves are we commending to you,  
 but an opportunity giving to you of boasting about us,  
 so you may have *something to say* to those boasting in appearance and not in heart.
- 13 For if we are beside ourselves, *it is* for God; if we are of sound mind, *it is* for you.
- 14 For the Anointed's love constrains us, having judged this,  
 that one for all died,  
 therefore all died.
- 15 And for all he died,  
 so the living no longer for themselves may live but for him who for them died and was raised.
- 16 Therefore, we from now on know no one according to flesh;  
 and though we have known Anointed according to flesh,  
 yet now no longer do we know *him so*.
- 17 So whoever *is* in Anointed  
*is* a new creation;  
 the old *things* have passed away;  
 look, they have become new.
- 18 All things *are* from God, who reconciled  
 us  
 to himself  
 through Anointed  
 and gave  
 us  
 the ministry of reconciliation:
- 19 namely, that God was in Anointed *the* world reconciling to himself,  
 not counting against them their trespasses,  
 and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.
- 20 On behalf of Anointed, therefore, we are ambassadors.  
 As God appealing through us,  
 we implore on behalf of Anointed, be reconciled to God.
- 21 Him who did not know sin,  
 for us  
 sin  
 he made,  
 that we may become  
 justfulness  
 of God  
 in him.

<sup>13</sup> 5:11-7:4 ABA. Parallel with 2:14-4:4.

### Qualifications of God's ministers

#### 6 Being fellow workers,<sup>14</sup>

we also appeal to you not in vain to receive the grace of God.

<sup>2</sup> For he says, "At an acceptable time I heard you, and on *the* day of salvation I helped you."

Look, now *is* an acceptable time. Look, now *is the* day of salvation.

<sup>3</sup> To no one in anything giving offense, that not blamed be the ministry,  
<sup>4</sup> but in everything showing ourselves as God's ministers:

in much patience,  
in distresses,  
in hardships,  
in constraints,  
<sup>5</sup> in beatings,  
in prisons,  
in riots,  
in labors,  
in vigils,  
in fasts,

<sup>6</sup> in purity,  
in knowledge,  
in longsuffering,  
in kindness,  
in holy spirit,  
in genuine love,  
<sup>7</sup> in word of truth,  
in God's strength,

through the weapons of justfulness for the right *hand* and left,  
<sup>8</sup> through glory and dishonor,  
through slander and praise,  
as deceivers and true,  
<sup>9</sup> as unknown and well-known,  
as dying and look—we live,  
as disciplined and not put to death,  
<sup>10</sup> as sorrowful but always rejoicing,  
as poor but making many rich,  
as having nothing and possessing everything.

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<sup>14</sup> 6:1 *Fellow workers* with whom? Paul and Timothy with the Corinthians and with God and Anointed? See 1:1,6-7; 3:1-4; 5:18,19,20; 6:4-10.

### Appeal for reconciliation

11 Our mouth is open to you,  
Corinthians,  
our heart is open wide.

12 You are not constricted in us,  
you are constricted in your own hearts.  
13 For fair exchange, as to *my* children I say,  
you be open too,  
[2 make room for us.] [repeated from 7:2a]

{14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.  
For what partnership *has* justfulness and lawlessness?  
Or what fellowship *has* light with darkness?  
15 What accord *has* Anointed with Beliar?  
Or what share *has* a believer with an unbeliever?

16 What agreement *has* God's temple with idols?  
For we are a temple of *the* living God,  
as God said: "I will dwell among them and I will walk among *them*, and I will be  
their God, and they will be my people.

17 Therefore come out from among them and be separate, says *the* Lord, and do not touch  
*anything* unclean  
and I will receive you,  
18 and I will be to you a Father,  
and you will be to me sons and daughters, says *the* Lord Almighty."

**7** Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every  
defilement of flesh and spirit, completing holiness in fear of God.} <sup>15</sup>

2 make room for us. [this combines well with 6:13]

We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one.  
3 For condemnation I do not speak.  
For I said before, you are in our hearts to die together and to live together.

4 Great openness *is* in me to you,  
great pride *is* in me over you.  
I am filled with encouragement.  
I am overflowing with joy in all our distress.

<sup>15</sup> 6:14-7:1 Paul's theme of openness in 6:11-13 is concluded in 7:2-4. So 6:14-7:1, on separation from unbelievers, is an interruption. It is also more separatist than what Paul expressed in 1 Cor 5:9-13; 7:12-16; 9:19-22; and 10:25-33. It is filled with scripture quotations and allusions, none of which are used elsewhere in the Pauline letters. It uses six words not found elsewhere in the NT, such as "Beliar." And being separate from unbelievers seems strange in the ending for this long section, 5:11-7:4, on being ambassadors for Anointed and partners with the Corinthians. Some question whether this passage is in its original setting and whether Paul is the author. The insert is ABA, the first and last sections about being separate from unbelievers. It appears to have been inserted into an ABBA composed of 6:11-13 and 7:2-4, forming an ABCBA structure for 6:11-7:4, with five sections: 6:11-13, 6:14-15, 6:16, 6:17-7:1, 7:2-4.

### Encouraged by arrival of Titus and good response to tearful letter<sup>16</sup>

[<sup>12</sup> Coming to Troas

for the good news of the Anointed and a door for me being opened by *the* Lord,

<sup>13</sup> I had no rest in my spirit because I did not find Titus my brother,

but taking leave from them, I went on into Macedonia.] [Repeated from 2:12-13.]

<sup>5</sup> And when we came into Macedonia,

our flesh had no rest, but we were distressed on every *side*, conflicts outside, fears within.

<sup>6</sup> But he who encourages the downcast encouraged us, God,  
by the coming of Titus,

<sup>7</sup> and not only by his arrival,

but also by the encouragement by which he was encouraged because of you,

reporting to us your longing, your grieving, your zeal for me,

so that I rejoiced more.

<sup>8</sup> For even though I **grieved** you by the **letter**, I do not **regret** *it*. And though I did **regret** *it*, I see that that **letter**, though for a short time, did **grieve** you. [ABCCBA]

<sup>9</sup> Now I rejoice,

not because you were grieved,

but because you were grieved into repentance.

For you were grieved according to God,

so that in nothing you suffered loss because of us.

<sup>10</sup> For godly sorrow brings about repentance to salvation without regret, but worldly sorrow produces death.

<sup>11</sup> See what this, to be grieved according to God, has produced in you:

earnestness, and defense, and indignation, and fear, and longing, and zeal, and punishment!

In everything you have shown yourselves to be innocent in the matter.

<sup>12</sup> So even though I wrote to you,

*it was* not because of the one who did wrong, nor because of the one who was wronged,

but in order that your earnestness for us might be made known to you before God.

<sup>13</sup> For this reason we are encouraged.

And in addition to our encouragement, we were made all the more joyful by Titus's joy,  
because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you.

<sup>14</sup> For whatever I have boasted to him about you,

I was not put to shame,

but as we spoke everything to you in truth,

so also our boasting to Titus has proved true.

<sup>15</sup> And his heart goes out all the more to you, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, how  
with fear and trembling you welcomed him.

<sup>16</sup> I rejoice, because in everything I have confidence in you.

<sup>16</sup> 7:5-16 ABCBA. Parallel with 1:3-2:13, but primarily with 1:12-2:4. A's: encouraged by Titus's coming and Titus's joy; B's: their response; C: grieved by tearful letter.

**The gift for Jerusalem<sup>17</sup>**

**8** We make known to you, brothers, God's grace that has been given to the churches of Macedonia,  
 2 that in a great trial of distress,  
     the overflow of their joy and their deep poverty  
     overflowed in the wealth of their generosity,  
 3 that according to *their* ability, I bear witness, and beyond *their* ability,  
 of their own accord  
 4 earnestly begging us for the grace of taking part in the contribution to the holy *ones*,  
 5 and not as we expected.

Instead, they gave themselves first to the Lord and to us through God's will,  
 6 so that we encouraged Titus,  
 that as he had already begun, so also he should complete for you also this grace.

7 And as you overflow in everything,  
     in faithfulness and word and knowledge and all diligence and our love for you,  
 may you overflow in this grace also.

8 I speak not by way of command,  
     but by the earnestness of others  
 also to test the genuineness of your love.

9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Anointed,  
     that for your sakes he became poor  
     though he was rich,  
     so you through his poverty  
 you may become rich.

10 And in this I am giving *my* advice. This is appropriate for you who not only to do  
     but also to be willing  
     began last year:  
 11 now finish doing *it*,  
     so that *your* eager willingness  
 may be matched by finishing *it* from what *you* have.

12 For if the willingness is there, *it is* acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.

13 Not that *there should be* relief to others *and* hardship to you, but an equality—  
 14 at the present time your abundance for their need,  
     so that their abundance may also be for your need,  
 that there may be equality.

15 As it is written: "Whoever *gathered* much had nothing over, and whoever *gathered* little had no lack."

<sup>17</sup> 8:1-15 ABCDCBA. Parallel with 9:1-15. The A's, sharing according to ability. The B's, finishing. The C's, overflowing in giving. D, a test. See Gal 2:10; 1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 9; and Rom 15:25-31.

**Commendation of letter carriers (normally part of the closing)<sup>18</sup>**

<sup>16</sup> Thanks to God who put the same eagerness for you into Titus's heart,

<sup>17</sup> for he not only welcomed *our* appeal,  
but being more eager, of his own accord he has gone<sup>19</sup> out to you.

<sup>18</sup> We sent along with him brother \_\_\_\_\_  
whose praise *is* in the good news throughout all the churches.

<sup>19</sup> And not only *that*,  
but he was also appointed by the churches  
our traveling companion with this gift,

which is administered by us for the Lord's glory and *for* our willingness,  
<sup>20</sup> *thereby* avoiding this, that anyone should criticize us regarding this liberality  
which is administered by us.

<sup>21</sup> For we "make provision for *what is* good not only in the sight of *the* Lord but also in  
the sight of others."

<sup>22</sup> And we sent with them our brother \_\_\_\_\_  
whom we have proved in many ways many times to be eager,  
and *who is* now much more eager  
in *the* great confidence that *he has* in you.

<sup>23</sup> As for Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker among you. As for our brothers, *they are* apostles  
of *the* churches,

Anointed's glory.

<sup>24</sup> Accordingly, the proof of your love and of our boasting about you, to them prove before the  
churches.

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<sup>18</sup> 8:16-24 ABCBA. As it stands, this is the center of the letter. A's: Titus; B's: two unnamed brothers (see last paragraph of the Introduction to 2 Cor); C: prudence

<sup>19</sup> 8:17 (and 9:3) The past tense reflects the readers' viewpoint when they receive this letter.



**The gift for Jerusalem, again<sup>20</sup>**

**9** Concerning the contribution to the holy *ones*, it is superfluous for me to write to you.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>2</sup> For I know your eagerness,  
about which I boast of you to *the* Macedonians,  
that Achaia has been ready since last year,  
and your zeal has stirred up the majority.

<sup>3</sup> But I sent the brothers  
so that our boast about you may not prove empty in this respect,  
so that, as I said, you may be ready.

<sup>4</sup> Otherwise, if *any* Macedonians come with me  
and find you not ready,  
we would be ashamed, we,  
to say nothing of you,  
in this confidence.

<sup>5</sup> So I considered it necessary to encourage the brothers to go on ahead to you  
and prepare in advance your promised gift,  
so it may be ready as a gift and not as compelled.

<sup>6</sup> *Remember* this: whoever sows sparingly, sparingly also will reap,  
and whoever sows bountifully, bountifully also will reap.

<sup>7</sup> Each *should give* as he has decided in *his* heart,  
not reluctantly or under compulsion,  
for “God loves a cheerful giver.”

<sup>8</sup> God is able to make every grace overflow in you,  
so that in everything, always having all you need,  
you may overflow in every good work,

<sup>9</sup> as it is written: “He has scattered abroad,  
he has given to the poor,  
his justfulness endures into the age.”

<sup>10</sup> He who provides “seed to the sower and bread for eating”  
will provide and multiply your seed  
and increase “the fruits of your justfulness,”

<sup>11</sup> in everything being enriched  
for all generosity,  
which brings about through us thanksgiving to God.

<sup>12</sup> For the ministry of this offering  
not only supplies the needs of the holy *ones*,  
but also overflows through many thanksgivings to God:

<sup>13</sup> through the proof of this contribution,  
*many are* glorifying God  
for the obedience of your confession  
to the good news of the Anointed,

and for *the* generosity of *your* contribution to them and to all,

<sup>14</sup> and by their prayer for you,

*many are* longing for you

because of the surpassing grace of God in you.

<sup>15</sup> Thanks to God for his indescribable gift.

<sup>20</sup> 9:1-15 ABCDCBA. Parallel with 8:1-15. A’s: gifts; B’s: zeal, generosity; C’s: readiness; D: cheerfully.

<sup>21</sup> 9:1 But Paul has just done so at length in chapter 8.

**Response to Paul's opponents at Corinth<sup>22</sup>****Building you up by writing before coming, not commending ourselves<sup>23</sup>**

**10** Myself, I, Paul, I appeal to you, by the meekness and gentleness of the Anointed  
 (I who face to face *am* "humble" with you,  
 but away I am "bold" to you).

<sup>2</sup> I plead that when present I may not *need to* be bold with the confidence with which I consider to dare  
 against some who consider us as walking according to flesh.

<sup>3</sup> Though walking in flesh,  
 we do not battle according to flesh.

<sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our battle *are* not fleshly,  
 but *are* powerful in God for destruction of strongholds,  
 destroying arguments <sup>5</sup> and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God,  
 and bringing into captivity every thought into obedience to the Anointed,  
<sup>6</sup> and being ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Look at things according to *their* face.

If someone has convinced himself that he is Anointed's,  
 he should consider again to himself,  
 that just as he *is* Anointed's,  
 so also *are* we.

<sup>8</sup> For if somewhat too much I boast about our authority  
 that the Lord gave  
 for building up  
 and not for tearing down  
 of you,  
 I will not be ashamed.

<sup>9</sup> May I not seem as though to frighten you with letters,  
<sup>10</sup> because "*His* letters," it is said, "*are* weighty and strong,  
 but *his* presence in body *is* weak and *his* speech contemptible."

<sup>11</sup> This should such a one consider: that what we are in word through letters while away, such  
 also *will we be* when present in deed.

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<sup>22</sup> 10:1-13:10 ABCBBA. A's: not commending ourselves, but building you up. B's: super-apostles and one who did not burden them. C's: Paul's boasting of his weaknesses so Anointed's strength may be evident. This is symmetrical with the other main body in 1:3-7:16. In 7:5-16 Titus reports that Paul's problems with the Corinthians had been resolved, but in chapters 10-13 they are far from resolved. So it is likely that chapters 10-13 were part of an earlier letter, written "with many tears," mentioned in 2 Cor 2:1-4 and 7:8-12, which produced the good response that Titus reported.

<sup>23</sup> 10:1-18 ABA. Parallel with 12:19-13:10. The A's, 1-6, 12-18: what Paul pleads not to dare, and does not dare regarding his critics. B, 7-11: his authority is from Anointed, not himself.

<sup>24</sup> 10:6 This is referred to, as already completed, in 2:6-9.

<sup>12</sup> We do not dare  
classify or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves.

But those who measure themselves by themselves  
and compare themselves with themselves  
do not have sense.

<sup>13</sup> We not beyond limits will boast, but within the limit of the area God assigned to us,  
a limit to reach even as far as you.

<sup>14</sup> For not as though we had not reached to you, are we overreaching ourselves,  
we indeed first came to you with the Anointed's good news.

<sup>15</sup> Not beyond limits are we boasting in *the* work of others,  
but we have hope, as your faithfulness is increased,  
among you may be enlarged our area of activity greatly,

<sup>16</sup> to the *regions* beyond you to preach the good news,  
not in an area of another in things already done to boast.

<sup>17</sup> "Whoever boasts, in *the* Lord let him boast."

<sup>18</sup> For *it is* not one who commends himself that is approved,  
but whom the Lord commends.

**Super-apostles, one who did not burden them, and false apostles<sup>25</sup>**

**11** I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me!

<sup>2</sup> For I am jealous over you with God's jealousy,  
for I betrothed you to one husband, a pure virgin to present to the Anointed.

<sup>3</sup> But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve in his craftiness,  
your thoughts may be led astray from sincere devotion to the Anointed.

<sup>4</sup> For if someone comes  
and preaches another Jesus than we preached,  
or *if* you receive a different spirit than you did receive,  
or a different good news than you did accept,  
you put up with *it* well enough.

<sup>5</sup> I think I am in no way inferior to those "super-apostles."

<sup>6</sup> Even if untrained in speech, but not in knowledge,  
in every *way* we have made *this* known in all *things* to you.

<sup>7</sup> Or did I commit a sin,  
humbling myself so you may be exalted,  
because without charge I preached God's good news to you?

<sup>8</sup> Other churches I robbed, taking pay *from them* for ministering to you.

<sup>9</sup> And when I was with you and in need, I did not burden anyone,  
for my need was supplied by the brothers who came from Macedonia.<sup>26</sup>

And in every way I refrained from burdening you and I will refrain.

<sup>10</sup> As Anointed's truth is in me, this boast will not be silenced in me in the regions of Achaia.

<sup>11</sup> Why? Because I do not love you? God knows *I do*.

<sup>12</sup> What I am doing I will also continue doing,

that I may deny the opportunity to those who want an opportunity that in what they boast to be regarded as we.

<sup>13</sup> For such as these *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Anointed.

<sup>14</sup> And no wonder!

For the Adversary himself disguises himself into an angel of light.

<sup>15</sup> *It is* not extraordinary, then, if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of justfulness. Their end will be according to their works.

<sup>25</sup> 11:1-15 ABA. 1-6: super apostles, 7-11: Paul gave up the rights of a true apostle, 12-15: false apostles.

<sup>26</sup> 11:9 This is confirmed in Acts 18:5, where it says: "After Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul devoted all his time to preaching." Before that, Acts 18:1-4 says that when Paul came to Corinth he lodged with Aquila and Priscilla, who were tentmakers, and they worked together, and that Paul preached "every Sabbath." One of Paul's thank-you notes for those gifts from Macedonia is in Phlp 4:10-20. Paul normally supported himself (see 1 Th 2:9; 1 Cor 9; 2 Th 3:7-9).

### Boasting of thirty foolishnesses and weaknesses, and an escape

<sup>16</sup> Again I say: let no one consider me a fool, but if so, receive me even as a fool, so I too may boast of a little something.

<sup>17</sup> What I am saying I am not saying according to *the* Lord, but as foolishness in this confidence of boasting.

<sup>18</sup> Since many are boasting according to *the* flesh,  
I too will boast.

<sup>19</sup> For you gladly put up with fools,  
being wise *yourselves*!

<sup>20</sup> For you put up with *it* if someone enslaves you, if someone devours *you*, if someone takes advantage of *you*, if someone exalts himself, if someone hits you in the face.

<sup>21</sup> To my shame I say that we were weak!

But whatever anyone dares to *boast of* (I am speaking in foolishness), I also dare:

<sup>22</sup> Are they Hebrews? I too.

Are they Israelites? I too.

Are they Abraham's seed? I too.

<sup>23</sup> Are they Anointed's ministers? (I am talking as insane) I more;  
in labors more,  
in prisons more,  
in beatings much more,  
in deaths often.

<sup>24</sup> From *the* Jews five times I received forty *lashes* less one,

<sup>25</sup> three times I was beaten with a rod,  
once I was stoned.

Three times I was shipwrecked,  
a night and a day I have been on the deep,

<sup>26</sup> on journeys often,  
in dangers of rivers,  
in dangers of robbers,  
in dangers from *my own* people,  
in dangers from Gentiles,  
in dangers in *the* city,  
in dangers in *the* wilderness,

in dangers at sea,  
in dangers among false brothers,

<sup>27</sup> in labor and toil,  
in watches often,  
in hunger and thirst,  
in fastings often,  
in cold and exposure.

<sup>28</sup> Besides these externals, the daily pressure on me—the concern for all the churches.

<sup>29</sup> Who is weak, and I am not weak?

Who is caused to stumble, and I am not burned?

<sup>30</sup> If I must boast, I will boast of the *things* of my weakness. <sup>31</sup> The God and Father of the Lord Jesus knows, he who is blessed into the ages, that I do not lie.

<sup>32</sup> In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus to arrest me,

<sup>33</sup> and through a window in the wall I was let down in a basket  
and I escaped his hands.

**Boasting of visions, weaknesses, a thorn in the flesh, and ungranted prayer<sup>27</sup>**

**12** To boast is necessary,  
not that it is helpful,

but I will go on to visions and revelations of *the* Lord.

<sup>2</sup> I know a man in Anointed who, fourteen years ago  
whether in *the* body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows,  
such a one was caught up to *the* third heaven.

<sup>3</sup> And I know such a man

whether in *the* body or out of the body I do not know, God knows,

<sup>4</sup> that was caught up into paradise and heard inexpressible sayings that no mortal may  
utter.

<sup>5</sup> On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on behalf of myself I will not boast, except of *my* weaknesses.

<sup>6</sup> If I should desire to boast, I would not be foolish, for I would be telling *the* truth.

But I refrain, so that no one may think more of me than what he sees in me or hears from me, <sup>7</sup> and  
the excellence of the revelations.

Therefore, so that I may not be puffed up,  
there was given

to me

a thorn in the flesh,

a messenger of *the* Adversary,

me

to batter,

so that I may not be puffed up.

<sup>8</sup> For this, three times to the Lord I appealed, that it might go away from me.

<sup>9</sup> And he said to me, "Sufficient for you is my grace,  
for strength in weakness is made perfect."

So most gladly I will rather boast in my weaknesses,

so that in me may dwell the strength of the Anointed.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore I am content in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions and distresses,  
for Anointed's sake.

For when I am weak, then am I strong.

<sup>27</sup> 12:1-10 ABA and 11:16-33 ABA are the two central sections of 10:1-13:10.

**Super-apostles, and one who did not burden them<sup>28</sup>**

11 I have been foolish. You forced me. I ought to be commended by you.

For in nothing am I inferior  
to those super-apostles  
even though I am nothing.

12 Surely the signs of the apostle were done among you in all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty works.

13 In what way were you worse off than the other churches,  
except that I myself did not burden you?

Forgive me this injustice!

14 Look, this third time I am ready to come to you.

And I will not be a burden, for I do not seek your things, but you.

For children ought not to lay up for the parents but parents for the children.

15 I will very gladly spend and be spent for you.

If I love you more, am I loved less?

16 But anyway, I have not burdened you,  
but being crafty, I caught you with bait!

17 Did I take advantage of you through any of those I sent to you?

18 I urged Titus and with *him* I sent brother \_\_\_\_\_.

Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? In the same footsteps?

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<sup>28</sup> 12:11-18 ABA. Parallel with 11:1-15. For the unnamed brother see 8:16-24 and the last paragraph of the Introduction to 2 Cor.

**Not defending ourselves, but building you up by writing before coming<sup>29</sup>**

<sup>19</sup> All along, have you been thinking that we are defending ourselves to you?

Before God in Anointed we are speaking.

All things, beloved, *are* for building you up.

<sup>20</sup> For I fear that somehow, when I come, not such as I wish I may find you,  
and I may be found by you not such as you wish,

that somehow *there may be* rivalry, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, talebearing,  
arrogance, disorder;

<sup>21</sup> that when I come again, my God may humble me before you,  
and I may grieve over many of those who sinned before and have not repented of the impurity  
and immorality and sensuality that they have done.

**13** This *is the* third time I am coming to you. “By *the* mouth of two or three witnesses  
will every word be established.”

<sup>2</sup> I gave warning before and I am giving warning,  
while present the second time, and now *again* while away,  
to those who sinned before and all the rest,

that when I come again I will not be lenient, <sup>3</sup> because you are asking for proof of  
Anointed’s speaking in me.

He toward you is not weak, but is strong among you.

<sup>4</sup> For he was crucified in weakness,  
but he lives by God’s strength.

For we also are weak in him,  
but we will live with him by God’s strength toward you.

<sup>5</sup> Examine yourselves *to see* whether you are in the faith.

Test yourselves. Do you not know your own selves, that Jesus Anointed *is* in you?—unless  
you fail the test.

<sup>6</sup> I hope that you will find that we do not fail the test.

<sup>7</sup> We pray to God that you may not do anything wrong,  
not that we may appear to have passed the test,  
but that you may do what is good,  
even though we may seem to fail the test.

<sup>8</sup> For we cannot do anything against the truth, but *only* for the truth. <sup>9</sup> For we rejoice when  
we are weak but you are strong.

And we pray for this, your restoration.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore, I am writing this while away,

so that when present I may not be harsh with the authority that the Lord has given me  
for building up and not for tearing down.

**Greetings and blessing**

<sup>11</sup> Finally, brothers, farewell, be restored,<sup>30</sup> be encouraged, be of the same mind, live in peace, and  
the God of love and peace will be with you.

<sup>12</sup> Greet one another with a holy kiss.

Greeting you are all the holy *ones*.

<sup>13</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Anointed, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the holy spirit  
*be* with you all.

<sup>29</sup> 12:19-13:10 ABCCBA. A’s: building you up; B’s: concern for their restoration; C’s: not lenient, God’s strength.

<sup>30</sup> 13:11 The concept of restoration is closely related to the theme of chapters 10-13. The same Greek root is found  
in 13:9, which links this closing to chapters 10-13. It does not appear elsewhere in 1 or 2 Cor.



