

WORLDLINESS IN THE CHURCH

I JOHN 2:15

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I JOHN 2:16

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

I JOHN 2:17

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

I JOHN 2:18

18 ¶ Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

I JOHN 2:19

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

[STOP]

LOOK AT SOME WORLDLY THINGS IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH

I CORINTHIANS 1:10

10 ¶ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no ***DIVISIONS** among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

DIVISIONS: schisma {skhis'-mah}
Rent, schism, metaph. a division, dissension

I CORINTHIANS 1:11

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are ***CONTENTIONS** among you.

CONTENTIONS: eris {er'-is}
Strife, debate, variance, wrangling

I CORINTHIANS 1:12

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

I am of Paul; they were attached to, and ranged under different men whom they claimed as their leaders, as if one were better than another, and his followers more holy. This caused divisions among them.

Apollos; an eloquent preacher, who had visited Achaia and Corinth after the apostle.

Apollos personally was absolutely loyal and honorable, but his visit to Corinth had done mischief. His impassioned oratory, his Alexandrian refinements, his allegorizing way, the culture and polish of his style, had charmed the fickle Corinthians. The Apollonians were the party of culture. They had, as we see from later parts of the Epistle, exaggerated St. Paul's views, as expounded by Apollos, into extravagance. Puffed up with the conceit of knowledge, they had fallen into moral inconsistency. The egotism of oratorical rivals, the contemptuous tone towards weaker brethren, the sophistical condonations of vice, were probably due to them. Apollos, as we see by his noble refusal to visit Corinth under present circumstances (1 Cor 16:12), was as indignant as St. Paul himself at the perversion of his name into an engine of party warfare.

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Cephas; the great apostle of the circumcision, whose name the adherents of the Mosaic law would be likely to use.

The party of Cephas apparently doubted Paul's credentials, preferring the link with Jerusalem by Peter.
(from The Wycliffe Bible Commentary)

I of Christ; the men who said this probably affected a peculiar intimacy with Christ, which raised them above the necessity of following any human teacher: for men may be proud not only of having a particular human leader but Christ.

Yet "I follow Christ" is no better a boast than the others, since it proudly disparages all teachers and, supposedly in the name of faithfulness to Christ, tries to justify heeding no one.

The ones who were of Christ disdained all connections with the others, thus becoming a party themselves.

Christ may have been made in the name of unity against the other three factions, but it merely added another party to those existing. In scouting the names of the other leaders they lowered the name and rank of Christ to their level.

II CORINTHIANS 10:7

7 ¶ Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.

BURKITT says:

Because the false apostles had taught the Corinthians to despise St. Paul, upon the account of his mean appearance; he here

reasons with them, and desires to know whether they would judge of men by outward appearance, or by inward worth?

As if he said, "Are ye so weak as to judge of me by my outward person, by my bodily presence, by the meanness of my garb, by the smallness of my stature, by my outward aspect and countenance? but if you will judge of me, and the pretended apostles, by ministerial gifts and authority received from Christ, surely I have as much to shew of these, as they can pretend to shew; for in nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles." There is no judging of men, much less of ministers, by outward appearances: Much real worth sometimes lodges within, when nothing but what is despicable and contemptible appears without.

JOHN GILL SAID:

Do ye look on things after the outward appearance,... so many judged of Paul by the meanness of his person, the weakness of his body, the lowness of his voice, his outward circumstances of life, his poverty, afflictions, and persecutions; and despised him; whilst they looked upon the riches, eloquence, haughty airs, noisiness, and personable mien, of the false apostles, and admired them:

if a man trusts to himself that he is Christ's: is fully assured that he has an interest in his love and favour, is redeemed by his blood, is a partaker of his grace, and a believer in him; or rather, that he is a minister of the Gospel, and an apostle of Christ, one that is qualified and sent forth by him to preach the word:

let him, of himself, think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's; that is, he may, and ought of himself, without another's observing it to him, of his own accord, willingly reason and conclude, by the selfsame marks and evidences he would be thought to be a minister of Christ, that we are also.

That, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's. That I have given as much evidence that I am commissioned by Christ as

they can produce. It may be of a different kind. It is not in eloquence, and rank, and the gift of a rapid and ready elocution, but it may be superior to what they are able to produce. Probably Paul refers here to the fact that he had seen the Lord Jesus, and that he had been directly commissioned by him. The sense is, that no one could produce more proofs of being called to the ministry than he could.

I CORINTHIANS 1:13

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

The verb means, "Has Christ been divided and different parts handed out to different people?"

