

4. EXPECTATION FOR CHRIST. vv. 7,8

- a. Stated. The Greek term for "wait" in these verses is fabulous. Being a double compound, it points to the highest possible posture of a child of God concerning the coming of Christ. They really looked for His return. Do we?!
- b. Determined. Actually, the coming of Christ has some genuine thoughts in view. He will confirm His work in every believing heart unto the end (an obvious reference to the Rapture; cf., Phil. 1:6). Then it will be that born again ones will be unreprieveable. Not till then! This sort of teaching is needed today more than ever in view of the "crack ups" amongst Christians.

5. ASSOCIATION WITH CHRIST. v. 9.

- a. It is based. The faithfulness of God is the key to the situation here. He called the Corinthians and He called all believers because of His faithfulness (cf. Psa. 36:5).
- b. It is purposed. Here is the true κοινωνία of the Bible. The modernist would have it done through a world church, but God has already provided it through His holy Son, Jesus Christ. The fellowship is by virtue of a relationship with Christ. With this sort of explanation, the word "blameless" takes on new significance too.

Conclusion: Church saints are ordinary born again people for whom Christ has done so much. They have a tremendous situation because of Christ. There is nothing inherently worthy, but because of Him they are "saints." Are you one today? If not, get related to Jesus NOW! Amen.

BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

"Church Saints"

I Corinthians 1:1-9

Introduction

1. Interest always runs high in letters. Those who receive them are the most interested. Such is the case with letters included in the Bible.
2. This present letter has some interesting characteristics worthy of notation:
 - a. It is a corrective letter, Romans was written to state the doctrine of justification, Galatians, to defend that doctrine. I Corinthians, to correct that doctrine of justification.
 - b. It is a church letter. Seven letters were written by Paul to churches of: Ephesus, Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Philippians, Colossae, and Thessalonica. The local church was a reality in the first century. It is today also!
 - c. It is a chronological letter. Paul founded the church on his second missionary journey (Acts 18) and spent 18 months there. Probably written from Ephesus about 57 A.D.
3. The kind of people to whom the letter was sent is clearly stated in the text. Their situation because of the Lord Jesus Christ beggars description. But, study some of the details which are provided.

NOTE: The lining up of the details are from one who ought to know--Paul the Apostle. He admits to his own call to the ministry as an apostle. It was all through the grace of God. Furthermore, this was God's will for him (cf. Acts 1:15-26; I Cor. 15:8-10). The term, apostle, therefore, is not now used in its technical sense, but may be applied to anyone.

1. SEPARATION IN CHRIST. v.2

- a. What? The reference is to the "Church of God." But this is obviously not the denomination of that name (Rom. 16:16), but rather a reference to the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22, 23). Organism is more important than organization in the Bible (cf. I Pet. 2:5). True, the church was "at Corinth," so it was local, but keep a balance about this matter. How things have deteriorated into institutionalized fossils!
- b. How? The manner in which separation is gained is clear--by sanctification. Now, don't let that verb turn you off. It merely means to separate. Being perfect and passive in form, the thought behind the word is terrific. Of course, it cannot be disassociated from the technical phrase "in Christ." There is no separation apart from Him, but being in Him one will partake of all that He is (cf. John 17:17-19). Hallelujah!

2. IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST. v.2.

- a. The fact. There are no canonized saints in the Bible, unless you consider the "canon of the Scripture." Saints are persons who know about their sainthood for they are "called." This is an adjective in the original and points to something which is both permanent and remarkable. Paul rebukes the believers at Corinth, hence, one must make a distinction between the twin thoughts of holiness which is imputed and holiness which is imparted (acquired). The Bible affirms the former and urges the latter. The summons to a holy walk is based upon the accepted fact. It is God's way of doing things.
- b. The feature. Paul does not conclude that

the Corinthians have a corner on the matter of being saints. All who "call upon the Name of Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours" are included in the thoughts expressed here. This teaches a Biblical ecumenism which is solely sourced in the Person of Christ.

3. SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST. vv. 4,5.

- a. It is a gift. Salvation is always presented this way in the Bible (Rom. 6:23). Current thinking does not appreciate this for it denies the existence of a sovereign and immutable God in Glory! Nonetheless, Bible believers accept the accuracy of their record and hold to it. Our God is not capricious and therefore we find Him always acting in accord with His perfect character. The gift of "grace" came at the point of salvation as the aorist tense of the verb connotes.
- b. It has a goal. The "that" of the text is explicative. Salvation had come to the Corinthians, but it did not stop there as an end in itself. They were "enriched" by the Lord as the aorist passive points out. They gained something for usefulness. This is elucidated to be:
- 1) Utterance. The word employed is the one which means content of speech more than manner of speech. God had done something for them and they had something to say!
 - 2) Knowledge. The Greek term here suggests the fruit of intuition. It considers insight into things rather than merely a research of items.
- c. It has a gain. The faith of the Corinthians had some objectivity to it. They had a testimony concerning Christ. This doctrinal rightness was found to be established in them. Indeed, all the gifts in their midst demonstrated that the Gospel had really taken hold upon them. They were complete (cf. Col. 2:9) and their witness proved it!