**Structure**

- 1:1-7 Address, summary of the good news, blessing
- 1:8-17 Thanksgiving for the Romans' faithfulness, Paul's prayers and plans
- 1:18-15:13 Jews and Gentiles are equal before God
  - 1:18-3:20 Jews and Gentiles have both dishonored God
    - 1:18-32 Gentiles are without excuse
    - 2:1-16 All who judge are self-condemned
    - 2:17-29 A Jew who teaches the law and breaks it is self-condemned
    - 3:1-20 Both Jews and Greeks are indicted under law
  - 3:21-4:25 Jews and Gentiles equal under faithfulness
    - 3:21-26 Jews and Gentiles equal under Jesus' faithfulness
    - 3:27-4:2a Jews and Gentiles equal under one God who justifies both through faithfulness
    - 4:2b-25 Jews and Gentiles equal under Abraham's faithfulness
  - 5:1-8:39 In Anointed all are reconciled to God
    - 5:1-11 Justified through Anointed's faithfulness we are reconciled to God
    - 5:12-21 As the sin of one reigned in death to all, grace reigns in life through one, Jesus
    - 6:1-14 We died to sin with Anointed so we may live with him in his resurrection
    - 6:15-23 Being freed from sin, be slaves to God in Anointed Jesus
    - 7:1-8:8 Freed from the law of sin and death by the law of the spirit of life in Anointed
    - 8:9-39 United as God's sons and heirs in Anointed
  - 9:1-11:36 Israel and Gentiles are interdependent for salvation
    - 9:1-5 Doxology to the Israelites and blessing to God
    - 9:6-29 A remnant will be called and saved from Israel, and also from Gentiles
    - 9:30-10:21 Gentiles found what they did not seek, Israel has not found what it sought
    - 11:1-10 The chosen obtained what Israel was seeking, the rest were hardened
    - 11:11-32 Part of Israel is hardened so both Gentiles and Israel may be saved
    - 11:33-36 Doxology
  - 12:1-13:14 Be members of one another, as one body in Anointed, under God's will
    - 12:1-2 Present yourselves to God, do not be conformed to this age
    - 12:3-13 Be united in Anointed under God who has given us different gifts
    - 12:14-21 Unity under adversity and diversity
    - 13:1-7 Unity under God's authorities and ministers (religious and civil)
    - 13:8-10 Love your neighbor
    - 13:11-14 Throw off the works of darkness, put on the Anointed
  - 14:1-15:13 Jews and Gentiles, glorify God together, as brothers
    - 14:1-13a Welcome your weak brother (a Jew) as God has welcomed him
    - 14:13b-23 Do not, for food, destroy God's people
    - 15:1-6 The strong should bear with the weak
    - 15:7-13 Welcome one another, Jews and Gentiles, as Anointed welcomed you
- 15:14-16:23 Confidence in the Romans, Paul's plans and request for prayer, benedictions, greetings
  - 15:14-32 Confidence in the Romans, Paul's ministry and plans, request for prayer
  - 15:33 Peace benediction
  - 16:1-2 Commendation of the letter carrier
  - 16:3-16 Greetings to those in Rome
  - 16:17-20a Warning, rejoicing for those in Rome
  - 16:20b Grace benediction
  - 16:21-23 Greetings from those with Paul
- 16:25-27 Blessing, summary of the good news, doxology

The overall structure is ABCBA. The center, the main body, is structured ABCCBA.

## Background

Paul wrote this letter near the end of his third missionary journey (within 51-58), in Corinth (16:1), where he stayed for perhaps three months before returning to Jerusalem. After Jerusalem, he planned to go to Rome for the first time (see Rom 15:22-32; Acts 19:21). Nero was the Roman emperor from 54 to 68.

## Theme

This letter is addressed “to all who are in Rome, God’s loved ones, called to be holy ones.” It continues the theme of Paul’s previous letters: the unity of God’s “holy ones” with “God our Father” and with each other in “our Lord Jesus Anointed,” with special emphasis here on the issue addressed in Galatians that this includes both Jews and Gentiles on a fully equal basis—equal in being under law and in failing to keep that law, equal in being freed from sin and law by the faithfulness of both Abraham and Jesus, and equal in being made God’s sons and heirs, and brothers of each other, through Jesus’ faithfulness and resurrection. Paul summarizes his overall theme in this letter in 1:5 and 16:26, “for obedience of faithfulness in all nations,” the fulfillment of Gen 22:18.

As in his other letters, Paul refers to that unity and how God has initiated it as the “good news.” His one-sentence address (1:1-7), the longest address of all his letters and the only one to include the term, “good news” (1:1), is primarily a summary of the good news, which is Paul’s title of this letter, the only one of Paul’s letters to suggest a title. The good news is Paul’s (2:16; 16:25), Anointed’s (1:9; 15:19), and God’s (1:1; 15:16).

Paul’s letter to the Romans is the second (after Galatians) extended presentation of the “Gospel,” that is, how Jesus’ death and resurrection have benefited both Jew and Gentile. “Gospel” comes from Old English *god + spel* = good news, and is a translation of the Greek *eu + angelion* = good news. Accordingly, Galatians and Romans are the oldest “Gospels,” the earliest to be written.

Paul urges us to be members of one another in one body in Anointed, and he urges Jews and Gentiles to glorify God together as brothers. We thereby become a fulfillment of 1:17, “God’s justfulness is revealed by faithfulness to faithfulness,” and 3:22, “God’s justfulness has been made known through Jesus Anointed’s faithfulness to all who are faithful.”

Paul makes it clear that our relationship to God and with each other in Anointed is not a judicial or legal relationship based on law, righteousness or justification, but a family relationship based on love and faithfulness. Romans and Galatians also specifically include Abraham because this family relationship began among “God our Father,” Abraham the “father of us all” (as Paul translates Abraham’s name; see 4:16-18), and Abraham’s “children of the promise” (9:6-29). Jesus did not start a new family but helped to fulfill God’s covenant with Abraham to bless all nations through Abraham and his seed (Rom 4; Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18). So Abraham is the father of all God’s holy ones, Jew and Gentile, because of God’s call to Abraham, Abraham’s faithfulness to God, and the faithfulness of Abraham’s descendant, Jesus, in bringing all nations into that relationship. And Jesus is our Lord because of his faithfulness to God, to the Jews, and to the Gentiles in “confirming” God’s covenant with Abraham to bless all nations (15:7-13). God’s gift to both Abraham and Jesus was “life to the dead” (4:17)—a son to Abraham and Sarah when they were “as good as dead” (4:19), and raising Jesus “from the dead” (4:24). An important part of that family relationship is the partnership and unity among God’s holy ones, both Jew and Gentile, which Paul addresses especially in 12:1-15:13.

Holiness or unholiness, cleanness or uncleanness, Jew or Gentile, loved by God or estranged from God, are not results of what one does; they are results of, and responses to, a family relationship. The remedy is not a change of behavior, but a change of family. And changing one’s family or becoming “chosen” by God cannot be accomplished by oneself or initiated by the “chosen.” How God initiated, for both Jews and Gentiles, the fulfillment of God’s promise to

Abraham (4:16; 15:7-13; Gal 3:8,14; Gen 22:18) through Anointed Jesus is an important part of Paul's theme in Romans.

### **A notable omission**

A notable omission is the omission of the word *church* in the opening address. In his earlier letters—1 Thessalonians, Galatians, and 1 & 2 Corinthians—Paul addressed his letter to the *church* or *churches* (“called out assembly”) of those places. His only subsequent letter even indirectly addressed to a *church* is Philemon, where Paul adds: “and to the church at your house” (and 2 Th which was modeled closely after 1 Th). Why does Paul not use *churches* in his address to the Romans? The subject matter of Romans suggests an explanation.

The Greek word for church, (*ek + klesia* = called out from) is a synonym, in its root meaning, for the Greek word for synagogue, (*sun + agoge* = gathered together). Both speak of a community that God has called out from the nations so they can be gathered together in God's family. Both are used frequently in the Greek translation (the LXX) of the Hebrew Bible to refer to the congregation of God's people. Paul never uses *synagogue* in his letters.

In Romans, Paul is promoting unity among Jews and Gentiles, but not sameness. The term “Christian” (another term Paul never used in his letters) implies the replacement of Judaism rather than its completion. But as the “Way” tended to become a sect meeting separately from the synagogue, the terms *church* and *synagogue* tended to become mutually exclusive. By the end of the first century they had become firmly separated. *Church* included Christians but not Jews, and *synagogue* included Jews but not Christians. In usage they were becoming more antonyms than synonyms. So in addressing God's family in Rome, which consisted mostly of Gentiles, and when telling the Romans about his pending journey to minister to God's family in Jerusalem, which consisted mostly of Jews, he avoided using terms like “church” or “synagogue,” and used more inclusive terms, except as in Chapter 16.

In 1:6-7 he uses three terms: “Jesus Anointed's called *ones*,” “God's loved *ones*,” and “called to be holy *ones*.” In 15:25-26,31, in reference to God's family at Jerusalem, he uses “holy *ones*.” In two of the phrases used in 1:6-7, Paul uses the word *called* which forms part of the Greek word for *church*, making it evident that Paul is thinking of *church* (*called out from*) but is avoiding the term that had become, or was becoming, uncomfortable to Jews. Paul is practicing what he preaches in Romans 12-15.

### **Another notable omission**

Paul never uses the word, “Christian,” in any of his letters. That word appears in the NT only at Acts 11:26 and 26:28, and in 1 Peter 4:16. Acts 11:26 says that word was first used at Antioch after Paul and Barnabas had preached there for a year at the beginning of Paul's new career as Anointed's apostle and before Paul had written any of his letters. In his letters Paul refers to all of God's people, Jew and gentile, as “holy ones” which is customarily translated into English as “saints.” The term “Christian” would have implied the replacement of Judaism, not its completion or fulfillment, so Paul appears to have deliberately refrained from using it.

## God's Good News to the Romans

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

### Address, summary of the good news, blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul, a slave of **Anointed Jesus**,  
 called *to be* an apostle,  
 set apart for God's good news,  
<sup>2</sup> which he promised before through his prophets in *the* holy scriptures <sup>3</sup> concerning his son,  
 who was born by David's seed  
 according to flesh,  
<sup>4</sup> who was appointed God's Son In Power  
 according to spirit of holiness  
 by resurrection of *the* dead,  
**Jesus Anointed our Lord**,  
<sup>5</sup> through whom  
 we have received grace and apostleship  
 for obedience of faithfulness in all nations  
 for his name's sake,  
<sup>6</sup> among whom are you also, Jesus Anointed's called *ones*, <sup>7</sup> To all who are in Rome,  
 God's loved *ones*,  
 called *to be* holy *ones*:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and *the* **Lord Jesus Anointed**.

### Thanksgiving for the Romans' faithfulness, Paul's prayers and plans<sup>2</sup>

<sup>8</sup> First, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Anointed for you all, because your **faithfulness** is **proclaimed** in all the world.

<sup>9</sup> My witness is God,  
 whom I serve in my spirit in his son's good news,  
 that without ceasing I make mention of you <sup>10</sup> always in my prayers, asking that somehow  
 now at last I may succeed by God's will in coming to you.  
<sup>11</sup> For I long to see you, that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you,  
<sup>12</sup> that is, to be encouraged together with you by each other's faithfulness, both  
 yours and mine.

<sup>13</sup> I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, **that often**  
**I have longed**  
**to come to you—**  
**and I have been unable**  
**until now—**

that I may have some fruit also among you, as well as among the other nations.

<sup>14</sup> To both Greeks and foreigners, to both learned and ignorant, I am obligated.

<sup>15</sup> So I am eager to preach *the* good news also to you in Rome.

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the good news,  
 for God's Power is for salvation to everyone who is faithful—Jew first, also Greek,  
<sup>17</sup> for in it (*in the good news*) God's justfulness is **revealed by faithfulness to faithfulness**, as it is  
 written: "The just *one* by faithfulness<sup>3</sup> will live."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-7 The first of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 16:25-27. Paul's longest opening address.

<sup>2</sup> 1:8-17 The second of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 15:14-16:23. Compare 1:13 with 15:22-23.

<sup>3</sup> 1:17 *Faithfulness*. The Hebrew word in Habakkuk 2:4, translated here as "faithfulness," means "firmness, steadfastness, faithfulness, trust, fidelity." It appears in the Hebrew Bible 49 times. Only once, in Habakkuk 2:4, is it translated "faith" by the KJV. The KJV translates it: faithfulness 18 times, truth 13, faithfully 5, office 5, faithful 3, faith

**Jews and Gentiles are equal before God<sup>5</sup>****Jews and Gentiles have both dishonored God<sup>6</sup>****Gentiles are without excuse<sup>7</sup>**

<sup>18</sup> Revealed is

*the* vengeance

of God

from heaven

against all godlessness and injustice

of people

who the truth in injustice

suppress.

<sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God to them has made *it* plain.

<sup>20</sup> His invisible *attributes*,

from creation of *the* world, by the *things* created are understood *and* clearly seen,

both his eternal power and deity.

So they are without excuse.

<sup>21</sup> For, knowing God, not as God did they glorify or thank *him*.

Instead, they became futile in their thinking,

and darkened was their uncomprehending heart.

<sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

<sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for a likeness of an image of mortal man and birds and four-footed animals and reptiles.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore, **God handed them over**

in the lusts of their hearts to impurity so as to disgrace their bodies among themselves,

<sup>25</sup> those who exchanged God's truth for a lie

and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator,

who is blessed into the ages! Amen.

<sup>26</sup> Because of this **God handed them over** to passions of disgrace.

Their females exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural;

<sup>27</sup> likewise also the males,

leaving the natural intercourse with the female,

burned with their lust for one another,

males with males committing the shameless;

and receiving in themselves the due return for their deviation.

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1 (here), stability 1, steady 1, truly 1, verily 1. The LXX (which Paul quotes) translated it here with a Greek word, which Bauer-Danker-Arndt-Gingrich's Greek-English Lexicon (Third Edition, 2000) defines as: 1. faithfulness, reliability, fidelity, commitment, assurance, oath, troth, proof, pledge; 2. trust, confidence, faith; 3. body of faith/belief/teaching. At least when it applies to God, as in 3:3, it is usually translated "faithfulness."

<sup>4</sup> 1:17 Parallel with 1:8. This is restated in 3:21-26; 4:12,16; Phlp 3:9-11, and restates Gal 2:16; 3:11.

<sup>5</sup> 1:18-15:13 ABCCBA. The central of five divisions. A's: Jews and Gentiles have both dishonored God; Jews and Gentiles, glorify God together, as brothers. B's: Jews and Gentiles equal under faithfulness; be members of one another, as one body in Anointed, under God's will. C's: in Anointed all are reconciled to God; Israel and Gentiles are interdependent for salvation.

<sup>6</sup> 1:18-3:20 ABBA. Parallel with 14:1-15:13.

<sup>7</sup> 1:18-32 ABBA: Parallel with 3:1-20. A's: what and why. B's: how. A classic summary of Gentiles, as in Wisdom 13-14: estranged from God, unholy, unclean, abnormal, alien, idolaters (verse 23), that is, Gentiles. This is not how a Jew, like Paul, would describe Jews. Paul's description of Jews is in 2:17-3:20 and chapters 9-11.

28 And because they did not think *it* worthy  
to acknowledge

God,

**God**

**handed them over**

to a worthless mind to do what is not worthy—

29 becoming filled with every injustice, evil, greed, malice—

full of envy, murder, rivalry, deceit, spite—

gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters—

tyrants, arrogant *ones*, boasters, schemers of evils, disobedient to parents—

31 senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless—

32 those who, acknowledging God's sentence

that those doing such things

are worthy of death,

not only do them

but even approve those doing *them*.

### **All who judge are self-condemned<sup>8</sup>**

**2** Therefore without excuse are you, O human, whoever judges.

For in what you judge another, yourself you condemn,

since the same *things* do you, who judges.

2 We know that God's judgment is according to truth against those who do such things.

3 Do you think this, O human,

who judges those doing such things

and does *the* same *things*,

that you will escape God's judgment?

4 Or, for the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience,

do you have little regard,

not understanding

that God's kindness leads you to repentance?

5 By your hardness and unrepentant heart you are storing up for yourself vengeance on *the* day of vengeance and revelation of God's just judgment,

6 who "will give back to each according to his works"—

7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek glory and honor and immortality:  
eternal life;

8 but to those who from self-seeking both disobey the truth and obey injustice:  
vengeance and fury;

9 trouble and distress

upon every human soul that does evil, Jew first, also Greek,

10 but glory and honor and peace

to everyone who does good, Jew first, also Greek.

11 "There is no favoritism with God."

<sup>8</sup> 2:1-16 ABA. Parallel with 2:17-29. A's: all who sin are without excuse. B: God's judgment is just.

12 All who have sinned without law will also perish without law, and all who have sinned under law will be judged by law.

13 For not the hearers of law *are* just before God; rather, the doers of law will be justified.<sup>9</sup>

14 For when Gentiles, those not having law, by nature do the law's requirements, they, not having law, are a law to themselves.

15 They show the law's work written on their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and *their* thoughts on one side or another accusing or even defending *them*,

16 on *the* day when God judges the secrets of human hearts, according to my good news, by Anointed Jesus.

### A Jew who teaches the law and breaks it is self-condemned<sup>10</sup>

**[Paul]** 17 But you, if a Jew you call yourself

and you rely on *the* law  
and you boast in God

18 and you know *his* will  
and you discern what is best, being instructed from the law,

19 and you are confident that you are a guide of *the* blind,  
a light of those in darkness,  
20 a corrector of *the* foolish,  
a teacher of children,  
having the embodiment of knowledge and truth in the law—

21 One then, who teaches another, do you not teach yourself?

One who preaches not to steal, do you steal?

22 One who says not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery?

One who abhors idols, do you rob temples?

23 You who boasts in *the* law,  
by breaking the law you dishonor God.

24 For, "God's name because of you is blasphemed among the Gentiles,"  
as it is written.

25 Circumcision indeed has value if you obey *the* law,  
but if you are a lawbreaker your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

26 Therefore, if the uncircumcision keeps the law's requirements,  
will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?

27 And the uncircumcision by nature that fulfills the law will condemn you  
who, with *the* letter of *the* law and circumcision, *is* a lawbreaker.

28 One is not a Jew outwardly,  
nor *is* circumcision outward in flesh.

29 Rather, one *is* a Jew inwardly,  
and circumcision *is* of heart, in spirit, not letter,  
whose praise<sup>11</sup> is not from people but from God.

<sup>9</sup> 2:13 *Justified*. A legal technical term meaning "acquitted" or "found innocent of the charge." Used in Gal 2:16-5:4 and Rom 2:13-8:33. Paul appears to use it to refer to members of God's family, as in Gal 3:23-29 and Rom 3:27-4:2.

<sup>10</sup> 2:17-29 ABCBA. A's: the meaning of being a Jew, B's: the value of the law and the bodily mark of the law, C: boasting in the law and breaking it dishonors God.

<sup>11</sup> 2:29 *Praise* is the meaning of *Judah*, for which *Jew* is an abbreviation.

### Both Jews and Greeks are indicted under law<sup>12</sup>

[Jewish Teacher] **3** What then *is* the **advantage** of the Jew? Or what *is* the value of circumcision?

[Paul] <sup>2</sup> Much in every way! First, that they were entrusted with **God's very words**.<sup>13</sup> <sup>3</sup> What if some were unfaithful?<sup>14</sup> Will their unfaithfulness God's faithfulness<sup>15</sup> nullify?

[Jewish Teacher] <sup>4</sup> Not at all! God must be true, though "every human a liar," as it is written: "That you may be justified in your words, and win when you are accused."

[Paul] <sup>5</sup> But if our unjustfulness confirms God's justfulness, what are we to say? *That God is unjust to take vengeance on us Jews?* (I speak in a human way.)

[Jewish Teacher] <sup>6</sup> Not at all! For then how will God judge the world?

[Paul] <sup>7</sup> But if **God's truthfulness** excels by my falsehood to his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner? <sup>8</sup> And *why* not, as we are accused and as some affirm that we say, "Let us do evil that good may come?"<sup>16</sup> Their condemnation is deserved.

[Jewish Teacher] <sup>9</sup> What then? Are we *Jews* at a **disadvantage**?

[Paul] Not at all!

For we have already indicted **both Jews and Greeks**, that all are under sin, <sup>10</sup> as it is written:

"There is no one just, **not one**,"

<sup>11</sup> "there is no one who understands,  
there is no one who seeks God.

<sup>12</sup> All have turned away,  
together they are worthless,  
there is no one who does good, **not even one**."

<sup>13</sup> "Their **throat** *is* an opened grave,  
with their **tongues** they deceive."  
"Vipers' venom *is* under their **lips**."

<sup>14</sup> "Their **mouth** is full of cursing and bitterness."

<sup>15</sup> "Their **feet** *are* swift to shed blood,  
<sup>16</sup> ruin and misery *are* in their **ways**,  
<sup>17</sup> and *the way* of peace they have not known."

<sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their **eyes**."

<sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says,  
to those under the law it speaks  
in order that **every** mouth  
may be silenced  
and accountable may be  
**all the world** to God,

<sup>20</sup> "because by works of law no flesh will be justified in his sight,"  
for through law *comes* knowledge of sin.

<sup>12</sup> 3:1-20 ABBBA. Parallel with 1:18-32. A's: all are under law. B's: quotations from the Psalms, Is, Prov, Eccl.

<sup>13</sup> 3:2 *God's very words*. Not only the promise that Abraham's seed would be blessed (4:13), but also the promise that God would bless the Gentiles through Abraham's seed (Rom 4; Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18).

<sup>14</sup> 3:3 *Unfaithful*. In communicating God's promises to the Gentiles (see 2:17-24; 9:30-10:3; 15:7-13).

<sup>15</sup> 3:3 *Faithfulness*. Toward his promises to Abraham. This question is addressed more fully in chapters 9-11.

<sup>16</sup> 3:8 This question is addressed more fully in chapter 6.



**Jews and Gentiles equal under faithfulness<sup>17</sup>****Jews and Gentiles equal under Jesus' faithfulness**

**[Paul]** <sup>21</sup> But now apart from law

God's justfulness has been made known,  
being witnessed to by the law and the prophets.

<sup>22</sup> God's justfulness *has been made known*  
through Jesus Anointed's faithfulness to all who are faithful.

There is no distinction.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>23</sup> For all have sinned and fall short of God's glory,

<sup>24</sup> being justified freely by his grace through the deliverance in Anointed Jesus,

<sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a means of conciliation through *Jesus' faithfulness in shedding* his blood,  
for demonstration of his [God's] justfulness

because of the passing over of the sins of the past <sup>26</sup> in God's forbearance,

for demonstration of his justfulness at the present time,

that he is just and *the* justifier of the one *who is* from Jesus' faithfulness.

**Jews and Gentiles equal under one God who justifies both through faithfulness**

**[Jewish Teacher]** <sup>27</sup> Where then *is* the *basis for* boasting?

**[Paul]** It has been excluded!

**[Jewish Teacher]** By what law? Of works?

**[Paul]** No, but by a law of faithfulness. <sup>28</sup> For we consider a person to be justified by  
faithfulness apart from works of law.

<sup>29</sup> Or *is God* the God of Jews only?

Not also of Gentiles?

**[Jewish Teacher]** Yes, also of Gentiles.

**[Paul]** <sup>30</sup> If indeed God *is* one<sup>19</sup>

he will justify *the* circumcised by faithfulness and *the* uncircumcised through faithfulness.

**[Jewish Teacher]** <sup>31</sup> Are we then nullifying *the* law through faithfulness?<sup>20</sup>

**[Paul]** Not at all! Rather, we uphold *the* law.

**[Jewish Teacher]** **4** What then shall we say that Abraham found, our forefather according to flesh?

<sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has reason for boasting.

<sup>17</sup> 3:21-4:25 ABA. Parallel with 12:1-13:14.

<sup>18</sup> 3:22 *No distinction*, which makes Jews alone the recipients of God's mercy. Another answer to 3:9a.

<sup>19</sup> 3:30 *God is one*. The argument in verses 29-30 is based on the Shema (Deut 6:4).

<sup>20</sup> 3:31 This question is addressed more fully in 7:1-8:8.

### Jews and Gentiles equal under Abraham's faithfulness<sup>21</sup>

[Paul] But not before God.

<sup>3</sup> For what does the scripture say?

“Abraham put faith in God and it was counted to him as justfulness.”<sup>22</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Now to one who works,  
the pay is not counted as a gift  
but as a debt.

<sup>5</sup> But to one who does not work,  
but puts faith in him who justifies the godless,  
his faith is counted as justfulness.

<sup>6</sup> So also David declares the blessedness of the person to whom God counts justfulness apart from works:

<sup>7</sup> “Blessed *are they* whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

<sup>8</sup> Blessed *the* man whose sin *the* Lord will not take into account.”

<sup>9</sup> *Is* this blessing then upon the circumcised,  
or also upon the uncircumcised?

We say, “Faith was counted to Abraham as justfulness.” <sup>10</sup> How then was it counted?

In circumcision or in uncircumcision?

Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision.

<sup>11</sup> And he received a sign of circumcision—a seal of the justfulness of the faith that *he had* in uncircumcision—

that he might be father of all who are faithful during uncircumcision so that justfulness might be counted to them,

<sup>12</sup> and father of circumcision to those who are not only of circumcision but who also walk in the footsteps of the faithfulness in uncircumcision of our father Abraham.

<sup>13</sup> For not through law

*was* the promise

to Abraham or his seed,

that he would be the heir of *the* world,

but through justfulness of faithfulness.

<sup>14</sup> For if the heirs *are* from law,

null is *Abraham's* faithfulness

and void is *God's* promise,

<sup>15</sup> for the law produces vengeance. But where there is no law, neither transgression.

<sup>16</sup> For this reason *the promise comes* from faithfulness,

in order that *it may come* as a gift,

so that the promise may be guaranteed to every seed,

not only to the *seed* from the law

but also to the *seed* from *the* faithfulness of Abraham,

<sup>21</sup> 4:2b-25 ABCDCBA. The A's: faith counted as justfulness. The B's: when the promise was given. The C's: the promise is by faith to all. D: the promise is by faithfulness so it may be a gift guaranteed to all.

<sup>22</sup> 4:3 Also quoted at 4:9,22-23 and discussed in Gal 3:6-29. In Gen 22:18 “obey” is used for “put faith.”

who is father of us all <sup>17</sup> (as it is written: “Father of many nations I have made you”) in the sight of him in whom he had faith,  
 God, who gives life to the dead<sup>23</sup> and calls into being things that are not,  
<sup>18</sup> who against hope, in hope, had faith  
 that he would become “father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So will your seed be.”

<sup>19</sup> And not weakening in faithfulness, he considered his own body as good as dead, being about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.

<sup>20</sup> But the promise of God  
 he did not doubt in unfaithfulness,  
 but he was strengthened in faithfulness,<sup>24</sup>  
 giving glory to God,

<sup>21</sup> and being fully convinced that what *God* had promised he was also able to do.

<sup>22</sup> That is why “it was counted to him as justfulness.”

<sup>23</sup> It was not written for him alone that “it was counted to him,”

<sup>24</sup> but also for us, to whom it will be counted,  
 to those who put faith in him who raised Jesus our Lord from *the* dead,  
<sup>25</sup> who was handed over for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

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<sup>23</sup> 4:17 *The dead*. Abraham and Sarah, verse 19, and Jesus, verse 24.