I CORINTHIANS 4:15

15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many ***FATHERS***: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

FATHERS: pater {pat-ayr'}

generator or male ancestor, the authors of a family or society of persons animated by the same spirit as himself; one who has infused his own spirit into others, who actuates and governs their minds, one who stands in a father's place and looks after another in a paternal way

Not many fathers, Many offer to instruct you who have no parental feeling for you; and how can they? you are not their spiritual children, you stand in this relation to me alone; for in Christ Jesus - by the power and unction of his Spirit, I have begotten you - I was the means of bringing you into a state of salvation, so that you have been born again. His preaching was the means of their regeneration.

I CORINTHIANS 4:16

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

I CORINTHIANS 4:17

17 ¶ For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

I CORINTHIANS 4:18

18 Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

I CORINTHIANS 4:19

19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

The contrast in this paragraph is between **speech and Power, words and deeds**. The arrogant Corinthians had no problem "talking big," the way children often will do; **but they could not back up their talk with their "walk."** **Their religion was only in words. Paul was prepared to back up his "talk" with power**, with deeds that would reveal their sins and God's holiness.

All called and empowered ministers have power to demonstrate what they teach. This is how you can tell whether your teachers are genuine or not. I will prove my calling by a manifestation of power when I get there.

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I CORINTHIANS 4:20

20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

I CORINTHIANS 4:21

21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

II CORINTHIANS 10:2

2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

The rebels in the church (led by the Judaizers) said that Paul was very courageous when he wrote letters from a distance, but very timid and even weak when he was present with the Corinthians.

Christians usually grow the way they are born. If they are born in an atmosphere of dictatorial leadership, they grow up depending on man's wisdom and strength. If they are born in an atmosphere of humility and love, they learn to depend on the Lord. Paul wanted his converts to trust the Lord, and not the servant; so he deliberately "played down" his own authority and ability.

II CORINTHIANS 10:2

2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Simply because Paul did not use carnal methods and exert the power of a "strong personality," the believers thought he was a weakling!

Greek culture did not usually regard meekness as a virtue.

Paul was warning them in a loving way, "Please don't force me to come and show how bold I can be!"

as if we walked according to the flesh--His Corinthian detractors judged of him by themselves, as if he were influenced by fleshly motives, the desire of favor or fear of giving offense, so as not to exercise his authority when present. Were led by worldly motives.

II CORINTHIANS 10:3

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

I CORINTHIANS 4:21

21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

II CORINTHIANS 10:8

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

II CORINTHIANS 10:9

9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

II CORINTHIANS 10:10

10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

The false teachers told the Corinthians, that Paul's letters were indeed severe and authoritative, terrifying and affrighting: but his personal presence was weak, and his speech contemptible.

Tradition tells us, that Paul (according to his name) was a man of very little stature, and his voice answerably small; whence probably, the false apostles took occasion to raise this report of his presence and speech. Chrysostom saith, that St. Paul's stature was low, pale and emaciated in countenance, his body crooked, his head bald; and when it is added, that **his speech was contemptible**, but it is thought, this refers rather to some infirmity, or natural impediment, which the apostle might have in his speech.

II CORINTHIANS 10:10

10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

The Greeks particularly admired splendid physique, as we may see from the many magnificent statues they have left behind. But Paul was probably a very small man. The name Paul means "little one," and people naturally received names in those days that intimated what they were. His outward appearance was weak and his speech contemptible.

But he could say, "If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's." In other words, "I am not much to look at, but I belong to Christ just as much as the fine-looking teachers with heroic figures.

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II CORINTHIANS 10:11

11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present.

II CORINTHIANS 10:12

12 ¶ For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

II CORINTHIANS 10:13

13 But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

II CORINTHIANS 12:20

20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

lest there be debates; or "strifes", or contentions among them, about words to no profit, or about their ministers, as before; one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, and another for Cephas:

envyings; at each other's gifts, or "jealousies" of one another, and evil surmisings:

wraths; breaking out into words and actions, which discover hatred of mind, a malignant spirit, quite contrary to that of the Gospel:

strifes; law suits before heathen magistrates; contentions in the church who shall be greatest; or about lesser matters of religion, or things indifferent, vain, and trifling, and kept up merely for the sake of victory:

backbitings; speaking evil of one another, detracting from, hurting, or taking away each other's character and good name:

whisperings; secretly sowing discords among friends, and privately suggesting evil things of each other:

PROVERBS 16:28

28 A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.

swellings; with pride and conceit of themselves, because of their riches, learning, and eloquence, and looking with disdain upon others:

tumults; at church meetings, interrupting one another, going into parties, and making rents and schisms.

WOW THIS IS GOING ON IN THE CHURCH THAT PAUL FOUNDED?

We see what a distracted and divided state the Church at Corinth must have been in. Brotherly love and charity seem to have been driven out of this once heavenly assembly. **These debates, etc.,**

are precisely the opposites to that love which the apostle recommends and explains by its different properties in the 13th chapter of his first epistle.