<sup>24</sup> 4:20 *Strengthened in faithfulness*. Paul suggests that Abraham’s faith or faithfulness was an active partnership with God in fulfilling God’s promise, based on the brief story in Gen 18-21. See also Gen 22:18.

God was not the only one who heard Sarah laugh when she heard God promise them a son (Gen 18:9-15; Rom 9:9). Abraham heard that laugh too and knew he had a part to do if God’s promise was to be fulfilled. After the commotion died down from the destruction of Sodom, the home of Abraham’s nephew, Lot, Abraham apparently persuaded 90-year-old Sarah to travel about 60 miles on camelback out of those dusty mountains for a vacation by the seaside. He probably encouraged her to get some new clothes for the occasion. Then, on the way, Abraham, the great warrior who didn’t hesitate to wage war (Gen 14), became uncharacteristically timid and told Sarah of his fear that someone down there might be so attracted to her beauty that they might kill him to get her for a wife. He asked her to help save his life from a danger he was knowingly taking her into. And Sarah believed it. Sarah was beautiful, but she was 90 years old, and she had laughed at the thought of having sexual pleasure again (Gen 18:12). But her attitude was beginning to change.

By the time they arrived, Sarah was glowing so much from Abraham’s praise of her beauty, and looking so attractive in her new clothes, that the incredible happened. The King of Gerar noticed her and wanted her for his harem. Abraham played along by letting her go, saying he was only her brother. And God let her go through all the nuptial preparations at the palace before he rescued her. Nine months after Abraham and Sarah were reunited, Isaac (“He laughs”) was born.

Abraham’s faithfulness was an active partnership with God to fulfill Abraham’s greatest desire and God’s promise, which neither could have done alone. The same can be said about Jesus’ faithfulness (3:21-26).

**In Anointed all are reconciled to God<sup>25</sup>****Justified through Anointed's faithfulness we are reconciled to God<sup>26</sup>**

**5** Justified therefore by *Anointed's* faithfulness, let us have peace<sup>27</sup> with God, through our Lord Jesus Anointed,

<sup>2</sup> through whom also we have obtained access into this grace in which we stand, and let us boast in hope of God's glory.

<sup>3</sup> Not only *that*, but also let us boast in sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance character, and character hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint,

because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the holy spirit given to us.

<sup>6</sup> For Anointed, while we were still weak, even then, he died for *the* godless.

<sup>7</sup> Indeed, hardly for a just *person* will someone die, though for a good *person* perhaps someone might even dare to die.

<sup>8</sup> But God proves his love for us in that, while we were still sinners, Anointed died for us.

<sup>9</sup> Much more then, being now justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from *God's* vengeance.

<sup>10</sup> For if, being enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his son, much more, being reconciled, will we be saved by his life.

<sup>11</sup> Not only *that*, but also boasting<sup>28</sup> in God through our Lord Jesus Anointed through whom we have now received reconciliation.

<sup>25</sup> 5:1-8:39 ABCCBA. Parallel with 9:1-11:36.

<sup>26</sup> 5:1-11 ABA. Parallel with 8:9-39. The A's: our reconciliation with God. B: Anointed's faithfulness.

<sup>27</sup> 5:1 *Let us have peace* has far better manuscript support than the preferred reading of *we have peace*, (see Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 1994) and is consistent with 5:2b-5, 6:12-23 and 12:1-2.

<sup>28</sup> 5:2,3,11 *Boast*. Boast or rejoice? The word translated "boast" here in verses 2, 3, and 11 is the same word usually translated "brag," "boast," or "pride" in 2:17,23; 3:27; and 4:2, where it refers to a Jew boasting of the law. Paul boasts here in God and sufferings rather than in the law and his own works.

**As the sin of one reigned in death to all, grace reigns in life through one, Jesus<sup>29</sup>**

12 Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death,  
and so to all came death, in that all sinned.

13 For until law,  
sin was in *the* world,  
but sin is not counted  
when there is no law.

14 But death reigned from Adam to Moses,  
even over those who did not sin after the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the  
one to come.

15 But not as the trespass, so also *is* the gift.  
For if through the trespass of the one, the many died,  
much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus  
Anointed, to the many has overflowed.

16 And not as by *the* sinning of one *is* the gift.  
For the judgment *came* out of *the sinning of* one into condemnation,  
but the gift *comes* out of *the* trespasses of many into justfulness.

17 For if  
by the trespass of the one,  
death reigned  
through the one,  
much more  
they who receive the abundance of the grace and of the gift of justfulness,  
in life will reign  
through the one, Jesus Anointed.

18 So then as  
by *the* trespass of one,  
*judgment came* to all for condemnation,  
so also  
by *the* justifying act of one,  
*the gift comes* to all for justfulness of life.

19 For as  
by the disobedience of the one man,  
the many were made sinners,  
so also  
by the obedience of the one,  
the many will be made just.

20 Law entered in  
so that trespassing might increase.  
But where sin increased,  
grace increased much more,

21 so that as  
reigned sin  
in death,  
so also  
grace may reign  
through justfulness into eternal life  
through Jesus Anointed our Lord.

<sup>29</sup> 5:12-21 ABA: 12-14, 15-16, 17-21. Parallel with 7:1-8:8.

**We died to sin with Anointed so we may live with him in his resurrection<sup>30</sup>**

**6** What then shall we say?

Should we persist  
in sin  
that grace  
may increase?

<sup>2</sup> Not at all!

We who died to sin, how can we still live in it?

<sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that we who were baptized  
into Anointed Jesus,  
into his death  
we were baptized?

<sup>4</sup> We were buried with him by baptism into death,  
so that, as Anointed was raised from *the* dead by the Father's glory,  
so we too in newness of life may walk.

<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united  
in the likeness of his death,  
then also *in the likeness* of his resurrection  
we will be *united*,

<sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old self  
was crucified with *him*  
so that done away with may be  
the body of sin,

so that we should no longer be enslaved to sin.

<sup>7</sup> For one who has died  
is justified from sin.

<sup>8</sup> If, then, we have died with Anointed,  
we believe that we will also live with him,  
<sup>9</sup> knowing that Anointed,  
being raised from *the* dead,  
dies no more, death no longer is lord over him.

<sup>10</sup> The *death* he died,  
to sin he died, once,  
but the *life* he lives,  
he lives to God.

<sup>11</sup> So you also must think of yourselves  
as dead to sin  
and living for God  
in Anointed Jesus.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, to obey its desires.

<sup>13</sup> Do not give your members as instruments of evil to sin,  
but give yourselves to God as alive from *the* dead,  
and your members as instruments of justfulness to God.

<sup>14</sup> For sin will not be lord over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

<sup>30</sup> 6:1-14 ABBA. Parallel with 6:15-23. Answers to the question in 6:1 (and in 3:8).

**Being freed from sin, be slaves to God in Anointed Jesus<sup>31</sup>**

15 What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace?

Not at all!

16 Do you not know that to whom you offer yourselves as slaves for obedience,  
you are slaves to whom you obey,  
either of sin into death, or of obedience into justfulness?

17 But thanks to God,  
you were slaves of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart the pattern of teaching to which you were handed over.

18 And having been freed from sin,  
you have been enslaved to justfulness.

19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you offered your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness for lawlessness, so now offer your members as slaves to justfulness for holiness.

20 For when you were slaves of sin,  
you were free from justfulness.

21 So what fruit did you have then in the *things* you are now ashamed of?  
For the end of those *is* death.

22 But now, having been freed from sin and enslaved to God,  
you have your fruit for holiness, and the end *is* eternal life.

23 For sin's pay *is* death,  
but God's gift *is* eternal life in Anointed Jesus our Lord.

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<sup>31</sup> 6:15-23 ABA. Respond to God's gift in Anointed, that is, respond to faithfulness with faithfulness.

**Freed from the law of sin and death by the law of the spirit of life in Anointed<sup>32</sup>**

**7** Do you not know, brothers,  
for to those who know law  
I am speaking,  
that the law is binding over one  
*only* for as long as one lives?

<sup>2</sup> Thus the married woman to the living husband is bound by law,  
but if the husband dies, she is released from the law of the husband.

<sup>3</sup> So then, the husband living, adulteress she will be called if she goes to another man,  
but if the husband dies, she is free from that law,  
she is not an adulteress if she goes to another man.

<sup>4</sup> So, my brothers, you also have been put to death to the law  
through the body of the Anointed,  
so that you may belong to another,  
to him who was raised from the dead,  
in order that we may bear fruit for God.

<sup>5</sup> For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, those through the law, worked in our members  
to bear fruit for death.

<sup>6</sup> But now we are released from the law, having died to what was binding *us*,  
so we may serve in newness of spirit and not oldness of letter.

**[Teacher of Law<sup>33</sup>]** <sup>7</sup> What then should we say? The law *is* sin? Not at all!  
But sin I did not know  
except through law,  
and desire I had not known  
except the law said, “Do not desire.”

<sup>8</sup> But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment,  
produced in me every desire,  
for apart from law sin *is* dead.

<sup>9</sup> I was alive apart from law formerly,  
but when came the commandment,  
sin came to life,

<sup>10</sup> and I died

and I found the commandment  
that *was* for life *to be* for death.

<sup>11</sup> For sin, taking opportunity through the commandment,  
deceived me  
and through it killed *me*.

<sup>12</sup> So the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

<sup>13</sup> Then the good to me became death? Not at all!

But sin, so that it may be shown to be sin,  
through the good to me worked death,  
so that sin may become utterly sinful through the commandment.

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<sup>32</sup> 7:1-8:8 ABCBA. 7:1-6 and 8:1-8: freed from the law of sin and death to serve God in the spirit of life in Anointed Jesus; 7:7-13 and 24-25 describe the futility of rescuing ourselves; 7:14-23: God’s law is good but we are captive to the law of sin; 7:7-8:8 is a dialogue conducted in the singular “I” and singular “you.”

<sup>33</sup> 7:7-25 *Teacher of Law*. This person is both the Gentile Judge of 2:1-16 and the Jewish Teacher of 2:17-4:2.



14 Now we know that the law is spiritual,  
but I am of flesh,  
sold into slavery under sin.

15 What I do, I do not understand.

Not what I want, that I do.

But what I hate, that I do.

16 Now if what I do not want, that I do,

I agree with the law that *it is* good.

17 So now *it is* no longer I doing it, but the sin dwelling within me.

18 For I know that good does not dwell within me, that is, in my flesh.

The willing *is* present with me, but doing the good *is* not.

19 For I do not do the good I want; but the evil I do not want, that I do.

20 Now if what I do not want, that I do,

*it is* no longer I doing it, but the sin dwelling within me.

21 So I find the law that when I want to do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in God's law according to my inner self,

23 but I see another law in my members at war with the law of my mind,  
and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

24 Wretched one *that I am!* Who will rescue me from this body of death?

**[Paul]** 25 Thanks to God—through Jesus Anointed our Lord!

**[Teacher of Law]** So then, I myself, with the mind I serve God's law, but with the flesh, sin's law.

**[Paul]** **8** Now then, *there is* no condemnation for those in Anointed Jesus.

2 For the law of the spirit of life in Anointed Jesus has freed you<sup>34</sup> from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own son in likeness of flesh of sin, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh,

4 so the requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us who walk not by flesh but by spirit.

5 For those who are by flesh mind the *things* of the flesh, but those by spirit the *things* of the spirit.

6 The mind of the flesh *is* death, the mind of the spirit *is* life and peace.

7 Because the mind of the flesh *is* hostility to God, to the law of God it does not submit, nor can it,

8 and those who are in flesh cannot please God. [ABBA] [End of dialog that began at 7:7]

<sup>34</sup> 8:2 Here, *you* in Greek is singular in number. Paul is responding to the one who said *I* in 7:7-25.

### United as God's sons and heirs in Anointed<sup>35</sup>

9 But you<sup>36</sup> are not in flesh but in spirit, if God's spirit dwells in you.

If anyone does not have Anointed's spirit, that one does not belong to him.

10 If Anointed *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the spirit *is* life because of justfulness.

11 And if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from *the* dead dwells in you, he who raised Anointed from *the* dead, will give life also to your mortal bodies, through his spirit dwelling in you. [ABBA]

12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live by flesh,

13 for if you live by flesh, you will die,

but if by spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

14 For as many as by God's spirit are led, they are God's sons.

15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery back again into fear,

but you received a spirit of sons in which we cry, "Abba! Father!"

16 The spirit itself bears witness together with our spirit that we are God's children,

17 and if children, also heirs,

God's heirs,

and Anointed's fellow heirs,

if we suffer together so that we may also be glorified together.

18 For I consider that not comparable *are* the sufferings of this present time to the coming glory to be revealed for us.

19 For the anxious expectation of creation the revealing of God's sons awaits.

20 To futility

creation was subjected,

not of its own will

but by him who subjected *it*,

in hope

21 that creation itself will be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of God's children.

22 For we know that all creation together groans and suffers in labor pains until now.

23 And not only *creation*, but also ourselves, having the first fruit of the spirit,

we also ourselves groan within ourselves, awaiting a status as sons, the release of our body.

24 For in hope we were saved.

But hope seen is not hope.

For who hopes for what one sees?

25 But if we hope for what we do not see,  
with patience we wait.

<sup>35</sup> 8:9-39 ABCBA. 9-17 and 35-39, our relationship with God and the Anointed. 18-25, our hope. 26-30, God's help. 31-34, if God is for us who can be against us?

<sup>36</sup> 8:9 In verses 9-39, the Greek words for *you* are plural.

<sup>26</sup> In the same way, the spirit also comes to the aid of our weakness.

For what we should pray for as we ought we do not know,  
but the spirit itself pleads with groans inexpressible.

<sup>27</sup> And he who searches the hearts knows what *is* the mind of the spirit,  
because according to *the will of God* it pleads for *the holy ones*.

<sup>28</sup> And we know that, with those who love God,  
all things he works for good,

with those who are called according to *his* purpose.

<sup>29</sup> For those he knew before he also appointed before *to be* conformed to his son's likeness,  
so that he may be the firstborn among many brothers.

<sup>30</sup> And those he appointed<sup>37</sup> before he also called, and those he called he also justified,  
and those he justified he also glorified.

<sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?

<sup>32</sup> He who "did not spare his own son" but handed him over for us all, how will he not also  
give us all things with him?

<sup>33</sup> Who will bring a charge against God's chosen *ones*? "*It is* God who justifies.

<sup>34</sup> Who will condemn?" *It is* Anointed who died, and more, was raised, who also is at God's  
right hand, who also intercedes for us.

<sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the Anointed's love?

Hardship or distress or persecution or hunger or nakedness or danger or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written:  
"For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for slaughter."

<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

<sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor  
things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,  
will be able to separate us from God's love in Anointed Jesus our Lord.

**Israel and Gentiles are interdependent for salvation<sup>38</sup>**

**Doxology to the Israelites and blessing to God<sup>39</sup>**

**9** Truth I am telling, in Anointed, I am not lying, [ABA]  
bearing witness to me *is* my conscience in holy spirit,

<sup>2</sup> that sorrow to me is great and unceasing anguish in my heart.

<sup>3</sup> For I have been praying to be **cursed**,<sup>40</sup> myself, I, separated from the Anointed, [ABA]

for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to flesh,

<sup>4</sup> who are Israelites,

whose *are* the status of sons,

and the **glory**,

and the covenants,

and the law giving,

and the *temple* worship,

and the promises,

<sup>5</sup> whose *are* the fathers,

and from whom *is* the Anointed according to flesh.

He who is over all, God,<sup>41</sup> **blessed** into the ages. Amen. [ABA]

<sup>37</sup> 8:29,30 *Appointed*. Same word used in 1:4 for Jesus being "appointed God's son in power...by resurrection"

<sup>38</sup> 9:1-11:36 ABCCBA. A's: doxologies, B's: God's purposes in saving part and hardening part of Israel, C's: why?

<sup>39</sup> 9:1-5 ABA. Parallel with 11:33-36. The first and last sections contrast Paul with God, but both are concerned for those at the center, the Israelites. Note the use of *glory* (*doxa* in Greek) in 9:4 and 11:36.

<sup>40</sup> 9:3 *Cursed*, as the Anointed became "for us" (Gal 3:13) and as Moses asked God to erase his name from the book of life if God would not forgive the people of Israel (Ex 32:32).

<sup>41</sup> 9:5 *God*. The word sequence in verse 5 follows the Greek exactly.

**A remnant will be called and saved from Israel, and also from Gentiles<sup>42</sup>**

6 Not as though God's word has failed.

For not all those from Israel are Israel,

7 nor because they are Abraham's seed *are* all children,

but "In Isaac will seed be named to you."

8 That is, not the children of the flesh *are* these children of God,

but the children of the promise are counted as seed.

9 For this *is* the word of promise: "About this time I will return and Sarah will have a son."

10 And not only *that*, but also Rebecca, having conceived by one, Isaac our father,

11 before they had been born or had done anything good or bad,

so that according to choice God's purpose might stand—

12 not because of works but because of calling—

she was told: "The older will serve the younger." 13 As it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

14 What then should we say? Injustice with God? Not at all!

15 For to Moses he says: "I will show mercy on whom I show mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

16 So then *it is* not of willing nor of working, but of God showing mercy.

17 For the scripture says to Pharaoh: "I have raised you up for this purpose, so I may show my power in you, and so my name may be proclaimed in all the earth."

18 So then he has mercy on whom he wills, and he hardens whom he wills.

19 You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault?

For who has withstood his will?"

20 O mortal, indeed, who are you to talk back to God?

"Will the molded say to the molder, Why did you make me like this?"

21 Has not the potter authority over the clay,

out of the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

22 What if God, desiring to show vengeance and to make known his power,

has endured with much patience *the* vessels of vengeance designed for destruction,

23 that he may make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory,

24 even us whom he has called, not only from Jews but also from Gentiles?

25 As indeed he says in Hosea: "I will call those not my people, 'my people,'

and her who was not beloved, 'beloved.'"

26 "And it will be in the place where it was said to them, 'You *are* not my people,' there they will be called 'sons of *the* living God.'"

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the Israelites be as the sand of the sea, *only* the remnant will be saved,

28 for *his* word, decisively and swiftly, *the* Lord will execute on the earth."

29 And as Isaiah foretold: "If *the* Lord of hosts had not left us a seed, like Sodom we would have been and like Gomorrah we would have been made."

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<sup>42</sup> 9:6-29 ABCCBA. Parallel with 11:11-32. 6-9 and 27-29, not all Israel are Israel. 10-13 and 22-26, some non-Israelites chosen and some not. 14-18 and 19-21, some chosen for mercy or honor and some not.

**Gentiles found what they did not seek, Israel has not found what it sought<sup>43</sup>**

<sup>30</sup> What then should we say?

That Gentiles, who did not pursue justfulness, have overtaken justfulness,  
the justfulness from faithfulness,

<sup>31</sup> but Israel who pursued, a law, of justfulness, to *that* law, has not attained. [ABCBA]

<sup>32</sup> Why?

Because not through faithfulness, but as through works.

They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

<sup>33</sup> as it is written: “See, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a tripping rock,  
and one who has faith in him will not be put to shame.”

**10** Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them *is* for salvation.

<sup>2</sup> I bear them witness that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> Not knowing, God’s, justfulness, and their own, seeking to establish, [ABCBA]  
to the justfulness of God they did not submit.

<sup>4</sup> For *the* fulfillment<sup>44</sup> of *the* law *is* Anointed,

for justfulness to everyone who is faithful.

<sup>5</sup> Moses describes the justfulness that *comes* from law,

“the one who does these will live in them.”

<sup>6</sup> But the justfulness from faithfulness speaks in this way:

“Do not say in your heart,

‘Who will go up into heaven?’

(that is, Anointed to bring down)

<sup>7</sup> or ‘Who will go down into the abyss?’

(that is, Anointed from *the* dead to bring up).”

<sup>8</sup> But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”  
(that is, the word of faithfulness which we preach).

<sup>9</sup> For if you confess with your mouth *the* Lord Jesus,  
and believe in your heart that God raised him from *the* dead,  
you will be saved.

<sup>10</sup> For with *the* heart one believes to justfulness,  
and with *the* mouth one confesses to salvation.

<sup>11</sup> For the scripture says, “Whoever has faith in him will not be put to shame.”

<sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek,  
since the same *is* Lord of all,

being generous to all who call upon him.

<sup>13</sup> For “whoever calls on the Lord’s name will be saved.”

<sup>43</sup> 9:30-10:21 ABBA. Parallel with 11:1-10. A’s, Israel pursuing, not finding; B’s, salvation open to all.

<sup>44</sup> 10:4 *Fulfillment? Goal? Or end?* See 3:31; 7:12,14a; 8:2-4; 13:8-10. This verse may explain 3:19 and 11:32.

14 **How** then are they to call on whom they have not believed?

And **how** are they to believe of whom they have not heard?

And **how** are they to hear without preaching?

15 And **how** are they to preach unless they are sent?

As it is written: “**How** beautiful the feet of those who bring good news!”

16 But not all have obeyed the good news.

For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what *they* heard from us?”

17 So faithfulness *comes* from hearing, and hearing through *the* word of Anointed.

18 But I ask, have they not heard? Yes, indeed: “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

19 But I ask, did Israel not understand?

First Moses says, “I will make you jealous, of *those who are* not a people, with a people without understanding, I will make you angry.” [ABBA]

20 Then Isaiah is bold and says, “I was found by those not seeking me; I appeared to those not asking for me.”

21 But to Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

### **The chosen obtained what Israel was seeking, the rest were hardened**

**11** I ask then, has God rejected his people? Not at all!

I too am an Israelite,

of Abraham’s seed,

Benjamin’s tribe.

2 God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

Do you not know what the scripture says through Elijah,  
how he pleads with God against Israel?

3 “Lord, your prophets they have killed,  
your altars they have torn down,  
and I alone am left, and they seek my life.”

4 But what is God’s reply to him?

“I have reserved for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed a knee to Baal.”

5 So also at this time a remnant,  
chosen by grace, remains.

6 But if by grace, then not of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

7 What then?

What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained.

The chosen obtained *it*,  
but the rest were hardened,

8 as it is written: “God gave them a spirit of stupor,  
eyes that see not and ears that hear not, to this very day.”

9 And David says: “Let their table become a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a retribution for them,

10 let their eyes be darkened so they cannot see,  
and their backs be bent always.”

**Part of Israel is hardened so both Gentiles and Israel may be saved<sup>45</sup>**

- 11 I ask then, have they stumbled so as to fall? Not at all!  
 But by their misstep salvation *has come* to the Gentiles so as to make them jealous.
- 12 Now if their misstep *means* riches for *the* world,  
 and their falling short *of winning the race means* riches for *the* Gentiles,  
 how much more their completion *of the race will mean!*<sup>46</sup>
- 13 To you, I am speaking, to the Gentiles.  
 Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to *the* Gentiles, my ministry I glorify,  
 14 that somehow I may make jealous *those of* my flesh, and save some of them.
- 15 For if their loss<sup>47</sup> *means the* reconciliation of *the* world,  
 what *will their* recovery *mean* if not life from *the* dead?
- 16 If the first fruit *is* holy, also the *whole* lump; and if the root *is* holy, also the branches.  
 17 But if some of the branches were broken off,  
 and you, being a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among them  
 and a sharer of the root of the richness of the olive tree you became,  
 18 do not boast over the branches.
- If you do boast,  
 not you, the root, support, but the root, you. [ABCBA]
- 19 You will say then, “Branches were broken off  
 so I may be grafted in.”
- 20 True. Because of unfaithfulness they were broken off;  
 but you stand because of faithfulness.  
 Do not be proud, but fear.
- 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.  
 22 See then *the* kindness  
 and severity  
 of God:  
 to those who fell, severity,  
 but to you, God’s kindness, if you continue in *his* kindness,  
 otherwise you too will be cut off.
- 23 And they also, if they do not continue in unfaithfulness, will be grafted in,  
 for God is able to graft them in again.  
 24 For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree,  
 and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree,  
 how much more these natural *branches* will be grafted into their own olive tree.

<sup>45</sup> 11:11-32 ABCBA. A’s: disobedience of Israel has benefited Gentiles. B’s: salvation of Gentiles will benefit Israel. The center, 11:16-24, an address to a wild olive shoot, where *you* is singular, warns that grace requires a fitting response.

<sup>46</sup> 11:11-12 Paul uses foot race terms here that echo the story of the foot race in the Funeral Games described in the *Iliad*, book 23, lines 740-792. The goddess Athena trips Ajax, who is in the lead, to favor Odysseus, who won first prize. Ajax stumbles but recovers to receive the handsome second prize. Here God has delayed the Jews so the Gentiles have time to benefit from the Anointed’s faithfulness before the Jews recover when the Anointed returns (11:25-26).

<sup>47</sup> 11:15 *Loss*. The only other place this word is used in the NT is in Acts 27:22 where it is usually translated “loss” (no loss of life). If it is translated here as “rejection,” as it usually is, this verse would be the only place in the Bible where it says that God has rejected his people Israel, and it would contradict 11:1-2. This verse is a restatement of 11:11-12.

- 25 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of this mystery,<sup>48</sup> so you do not become conceited: that a hardening has come upon part of Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.
- 26 And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written:  
 “The savior will come from Zion, he will turn away godlessness from Jacob.”
- 27 “And this *is* my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”
- 28 As regards the good news, *they are* enemies for your sake, but as regards the choosing, *they are* loved for the sake of the fathers.
- 29 For irrevocable *are* the gifts and the call of God.
- 30 Just as you *Gentiles* once disobeyed God, but now you have received mercy because of their disobedience,  
 31 so also they have now disobeyed because of the mercy shown to you, so that they too may receive mercy.
- 32 For God has imprisoned all in disobedience, so that to all he may show mercy.<sup>49</sup>

### Doxology<sup>50</sup>

- 33 O *the* depth  
 of wealth  
 and wisdom  
 and knowledge of God!  
 How unsearchable his judgments!  
 and unknowable his ways!
- 34 “Who has known *the* mind of *the* Lord?  
 Or who has been his counselor?”
- 35 “Or who has first given to him, and it will be paid back to him?”
- 36 For from him and through him and to him *are* all. To him the **glory** into the ages. Amen.

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<sup>48</sup> 11:25 The *mystery* described in 11:11-12,15,25-36 is that a temporary hardening has come upon part of Israel to give an opportunity for the Gentiles to be saved through the resurrection of the Anointed. Ultimately all Israel will be saved when the Anointed returns (11:26) (See 2 Pet 3:15-16). In 16:25 the mystery may refer to the division of God’s prophesied Parousia (presence, coming) into two stages: the first stage being the resurrection of Jesus Anointed (1:4), which delayed the final judgment and gave Gentiles (16:26) an opportunity to share in that resurrection; and the second stage being the Anointed’s return mentioned in 2:5,16; 8:18-25; 11:26; and 13:11-12, which Paul expected imminently. In 16:25 the focus is on its effect on the Gentiles—that God has included the Gentiles in his gifts of status as sons and the opportunity to respond with faithfulness. The mystery in 11:25-36 looks at the same division of God’s parousia into two stages and its resulting delay, but from the point of view of its effect on the Jews: that they have been temporarily hardened during the interval between the two stages. Another extensive, and much simpler, explanation of the mystery of the inclusion of the Gentiles is in Eph 2:11-3:13. See “mystery” in the introduction to Colossians.

<sup>49</sup> 11:32 This verse restates the argument in 3:19-22 and 10:4.

<sup>50</sup> 11:33-36 Three qualities of God, three exclamations, three questions, three relations to God.



**Be members of one another, as one body in Anointed, under God's will<sup>51</sup>**

**Present yourselves to God, do not be conformed to this age**

**12** I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies *as* a living offering—holy, acceptable to God, your thoughtful worship.

<sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this age,  
but be transformed by the renewal of the mind,  
that you may discern what *is* God's will—the good and acceptable and perfect.

**Be united in Anointed under God who has given us different gifts<sup>52</sup>**

<sup>3</sup> I say, by the grace given to me, to every one among you,  
not to think *of yourself* more highly than you ought to think,  
but to think soberly  
as to each God has apportioned a measure of faithfulness.

<sup>4</sup> For as in one body many members we have,  
and all the members do not have the same function,  
<sup>5</sup> so the many, one body we are in Anointed, and each one members of one another.

<sup>6</sup> Having gifts differing according to the grace given to us, *let us use them*:

if prophecy, in the proportion of the faithfulness;

<sup>7</sup> if service, in the serving;

if the teacher, in the teaching;

<sup>8</sup> if the encourager, in the encouragement;

the giver, in liberality;

the leader, in diligence;

the compassionate, in cheerfulness;

<sup>9</sup> the love, without hypocrisy;

hating the evil;

holding on to the good;

<sup>10</sup> in brotherly love, one another loving;

in honor, one another preferring;

<sup>11</sup> in diligence, not lacking;

in the spirit, fervent;

in the Lord, serving;

<sup>12</sup> in hope, rejoicing;

in hardship, enduring;

in prayer, persevering;

<sup>13</sup> to the needs of the holy *ones*, contributing;

to hospitality, being diligent.

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<sup>51</sup> 12:1-13:14 ABCCBA. Parallel with 3:21-4:25. A's, be transformed; B's, love one another; C's, unity under adversity and diversity, and under God's authorities.

<sup>52</sup> 12:3-13 Be united in Anointed under God who has given us different gifts, with a list of 20 instructions for unity, centering on love. Parallel with 13:8-10, love your neighbor.

### Unity under adversity and diversity (20 more instructions)

14 Bless the persecutors,  
 bless  
 and do not curse.

15 . . . to rejoice with *the* rejoicing,  
 to weep with *the* weeping,  
 16 the same regard for one another having,  
 not proud being,  
 but with the lowly associating,  
 do not be conceited.

17 No one evil for evil repaying;  
 taking thought for what is good in the sight of all;  
 18 if possible, on your part, living peaceably with all;  
 19 not yourselves avenging, beloved;  
 but give place to *God's* vengeance;  
 for it is written: "Mine *is* vengeance, I will repay, says *the* Lord."  
 20 Rather, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
 if he is thirsty, give drink to him;  
 for *by* doing this you will heap burning coals on his head."

21 Do not be overcome by the evil,  
 but overcome the evil with the good.

### Unity under God's authorities and ministers (religious and civil)

**13** Every soul must submit to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been established by God.

2 Accordingly, whoever resists the authority, God's ordinance opposes,  
 and those who oppose will get condemnation on themselves.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to evil.

Do you wish to have no fear of the authority?

Do the good,

and you will receive its approval,

4 for it is God's servant to you

for good.

But if you do evil, be afraid,

for it does not wear the sword for nothing,

for it is God's servant, to take vengeance on the evildoer.

5 Therefore, *it is* a necessity to be subject, not only because of vengeance, but also because  
 of conscience.

6 This is why you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers, devoting themselves to this very  
 thing.

7 Pay to all their dues, tax to whom tax *is due*, custom to whom custom, respect to whom respect,  
 honor to whom honor.

### Love your neighbor

8 Owe no one anything,  
 except one another to love,  
 for one who loves the other  
 has fulfilled *the* law.

9 The “Do no adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not desire,” and any other commandment,  
 are summed up in this word:  
 “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

10 Love  
 does no wrong to the neighbor;  
 fulfillment of *the* law, therefore,  
 is love.

### Throw off the works of darkness, put on the Anointed

11 Besides this, knowing the time, that now *is the* hour for you to wake from sleep,  
 for now salvation *is* nearer to us than when we believed.

12 The night has advanced,  
 the day is at hand.

Let us then throw off the works of darkness.

Let us put on the armor of light.

13 Let us walk properly as in *the* day,  
 not in orgies and drunkenness, not in promiscuity and indecency, not in rivalry and jealousy.

14 But put on the Lord Jesus Anointed,  
 and make no provision for desires of the flesh.

### Jews and Gentiles, glorify God together, as brothers

#### Welcome your weak brother (a Jew) as God has welcomed him

**14** Welcome the weak in faith, *but* not for disputes over opinions.

2 One has faith to eat everything, another who is weak eats vegetables.

3 The one who eats must not despise the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat must  
 not judge the one who eats,  
 for God has welcomed him.

4 Who are you to judge a servant of another?

To his own Lord he stands or falls.

And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 One esteems one day above another,  
 another esteems every day.

Each should be fully convinced in his own mind.

6 Whoever observes the day, observes *it* for *the* Lord.

And whoever eats, eats for *the* Lord, for he gives thanks to God;  
 and whoever does not eat, abstains for *the* Lord and gives thanks to God.

7 None of us lives to oneself, and no one dies to oneself.

8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord.

So whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

9 For this Anointed died and lived, that he may be Lord of both *the* dead and *the* living.

10 You then, why do you judge your brother? Or you, why do you look down on your brother?  
 For we will all stand before God's judgment seat.

11 For it is written: “*As* I live, says *the* Lord, to me will bow every knee, and every tongue will  
 praise God.”

12 So each of us will give account of oneself.

13 Therefore let us no longer judge one another.

**Do not, for food, destroy God's people**

But resolve this instead, not to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.

<sup>14</sup> I know and am persuaded in *the* Lord Jesus that nothing *is* unclean in itself, but to one who considers something unclean, to that one *it is* unclean.

<sup>15</sup> If your brother is being injured because of your food, you are no longer walking in love.

Do not by your food destroy one for whom Anointed died.

<sup>16</sup> Don't let your good be spoken of as evil. <sup>17</sup> For God's kingdom is not eating and drinking, but justfulness and peace and joy in *the* holy spirit.

<sup>18</sup> Whoever serves the Anointed in this *is* pleasing to God and approved by all.

<sup>19</sup> So then, let us strive for the *things* of peace and of upbuilding one another.

<sup>20</sup> Do not, for the sake of food, destroy God's work.

All things *are* indeed clean,

but *it is* wrong for anyone to eat with offense *to others*.

<sup>21</sup> *It is* noble not to eat meat or drink wine or *do anything* in which your brother is offended.

<sup>22</sup> *The* conviction you have, keep to yourself before God.

Blessed *is* the one who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

<sup>23</sup> But whoever doubts is condemned if he eats, because *it is* not from faith.

Everything not from faith is sin.

**The strong should bear with the weak**

**15** We the strong ought to bear with the weaknesses of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

<sup>2</sup> Each of us should please the neighbor for good, toward upbuilding.

<sup>3</sup> For the Anointed did not please himself,

but as it is written: "The insults of those who insulted you fell on me."

<sup>4</sup> For whatever was written before  
for our instruction was written,  
so that by perseverance  
and by the encouragement of the scriptures  
we may have hope.

<sup>5</sup> The God of perseverance and encouragement may he enable you

to agree with one another,  
according to Anointed Jesus,

<sup>6</sup> so together in one voice

you may glorify

the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Anointed.

**Welcome one another, Jews and Gentiles, as Anointed welcomed you**

<sup>7</sup> Therefore welcome one another, as the Anointed also welcomed you, for God's glory.

<sup>8</sup> For I say that Anointed became a servant of *the* circumcised on behalf of God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises to the fathers,

<sup>9</sup> and that the Gentiles may glorify God for mercy, as it is written:

"For this I will praise you among *the* Gentiles, and to your name sing praise."

<sup>10</sup> And again it says: "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people."

<sup>11</sup> And again: "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him."

<sup>12</sup> And again Isaiah says: "There will be the offshoot of Jesse, he who will rise up to rule *the* Gentiles, in him *the* Gentiles will hope."

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope through *the* holy spirit's power.

**Confidence in the Romans, Paul's plans and request for prayer, benedictions, greetings<sup>53</sup>****Confidence in the Romans, Paul's ministry and plans, request for prayer**

14 Confident am I, my brothers,

even I myself,

about you,

that even yourselves,

full are you of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another.

15 Rather boldly have I written to you on some points, as reminding you,

because of the grace given me by God

16 for me to be Anointed Jesus' minister to the Gentiles,

ministering God's good news,

so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, made holy in *the* holy spirit.

17 I have, then, reason for boasting in Anointed Jesus in things pertaining to God.

18 To be sure I will not dare to speak of anything except what Anointed has accomplished through me toward obedience of *the* Gentiles, by word and deed, 19 by power of signs and wonders, by power of spirit,

for me, from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum,

to complete the good news,

the Anointed's.

20 In this way endeavoring to preach the good news,

not where Anointed has been named, so that I do not build on another's foundation,

21 but as it is written: "Those who were not told of him will see, and those who have not heard will understand."

22 That is why **I have been unable for so long to come to you.**

23 But now, no further place having in these regions, and **a longing having**

**to come to you**

for many years,

24 as I go to Spain, I hope on my journey to see you, and by you to be sent on my way there, after I have enjoyed you for a while.

25 But now I am going to Jerusalem, serving the holy *ones*.

26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the holy *ones* at Jerusalem.<sup>54</sup>

27 They were pleased, and indeed they are their debtors, for if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual *blessings*,

they ought also to serve them in material *blessings*.

28 So when I have completed this, and have sealed to them this fruit,

I will set out by way of you to Spain.

29 I know that in coming to you, in fullness of Anointed's blessing I will come.

30 I urge you, by our Lord Jesus Anointed and by the love of the spirit, to struggle with me by prayers for me to God,

31 that I may be delivered from the disobedient in Judea,

and *that* my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the holy *ones*,

32 so that with joy coming to you by *the* will of God, I may be refreshed together with you.

<sup>53</sup> 15:14-16:23 ABCDCBA. The fourth of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:8-17.

<sup>54</sup> 15:26 Apparently Galatia failed to participate. See 1 Cor 16:1-4; Gal 2:10; 2 Cor 8:1-6; 9:1-2.

**Peace benediction**

33 The God of peace *be* with all of you. Amen.

**Commendation of the letter carrier**

**16** I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a **deacon** of the church at Cenchreae,<sup>55</sup>  
 2 that you may welcome her in *the* Lord  
 in a manner worthy of the holy *ones*,  
 and help her in whatever from you she may need,  
 for she has been a **patron** to many and to me as well.

**Greetings to those in Rome**<sup>56</sup>

3 Greet Prisca<sup>57</sup> and Aquila, my fellow workers in Anointed Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but also **all the churches of the Gentiles**;

5 *greet* also the church in their house.

Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is *the* first fruit of Asia to Anointed.

6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.

7 Greet Andronicus and Junia,<sup>58</sup> my kin and my fellow prisoners, who are prominent among the apostles, and who were before me **in Anointed**.

8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved **in the Lord**.

9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker **in Anointed**, and Stachys, my beloved.

10 Greet Apelles, approved **in Anointed**.

Greet those of the *household* of Aristobulus.

11 Greet Herodion, my kinsman.

Greet those of the *household* of Narcissus who are **in the Lord**.

12 Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, hard workers **in the Lord**.

Greet Persis, the beloved, who has worked hard **in the Lord**.

13 Greet Rufus, the chosen **in the Lord**, and his mother and mine.

14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers with them.

15 Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the holy *ones* with them.

16 Greet one another with a holy kiss.

Greeting you are **all the churches of the Anointed**.

<sup>55</sup> 16:1 *Cenchreae*. The eastern port of Corinth. Paul sent this letter from Corinth within AD 51-58.

<sup>56</sup> 16:3-16 ABCDCBA. The center of this division. These 18 greetings are arranged in 7 groups.

<sup>57</sup> 16:3 *Prisca*. "Priscilla" in Acts. Acts 18:1-3 records that when Paul first came to Corinth on his second missionary journey he stayed and made tents with Priscilla and Aquila, who had recently been expelled with the Jews from Rome. Acts 18:18-19 says that they accompanied Paul when he left Corinth about 18 months later, and went with him to Ephesus, where Paul left them. When Paul returned to Ephesus on his third missionary journey, 1 Cor 16:19 indicates they were still there. Now they are evidently back in Rome. 2 Tim 4:19, which indicates it was written from Rome, places them back in or near Ephesus. The Jews were expelled from Rome by the emperor Claudius about 49, because of "disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus" (Suetonius, *Claudius* 25.4). When Nero became emperor in 54, he allowed the Jews to return.

<sup>58</sup> 16:7 This could be either "Junia," a common feminine name that occurs more than 250 times in Greek and Latin inscriptions found in Rome alone, or an hypothetical abbreviation, Junias, that has never been found in inscriptions, for Junianus, a masculine name. See Omanson's article in *Bible Review* (December 1998, pages 40-41). Some translations prefer the masculine name because Paul refers to the person as an "apostle."

### Warning, rejoicing for those in Rome

17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching that you learned, and avoid them.

18 For such do not serve our Lord Anointed, but their own stomach, and by smooth talk and praises they deceive the hearts of the unwary.

19 Your obedience<sup>59</sup> is known to all,  
over you, therefore, I rejoice;

but I want you to be wise to the good, and innocent to the evil.

20 The God of peace will crush the Adversary under your feet quickly.

### Grace benediction

The grace of our Lord Jesus *be* with you.

### Greetings from those with Paul

21 Greeting you is Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

22 Greeting you am I, Tertius, the writer of this letter, in *the* Lord.

23 Greeting you is Gaius,<sup>60</sup> the host to me and to the whole church.

Greeting you is Erastus, the city treasurer, and Quartus, the brother. [24]

### Blessing, summary of the good news, doxology<sup>61</sup>

25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you

according to my good news and Jesus Anointed's message,

according to *the* revelation of *the* mystery from times eternal kept secret

26 but now disclosed,

and through *the* prophetic scriptures,

according to *the* command of the eternal God,

for obedience of faithfulness into all nations,<sup>62</sup>

made known,

27 to *the* only wise God,

through Jesus Anointed,

to whom the **glory** into the ages. Amen.

<sup>59</sup> 16:19 *Obedience*. A fulfillment of 1:5 and 16:26.

<sup>60</sup> 16:23 *Gaius* of Corinth was one of the few in Corinth baptized by Paul (1 Cor 1:14).

<sup>61</sup> 16:25-27 The last of five divisions of this letter. The only Pauline letter closing that names and summarizes the good news. Parallel with 1:1-7, the only Pauline letter opening that names and summarizes the good news. The NA27 Greek text puts verses 25-27 in brackets because of divided manuscript support.

<sup>62</sup> 16:26 *For obedience of faithfulness into all nations* (see 1:5), a summary of the theme of this letter and a fulfillment of Gen 22:18. *All nations*, see Gal 3:8,14; Mark 13:10; Mat 28:19; Luke 24:47; and 2 Tim 4:17.

**Structure**

The overall structure is ABCDEEDCBA. There are two main bodies, the fourth and seventh divisions.

1:1-2 Address and blessing

1:3-11 Thanksgiving and prayer

1:12-26 Paul's situation, commendation of the brothers, hope, and confidence

1:27-2:18 The absent Paul's hymn for God's children in Anointed

2:19-24 Paul's situation, commendation of Timothy, hope, and confidence

2:25-3:1a Commendation of the letter carrier, farewell

3:1b-4:1 Flesh and spirit, sharing Anointed's death and resurrection, earthly and heavenly

4:2-9 Paul's personal messages, farewells, advice

4:10-20 Thanks and doxology [An earlier response for this gift]

4:21-23 Greetings and blessing

The first and last divisions are the address and blessing, and the greetings and blessing, both of which use Anointed Jesus and Jesus Anointed symmetrically. The second and ninth are both thanksgiving and prayer. The third and eighth are about Paul's personal affairs, messages, farewells, and advice. The fourth and seventh are the two main bodies, like two humps on a camel, which match each other well. Both urge Anointed's people to be conformed to his death and resurrection, as exemplified by Paul. The two central divisions are commendations. That is an unusually large number of divisions for the overall structure of a letter. But it is symmetrical. If this is a compilation of more than one letter, the compiler was familiar with Paul's use of symmetrical parallelism.

**One letter or a composite?**

There are two commendations for the same letter carrier: 2:25-30 and 4:18. There are three closings: 3:1a; 4:2-9; and 4:21-23. There are two main bodies in the letter, 1:27-2:18 and 3:1b-4:1, with two commendations placed between them at the center of the letter. It is strange to make commendations the center of a letter. That position is usually occupied by the most important part of the letter. The only other letter of Paul's with two main bodies, and where the commendation of letter carriers is centered between them instead of coming close to the end of the letter, is 2 Corinthians, which also appears to be a composite of more than one letter.

Also, why does Paul's thanks to the Philippians for their gift (4:10-20) come so late in this letter, after Paul has thanked the letter carrier (2:25-30) for his part in bringing it? Phlp 4:10-20 may be from Paul's first response to this gift, which may also have informed the Philippians that Epaphroditus was ill and not yet able to return, as indicated in 2:26-27.

What we have in 1:1-3:1a may be Paul's last letter to the Philippians, with the closing partly moved to 4:21-23, as shown below.

1:1-2 Address and blessing

1:3-11 Thanksgiving and prayer

1:12-26 Paul's situation, commendation of the brothers, hope, and confidence

1:27-2:18 The absent Paul's hymn for God's children in Anointed

2:19-24 Paul's situation, commendation of Timothy, hope, and confidence

2:25-30 Commendation of the letter carrier

3:1a and 4:21-23 Farewell, greetings, and blessing

That would be a symmetrical parallelism of seven sections, ABCDCBA, with the main body at the center. What we have in 3:1b-4:20 may be from one or more earlier letters.



## Background

Philippi was where Paul founded the first church in Europe on his second missionary journey (see Acts 16:9-40). He visited it twice near the end of his third missionary journey, once after he left Ephesus (Acts 20:1-2) and again at Passover (Acts 20:3-6).

There is no doubt that Paul wrote this letter, but when and where is a different matter. It was from prison, but which imprisonment? Was it from Rome? Or from Caesarea? Or from an unrecorded imprisonment in Ephesus, where Paul was for about three years on his third missionary journey? We are assuming it was written from Rome because that seems to fit the content of this letter better in some ways, and because, like Romans, he does not address this letter to a “church.”

Ephesus is favored by some because Ephesus is only 400 miles from Philippi, while Rome is about 700 miles from Philippi. This letter implies that news has made two round-trips between Paul and Philippi before this letter was written and while Paul was in chains (4:18; 2:25-30). The 400 mile one-way trip to Ephesus is estimated by Raymond E. Brown (*Intro to the NT*, 1997, pages 495-6) to have taken about seven to nine days. But Rome is scarcely twice as far and there were good roads from Rome to Philippi, making two round-trips quite feasible within the two years that Acts 28:16,30 records that Paul was imprisoned in Rome. An imprisonment long enough to allow all the events to take place that are described in this letter is less likely in Ephesus, where none is recorded. And the reference to Caesar’s household in 4:22 favors Rome. Caesarea is the least likely of the three possibilities. It is about 1000 miles from Philippi, the land route was difficult, and the sea route was not feasible at all times of the year, as we know from Paul’s journey to Rome.

## Theme

This is a loving thank-you note from Paul for the gift the Philippians had sent him by their messenger, Epaphroditus, and for all they had meant to him and done for him since he had first known them. He is also conscious that it may be his farewell to them (1:19-24; 2:12-18; 3:1a; 4:4). The charge and hymn to the Philippians in 1:27-2:18 is reminiscent of and quotes from the farewell charge of Moses to Israel in Dt 31,32 (LXX), but is transformed in sentiment, reflecting the more favorable response of the Philippians to Paul and Anointed in contrast to the response of the Israelites to Moses. Compare especially Dt 31:6 to Phlp 1:27-28 and 2:13,16; Dt 32:3 to Phlp 2:9-11; and Dt 32:5 to Phlp 2:12,15. Paul’s farewells to the Philippians and Philemon are quite different from Luke’s account of Paul’s farewell to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:17-38, which is more comparable to Hector’s farewell to Andromache in the *Iliad* 6:361-501 (MacDonald, *Does the New Testament Imitate Homer?*, chapters 6-8).

Paul is still looking for his Lord’s coming (1:6,10; 2:16; 3:14,20; 4:5). He rejoices in sharing in his Lord’s death and resurrection (1:21,29; 2:5-11; 3:10-11). Throughout Philippians, as in all of his undoubted letters, Paul’s theme is: The unity of God’s “holy ones” with “God our Father” and with each other by sharing with the “Lord Jesus Anointed” in his death and resurrection (as in John 14:20), which is summarized here many times, as in 1:2,8; 2:11; 3:14; 4:7,19; and especially 2:1-11.

## Philippians

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

### Address and blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul and Timothy, slaves<sup>2</sup> of **Anointed Jesus**,

To all the holy *ones* in Anointed Jesus,  
those who are in Philippi,  
with *the* overseers and deacons:

**2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and *the* **Lord Jesus Anointed**.

### Thanksgiving and prayer<sup>3</sup>

**3** I give thanks to my God at every remembrance of you

**4** always in every prayer of mine for you all,  
praying with joy,

**5** because of your partnership in the good news from the first day until now,

**6** confident of this,

that he who began a good work among you

will go on to complete *it* until *the* day of **Anointed Jesus**.

**7** It is just for me to think this of all of you because I hold you in *my* heart,

both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the good news, all you who are  
partners with me in grace.

**8** My witness *is* God, how I long for all of you with *the* inmost heart of Anointed Jesus.

**9** And this I pray,

that your love ever more and more may abound in knowledge and all insight **10** for you to discern  
what is best,

so that you may be pure and blameless for *the* day of Anointed,

**11** filled with fruit of justfulness that *comes* through **Jesus Anointed**  
to glory and praise of God.

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-2 ABCBA. Parallel with 4:21-23.

<sup>2</sup> 1:1 *Slaves*. This and Philemon are the only undisputed letters of Paul that do not use the term “apostle” for himself, but see 2:25.

<sup>3</sup> 1:3-11 ABA. Now parallel with 4:10-20, it may originally have been parallel with 2:25-30. The A’s: Paul’s prayers for them; B: he holds them in his heart.

**Paul's situation, commendation of the brothers, hope, and confidence<sup>4</sup>**

12 I want you to know, brothers,  
 that my situation rather to *the* progress of the good news has turned out,  
 13 so that my chains have become evident to *be* in Anointed  
 in all the Praetorium and to all the rest.

14 And many more of the brothers,  
 in *the* Lord taking confidence by my chains,  
 more than ever dare without fear to speak the word.

15 Some from envy and rivalry,  
 but others from good will  
 preach the Anointed.

16 These from love, knowing that for the defense of the good news I am here.

17 The others from jealousy proclaim the Anointed, not sincerely, thinking to add  
 suffering to my chains.

18 What then?  
 Only that in every way,  
 whether in pretense or in truth,  
 Anointed is proclaimed.

In that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will go on rejoicing.

19 For I know that "this for me will lead to deliverance" through your prayer and *the* support  
 of the spirit of Jesus Anointed,

20 according to my eager expectation and hope  
 that in nothing will I be put to shame,  
 but in all boldness now as always will be exalted Anointed  
 in my body,  
 whether by life or by death.

21 For to me  
 to live  
     *is* Anointed,  
 and to die  
     *is* gain.

22 But if *I am* to live in *the* flesh, that *means* fruitful labor for me.  
 And which I prefer I do not know.

23 I am caught between the two,  
 having a desire to depart and to be with Anointed, *which is* far better.

24 But to remain in the flesh *is* more necessary for you.

25 And confident of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you  
 for your progress and joy of faithfulness,

26 so that your boasting may overflow in Anointed Jesus  
 in me by my coming again to you.

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<sup>4</sup> 1:12-26 ABCBBA. The third division of this letter. Now parallel with 4:2-9, it may originally have been parallel with 2:19-24. A's: progress; B's: choice between two options; C's: Paul rejoices in both.

**The absent Paul's hymn for God's children in Anointed<sup>5</sup>**

- 27 Only in a manner worthy of the good news of the Anointed  
 conduct yourselves together  
 so that whether coming and seeing you or absent,  
 I may hear about you,  
 that you are standing firm in one spirit,  
 with one soul striving together in the faithfulness of the good news,  
 28 and not frightened in any way by *your* adversaries,  
 which is to them a sign  
 of *their* destruction,  
 but of your salvation,  
 and that from God.
- 29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Anointed,  
 not only to trust in him  
 but also to suffer for him,  
 30 having the same battle as you saw in me and now hear in me.

- 2** If any encouragement, then, *is* in **Anointed**,  
 if any consolation of love,  
 if any partnership of spirit,  
 if any heart and sympathy,  
 2 complete my joy  
 that you be of the same mind,  
 having the same love,  
 united in soul,  
 of one mind,  
 3 nothing through selfishness nor through vainglory,  
 but in humility considering others better than yourselves,  
 4 not each for your own *interests* looking out,  
 but each for those of others.  
 5 Have this mind among you which *was* also in **Anointed Jesus**,

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<sup>5</sup> 1:27-2:18 ABCBA. The fourth division of this letter. Now parallel with 3:1b-4:1, it may originally have been the center of this letter. (This church, unlike those in Col and Eph, has seen and knows Paul.) The A's: Paul and they are apart but very close; BCB: united in Anointed's mind, death, and resurrection.

<sup>6</sup> who, in *the* form of God being,  
not *as* something to be grabbed did he consider  
being equal with God,

<sup>7</sup> but himself  
he emptied,  
*the* form of a slave taking.  
In human likeness born  
and in human form being found,

<sup>8</sup> he humbled  
himself,  
being obedient as far as  
death,  
death  
on a cross.

<sup>9</sup> And for this God raised him up  
and gave him the **name** above every **name**, <sup>10</sup> so that in the **name** of Jesus  
“every knee should bend”  
in heaven and on earth and under *the* earth,  
<sup>11</sup> “and every tongue acclaim,”  
**“Lord Jesus Anointed,”**  
to *the* glory of God *the* Father.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed,  
not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence,  
with fear and trembling your own salvation work out.

<sup>13</sup> For God is the *one* working among you  
both to will and to work for *his* good purpose.

<sup>14</sup> Do all *things* without murmurings and arguments,  
<sup>15</sup> so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God,  
faultless in the midst of “a generation crooked and perverse,”  
among whom you shine as stars in *the* world,  
<sup>16</sup> holding fast *the* word of life,

that my boast at *the* day of Anointed may be that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.

<sup>17</sup> But even if I am poured out as an offering on the sacrifice and ministry of your faithfulness,  
I rejoice and share my joy with all of you.

<sup>18</sup> In the same way, you also should rejoice and share your joy with me.

**Paul's situation, commendation of Timothy, hope, and confidence<sup>6</sup>**

- 19 I hope in *the* Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon,  
 so that I too may be heartened by news of you.  
 20 For I have no one like him who will care genuinely for you.  
 21 For they all look out for their own *interests*,  
 not those of Jesus Anointed.  
 22 But his worth you know,  
 that as a child with a father he has served with me in the good news.  
 23 Him then I hope to send as soon as I know how things go with me.  
 24 I am confident in *the* Lord that also I myself will come soon.

**Commendation of the letter carrier, farewell**

- 25 But I considered it necessary, Epaphroditus,  
 my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier,  
 your apostle and minister to my need,  
 to send to you.  
 26 For he was longing for all of you and distressed,  
 because you heard that he was ill.  
 27 And indeed he was sick nearly to death,  
 but God had mercy on him,  
 not on him only  
 but also on me,  
 so that I may not have sorrow upon sorrow.  
 28 More hastily, therefore, I have sent him  
 so that seeing him again you may rejoice,  
 and I may be more relieved of anxiety.  
 29 Welcome him, therefore,  
 in *the* Lord with all joy,  
 and such *people* hold in esteem,  
 30 because for the work of Anointed,  
 close to death he came,  
 risking *his* life  
 to supply what you could not of the ministry to me.

**[First closing] 3** Finally, my brothers, farewell in *the* Lord.

<sup>6</sup> 2:19-24 Now parallel with 2:25-3:1a, forming the two central divisions of this letter. 2:19-24 may originally have been parallel with 1:12-26, and 2:25-30 may originally have been parallel with 1:3-11.

**Flesh and spirit, sharing Anointed's death and resurrection, earthly and heavenly<sup>7</sup>**

To write the same *things*

to you

for me *is* not troublesome,

but for you

a safeguard.

<sup>2</sup> Beware of the dogs!

Beware of the evil workers!

Beware of the mutilation!<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> For we are the circumcision,

who serve through God's spirit

and boast in Anointed Jesus

and put no confidence in flesh,

<sup>4</sup> although I have grounds

for confidence even in flesh.

If anyone else has grounds

to be confident in flesh,

I more:

<sup>5</sup> circumcised the eighth day,

of the people of Israel,

tribe of Benjamin,

Hebrew of Hebrews,

as to law a Pharisee,

<sup>6</sup> as to zeal persecuting the church,

as to the justfulness under law blameless.

<sup>7</sup> Whatever was to me gain,

those I counted for the Anointed a loss.

<sup>8</sup> More than that, I count all *things* to be a loss

for the surpassing value of knowing Anointed Jesus my Lord,

for whom I have suffered the loss of all *things*,

and count *them* garbage,

that Anointed I may gain

---

<sup>7</sup> 3:1b-4:1 ABCDDCBA. Now parallel with 1:27-2:18. This and the following two divisions were probably parts of earlier letters to the Philippians. A's, warnings about evil workers, contrasted with those in Anointed. B's, what people have regard for. C's, gaining and winning. D's, in Anointed and his death and resurrection.

<sup>8</sup> 3:2 *Mutilation*. That is, circumcision.

- 9 and be found in him,  
     not having my own justfulness,  
         that from law,  
             but that through Anointed's faithfulness,  
         that from God,  
     justfulness  
 based on *Anointed's* faithfulness,
- 10 to know him and the power of his resurrection  
     and *the* sharing of his sufferings,  
     being conformed to his death,
- 11 if somehow I may attain to the resurrection from *the* dead.
- 12 Not that I have already taken hold of *it* or have already attained the goal,  
     but I press on to win *that* for which also I have been won by Anointed.
- 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself to have won.  
     Just one *thing*:  
     forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,
- 14 toward *the* goal I press on,  
     to the prize of the upward calling of God in Anointed Jesus.
- 15 As many as *are* mature, then, let us have this mind.  
     And if you think differently,  
     that too will God reveal to you.
- 16 Only, to what we have attained, by the same let us walk.
- 17 Join in following me, brothers, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us.
- 18 For many are behaving, of whom I have often told you, and now tell you even weeping, as the  
     enemies of the cross of the Anointed,
- 19 whose end *is* destruction,  
     whose god *is their* stomach,  
     and *whose* glory *is* in their shame,  
     who are intent on earthly *things*.
- 20 For our homeland is in *the* heavens,  
     from which we also await a savior,  
     *the* Lord Jesus Anointed,
- 21 who will change our body of humiliation to conform to his body of glory,  
     by the power that enables him also to subject all things to himself.
- 4** So then, my brothers, beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in *the*  
 Lord, beloved.



**[Second closing] Paul's personal messages, farewells, advice**

2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in *the* Lord.

3 Yes, and I ask you, true comrade, come to the help of these women,  
 who in the good news  
 have worked together with me

and with Clement and my other fellow workers whose names *are* in *the* book of life.

4 Farewell in *the* Lord always. Again I will say, Farewell.

5 Let your forbearance be known to all.

The Lord *is* near.

6 In no way be anxious, but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving your requests make known to God.

7 And the peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Anointed Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers,

whatever is true,  
 whatever honorable,  
 whatever just,  
 whatever pure,  
 whatever lovely,  
 whatever commendable,  
 if any virtue,  
 and if any praise,  
 these think on;

9 what  
 also you learned  
 and received  
 and heard  
 and saw

in me,  
 these do;

and the God of peace will be with you.

**Thanks and doxology [An earlier response for this gift]<sup>9</sup>**

<sup>10</sup> I rejoice in *the* Lord greatly, that after so long has blossomed again your care for me, for which indeed you did care, but you lacked opportunity.

<sup>11</sup> Not that I speak because of need, for I have learned, whatever I am in, to be content.

<sup>12</sup> I know both *what it is* to have little,  
and I know *what it is* to have plenty.  
In any and in all *circumstances*  
I have learned the secret  
both to be well-fed and to be hungry,  
both to have plenty  
and to be in need.

<sup>13</sup> I have strength for all *things* through him who strengthens me.

<sup>14</sup> But you have done well to share in my distress.

<sup>15</sup> You know, indeed you, Philippians,  
that in *the* beginning of the good news, when I went out from Macedonia, no  
church shared with me in *the* matter of giving and receiving  
except you alone,<sup>10</sup>

<sup>16</sup> that even in Thessalonica both once and twice you sent to my need.

<sup>17</sup> Not that I want the gift, but I want the fruit that increases to your account.

<sup>18</sup> I have received full payment and more.  
I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the *gifts* from you,  
“a fragrant aroma,” an acceptable offering, pleasing to God.

<sup>19</sup> And my God  
will fully supply your every need  
according to his riches in glory  
in Anointed Jesus.

<sup>20</sup> To our God and Father, **glory** into the ages of the ages. Amen.

**[Third closing] Greetings and blessing**

<sup>21</sup> Greet every holy *one* in **Anointed Jesus**.

Greeting you are the brothers with me.

<sup>22</sup> Greeting you are all the holy *ones*, especially those of the Caesar’s household.

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the **Lord Jesus Anointed** *be* with your spirit.

**[First and third closings combined]<sup>11</sup> [3:1a + 4:21-23]**

Finally, my brothers, farewell in *the* Lord.

<sup>21</sup> Greet every holy *one* in Anointed Jesus.

Greeting you are the brothers with me.

<sup>22</sup> Greeting you are all the holy *ones*, especially those of the Caesar’s household.

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Anointed *be* with your spirit.

<sup>9</sup> 4:10-20 ABCCBA. The A’s, rejoicing in the Lord and to God. The B’s, God’s sufficiency for himself and for them. The C’s, Paul thanks them for their gifts on behalf of the good news and God.

<sup>10</sup> 4:15 This is confirmed in 2 Cor 11:9.

<sup>11</sup> 3:1a + 4:21-23 If 3:1a and 4:21-23 are combined they become more symmetrical: the first and last lines are a farewell (Chairete) and a grace (Charis), the second and next to last lines are greetings to and from all the holy ones, and the center is a greeting from the brothers with Paul. See 2 Cor 13:11-13 for a similar closing.

**Structure**

The letter as a whole is a symmetrical parallelism, ABCCBA:

1-3 Paul's greeting to Philemon and grace from the Lord Jesus

4-7 Thanks and prayers for Philemon

8-16 Appeal to Philemon to receive Onesimus ("useful") as a brother, once useless but now useful to both Paul and Philemon, as voluntarily as Onesimus and Paul have returned him

17-20 Appeal to Philemon to welcome Onesimus as he would welcome Paul, and as a brother and debtor to Paul to consider being useful to Paul (by returning Onesimus to Paul)

21-22 Confidence in Philemon to do even more than Paul has asked explicitly

23-25 Greetings from those with Paul and grace from the Lord Jesus

The first and last divisions are greetings and blessings. Both use "Anointed Jesus" and "Lord Jesus Anointed" symmetrically. Both use "fellow" twice, and both refer to Paul as a "prisoner." The second division refers to Paul's prayers for Philemon, the fifth to Philemon's prayers for Paul. At the center are two appeals for reconciliation with Onesimus. The first, based on mutual freedom, contrasts freedom and compulsion: Paul in chains freely returning his "child" to Philemon, Onesimus a useless slave freely returning himself to his master, and Philemon a slave owner who is invited to freely receive his slave as a brother. The second appeal is based on mutual indebtedness: Onesimus's, Paul's, and Philemon's to each other. The first appeal, 8-16, is structured ABA. The center, 11-13, focuses on Paul's (and Onesimus's) voluntary gift to Philemon. The two sides, 8-10 and 14-16, focus on Philemon's response as voluntary, not compulsory.

Note the ring pattern in 3, where grace from Jesus surrounds peace from God, and a similar pattern in 5. The faithfulness to Jesus in 5 is described in 6, and the love for the holy ones in 5 is described in 7.

**Background**

As in Philippians, Rome is a likely possibility for where Paul wrote this letter. If so, it was written sometime in AD 55-63. That fits better with Paul being "an old man" (Phlm 9, implying an age of 50-56), since Paul's birth is estimated at about AD 5-10. If he wrote this from Rome about 60, his age would have been about 50-55.

**Theme**

Paul's explicit goal here is a reconciliation. Note the irony in 13, "whom I wanted to keep for myself," which expresses the attitude of both Philemon, who wanted Onesimus back, and Onesimus, who ran away. And note the irony in 19, "by my own hand," which is also the way Onesimus has returned himself to Philemon. Paul's inexplicit goal (13, 21) is that Philemon will free Onesimus and return him to Paul as a fellow worker.

There are many allusions or puns on the name, Onesimus, which means "useful." See 6 "fruitful" and "good," 7b "refreshed," the rare last word in 8 "useful" which is paired with and sounds like the last word in 10 "Onesimus," the rare last word in 11 "useful" which sounds like "Christos" and is paired with the last word in 13 "good news," 11 the rare "useless" and "useful," 13b "serve," 14c "kindness," 20a the rare "use," 20b "refresh," and 22b "restored." Four of these puns use words that appear only once in Paul's undisputed letters. Puns can be hard to translate.

Even though short, this letter twice celebrates Paul's theme in all of his letters of unity among God's "holy ones" and with "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Anointed" (in 3 and 4-7). The word "spirit" is used only once, in the last verse, and refers to "your [plural] spirit," the spirit that God shares with all his "holy ones," (Gal 4:6, Rom 8:9). None of the popular translations capitalize it. The word "holy" is used twice, both times in reference to God's "holy ones," who share that spirit.

"You" and "your" are plural only in 3, 22 and 25, and singular elsewhere.

## Philemon

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

**Paul**, a prisoner of **Anointed Jesus**, and brother Timothy,  
 To Philemon, our beloved and fellow worker, <sup>2</sup> and to sister Apphia,  
 and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church at your house:  
<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and *the* **Lord Jesus Anointed**.

<sup>4</sup> I give thanks to my God always making mention of you in my prayers,  
<sup>5</sup> hearing of your love and faithfulness  
 which you have toward the Lord Jesus  
 and for all the holy *ones*,  
<sup>6</sup> that the partnership of your faithfulness may be fruitful  
 through knowledge of all *the* good  
 that *is* in us for Anointed.

<sup>7</sup> For I have received much joy and encouragement from your love,  
 because the hearts of the holy *ones* have been refreshed by you, brother.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, having in Anointed full assurance to command you what is useful,  
<sup>9</sup> for love's sake  
 I rather appeal,  
 being such as Paul an old man and now also a prisoner of Anointed Jesus.  
<sup>10</sup> I appeal to you  
 for my child,  
 whom I have fathered in *my* chains, Onesimus,  
<sup>11</sup> once to you useless, but now to you and me useful,  
<sup>12</sup> **whom I have sent back to you, himself,**  
**that is, my own heart,**  
<sup>13</sup> **whom I wanted to keep for myself,**  
 so that on your behalf he might serve me in the chains of the good news.

<sup>14</sup> But without your consent  
 nothing I wanted to do,  
 so that not forced your kindness may be  
 but voluntary.  
<sup>15</sup> Perhaps this is why he was taken away  
 for a while,  
 so forever  
 you may receive him

<sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother,  
 especially to me,  
 but how much more to you,  
 both in *the* flesh and in *the* Lord.

17 So if you regard me as a partner, welcome him as me.

18 And if he has wronged or owes you anything, charge that to me.

19 **IPAULIHAVEWRITTENBMYOWNHANDIMYSELFWILLREPAY** <sup>1</sup>

May I not tell you that you owe even yourself to me.

20 Yes, brother, may I have use of you in *the* Lord, refresh my heart in Anointed.

21 Confident of your obedience I have written to you,  
knowing that even more than I ask, you will do.

22 At the same time also prepare a room for me,  
for I hope that through your prayers I will be restored to you.

23 Greeting you is

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner  
in **Anointed Jesus**,

24 *and* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, *and* Luke, my fellow workers.

25 The grace of the **Lord Jesus Anointed** *be* with your spirit.

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<sup>1</sup> 1:19a When Paul wrote, all letters were capitals, there was no punctuation as we know it, no chapter or verse markings, no spacing between words, sentences, or paragraphs.

**Structure**

The overall structure (like 1 Thess) is ABCCBA:

1:1-2 Address, grace and peace blessings

1:3-12 Thanksgiving, God's justice, and prayer

2:1-17 Encouragement and prayer for strength and endurance in the face of the lawless one

3:1-5 Prayer for deliverance from the evil one

3:6-15 Commands to work helpfully, and to shun brothers who don't

3:16-18 Greeting, peace and grace blessings

**Background**

See the Introduction for 1 Thessalonians.

**Relationships with other letters of Paul**

If 2 Thessalonians was written while both Silvanus and Timothy were with Paul, and therefore not more than eighteen months after 1 Thessalonians, there would have been only one surviving letter of Paul's before 2 Thessalonians. But 3:17 presumes the existence of many letters before 2 Thessalonians. In addition to very many similarities to 1 Thessalonians, there are also many similarities to 1 Corinthians and Romans. For example, the first part of the autograph in 3:17 is identical to 1 Cor 16:21. So it may have been written after 1 Corinthians and Romans, and after a collection of Paul's letters was available.

If the second thanksgiving in 1 Th 2:13-16 was inserted after 1 Thessalonians was originally written, 2 Thessalonians, which also has a second thanksgiving in 2 Th 2:13-17, was written after that insertion. 1 and 2 Thessalonians are the only letters of Paul that begin with double thanksgivings.

2 Thessalonians is the only Pauline letter that does not use the uniquely Pauline phrase, "Anointed Jesus." The Pauline letters use that phrase 83 times, more frequently than "Jesus Anointed" which appears 78 times, nine of which are in 2 Thessalonians. The only other Pauline letters that have nine or more instances of "Jesus Anointed" are Romans and 1 Corinthians.

**Theme**

While 1 and 2 Thessalonians have a similar outline and similar openings, closings, and double thanksgivings (1 Th 1:2; 2:13; 2 Th 1:3; 2:13), their main sections are very different. 1 Thessalonians relates Paul's coming and closeness to the Thessalonians in a positive way to the Lord's coming, and gives encouragement regarding those who have died, that they will not be forgotten or left behind at the Lord's coming. 2 Thessalonians warns about the "lawless one" and the "evil one" who will come before the Lord's coming, and reverses the thrust of 1 Thessalonians that the Lord's coming was expected at any time and soon (1 Th 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:2-10,23) and that "the Day of the Lord is coming like a thief at night" (1 Th 5:2). 2 Thessalonians reflects an apocalyptic view similar to Revelation, which was probably written near the end of the first century, long after Paul's death. It is the only Pauline letter that says something that has not yet happened must happen before the Anointed's return.

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

### Address, grace and peace blessings<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul and Silvanus and Timothy,  
 To the *assembly* called out from<sup>2</sup>  
*the* Thessalonians  
 in God our Father  
 and *the* Lord Jesus  
 Anointed:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Anointed.

### Thanksgiving, God's justice, and prayer<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> We are obligated to give thanks to God always for you, brothers,  
 as is fitting,  
 because your faith is growing abundantly and the love of every one of you for one another  
 is increasing.

<sup>4</sup> So that we ourselves boast of you among God's churches  
 for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and afflictions that you endure—  
<sup>5</sup> evidence of God's just judgment  
 that you are counted worthy of God's kingdom for which you are suffering.

<sup>6</sup> For *it is* just with God to pay back:  
 to those who trouble you, trouble,  
<sup>7</sup> and to you who are being troubled, relief with us,  
 at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his mighty angels <sup>8</sup> in flaming fire,  
 rendering vengeance to those who do not acknowledge God and to those who do not  
 obey the good news of our Lord Jesus.

<sup>9</sup> These will suffer *the* justice of eternal ruin away from the Lord's presence and away  
 from the glory of his power,

<sup>10</sup> when he comes  
 to be glorified among his holy *ones*  
 and to be marveled at among all who have believed (because our testimony to you was  
 believed)  
 on that day.

<sup>11</sup> To this end we pray always for you,  
 that our God may make you worthy of the call,  
 and may fulfill every resolve of goodness and work of faith with power,  
<sup>12</sup> that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him,  
 through the grace of our God and *the* Lord Jesus Anointed.

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<sup>1</sup> 1:1-2 ABCDCBA. The first of seven divisions. Parallel with 3:16-18.

<sup>2</sup> 1:1. Literally, *ekklesia* = "called out from" (usually translated "church"), equivalent here to "Anointed."

<sup>3</sup> 1:3-12 ABA. Second of six divisions. Parallel with 3:6-15. A's: thanks and prayer; B: God's justice.

**Encouragement and prayer for strength and endurance in the face of the lawless one<sup>4</sup>**

**2** We urge you, brothers,  
 regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus Anointed and our gathering together to him,  
<sup>2</sup> that you not be quickly unsettled in mind nor be alarmed,  
 neither by spirit nor by word nor by letter as though from us,  
 to the effect that the Day of the Lord has come.

<sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you in any way.

For unless the apostasy comes first and revealed is the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction,  
<sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself over everything called god or object of worship,  
 so that he seats himself in God's temple,  
 proclaiming himself that he is God—

<sup>5</sup> don't you remember that when I was still with you I told you these *things*?

<sup>6</sup> And now the restrainer<sup>5</sup> you know so that he may be revealed at his time.

<sup>7</sup> For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work,  
 until the restrainer for the present only is taken out of the way.

<sup>8</sup> And then will be revealed the lawless *one*,  
 whom the Lord will do away with  
 by the spirit of his mouth  
 and render powerless  
 by the appearing of his coming,  
<sup>9</sup> *the one* whose coming is  
 by the Adversary's working with all power and signs and wonders of lying,  
<sup>10</sup> and with all deception of injustice  
 for those being destroyed,  
 because they did not receive the love of the truth that they might be saved.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore God sends them a strong delusion,  
 so that they believe the lie,  
<sup>12</sup> so that all may be condemned  
 who have not believed the truth  
 but delighted in injustice.

<sup>13</sup> We are obligated to give thanks to God always for you, brothers loved by *the* Lord,  
 because God chose you *as* first fruit to salvation in holiness of spirit and belief of truth,  
<sup>14</sup> to which he called you through our good news to possession of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus  
 Anointed.

<sup>15</sup> So then, brothers, stand firm and hold fast the traditions you were taught, whether by  
 word or by letter of ours.

<sup>16</sup> Himself our Lord Jesus Anointed and God our Father who loved us  
 and gave *us* eternal encouragement and good hope through grace,  
<sup>17</sup> may he encourage your hearts and strengthen *you* in every good deed and word.

<sup>4</sup> 2:1-17 ABCCBA. Parallel with 3:1-5. A's: encouragement to stand firm. B's: apostasy and delusion. C's: now and then.

<sup>5</sup> 2:6-7 The "restrainer," "possessor" or "occupier," (*katechon*) is mentioned nowhere else in the NT.



**Prayer for deliverance from the evil one**

- 3** Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the Lord's word may speed forward and be honored, just as among you,  
<sup>2</sup> and that we may be delivered from perverse and evil people, for not all *have* the faith.  
<sup>3</sup> Faithful however is the Lord, who will strengthen and guard you from the evil *one*.  
<sup>4</sup> We depend in *the* Lord on you, that what we command, you are doing and will do.  
<sup>5</sup> May the Lord guide your hearts to God's love and to the Anointed's steadfastness.

**Commands to work helpfully, and to shun brothers who don't**

- <sup>6</sup> We command you, brothers, in *the* name of the Lord Jesus Anointed, that you keep away from every brother walking irresponsibly and not according to the tradition that they received from us.  
<sup>7</sup> For you yourselves know how one must follow us. For we were not out of order among you,  
<sup>8</sup> nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying, but with labor and toil night and day working so as not to burden any of you.  
<sup>9</sup> Not that we have not *that* right, but to make ourselves an example for you to follow us.  
<sup>10</sup> For even when we were with you, we commanded you, that if anyone would not work neither should he eat.  
<sup>11</sup> For we hear some are walking among you out of order, not being busy, but being busybodies.  
<sup>12</sup> Such *persons* we command and urge in *the* Lord Jesus Anointed, that working in quietness they should eat their own bread.  
<sup>13</sup> But you, brothers, do not tire of doing good.  
<sup>14</sup> If anyone does not obey our word in this letter, take note of that *one* not to associate with him, that he may be ashamed.  
<sup>15</sup> And do not regard *him* as an enemy, but warn *him* as a brother.

**Greeting, peace and grace blessings**

- <sup>16</sup> Himself the Lord of peace, may he give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord *be* with you all.  
<sup>17</sup> The greeting by my own hand, Paul, which is a mark in every letter, so I write.  
<sup>18</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Anointed *be* with you all.

**Structure**

The overall structure is ABCDCBA:

1:1-2 Address and blessing

1:3-8 Thanksgiving

1:9-2:5 Paul's ministry for you, the church

2:6-3:17 Sharing in Anointed's death and resurrection

3:18-4:6 Your ministry for others

4:7-9 Commendation of letter carriers

4:10-18 Greetings and blessing

**Background**

The city of Colossae was in the Roman province of Asia, now western Turkey. It was about 120 miles east of Ephesus and about eleven miles east of Laodicea on a road from Ephesus. The city of Hierapolis was about six miles north of Laodicea. Of these three neighboring cities, the three cities mentioned in this letter, Laodicea was the most important and Colossae the least, being, by far, the least important city to which a New Testament letter was addressed. Orosius the historian (fl. 415) reported that these three cities were overthrown by an earthquake during the reign of Nero (54 - 68).

Colossians appears to be connected to Philemon. Col 4:7-9 identifies Tychicus and Onesimus as the carriers of the letter to the Colossians, and Philemon identifies Onesimus as the carrier of that letter. Philemon mentions Paul plus ten others, eight of whom (all but Philemon and his wife Apphia) are mentioned in Colossians. This has raised the question of whether both letters were written by Paul about the same time and sent together, or whether the author of Colossians used the names in Philemon to identify Colossians with Paul.

Colossians indicates that Paul is in prison (4:3,10,18; 1:24), but the question is the same as for Philippians and Philemon: which imprisonment? Location favors an unrecorded imprisonment at Ephesus, only 120 miles from Colossae. Timothy, a co-sender, was with Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:22; 1 Cor 4:17; 16:10-11; 2 Cor 1:1), but he was probably also with Paul at Rome (Phlp 1:1; Phlm 1:1). However, three others mentioned in 4:10,14—Luke, Demas, and Mark—are not mentioned with Paul at Ephesus, but are associated with him at Rome (Acts 28:15-16; 2 Tim 4:10-11; 1 Pet 5:13). Because of this—and some parallels with Romans, and some theology of Colossians on the church and the Anointed that seems more developed than Paul's undisputed letters—many favor Rome, if Paul is assumed to be the author.

**Hymns and Theme**

Colossians begins with a thanksgiving followed by a collection of three hymns that commemorate Paul's ministry to the church. The theme of the thanksgiving and these hymns—the unity among God, his Anointed, and his church—is faithful to Paul's theme in his undisputed letters, his good news. There are only two references to "spirit" in Colossians (1:8 and 2:5). Both are references to the spirit that believers share with each other and with God, but only one (1:8) is also usually regarded to be a reference to God's spirit. The term "holy" is used six times in Colossians, always in reference to God's "holy ones."

**The "Mystery"**

One of the parallels to Romans is the discussion, in Col 1:26-27; 2:2-3; 4:3, of a "mystery" that has been "hidden" until the time of the Anointed. It is summarized briefly as "Anointed among you, the hope of glory." It pertains to the Gentiles who have now been included in God's blessings. A similar mystery is explained in Eph 1:9-14; 2:11-3:13, and in 1 Tim 3:16. Paul's undisputed letters describe a mystery only in 1 Cor 2:1-16 and 15:51-57, and in Rom 11:1-36 and 16:25-26. In 1 Corinthians the mystery is applicable to all in general, not to Gentiles in particular. His only real

explanation of a mystery that pertains to Gentiles, and that has been hidden from everyone until it was revealed to Paul, is in Romans. But Paul's explanation of what was hidden is difficult to understand. The author of 2 Pet 3:1-16 agrees that Paul was sometimes hard to understand, but seems to understand Paul's explanation, in Rom 11:1-36, of God's purpose in dividing the "Day of the Lord" into two parts, with the resulting delay in his coming in final judgment as an added opportunity for both Jews and Gentiles to be saved.

In Colossians and Ephesians that mystery has been simplified to be the Anointed himself, and broadened to be the salvation of the Gentiles through the Anointed, a simpler concept that is more readily understood. It does not even mention the aspect that Paul, in Romans, said was hidden until God revealed it to him. But the idea that God would save the Gentiles, and that he would send an Anointed one, can hardly be described as a mystery to the Jews, a mystery that was hidden up to the time of Anointed, because it was part of God's promise to Abraham (Gen 22:18), as Paul conveys in Rom 1:5; 4:1-25; 9:22-30; 10:19-21; 16:26. So the carryover of the idea that this was a mystery that had been "hidden" from everyone until the time of the Anointed and that it applies to the Gentiles, appears to come from Paul's more mysterious mystery in Romans, and not from anything that is described in Colossians and Ephesians. That would place Colossians after Romans.

But what Colossians and Ephesians define as a mystery was a mystery to the Gentiles, and was hidden from the Gentiles, who were the audience addressed in Colossians and Ephesians.

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

### Address and blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul, an apostle of Anointed Jesus by God's will,  
and brother Timothy,  
    <sup>2</sup> To those in Colossae,  
holy and faithful brothers in Anointed:  
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

### Thanksgiving<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> We give thanks to God, Father of our Lord Jesus Anointed,  
always praying for you,  
    <sup>4</sup> having heard of your faith in Anointed Jesus  
and the love that you have for all the holy *ones*,  
<sup>5</sup> because of the hope laid up for you in the heavens,  
    of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the good news <sup>6</sup> that came to you,  
    just as also in all the world  
        it is bearing fruit and growing,  
    just as also among you,  
    from the day you heard and came to know God's grace in truth,  
<sup>7</sup> as you learned from Epaphras,  
    our beloved fellow slave  
        who is faithful on your behalf,  
    the Anointed's servant,  
<sup>8</sup> who also made known to us your love in spirit.

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-2 ABCBA. The first of seven divisions of this letter. Like 2 Cor 1:1-2. Parallel with 4:10-18.

<sup>2</sup> 1:3-8 ABA. The second of seven divisions. Parallel with the commendation of letter carriers in 4:7-9. Here Paul is hearing about them. In 4:7-9 they are being told about Paul. This thanksgiving, like the three hymns that follow it, commemorates Paul's ministry to the church, often indicating that he is absent. They may reflect Paul's farewell hymn in Phlp 1:27-2:18.

**Paul's ministry for you, the church<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>9</sup> Therefore also **we**, from the day **we** heard *it*, **we** do not cease

for **you** praying and asking

that **you** may be filled with the knowledge of his will  
in all spiritual wisdom and understanding

<sup>10</sup> to walk worthy of the Lord, to please *him* in all respects,

in every good work bearing fruit and growing in the knowledge of God,

<sup>11</sup> in every power strengthened according to the might of his glory

for all perseverance and patience,

with joy <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the **Father**,

who qualified you for a share of the inheritance of the holy *ones* in the light,

<sup>13</sup> who delivered us from the domain of darkness

and brought *us* into the kingdom of his beloved **son**:

<sup>14</sup> in whom we have release, the forgiveness of sins,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>15</sup> who is an image of God the invisible,

firstborn of all creation,

<sup>16</sup> for in him were created

all things,

in the heavens and on the earth,

the visible and the invisible,

whether thrones or dominions,

whether rulers or powers,

all things

through him and for him were created,

<sup>17</sup> and he is before all and all things in him hold together,

<sup>18</sup> and he is the head of the body, the church,

who is first, firstborn from the dead, that in everything he may be first.

<sup>19</sup> For in him *the Father* willed all fullness to dwell,

<sup>20</sup> and through him

to reconcile

all things to himself,

making peace

through the blood of his cross,

whether things on the earth or things in the heavens.

<sup>21</sup> And **you** who were once alienated and enemies in mind through evil works,

<sup>22</sup> he has now reconciled in the body of his flesh through death

to present **you** holy and faultless and blameless before himself,

<sup>23</sup> if **you** continue in the faith, grounded and firm and not moved from the hope of the good news that **you** heard,

that was preached to every creature under heaven,

of which **I** became, **I, Paul**, a servant.

<sup>3</sup> 1:9-2:5 ABA. The third of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 3:18-4:6, your ministry for others. Three hymns, all with Paul at both ends. The first and last center on Anointed, the center centers on the church repeatedly. 1:9-23 has seven sections: Paul, church, Father, son, Father, church, Paul. The center, 1:24-29, has: Paul centering on the church, the mystery centering on the church, Paul centering on the church. 2:1-5 has: Paul, Paul absent, church, God's mystery, Anointed, God's mystery, church, Paul absent, Paul.

<sup>4</sup> 1:14 *Forgiveness of sins* is a rare expression for Paul. It also occurs in Rom 4:7, Col 2:13 and Eph 1:7.

<sup>24</sup> Now I rejoice in *my* sufferings for you,<sup>5</sup> and I am completing what is lacking of the afflictions of the Anointed  
     in my flesh for his body,  
         which is the church,  
<sup>25</sup> of which I became, I, a servant  
 according to the stewardship of God given to me for you, to complete the word of God,  
<sup>26</sup> the mystery<sup>6</sup> that has been hidden from the ages and from the generations,  
     but now has been revealed to his holy *ones*,  
<sup>27</sup> to whom God chose to make known  
     what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles,  
     which is Anointed among you, the hope of glory,  
<sup>28</sup> whom we proclaim,  
     admonishing everyone,  
     and teaching everyone in all wisdom,  
         so that we may present everyone completed in Anointed,  
<sup>29</sup> for which also I labor,  
     struggling according to his working,  
     which is working in me mightily.

**2** For I want you to know how great a struggle I am having for you and those in Laodicea and all who have not seen my face in flesh,  
<sup>2</sup> that their hearts may be encouraged, being brought together in love, and into all richness of assurance of understanding  
     into knowledge of God's mystery,  
         Anointed,  
<sup>3</sup> in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.  
<sup>4</sup> This I say so that no one may deceive you with fine-sounding arguments.  
<sup>5</sup> For even though I am absent in the flesh,  
 yet in the spirit I am with you, rejoicing and seeing your orderliness and the firmness of your faith in Anointed.

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<sup>5</sup> 1:24 This verse and Eph 3:1,13 speak of Paul's vicarious sufferings on behalf of the church. Compare how he expressed it in Phlp 1:12-26; 2:17-18; and 3:7-14.

<sup>6</sup> 1:26-27 See Rom 16:25-26 and the discussion on the "mystery" in the introduction to Colossians.

**Sharing in Anointed's death and resurrection<sup>7</sup>**

<sup>6</sup> So, as you received the Anointed Jesus, the Lord,  
in him

walk,

<sup>7</sup> rooted and built up

in him

and established in the faith, as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

<sup>8</sup> See that no one captivates you through philosophy and empty deception  
according to human tradition,  
according to the elements of the world,  
and not according to Anointed.

<sup>9</sup> For in him dwells all the fullness of the deity bodily,

<sup>10</sup> and you are brought to fullness in him,

who is the head of every ruler and authority.

<sup>11</sup> In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands,  
in the stripping off of the body of flesh in the circumcision<sup>8</sup> of the Anointed,

<sup>12</sup> having been buried with him in baptism,

in which also you were raised with *him*

through the faithfulness of the working of God

who raised him from *the* dead.

<sup>13</sup> And you who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh,  
he<sup>9</sup> made you alive together with him,

having forgiven us all *our* trespasses.

<sup>14</sup> Having erased the handwriting against us

with *its* legal demands opposed to us,

he also set it aside, nailing it to the cross.

<sup>15</sup> Having disarmed the rulers and the authorities,

he made *them* a public example,

triumphing over them in the *cross*.

<sup>16</sup> So let no one judge you in food and in drink or in regard to a festival or new moon or Sabbath,

<sup>17</sup> which are a shadow of what is to come—

the Anointed's body.

<sup>18</sup> Let no one disqualify you, insisting on humility and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, in vain  
puffed up by the mind of his flesh,

<sup>19</sup> and not holding fast to the head,

from whom the whole body, by the joints and ligaments being supplied and held together, grows  
with the growth of God.

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<sup>7</sup> 2:6-3:17 ABA. The central of seven divisions. Three imperatives, 2:6-19, 2:20-3:4, and 3:5-17, to share in Anointed's death and resurrection.

<sup>8</sup> 2:11 *Circumcision*. His death, see the next phrase.

<sup>9</sup> 2:13 *He*. God.

<sup>20</sup> If you **died** with Anointed to the elements of the world, why as though living in *the* world do you submit to regulations—

<sup>21</sup> “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch,”

<sup>22</sup> which are all to perish with the using—

according to human commandments and doctrines?

<sup>23</sup> These, though having a word of wisdom

in self-chosen worship and humility *and* unsparing treatment of *the* body, *are* of no value against indulgence of the flesh.

**3** If then you were **raised** with the Anointed,

seek the *things* above,

where the Anointed is,

seated at God’s right hand.

<sup>2</sup> Think on the *things* above,

not the *things* on the earth.

<sup>3</sup> For you have **died**,

and your life

is hidden

with the Anointed

in God.

<sup>4</sup> When the Anointed

is revealed,

your life,

then you also will be revealed with him in glory.



<sup>5</sup> **Put to death**, therefore, the members that *are* on the earth:  
sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry.

<sup>6</sup> Because of these, God's vengeance is coming.

<sup>7</sup> In these you also once walked,  
when you lived in them.

<sup>8</sup> But now **put away**, even you, all these:

anger, fury, malice, slander, foul language from your mouth.

<sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another,

having **put off** the old self with its deeds,

<sup>10</sup> and having **put on** the new *self*,

which is being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of its creator,

<sup>11</sup> where there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian,  
Scythian, slave, free,

but all and in all *is* Anointed.

<sup>12</sup> **Put on** then,

as chosen *ones* of God, holy and beloved,

hearts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience,

<sup>13</sup> bearing with one another and forgiving each other if any against another has a complaint,  
and as the Lord forgave you,

so also you.

<sup>14</sup> Above all these, **put on** love, which is *the* bond of wholeness.

<sup>15</sup> And let the Anointed's peace rule in your hearts,  
to which also you were called in one body,  
and be thankful.

<sup>16</sup> Let the Anointed's word dwell in you richly,

in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another,

psalms, hymns, *and* spiritual songs with thankfulness singing in your hearts to God.

<sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or in deed, *do* everything in *the* name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving  
thanks to God *the* Father through him.

**Your ministry for others<sup>10</sup>**

18 **Wives**, be subject to *your* husbands as is fitting in *the* Lord.

19 **Husbands**, love *your* wives and do not be harsh toward them.

20 **Children**, obey *your* parents in everything, for this is pleasing to *the* Lord.

21 **Fathers**, do not aggravate your children, that they may not lose heart.

22 **Slaves**, obey in everything *your* lords according to flesh, not with eye service as currying favor, but in sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.

23 Whatever you do, do from *your* soul, as for the Lord and not for your masters,

24 knowing that from *the* Lord you will receive the due payment of *your* inheritance.

To the Lord Anointed be slaves.

25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

**4 Lords**, treat *your* slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Lord in heaven.

2 *All of you*, persevere in prayer,

keeping watch in it with thanksgiving,

3 praying at the same time also for us,

that God may open **for us** a door for the word,

to speak

the mystery of the Anointed for which I am in chains,

4 that I may make it known as it is necessary for me

to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom toward **those outside**,

making the most of the time,

6 your speech always with grace,

seasoned with salt,

so that you know how you ought to answer each one.

**Commendation of letter carriers<sup>11</sup>**

7 Everything about me, he will tell you,

Tychicus,<sup>12</sup> the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in *the* Lord,

8 whom I have sent<sup>13</sup> to you for this very *purpose*,

that you may know about us,

and that he may encourage your hearts,

9 together with Onesimus,<sup>14</sup> the faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you.

They will tell you about everything here.

<sup>10</sup> 3:18-4:6 ABBA. The fifth of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:9-2:5, Paul's ministry for you, the church. A structure of four pairs; the fourth, 4:2-6, is ministry by insiders for outsiders. This household code is similar to Eph 5:21-6:9, but less developed. Other household codes are in Titus 2:1-10; 1 Tim 2:8-15; 6:1-2; 1 Pet 2:18-3:12.

<sup>11</sup> 4:7-9 ABCDCBA. The sixth of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with the thanksgiving in 1:3-8. Here they are being told about Paul. In the thanksgiving, Paul is hearing about them.

<sup>12</sup> 4:7 *Tychicus*. Also the letter carrier for Ephesians. Also mentioned in Acts 20:4; Titus 3:12; and 2 Tim 4:12. Note the similarity of Col 4:7-8 and Eph 6:21-22.

<sup>13</sup> 4:8 The past tense reflects the readers' viewpoint when they receive this letter by the hand of Tychicus

<sup>14</sup> 4:9 *Onesimus*. See Phlm 1:10

**Greetings and blessing<sup>15</sup>**

<sup>10</sup> Greeting you is Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner,  
and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas  
(concerning whom  
you have received  
instructions;  
if he comes to you,  
welcome him),

<sup>11</sup> and Jesus, who is called Justus.

These are of *the* circumcision, *my* only fellow workers for God's kingdom; they have been a comfort to me.

<sup>12</sup> Greeting you is Epaphras, who *is one* of you, Anointed's slave,  
always struggling for you in *his* prayers, that you may be established, complete and fulfilled, in every purpose of God.

<sup>13</sup> For I testify for him

that he works hard for you and those in Laodicea and those in Hierapolis.

<sup>14</sup> Greeting you is Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas.

<sup>15</sup> Greet the brothers in Laodicea, and Nympha and the church in her house.

<sup>16</sup> And when *this* letter has been read before you,  
see that it is read also in the church of *the* Laodiceans,  
and that you also read the *letter* from Laodicea.

<sup>17</sup> And tell Archippus,<sup>16</sup> "Look to the ministry that you received in *the* Lord, that you carry it out."

<sup>18</sup> The greeting by my own hand, Paul.<sup>17</sup>

Remember my chains.

Grace *be* with you.

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<sup>15</sup> 4:10-18 ABBA. The last of seven divisions. Parallel with the address and blessing in 1:1-2. The first and last sections mention Paul as a prisoner and are about Jews, the inner two are about Gentiles.

<sup>16</sup> 4:17 The only other reference to *Archippus* is in Phlm. The same for Epaphras and Onesimus.

<sup>17</sup> 4:18a Exactly the same as 1 Cor 16:21 and 2 Th 3:17a.

### Structure

The overall structure is ABCCBA. Both central divisions are ABBA.

1:1-2 Address and blessing

1:3-14 Doxology for God's blessings

1:15-3:21 The church united, Anointed's body, God's dwelling place

1:15-2:10 Thanksgiving, and prayer for God's power for the church in the Anointed

2:11-22 In the Anointed, both Gentiles and Israel are united, into God's temple

3:1-13 Gentiles are co-heirs (with Israel) in God's promise in the Anointed

3:14-21 Prayer for God's power for the church in the Anointed, and doxology

4:1-6:9 Walk worthy of God's calling to be in the Anointed's body

4:1-16 Unity in the Anointed, Anointed's gift

4:17-32 Throw off the old self, put on the new

5:1-20 Walk in love and light, filled with spirit. Take no part in unfruitful works

5:21-6:9 Household code, united in Anointed

5:21-33 Wives and husbands

6:1-4 Children and fathers

6:5-9 Slaves and lords

6:10-20 Put on God's full armor

6:21-24 News, commendation of the letter carrier, and blessing

### Background

Of all the letters attributed to Paul, only Romans has had more influence than Ephesians. Its portrayal of the universal church and of unity has been more appealing, and easier to grasp, than the difficult reasoning in Romans.

But Ephesians tells us very little about Paul, except that he is in prison (3:1; 4:1; 6:20). It is addressed to all the faithful: "To the holy *ones*, those who are also faithful in Anointed Jesus" (1:1). And it mentions only one other person by name, Tychicus, the letter carrier (6:21-22). The author says he has "heard" about those whom he is addressing (1:15; 3:2), implying he had not seen them or lived among them. All these would be strange for Paul, especially if this letter was addressed to Ephesus, where Paul had spent about three years.

Since the author of Ephesians is evidently familiar with Colossians, and to a lesser degree with Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians, it is assumed to have been written after all of them, and also after Paul's letters had been collected and were available as a group. If written by Paul, Colossians was most likely written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome. From our perspective, Ephesians' content implies a later date, and therefore implies an unrecorded subsequent imprisonment after the story in Acts ended, if written by Paul. But to readers in the early centuries there was nothing in this letter that suggested a second imprisonment in Rome.

### Theme

Ephesians could be an address to newly baptized believers in the form of a letter from Paul, for use as part of a liturgy for baptism. Even the brief address in 1:1-2, his customary thanksgiving and prayer which begins in 1:15, the brief summary of his ministry to them in 3:1-13, and the brief ending in 6:21-24 are perfectly suited to that purpose.

The theme throughout of the unity of God's "holy ones" with "God our Father" and with each other in "our Lord Jesus Anointed" is faithful to the theme of Paul's undisputed letters.

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

### Address and blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul, an apostle of **Anointed Jesus**  
by God's will,

To the holy *ones*, those who are also faithful in **Anointed Jesus**:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and *the Lord Jesus Anointed*.

### Doxology for God's blessings<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Anointed, who has blessed us in every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Anointed:

<sup>4</sup> as he chose us in him before *the* world's foundation for us to be holy and faultless before him in love,

<sup>5</sup> having appointed us before to the status of sons through Jesus Anointed to himself, according to the favor of his will,

<sup>6</sup> to praise of *the glory* of his grace which he gave us in the beloved,

<sup>7</sup> in whom

we have release through his blood, the forgiveness of trespasses,<sup>3</sup>

according to the riches of his grace <sup>8</sup> that he showered on us in all wisdom and insight,

<sup>9</sup> having made known to us the mystery of his will,

according to his favor that he purposed in him <sup>10</sup> in a plan for the fullness of the times,

to sum up all things in the Anointed, in the heavens and on the earth,

in him,

<sup>11</sup> in whom

also **we Jews** were chosen, having been appointed before

according to *the* plan of the *one* who works all things according to the purpose of his will,

<sup>12</sup> so that **we** may be to *the* praise of his **glory**, having hoped before  
in the Anointed,

<sup>13</sup> in whom also **you Gentiles**,

having heard the word of truth,

the good news of **your** salvation,

in whom also having believed,

**you** were sealed by the spirit of the promise, the holy *spirit*,

<sup>14</sup> which is *the* pledge of **our** inheritance

toward redemption of *his* possession,

to *the* praise of his **glory**.

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-2 ABCBA. The first of six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 6:21-24. This address and blessing summarizes the unity among God's "holy ones," "God our Father," and "the Lord Jesus Anointed"—the unity that every letter attributed to Paul summarizes in its address, the unity that is the good news that Paul preached.

<sup>2</sup> 1:3-14 ABA. The second of six divisions. Parallel with 6:10-20 about God's full armor.

<sup>3</sup> 1:7 *Forgiveness of trespasses* is a rare expression for Paul. It also occurs in Rom 4:7, Col 1:14 and 2:13.

**The church united, Anointed's body, God's dwelling place<sup>4</sup>****Thanksgiving, and prayer for God's power for the church in the Anointed<sup>5</sup>**

15 For this reason, I too, having heard about **your** faith in the Lord Jesus and love for all the holy *ones*,  
 16 I do not stop giving thanks for **you**, making mention in my prayers,  
 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Anointed, the Father of glory, may give **you** a spirit of wisdom and revelation in knowledge of himself,  
 18 enlightening the eyes of *your* heart so that **you** may know what is the hope of his calling,  
 what *are* the riches of the glory of his inheritance among the holy *ones*,  
 19 and what *is* the surpassing greatness of his power toward **us** who believe, according to the working of the might of his strength,  
 20 which he worked in the Anointed raising him from *the* dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavens,  
 21 far above every ruler and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the coming *age*.  
 22 And "everything he has put under his feet," and he gave him as head over everything in the church,  
 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

**2** Both **you**,<sup>6</sup> (who were dead in **your** trespasses and sins,  
 2 in which **you** once walked,  
 following the age of this world, following the ruler of the domain of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the disobedient,  
 3 among whom also **we** all once lived in the desires of **our** flesh doing the desires of the flesh and of *its* thoughts,  
 and **we** were by nature children of vengeance, as also the rest)  
 4 God, (who is rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us)  
 5 and **us**, (who *also* were dead in trespasses)

has made alive together in the Anointed  
 (by grace **you** have been saved)  
 6 and has raised together and seated together in the heavens in Anointed Jesus,  
 7 that he may show in the ages to come the surpassing riches of his **grace** in kindness to **us** in Anointed Jesus.  
 8 For by **grace** **you** have been saved through faith,  
 and that not of yourselves, *it is* God's gift,  
 9 not of *our* **works**, that no one may boast.  
 10 For **we** are his doing, created in Anointed Jesus, for good **works**, which God prepared before, that **we** should walk in them. [ABCBA]

<sup>4</sup> 1:15-3:21 ABBA. The third of six divisions. Parallel with 4:1-6:9.

<sup>5</sup> 1:15-2:10 ABCDCBA. Parallel with 3:14-21. A's: your faith in Anointed, God's gift; B's: God raised both the Anointed and us from the dead; C's: both you and we were dead in trespasses; D: all because of God's love for us.

<sup>6</sup> 2:1 "**You**" in 2:1 and "**us**" in 2:5 both appear to be the direct objects of the verbs in 2:5b-6 (like those in 1:20b): God has raised both you and us, when we both were dead in trespasses, from the dead together with the Anointed.

**In the Anointed, both Gentiles and Israel are united, into God's temple<sup>7</sup>**

- 11 Therefore, remember that at one time you, the Gentiles in flesh,  
 those called uncircumcision by those called circumcision (in flesh, made by hands),  
 12 that you were at that time apart from Anointed,  
 alienated from the community of Israel,  
 and strangers from the covenants of promise,  
 having no hope, and without God in the world.
- 13 But now in Anointed Jesus,  
 you who once were far off,  
 you have been brought near  
 in the blood of the Anointed.
- 14 For he himself is our peace,  
 who made both one  
 and the dividing-wall of partition broke down, the hostility,  
 through his flesh,  
 15 the law of commandments in ordinances having abolished,  
 so that the two he may make in himself into one new humanity,  
 making peace,
- 16 and may reconcile both  
 in one body  
 to God  
 through the cross,  
 putting to death the hostility through it.
- 17 And coming he preached good news,  
 "peace to you the far off  
 and peace to the near,"
- 18 for through him we have access, both *of us* in one spirit to the Father.
- 19 So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners but you are fellow citizens with the holy *ones*  
 and household members of God,  
 20 built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,  
 being *the* cornerstone himself, Anointed Jesus,  
 21 in whom *the* whole building being fitted together  
 grows into a holy temple in *the* Lord,  
 22 in whom also you are built together into *the* dwelling place of God in spirit.

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<sup>7</sup> 2:11-22 ABCCBA. Parallel with 3:1-13. Gentiles and Israel: in the first section, 2:11-12, Gentiles were strangers; in the last, 2:19-22, they are no longer strangers. In the second, 2:13, and fifth, 2:17-18, both were brought together in Anointed. In the center sections, 2:14-15, and 16, both are reconciled in one body.

### Gentiles are co-heirs (with Israel) in God's promise in the Anointed<sup>8</sup>

**3** Because of this I, Paul, the Anointed's prisoner, for the sake of you, the Gentiles—

<sup>2</sup> Surely you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace given to me for you.

<sup>3</sup> By revelation was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote above briefly,

<sup>4</sup> about which you can, when you read, perceive my understanding in the mystery of the Anointed,

<sup>5</sup> which in other generations was not made known to humanity as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in spirit,

<sup>6</sup> that the Gentiles are co-heirs and co-body-members and co-participants of the promise in Anointed Jesus through the good news,

<sup>7</sup> of which I was made a minister by the gift of God's grace given to me by the working of his power.

<sup>8</sup> To me, the very least of all *the holy ones*, was given this grace, to the Gentiles to bring the good news, the unsearchable riches of the Anointed,

<sup>9</sup> and to bring to light what *is* the plan

of the mystery hidden for ages in God

who created all things,

<sup>10</sup> so that now may be made known,

to the rulers and to the authorities in the heavens, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God,

<sup>11</sup> in accord with *his* purpose of the ages which he accomplished in the Anointed, Jesus our Lord,

<sup>12</sup> in whom we have the boldness and access with confidence through his faithfulness.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore I ask *you* not to lose heart in my sufferings for you; this is your glory—

#### Prayer for God's Power for the church in the Anointed, and doxology

<sup>14</sup> Because of this I bend my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in *the* heavens and on earth is named,

<sup>16</sup> that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power by his spirit in *your* inner self,

<sup>17</sup> that the Anointed may dwell through faith in your hearts, in love rooted and grounded,

<sup>18</sup> that you may have strength to comprehend with all the *holy ones* what *is* the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to know what surpasses knowledge, the Anointed's love, so that you may be filled to all the fullness of God.

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who is powerful beyond all to do far more than what we ask or imagine, by the power working in us,

<sup>21</sup> to him the **glory** in the church and in Anointed Jesus to all generations of the age of the ages. Amen.

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<sup>8</sup> 3:1-13 ABCBA. A's: Paul's suffering for the Gentiles. B's: God's mystery. The center explains the mystery. The sentence begun at 3:1 is resumed at 3:14.



**Walk worthy of God's calling to be in the Anointed's body<sup>9</sup>****Unity in the Anointed, Anointed's gift<sup>10</sup>**

**4** I urge you therefore, I, the prisoner in *the* Lord,  
to walk worthy of the calling to which you have been called,  
    <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness,  
        with patience,  
        bearing with one another in love,  
    <sup>3</sup> being eager to keep the unity of the spirit  
in the bond of peace:

<sup>4</sup> one body and one spirit, as also you were called in one hope of your calling,  
        <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism,  
    <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who *is* over all and through all and in all.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> To each one of us has been given grace according to the measure of the gift of the Anointed.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore it says: "Ascending on high he led captivity captive, he gave gifts to mankind."

<sup>9</sup> But what is the "he ascended," unless he also descended  
            to the depths of the earth?

<sup>10</sup> He who descended

        himself is also he who ascended far above all the heavens, that he may fill all things.

<sup>11</sup> And he gave to some *to be* apostles, to some prophets, to some evangelists, to some pastors and teachers:

<sup>12</sup> towards the equipping of the holy *ones* for *the* work of service,  
        for building up the body of the Anointed

<sup>13</sup> until we all come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the son of God,  
        to mature manhood, to *the* measure of *the* maturity of the fullness of the Anointed,

<sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be babies, tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching, by human trickery, by craftiness in deceitful scheming,

<sup>15</sup> but being truthful in love,

        we may grow into him

        in all things

        who is the head,

        Anointed,

<sup>16</sup> from whom all the body,

        joined and held together through every ligament of support by *the* working in measure of each individual part,

        the growth of the body brings about

to build up itself in love.

<sup>9</sup> 4:1-6:9 ABBA. The A's: unity in Anointed, B's: putting off the old way of life and putting on the new.

<sup>10</sup> 4:1-16 ABCBA. The A's: love, B's: unity, C: gifts to each.

<sup>11</sup> 4:4-6 These seven "ones" are arranged in three groups: the church, the Lord, and God. The same three groups are celebrated in all the hymns in Ephesians and Colossians. Their unity is Paul's theme.

**Throw off the old self, put on the new**

- 17 This, then, I say and testify in *the* Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles walk,  
in *the* futility of their mind,  
18 darkened in understanding,  
alienated from the life of God  
due to the ignorance that is in them  
due to the hardness of their heart,  
19 who, having lost all sensitivity, have handed themselves over to sensuality, to *the* practice of every  
impurity with greediness.
- 20 You have not so learned the Anointed,  
21 if indeed you heard of him  
and were taught in him,  
as truth is in Jesus,
- 22 that you should throw off the former way of life,  
the old self,  
corrupted by the lusts of deception,  
23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,  
24 and put on the new self,  
created like God in uprightness and holiness of the truth.
- 25 Therefore, putting away lying, “speak truth each with his neighbor,” for we are members of one  
another.
- 26 “Be angry and do not sin.” Do not let the sun set on your anger,  
27 nor give opportunity to the Slanderer.<sup>12</sup>  
28 The thief must no longer steal,  
but rather work,  
doing good with *his* hands,  
that he may have *something* to share with the *one* having need.
- 29 Let no foul word come out of your mouth,  
but only what *is* good for building up what is needed,  
that it may give grace to those who hear.
- 30 And do not grieve God’s holy spirit, with which you were sealed for the day of deliverance.  
31 All bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and slander must be removed from you, together  
with all malice.
- 32 To one another be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God in Anointed has forgiven  
you.

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<sup>12</sup> 4:27 The Greek word used here and at 6:11, usually translated “Devil,” is not used in Paul’s undisputed letters. There, the Hebrew word, “Satan,” is used, which has a similar meaning: “Adversary” or “Accuser.”

**Walk in love and light, filled with spirit. Take no part in unfruitful works**

- 5** Be followers, then, of God as beloved children,  
 2 and walk in love,  
     as the Anointed loved us  
 and handed himself over for us,  
 “an offering and sacrifice to God for a fragrant aroma.”
- 3 But sexual immorality and all impurity, or greed, must not even be named among you,  
 as befits holy *ones*,  
 4 also obscenity and foolish talk or coarse joking,  
     which are not fitting,  
 but rather thanksgiving.
- 5 Be sure of this:  
 that every immoral or impure or greedy *person*, that is, an idolater, has no inheritance in the  
 kingdom of the Anointed and God.
- 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words,  
 for because of these  
     comes the vengeance of God  
 on the disobedient.
- 7 Therefore do not be associated with them.
- 8 For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in *the* Lord.  
 Walk as children of light  
 9 (for the fruit of the light *is* in all goodness and uprightness and truth),  
 10 proving what is pleasing to the Lord.  
 11 And take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness.  
     But rather expose *them*,  
 12 for the *things* done in secret by them are shameful even to speak of.  
 13 All things exposed by the light become visible,  
 14 for all that is visible is light.  
 Therefore it says: “Awake, sleeper,  
 and arise from the dead, and on you will shine the Anointed.”
- 15 Look carefully, therefore, how you walk,  
 not as foolish  
     but as wise,  
 16 making the most of the time,  
 because the days are evil.
- 17 Therefore do not be senseless,  
 but understand what *is* the Lord’s will.
- 18 And “do not get drunk with wine,” in which is debauchery, but be filled with spirit,  
 19 singing to one another psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,  
     singing and chanting in your hearts to the Lord,  
 20 giving thanks always for all *things* in *the* name of our Lord Jesus Anointed to *our* God and Father.

**Household code, united in Anointed<sup>13</sup>****Wives and husbands**

21 Submit to one another out of respect for Anointed:

22 **Wives**, *submit* to your own husbands

as to the Lord,

23 because *the* husband is head

of the wife

as also the Anointed *is* head

of the church,

himself *the* savior

of the body.

24 But as the church is submissive

to the Anointed,

so also the **wives** to *their* husbands in everything.

25 **Husbands**, love *your* wives,

even as the Anointed loved the church

and handed himself over for her,

26 that he may make her holy,

cleansing *her* with the washing of water with *the* word,

27 that he may present to himself the church glorious,

not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing,

but that she may be holy and unblemished.

28 In the same way ought **husbands** to love their own wives as their own bodies.

He who loves his own wife loves himself.

29 For no one ever hates his own flesh,

but nourishes and cherishes it,

even as the Anointed *does* the church, 30 for we are members of his body.

31 “For this reason a man will leave *his* father and mother and be joined to his wife,  
and the two will become one flesh.”

32 This mystery is great,

but I am speaking about Anointed and about the church.

33 In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect *her* husband.

<sup>13</sup> 5:21-6:9 ABA. This household code is similar to the one in Col 3:18-4:1, but is further developed.

### Children and fathers

**6 Children**, obey your parents, for this is right.

<sup>2</sup> “Honor your father and mother,”

which is *the* first commandment with a promise:

<sup>3</sup> “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

<sup>4</sup> And **fathers**, do not make your children angry but raise them with discipline and instruction of *the* Lord.

### Slaves and lords

<sup>5</sup> **Slaves**, be obedient to *your* lords according to flesh with fear and trembling, in sincerity of your heart, as to the Anointed,

<sup>6</sup> not with eye service as currying favor,

but as slaves of Anointed,

doing God’s will from *your* soul,

<sup>7</sup> with good will being a slave as for the Lord

and not for your masters,

<sup>8</sup> knowing that each, for whatever good he does, will receive the same again from *the* Lord, whether slave or free.

<sup>9</sup> And **lords**,

do the same to them,

putting away threatening,

knowing that the Lord of both them and you is in *the* heavens,

and there is no partiality

with him.

**Put on God's full armor<sup>14</sup>**

- 10 Finally, be strong in *the* Lord and in the power of his strength.
- 11 Put on God's full armor, for you to be able to stand against the wiles of the Slanderer.
- 12 Because for us the fight is not against blood and flesh,  
but against the principalities,  
against the authorities,  
against the world rulers of this darkness,  
against the spiritual *forces* of evil in the heavens.
- 13 Therefore take up God's full armor, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day,  
and having done everything, to stand.
- 14 Stand, therefore, having belted your waist with truth,  
and having put on the breastplate of uprightness,  
15 and having shod *your* feet with readiness of the good news of peace,  
16 with all *these*, taking up the shield of faith,  
with which you will be able to put out all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*.
- 17 And take the helmet of salvation  
and the sword of the spirit, which is God's word,
- 18 with all prayer and petition,  
praying at all times in spirit,  
and in that watching with all perseverance and petition  
for all the holy *ones*,
- 19 and for me, that to me may be given a word  
when I open my mouth,  
in openness  
to make known  
the mystery of the good news,  
20 for which I am an ambassador  
in chains,  
that in him I may speak openly  
as I must speak.

**News, commendation of the letter carrier, and blessing<sup>15</sup>**

- 21 So that you also may know about me, what I am doing,  
he will tell you everything,  
Tychicus,<sup>16</sup> the beloved brother and faithful servant in *the* Lord,  
22 whom I have sent to you for this very *purpose*,  
so that you may know about us, and that he may encourage your hearts.
- 23 Peace to the brothers, and love with faith,  
from God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Anointed.
- 24 Grace *be* with all who love our Lord Jesus Anointed in pureness.

<sup>14</sup> 6:10-20 ABBA. The fifth of six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:3-14. 6:18-20 echo Col 4:2-4.

<sup>15</sup> 6:21-24 Parallel with 1:1-2.

<sup>16</sup> 6:21 *Tychicus*, also the letter carrier for Col, is also mentioned in Acts 20:4; Col 4:7-9; Titus 3:12; and 2 Tim 4:12. Note the similarity of Col 4:7-8 and Eph 6:21-22. Acts 20:4 says he was from the province of Asia, which included Ephesus. 2 Tim 4:12 says he was sent to Ephesus. Col was sent to three cities in Asia.

### Structure

The overall structure is ABCBA:

- 1:1-4 Address and blessing
- 1:5-16 Code for elders/overseers
  - 2:1-10 Household code
- 2:11-3:11 Pastoral care of church members
- 3:12-15 Instructions, greetings, and blessing

### Background

This letter from Paul is addressed to Titus, who was on the Greek island of Crete. Paul had recently left Crete and planned to go soon for the winter to the ancient city of Nicopolis on the west coast of Greece, about 325 miles northwest from western Crete. Corinth, which is on a direct route from Crete to Nicopolis, would be a likely location from which Paul may have written this letter. If this was written by Paul, it deals with an incident in Paul's travels that is not recorded in Acts. The only time that Acts reports that Paul was in Crete was when he was being taken, as a prisoner, to Rome from Caesarea. But there are many incidents in Paul's travels that are not recorded in Acts. For example, in 2 Cor 11:25 Paul reports that he was shipwrecked three times. Acts reports only one of them. And Acts never mentions Titus, who is mentioned in Gal 2:1-3; 2 Cor 2:13; 7:6-15; 8:6,16-23; 12:18; 2 Tim 4:10; and Titus 1:4.

Titus and 1 and 2 Timothy are known as the "pastoral" letters because they deal with the pastoral care of churches, church structure, and conduct in the church, rather than with the missionary and doctrinal themes in the other Pauline letters. Their themes seem more suited to the last quarter of the first century, or the second century, when the church had grown and become more established, and the return of the Lord Jesus seemed less immediate. Accordingly, many scholars believe they were written by the Pauline community after Paul's death.

Since the church structure in Titus seems less developed than in 1 Timothy, Titus is a likely candidate to be the earliest of the three pastorals. (The canonical sequence is based on length, not date.) And since 2 Timothy speaks of Paul's approaching death, it is a likely candidate to be last. But since authorship is uncertain, so are the dates and places of composition.

Another indication that the pastorals may not have been written during Paul's lifetime, but much later, is that they were not included in the earliest surviving copy of Paul's letters, P46, which was written about AD 200.<sup>1</sup> In addition, 1 and 2 Timothy are the only New Testament books not to have any papyrus manuscripts surviving, and to have only one witness earlier than the fifth century, the Sinaiticus of the fourth century. That is another reason why 1 and 2 Timothy are last in this sequence.

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<sup>1</sup> P46 includes Romans through 1 Thessalonians, plus Hebrews, which was placed after Romans. P46 was a single-quire codex which was formed by laying fifty two sheets of papyrus on one another, each with the recto side uppermost, and then folding the whole mass in the middle, giving 104 leaves after binding, of which the first seven and last seven did not survive. The pages were numbered. The first seven leaves contained Romans 1:1-5:16. The last surviving leaf ends with the last verse of 1 Thessalonians. Since all of the pastorals could not have been included in the missing pages at the end of P46, and since if more than Titus was included then 2 Thessalonians and Philemon could not both have been included, and since a handwritten codex often had some blank pages at the end, it is assumed that none of the pastorals were included in P46.

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

## Address and blessing<sup>2</sup>

**1** Paul, slave of God, apostle of **Jesus Anointed**  
 for *the* faith of God's chosen *ones* and *the* knowledge of truth in accord with godliness,  
<sup>2</sup> in hope of life eternal,  
 that God, who does not lie, promised  
 before time eternal,  
<sup>3</sup> and has revealed at his own time his word in *the* proclamation  
 that I was entrusted with by command of our savior, God;  
<sup>4</sup> To Titus,<sup>3</sup> true child in a common faith:  
 Grace and peace from God *our* Father and **Anointed Jesus** our savior.

## Code for elders/overseers<sup>4</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For this reason I left you in Crete,  
 so that what was unfinished you may set right,  
 and appoint **elders** for each city,  
 as I directed you,  
<sup>6</sup> whoever is blameless,  
 husband of one wife,  
 having believing children not accused of dissipation or disobedient.  
<sup>7</sup> For the **overseer** must be blameless as God's steward,  
 not arrogant, not prone to anger, not drunken, not violent, not greedy,  
<sup>8</sup> but hospitable, loving goodness, sensible, upright, devout, self-controlled,  
<sup>9</sup> holding fast the faithful word in accord with the teaching,  
 so that he may be able both to encourage with sound teaching and refute those who oppose.

<sup>10</sup> For there are many insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers,  
 especially those of the circumcision,  
<sup>11</sup> whom it is necessary to silence, who overturn whole houses, teaching what they  
 should not, for the sake of dishonest gain.  
<sup>12</sup> One of them, a prophet of their own, said,  
 "Cretans *are* always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."  
<sup>13</sup> That testimony is true.  
 For this reason rebuke them sharply, so that they may be sound in the faith,  
<sup>14</sup> not paying attention to Jewish myths  
 and commandments of those who turn away from the truth.

<sup>15</sup> All things *are* pure to the pure, but to the defiled and unfaithful nothing *is* pure,  
 but defiled are both their mind and conscience.  
<sup>16</sup> God they profess to know,  
 but by *their* works they deny *him*,  
 being detestable and disobedient and unfit for every good work.

<sup>2</sup> 1:1-4 ABA. The symmetry of *Jesus Anointed* and *Anointed Jesus* is opposite to Paul's undisputed letters.

<sup>3</sup> 1:4 *Titus* is also mentioned in Gal 2:1-3; 2 Cor 2:13; 7:6-15; 8:6,16-23; 12:17-18; and 2 Tim 4:10.

<sup>4</sup> 1:5-16 ABA. The second of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 2:11-3:11.



**Household code<sup>5</sup>**

**2** But you, tell what is fitting with sound teaching:

<sup>2</sup> **older men** to be sober, honorable, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in patience;

<sup>3</sup> **older women** likewise, reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not addicted to much wine, teaching what is good;

<sup>4</sup> so they may train the **young women**

to love their husbands,

to love their children,

<sup>5</sup> *to be* sensible, chaste, homemakers, good,

submissive to their husbands,

so that God's word may not be discredited.

<sup>6</sup> The **younger men** likewise urge to be sensible,

<sup>7</sup> in all *respects* showing yourself an example of good works:

in teaching *showing* honesty, seriousness, <sup>8</sup> wholesome speech beyond reproach,

so that the opponent may be ashamed, having nothing bad to say about us.

<sup>9</sup> *Tell* **slaves** to be submissive to their masters in all *respects*,

to be pleasing,

not obstinate,

<sup>10</sup> not pilfering,

but showing complete good faithfulness,

so that they may adorn the teaching of God our savior in all *respects*.

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<sup>5</sup> 2:1-10 ABBA. The central of five divisions of this letter. The other household codes in the NT are Col 3:18-4:1; Eph 5:21-6:9; 1 Tim 2:8-15; 6:1-2; and 1 Pet 2:18-3:12.

**Pastoral care of church members<sup>6</sup>**

11 For God's grace has appeared, saving all,  
 12 teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly desires,  
 sensibly and uprightly and godly  
 we should live in the present age,  
 13 looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and of our savior Jesus  
 Anointed,

14 who gave himself for us  
 that he may deliver us from all lawlessness  
 and cleanse for himself a people of his own, zealous for **good works**.

15 These *things* speak and encourage and rebuke with all **authority**; let no one disregard you.

**3** Remind them to be subject to rulers *and* authorities,  
 to be obedient,  
 to be ready for every good work,  
 2 to speak evil of no one,  
 to be peaceable,  
 gentle,  
 showing all humility toward all.

3 For we ourselves were once foolish,  
 disobedient,  
 led astray,  
 slaves to various desires and pleasures,  
 living in malice and envy,  
 loathsome,  
 hating one another.

4 But when the goodness and loving kindness appeared of God our savior,  
 5 not by works in uprightness which we did,  
 but because of his mercy he saved us  
 through washing of rebirth and renewal of holy spirit,  
 6 which he poured on us richly through Jesus Anointed our savior,  
 7 so that, made upright by his grace,  
 we may be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.

8 Faithful *is* the saying, and these *things* I want you to affirm **strongly**,  
 that those be careful to devote themselves to **good works**  
 who believe in God;  
 these are good and beneficial to everyone.

9 Foolish controversies and genealogies and rivalries and quarrels about the law  
 avoid,

for they are useless and futile.

10 A divisive person,  
 after a first and second warning,  
 dismiss,

11 knowing that such a one is perverted and sins, being self-condemned.

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<sup>6</sup> 2:11-3:11 ABCDEDCBA. The fourth of five divisions of this letter. The A's say to deny, avoid, and dismiss ungodliness. The B's aim for good works. The C's tell Titus to speak firmly. The middle three contain: seven good actions, seven bad actions, and seven of God's actions to save us.

**Instructions, greetings, and blessing<sup>7</sup>**

- 12 When I send Artemas to you or Tychicus,<sup>8</sup> do your best to come to me at Nicopolis,  
for there I have decided to spend the winter.
- 13 Zenas the lawyer and Apollos,<sup>9</sup> as best you can, send on their way so that they lack nothing.
- 14 And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works  
for pressing needs,  
so that they may not be unfruitful.
- 15 Greeting you are all those with me.  
Greet those who love us in *the* faith.  
Grace *be* with you all.

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<sup>7</sup> 3:12-15 ABA. The last of five divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:1-4.

<sup>8</sup> 3:12 *Tychicus* is also mentioned in Acts 20:4; Col 4:7-9; Eph 6:21-22; and 2 Tim 4:12.

<sup>9</sup> 3:13 *Apollos* is also mentioned in Acts 18:24-19:1 and 1 Cor 1:12; 3:4-6,22; 4:6; 16:12.

**Structure**

The overall structure is ABCDCBA:

- 1:1-2 Address to Timothy and blessing
- 1:3-20 Pastoral charges to Timothy, Paul's example
  - 1:3-11 A pastoral charge to Timothy on sound teaching and law
  - 1:12-17 Paul's example, enclosed by thanks to Jesus and doxology to God
  - 1:18-20 A pastoral charge to Timothy: fight the good fight
- 2:1-3:16 How you (as a pastor) should behave in God's household, the church
  - 2:1-7 You (as a pastor), our savior God, Jesus our mediator, and I an apostle
  - 2:8-15 Men and women
  - 3:1-7 The overseer
  - 3:8-13 Deacons
  - 3:14-16 You (as a pastor), the church of the living God, and Jesus the mystery of godliness
- 4:1-16 Pastoral charges on godliness
- 5:1-6:2a How you (as a pastor) should behave in God's household, the church (continued)
  - 5:1-2 Free men and women
  - 5:3-16 Widows
  - 5:17-25 Elders
  - 6:1-2a Slaves
- 6:2b-19 Pastoral charges, Anointed's example
  - 6:2b-10 A pastoral charge on sound teaching and riches
  - 6:11-16 A summary pastoral charge: fight the good fight, Anointed's example, and blessing
  - 6:17-19 A pastoral charge on riches
- 6:20-21 Closing charge to Timothy and blessing

The first and last divisions are the address to Timothy and blessing, and the closing charge to Timothy and blessing. The second and sixth are pastoral charges, Paul's or the Anointed's example. The third and fifth are how you (as a pastor) should behave in God's household, the church. The center is pastoral charges on godliness.

**Background**

Timothy was one of Paul's closest and most loyal associates. He is first mentioned at Lystra in southeast Asia Minor in Acts 16:1-3, where he joined Paul early in his second missionary journey, and where he is described as "a disciple . . . well spoken of by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium." He may have been converted by Paul on Paul's first missionary journey when Paul evangelized in Iconium and Lystra (Acts 13:51-14:23). Timothy continued with Paul for the rest of his second missionary journey, where he is mentioned at Corinth (Acts 18:1,5; 1 Th 1:1; 3:2,6; 2 Cor 1:19). He accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey, where he is mentioned in Acts 19:22; 20:4-5; 1 Cor 4:17; 16:10-11; 2 Cor 1:1; and Rom 16:21. And he was with Paul when he wrote Phlp 1:1; 2:19-24, and Phlm 1:1, from prison, probably in Rome.

1 Timothy is addressed to Timothy at Ephesus, from Paul who had recently left Ephesus for Macedonia (1:3), and who hoped to return soon (3:14). That would fit well with the only time that Acts reports that Paul left Ephesus for Macedonia (Acts 20:1), which was on his third missionary journey, except that on that occasion Acts reports that Paul sent Timothy on to Macedonia ahead of him rather than leaving him behind (Acts 19:21-22).

So if Acts is correct and 1 Timothy was written by Paul, it must have been written after the story in Acts ends with Paul in prison in Rome. But by that time Timothy would have been traveling with Paul for many years, helping him deal with the churches Paul dealt with in all that time. That would

make the reason given in 3:14-15 sound strange for putting these pastoral instructions into writing for Timothy. Further, if Paul returned to Ephesus, as indicated in 1:3; 3:14, after Paul's imprisonment in Rome, instead of during his third missionary journey, then Paul's statement in Acts 20:25,38 to the elders at Ephesus that none of them would ever see him again was incorrect.

So it appears more likely that, for the setting for this letter, the author of 1 Timothy used Paul's reported departure from Ephesus to Macedonia, where he stayed only a few months before he returned on his way to Jerusalem, and was not aware of the detail reported earlier in Acts about Timothy going ahead instead of being left behind.

Although this letter indicates that it was sent from Macedonia to Ephesus, a journey of about 400 miles, including at least some travel by sea, there is no commendation or mention of the letter carrier, which is somewhat unusual for Paul. There is also no thanksgiving or prayer after the address at the beginning, which is also unusual for Paul.

### **Theme**

The general theme is "how one should behave in God's household" (3:15). It consists of instructions on the pastoral care of churches, church structure, and conduct in the church. It seems to be aimed primarily at pastors and student pastors. It may have been prepared for use as part of a liturgy for ordination.

# 1 Timothy

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

## Address to Timothy and blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul, an apostle of Anointed Jesus by command of God our savior and of Anointed Jesus our hope,  
<sup>2</sup> To **Timothy**, *my* true child in faith:  
 Grace, mercy, peace from God *our* Father and Anointed Jesus our Lord.

## Pastoral charges to Timothy, Paul's example<sup>2</sup>

### A pastoral charge to Timothy on sound teaching and law

<sup>3</sup> I urged you to stay in Ephesus, when I left for Macedonia, that you may charge some not to teach different *doctrine*,  
<sup>4</sup> nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than God's training in faith.  
<sup>5</sup> The aim of *this* charge is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith,  
<sup>6</sup> from which some having deviated, have turned to empty talk,  
<sup>7</sup> desiring to be teachers of *the* law,  
 not understanding either what they say or what they assert.  
<sup>8</sup> We know that the law *is* good, if one uses it lawfully,  
<sup>9</sup> knowing this: that law is not meant for *the* upright, but for *the* lawless and disobedient, godless and sinful, impious and profane, father-killers and mother-killers, murderers, <sup>10</sup> sexually immoral, homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is opposed to sound teaching  
<sup>11</sup> according to the good news of the glory of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

<sup>1</sup> 1:1-2 ABA. The first of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 6:20-21.

<sup>2</sup> 1:3-20 ABA. The second of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 6:2b-19.

**Paul's example, enclosed by thanks to Jesus and doxology to God**

12 Thanks

I have

for him who has strengthened

me,

Anointed Jesus our Lord,

because he counted me faithful, appointing *me* to *his* service

13 though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a tyrant.

But I received mercy

because ignorantly I acted in unbelief,

14 and our Lord's grace overflowed with faithfulness and love  
in Anointed Jesus.

15 Faithful *is* the saying and of full acceptance worthy:

"Anointed Jesus

came into the world, sinners to save"—

of whom foremost am I.

16 But for this *purpose* I received mercy,

that in me foremost Anointed Jesus may show the utmost patience

as an example for those who would come to believe on him to eternal life.

17 To the king of the ages,

immortal, invisible,

*the* only God,

honor and **glory**

into the ages of the ages. Amen.

**A pastoral charge to Timothy: fight the good fight**

18 This charge I commit to you,

*my* child **Timothy**, in accord with the prophecies made earlier about you,

that you fight through them the good fight,

19 having faith and a good conscience,

which some, having pushed aside,

of *their* faith have made shipwreck,

20 among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander,<sup>3</sup>

whom I have handed over to the Adversary, that they may be taught not to blaspheme.

<sup>3</sup> 1:20 *Hymenaeus* and *Alexander* are also mentioned unfavorably in 2 Tim 2:17; 4:14.

## How you (as a pastor) should behave in God's household, the church<sup>4</sup>

### You (as a pastor), our savior God, Jesus our mediator, and I an apostle

**2** I urge *you*, then, first of all to offer requests, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings for everyone,

<sup>2</sup> for kings

and all who are in authority,

that a quiet and peaceful life we may lead in all godliness and honor.

<sup>3</sup> This *is* good and acceptable

in the sight of our savior,

God,

<sup>4</sup> who wants everyone to be saved

and to knowledge of truth to come.

<sup>5</sup> For *there is* one God,

and one mediator between God and humanity,

a man, Anointed Jesus,

<sup>6</sup> who gave himself a ransom for all—

the testimony at *God's* own time,

<sup>7</sup> to which I was appointed a herald

and an apostle

(Truth I am telling, I am not lying),

a teacher of Gentiles,

in faith and truth.

### Men and women

<sup>8</sup> I want *them*, therefore, to pray,

the **men** in every place,

lifting up holy hands without anger and argument.

<sup>9</sup> Likewise *I want the women* in honorable dress with modesty and moderation to dress themselves,

not in braided hair and gold or pearls or costly apparel,

<sup>10</sup> but, as is fitting for women who profess reverence for God, with good works.

<sup>11</sup> A woman should learn in silence

with full submission.

<sup>12</sup> I do not allow a woman to teach

nor to have authority over a man,

but to be in silence.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first,

then Eve.

<sup>14</sup> And Adam was not deceived,

but the woman, being deceived, was in disobedience.

<sup>15</sup> But she will be saved through childbearing,

if they remain in faithfulness and love and holiness, with prudence.

<sup>4</sup> 2:1-3:16 ABCBA. Third of seven divisions. Parallel with 5:1-6:2a. The first and last are about the church, God and Jesus, the second and fourth about men and women and deacons, the center about the overseer.

<sup>5</sup> 2:11-12 These are close to 1 Cor 14:34-35, which conflict with 1 Cor 11:5,13. The reason given in 2:13 was cited in 1 Cor 11:8 but was balanced with 1 Cor 11:12. The reason given in 2:14 was not used in 1 Cor 11: that Eve was deceived, so she was the one who disobeyed—not Adam, who disobeyed deliberately! In 1 Cor 11:7,15 Paul used glory as a basis for relationships between men and women, not guilt and punishment.



### The overseer

- 3** Faithful *is* the saying: whoever aspires to *the* office of **overseer** desires a good work.  
 2 Therefore, the **overseer** must be blameless, husband of one wife, sober, sensible, honorable, hospitable, able to teach,  
 3 not drunken, not violent, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not loving money,  
 4 managing his own household well, keeping *his* children in obedience with full respectfulness  
 5 (if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of God's church?),  
 6 not recently converted, so that he may not *be* swollen with pride *and* fall into the Slanderer's<sup>6</sup> condemnation.  
 7 He must also have a good reputation with those outside,  
 so that he may not fall into disgrace and a snare of the Slanderer.

### Deacons

- 8** **Deacons**,<sup>7</sup> likewise, *must be* honorable,  
 not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not after dishonest gain,  
 9 holding the mystery of the faith in a clear conscience.  
 10 And they must be tested first;  
 then let them serve as **deacons** if they are blameless.  
 11 *Their* wives likewise *must be* honorable, not slanderers, sober, faithful in everything.  
 12 **Deacons** must be husbands of one wife,  
 managing well *their* children and their own households.  
 13 For those who serve well as **deacons**,  
 a good standing for themselves they gain  
 and great boldness in the faith in Anointed Jesus.

### You (as a pastor), the church of the living God, and Jesus the mystery of godliness

- 14 These *things* I write to you,  
 hoping to come to you soon,  
 15 but in case I am delayed,  
 so that you may know how one should behave in God's household,  
 which is *the* church  
 of *the* living God,  
*the* pillar and foundation of the truth.  
 16 And by common consent, great is the mystery of godliness:  
 Who was made known in flesh,  
 vindicated in spirit,  
 seen by angels,  
 proclaimed among Gentiles,  
 believed on in *the* world,  
 raised up in glory.

<sup>6</sup> 3:6,7 *Slanderer*. The Greek word used here and at Eph 4:27; 6:11, usually translated "Devil," is not used in Paul's undisputed letters. There, the Hebrew word "Satan" is used, which has a similar meaning: "Adversary" or "Accuser."

<sup>7</sup> 3:8 *Deacons*. The meaning is "servants."

**Pastoral charges on godliness<sup>8</sup>**

**4** The spirit expressly says that in later times some will turn away from the faith,  
 paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,  
<sup>2</sup> in hypocrisy of liars,  
 seared in their own conscience,  
<sup>3</sup> forbidding to marry, *commanding* to abstain from foods, that God created to be received with  
 thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

<sup>4</sup> For every creature of God *is* good,  
 and nothing *is* to be rejected that with thanksgiving *is* received,  
<sup>5</sup> for it is made holy through God's word and prayer.

<sup>6</sup> By placing these *matters* before the brothers,  
 you will be a good servant<sup>9</sup>  
 of Anointed Jesus,  
 nourished on the words of faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.  
<sup>7</sup> With profane and old wives' tales have nothing to do.

Train yourself for godliness.

<sup>8</sup> For physical training is useful for a little,  
 but godliness is useful for all *things*,  
 holding promise for the present life  
 and the *life* to come.

<sup>9</sup> Faithful *is* the saying and of full acceptance worthy,  
<sup>10</sup> for this we labor and struggle,  
 because we have hope in a living God,  
 who is savior of all,  
 especially *the* faithful.

<sup>11</sup> Command and teach these *things*.

<sup>12</sup> Let no one look down on your youth,<sup>10</sup>

but be an example for the faithful, in word, in conduct, in love, in faithfulness, in purity.

<sup>13</sup> Until I come, attend to the reading *to the people*, the encouraging, the teaching.

<sup>14</sup> Do not neglect the gift in you,

that was given to you through prophecy with laying on of the hands of the elders.

<sup>15</sup> Take care for these, live in them, so that your progress may be evident to all.

<sup>16</sup> Attend to yourself and *your* teaching, persevere in them,  
 for by doing this both yourself you will save and your hearers.

<sup>8</sup> 4:1-16 ABCCBA. The center of seven divisions of this letter.

<sup>9</sup> 4:6 *Servant*. The Greek word is "deacon."

<sup>10</sup> 4:12 *Youth*. See also 1:2,18 and 2 Tim 1:2; 2:1,22. Where did the idea come from that Timothy was a youth? Possibly from 1 Cor 4:17 and 16:10-11. But "my dear and faithful child in *the* Lord" in 1 Cor 4:17 probably indicates that Timothy was brought to the Lord by Paul, not anything about his age. Elsewhere in Paul's undisputed letters, Timothy is described as a co-author, brother, and fellow worker. The estimated date for 1 Timothy is usually thirteen years or more after Timothy joined Paul as a fellow missionary early in Paul's second missionary journey. A more likely possibility is that these letters to Timothy were prepared for the training, ordination, and guidance of pastors, many of whom would have been youthful.

**How you (as a pastor) should behave in God's household, the church (continued)<sup>11</sup>****Free men and women**

- 5** An **older man** do not rebuke, but appeal to *him* as to a father,  
to **younger men** as brothers,  
    <sup>2</sup> to **older women** as mothers,  
    to **younger women** as sisters, with all propriety.

**Widows<sup>12</sup>**

- <sup>3</sup> Honor widows *who are truly widows*.  
<sup>4</sup> But if a widow has children or grandchildren,  
    they must learn first to their own household to show piety and give back a repayment to *their*  
    parents,  
    for this is pleasing in God's sight.  
<sup>5</sup> The true widow, left alone, has hoped in God and continues in the petitions and prayers night and day.  
<sup>6</sup> But she who lives in self-indulgence is dead while she lives.  
<sup>7</sup> And these *things* command, so that they may be blameless.  
<sup>8</sup> Whoever for relatives, and especially for household members, does not provide, has denied  
the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.  
<sup>9</sup> Let a widow be enrolled *for support* not younger than sixty years,  
a wife of one husband,  
<sup>10</sup> well spoken of for good works,  
if she has brought up children,  
if she has shown hospitality,  
if she has washed *the* feet of holy *ones*,  
if she has helped the afflicted,  
if she has devoted herself to every good work.  
<sup>11</sup> Younger widows turn away,  
    for when their sensual desires draw them away from the Anointed, they want to marry, <sup>12</sup>  
    having condemnation because their first faith they have rejected.  
<sup>13</sup> And furthermore, they learn *to be* idle, going about the houses, not only idle but also  
    gossips and busybodies, saying things they should not.  
<sup>14</sup> So I want younger *widows* to marry, to bear children, to run a household, to give the  
    enemy no opportunity for slander.  
<sup>15</sup> For already some have turned away to follow the Adversary.  
<sup>16</sup> If any believing woman has widowed relatives she must help them,  
    and the church must not be burdened,  
so those *who are truly widows* it may help.

<sup>11</sup> 5:1-6:2a ABBA. The fifth of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 2:1-3:16. The first section is about free men and women, the last about slaves, the two middle about widows (over sixty years) and elders (older men).

<sup>12</sup> 5:3-16 ABCBA. Nine requirements for a true widow: the first is described in the first and last sections, the other eight are listed at the center, 5:9-10.

**Elders**<sup>13</sup>

17 Let the **elders** who exercise authority well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in word and teaching.

(18 For the scripture says:

“You shall not muzzle an ox that treads out the grain”  
and “The worker deserves his pay.”)

19 Do not accept an accusation against an elder, except “upon two or three witnesses.”

20 Those who sin, rebuke in the presence of all,  
so the others also may have fear.

(21 I charge *you* before God and Anointed Jesus and the chosen angels,  
that you keep these *instructions* without prejudice, doing nothing out of favoritism.)

22 Do not lay hands hastily on anyone and do not take part in another’s sins.

Keep yourself pure.

(23 No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of *your* stomach and your frequent illnesses.)

24 The sins of some people are evident before,  
going before to judgment,  
and for others they follow after.

(25 So also the good works *of some are* evident before,  
and those that are not cannot be kept hidden.)

**Slaves**

**6** All **slaves** who are under *the* yoke  
must regard their masters worthy of all honor,  
so that God’s name and the teaching may not be spoken against.

2 Those having believing masters  
must not be disrespectful because they are brothers,  
but must serve *them* all the more

because they are believers and beloved who benefit from the good service.

**Pastoral charges, Anointed’s example****A pastoral charge on sound teaching and riches**

These *things* teach and encourage. 3 Whoever teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Anointed and the teaching in accord with godliness

4 is conceited, knowing nothing, but craving for controversies and disputes about words,  
from which come envy, rivalry, insults, evil suspicions, 5 *and* wranglings of those depraved in mind  
and destitute of the truth, thinking gain to be godliness.

6 It is great gain: godliness with contentment.

7 For we brought nothing into the world,  
and we can not carry anything out.

8 When we have food and clothing, with that we will be content.

9 Those who want to be rich

fall into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires,  
which sink them into ruin and destruction.

10 For a root of all evils is the love of money.

Some who desire it

have wandered away from faithfulness,  
and have pierced themselves through with many pains.

<sup>13</sup> 5:17-25 ABBA. Each closes with a (comment), as in 1 Cor 14:26-40, which may also be the source for 2:11-12.

**A summary pastoral charge: fight the good fight, Anointed's example, and blessing**

11 But you, O man of God,  
 flee these *things*.  
 Pursue uprightness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.  
 12 Fight the good fight of faith.  
 Take hold of the eternal life,  
 to which you were called and have professed the good profession before many witnesses.

13 I charge, in the sight of God who gives life to all things,  
 and of **Anointed Jesus**  
 who witnessed before Pontius Pilate the good profession,  
 14 that you keep the commandment without spot without blame  
 until the appearing  
 of our Lord **Jesus Anointed**,  
 15 which at the proper time *God* will reveal,

the blessed and only ruler,  
 the King of kings  
 and Lord of lords,  
 16 who alone has immortality,  
 dwelling in unapproachable light,  
 whom no one has seen nor can see,  
 to whom *be* honor and power eternal. Amen.

**A pastoral charge on riches**

17 Tell the rich in the present age not to be proud,  
 nor to put hope on *the* uncertainty of riches  
 but on God who provides us all *things* richly for enjoyment,  
 18 to do good, to be rich in good works,  
 to be generous, sharing,  
 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the future,  
 so that they may take hold of the real life.

**Closing charge to Timothy and blessing<sup>14</sup>**

20 O **Timothy**, what has been entrusted *to you*, guard,  
 turning away from  
 the profane babblings and absurdities of falsely called knowledge,  
 21 which some, professing,  
 with regard to the faith  
 have missed the mark.  
 Grace *be* with you *all*.

<sup>14</sup> 6:20-21 The last of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:1-2.

**Structure**

The overall structure is ABCCBA:

1:1-2 Address to Timothy and blessing

1:3-18 Paul's imprisonment in Rome. Carry on, loyal disciple, what I passed on to you

2:1-26 Persevere as a good soldier of Anointed

3:1-4:5 Turn away from the ungodly, proclaim the word, fulfill your ministry

4:6-18a Paul's imprisonment and ministry

4:18b-22 Doxology, greetings, and blessing

**Background**

This letter indicates that Paul was imprisoned at Rome (1:8,16-17; 2:9; 4:6,16-17). It does not say where Timothy was. He was probably in the Roman province of Asia, which included Ephesus, Troas, and Miletus, because of the references to all those places, beginning with the reference to Asia in 1:15. But he was probably not at Ephesus (see 4:12), where he was located in 1 Timothy. The references to Timothy in or near Troas, leaving Erastus at Corinth, and leaving Trophimus sick at Miletus (4:20), all fit well with Paul's return from his third missionary journey. Erastus, the city treasurer of Corinth, was last mentioned with Paul when Paul wrote Romans at Corinth (Rom 16:23). Trophimus, who was from Ephesus (Acts 21:29), was with Paul when they stopped at Miletus (Acts 20:4,15,17).

But Paul was imprisoned two years in Caesarea between his return to Jerusalem and his trip to Rome as a prisoner (Acts 24:27). The reference to leaving Trophimus sick at Miletus (4:20) does not seem to reflect such a long interval. And when Paul got to Jerusalem, Trophimus was with him (Acts 21:29). But it is unlikely that Paul later made another trip involving all those same places and same people in the same sequence, all without visiting Ephesus again after he had told the elders from Ephesus that they would not see him again.

Paul's first defense at Rome (4:16) is likely to have occurred during or soon after the two years he was imprisoned there, even though Acts does not mention that detail in its brief description. If this letter was written after Paul's death, it appears that, for the setting of this letter, the author used Paul's imprisonment in Rome as recorded in Acts.

**Theme**

Both 2 Timothy and Philippians are farewells from Paul from prison, with death impending. It is interesting to compare how Paul describes himself in that situation in those two farewells. A third farewell from Paul—also with imprisonment and death impending—is in Acts 20:17-38. It was at Miletus, where Paul stopped briefly to meet with the elders from Ephesus on his return from Corinth to Jerusalem. Paul tells them that the holy spirit has told him imprisonment and afflictions await him, and that he knows none of the elders from Ephesus will ever see his face again (Acts 20:22-25,38). Acts was probably written well after Paul's death. If so, the author of Acts chose to end his story with Paul still in prison, leaving the ending of the story of Paul's life to be told by Paul himself in his farewell address to the Ephesian elders, in the context of risk and purpose, rather than by the author of Acts in the context of certainty and history. But note the contrast in Paul's outlook in Acts 20:20-25,38 with that expressed in Phlp 2:17-24.

2 Timothy is a memorial to the legacy that Paul left to the church, in teaching and example. It solemnly charges God's workers to be true to that teaching and example. It may have been prepared for use as part of a liturgy for ordination.

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

### Address to Timothy and blessing<sup>1</sup>

**1** Paul, an apostle of Anointed Jesus  
by God's will  
for *the* promise of life in Anointed Jesus,  
    <sup>2</sup> To Timothy, *my* beloved child:  
Grace, mercy, peace  
from God *our* Father  
and Anointed Jesus our Lord.

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<sup>1</sup> 1:1-2 ABCDCBA. The first of six divisions. Parallel with 4:18b-22, doxology, greetings, and blessing.

**Paul's imprisonment in Rome. Carry on, loyal disciple, what I passed on to you<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>3</sup> I am grateful to God,  
 whom I serve from *my* forebears with a clear conscience,  
 as I have unceasing remembrance of you  
 in my prayers night and day,  
<sup>4</sup> longing to see you,  
 remembering your tears,  
 that I may be filled with joy,  
<sup>5</sup> remembering the sincere faith in you  
 that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice,  
 and, I am convinced, also in you.

<sup>6</sup> For this reason I remind you to rekindle God's gift that is in you through the laying on of my hands.

<sup>7</sup> For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but of power and love and sound judgment.

<sup>8</sup> So do not be ashamed of *your* testimony of our Lord nor of me his prisoner,  
 but share in suffering for the good news by the power of God,

<sup>9</sup> who saved us and called *us* to a holy calling,  
 not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace,  
 which was given to us in Anointed Jesus  
 before time eternal,

<sup>10</sup> but has been made known now  
 through the appearing of our savior, Anointed Jesus,  
 who broke the power of death and brought to light life and immortality  
 through the good news,

<sup>11</sup> for which I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.

<sup>12</sup> For this reason I also suffer these *things*,

but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have trusted, and I am convinced that he is  
 able to guard my deposit *from him*<sup>3</sup> until that day.

<sup>13</sup> Keep *the* pattern of sound words that you heard from me, in faith and love that *are* in  
 Anointed Jesus.

<sup>14</sup> The good deposit guard through *the* holy spirit that dwells in us.

<sup>15</sup> You know this,  
 that all those in Asia turned away from me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.

<sup>16</sup> May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus,<sup>4</sup>  
 because often he refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain.

<sup>17</sup> Rather, having come to Rome,  
 urgently he searched for me and found *me*.

<sup>18</sup> May the Lord grant him to find mercy from *the* Lord on that day.

And how much he served in Ephesus  
 you know very well.

<sup>2</sup> 1:3-18 ABA. The second of six divisions. Parallel with 4:6-18a, Paul's imprisonment and ministry.

<sup>3</sup> 1:12 If "my deposit" is Paul's appointment, described in verse 11, or the gifts described in verses 7 and 9, then it is a deposit entrusted to Paul *from God*, like the "gift" and "deposit" referred to in 1:6,14.

<sup>4</sup> 1:16 *Onesiphorus*. He is mentioned only here and at 4:19.



**Persevere as a good soldier of Anointed<sup>5</sup>**

**2** You, then, my **child**, be strong in the grace that *is* in Anointed Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> And what you have heard from me  
 through many witnesses,  
 these entrust  
 to faithful people  
 who will be able also to teach others.

<sup>3</sup> Share in suffering like a good soldier of Anointed Jesus.

<sup>4</sup> No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in the affairs of life, in order to please the enlisting officer.

<sup>5</sup> If an *athlete* competes, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

<sup>6</sup> The farmer who labors ought to be first to share in the fruit.

<sup>7</sup> Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

<sup>8</sup> Remember **Jesus Anointed**, raised from *the* dead, from David's seed, according to my good news,

<sup>9</sup> for which I am suffering to the point of chains as a criminal,  
 but God's word is not chained.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore I endure all *things* for the sake of the chosen *ones*,  
 so they also may obtain the salvation in **Anointed Jesus** with eternal glory.

<sup>11</sup> Faithful *is* the saying:

If we have died with *him*, we will also live with *him*;

<sup>12</sup> if we persevere, we will also reign with *him*;

if we deny *him*, he will also deny us;

<sup>13</sup> if we are unfaithful, he remains faithful,  
 for he cannot deny himself.

<sup>14</sup> Remind *them* of these *things*,

charging *them* before God not to quarrel about words,  
*which leads* to nothing useful,  
*and to the* ruin of those who listen.

<sup>15</sup> Be earnest to present yourself approved to God, a worker unashamed,  
 rightly interpreting the word of truth.

<sup>16</sup> Profane empty babblings avoid, for they will go on to more ungodli-  
 ness <sup>17</sup> and their talk like gangrene will spread.

Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,

<sup>18</sup> who regarding the truth have missed the mark,  
 saying that *the* resurrection has already come,  
 and they are overturning the faith of some.

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<sup>5</sup> 2:1-26 ABCDCBA. The third of six divisions. Parallel with 3:1-4:5. A's: charges to a youthful disciple. B's: an athlete who follows the rules and is crowned, and someone who cleanses himself to be a vessel of honor. C's: remember and remind. D: four prospects facing a disciple, two positive, two negative.

<sup>19</sup> But God's firm foundation stands, having this inscription: "*The Lord knows those who are his,*" and, "Let everyone depart from evil who calls on the Lord's name."

<sup>20</sup> In a large house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honor and others for common use.

<sup>21</sup> Accordingly, if anyone cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel for honor, made holy, useful to the master, prepared for every good work.

<sup>22</sup> Flee **youthful** passions.

Pursue uprightness, faith, love, peace,  
with those who call upon the Lord from a pure heart.

<sup>23</sup> Avoid foolish and ignorant questions,  
knowing that they breed quarrels.

<sup>24</sup> *The Lord's* slave must not quarrel,  
but be gentle with all, apt to teach, tolerant,

<sup>25</sup> with humility correcting opponents.

Perhaps God may give them repentance to a knowledge of truth,

<sup>26</sup> and they may come to themselves again from the Slanderer's snare, having been caught by him to *do* his will.

**Turn away from the ungodly, proclaim the word, fulfill your ministry<sup>6</sup>**

**3** Understand this: that in the last days there will be hard times.

<sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money,  
boasters, arrogant, insulting,

disobedient to parents, ungrateful, irreligious,

<sup>3</sup> heartless, unforgiving, slanderers,

uncontrolled, untamed, not loving good,

<sup>4</sup> traitors, rash, conceited,

lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

<sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but its power denying.

Turn away from them.

<sup>6</sup> For among them are those who make their way into houses and captivate foolish women laden with sins,

led by various desires,

<sup>7</sup> always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of truth.

<sup>8</sup> As Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses,

so also these oppose the truth,

depraved in mind,

unqualified regarding faith.

<sup>9</sup> But they will not progress further, for their folly will be evident to all, as it was with those *two*.

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<sup>6</sup> 3:1-4:5 ABBA. The fourth of six divisions of this letter. The A's: turn away from the ungodly; proclaim the word to them; B's: follow Paul's teaching and the scriptures.

10 But you, you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance,  
 11 *and* persecutions, sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra,<sup>7</sup>  
 such persecutions I endured.

And from all *of them* the Lord rescued me.

12 Indeed, all who want to live godly in Anointed Jesus will be persecuted.

13 Evildoers and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

14 But you, stay in what you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you  
 learned *it*,<sup>15</sup> and that from a baby you have known *the* sacred scriptures,<sup>8</sup>

which are able to make you wise to salvation through the faith in Anointed Jesus.

16 Every scripture *is* inspired by God

and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for the training in uprightness

17 so that one who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

#### 4 I charge *you* before God

and Anointed Jesus,

who will judge *the* living and *the* dead,

and by his appearing

and by his kingdom:

2 proclaim the word,

be persistent whether convenient or inconvenient,

reprove, rebuke, encourage,

with all patience and teaching.

3 For a time will come when they will not put up with sound teaching,

but to suit their own desires,

for themselves they will accumulate teachers,

tickling *their* ears,

4 and from the truth they will turn their ears away, and will turn to myths.

5 But you, be sober in everything,

endure hardship,

do *the* work of an evangelist,

your ministry fulfill.

<sup>7</sup> 3:11 *Antioch, Iconium, Lystra*. The only mention of these towns in Paul's letters. See Acts 13:13-14:23; 16:1-3.

<sup>8</sup> 3:15 *Scriptures*. If Paul is the author, the "sacred scriptures" that Timothy knew from childhood would not have included Paul's letters. But if written near the end of the first century after Paul's letters had begun to be collected, it probably does include Paul's letters, as many assume when they read this. The implied equivalence of Paul's teaching in 3:10-14 with "the word," "sound teaching," and "truth" in 4:1-5, and with "scripture" in 3:15-17, suggests that the author already regarded Paul's letters as scripture.

**Paul's imprisonment and ministry<sup>9</sup>**

<sup>6</sup> Indeed I am already being poured out as an offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

<sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

<sup>8</sup> From now on there is stored up for me the crown of uprightness, which the Lord will award to me on that day, the just judge, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

<sup>9</sup> Be urgent to come to me quickly,

<sup>10</sup> for Demas<sup>10</sup> has forsaken me, having loved the present age, and he has gone to Thessalonica,

Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

<sup>11</sup> Only Luke is with me.

Get Mark *and* bring *him* with you, for he is useful to me in ministry.

<sup>12</sup> Tychicus<sup>11</sup> I have sent to Ephesus.

<sup>13</sup> The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when you come, and the books, especially the parchments.

<sup>14</sup> Alexander<sup>12</sup> the coppersmith did me much harm.

“The Lord will repay him according to his deeds.”

<sup>15</sup> You too, be on guard against him, for he strongly opposed our words.

<sup>16</sup> At my first defense no one appeared on my behalf, but all deserted me. May it not be held against them.

<sup>17</sup> But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully presented and all nations might hear *it*. And I was “rescued from the lion’s mouth.”

<sup>18</sup> The Lord will rescue me from every evil work and he will bring *me* safe to his heavenly kingdom.

**Doxology, greetings, and blessing<sup>13</sup>**

To him the **glory** into the ages of the ages. Amen.

<sup>19</sup> Greet Prisca<sup>14</sup> and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus.

<sup>20</sup> Erastus remained in Corinth.

Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.

<sup>21</sup> Be urgent to come before winter.

Greeting you is Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers.

<sup>22</sup> The Lord *be* with your spirit. Grace *be* with you *all*.

<sup>9</sup> 4:6-18a ABBA. The fifth of six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:3-18.

<sup>10</sup> 4:10 *Demas* is mentioned favorably in Phlm 1:24 and Col 4:14.

<sup>11</sup> 4:12 *Tychicus* was the letter carrier for Eph (6:21-22), Col (4:7-8), and possibly for Titus (3:12). Acts 20:4 says he was from the province of Asia, which included Ephesus.

<sup>12</sup> 4:14 *Alexander* is also mentioned unfavorably in 1 Tim 1:20.

<sup>13</sup> 4:18b-22 ABCCBA. The last of six divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:1-2.

<sup>14</sup> 4:19 *Prisca and Aquila*. Also mentioned at 1 Cor 16:19 and Rom 16:3. See footnote on Rom 16:3.