

IS CHRIST DIVIDED?

Our lesson text comes from the Chloe section of the Book of 1st Corinthians (chs.1-4).

(1 Cor.1:11) “For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe’s (people), that there **are quarrels (eris) [rivalry strife] among you.**”

We will begin by studying a three-point outline of lesson text.

- **Problem stated: Rivalry and strife**
 - (1 Cor.1:11-12) ¹¹ For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe’s *people*, **that there are quarrels among you.** ¹² Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, “I am of Paul,” and “I of Apollos,” and “I of Cephas,” and “I of Christ.”
- **Problem identified: Three questions: ‘divided’ (merizo/ perf.p.nd.3ps) [1st expects a YES answer while the next two expect a NO answer]**
 - (1 Cor.1:13-16) ¹³ **Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?** ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one would say you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ Now I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any other.
- **Problem distracted from message of cross of Christ - Preaching gospel - “So that (hina) the cross of Christ would be made void” (me keno/ a.p.subj.3ps) (Rom.1:16)**
 - (1 Cor.1:17) ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void.

We will study four aspects of ONE of the THREE questions asked by Paul to the Corinthian church.

1. Rivalry strife was manifestation of walking in flesh!

- The Old Sin Nature (OSN) (Rom.6:12-14)
- Carnality (1 Cor.3:1-3)
- Personal sin (MAS) (mental attitude sins)

(Rom.13:13-14) “Let us behave properly as in the day, **not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy (note the three sets of personal sins).** But **put on (enduo/ a.m.impv.2pl) the Lord Jesus Christ [clothed] (Gal.3:27/ Eph.4:22-24), and make (poieo/ p.m.impv.2pl) no provision for the flesh (OSN) in regard to its lusts (Jas.1:14-15; Gal.5:16-17).”**

2. The problem they were having in the Corinthian church was coming from the Followers of Followers.

It had created rivalry strife in the church. There were four Followers of Followers factions: Followers of **Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ**, which were creating rivalry strife within the Corinthian Church (1Cor.1:12).

None of them died on the cross for the sin of the world! (John 1:29). Only Jesus Christ is the Savior of the body (Acts 20:28; Rev.5:9) and Head of the body of the Church (Eph.5:23-24).

- Every Church Age Believer is a **Follower of Christ** because of the gospel of CROSS of Christ.
- Every other spiritually gifted communicator of the Church of Jesus Christ is a Follower of Christ just like every other spiritually gifted Church Age Believer Follower(Eph.4:10-16).
- Every Church Age Believer is a Follower of Christ and not of men. Jesus Christ is the only one who died for all mankind's sins (1 Cor.1:17-18; Heb.9:12-15, 26-28).

3. Spiritually gifted communicators must understand that the church body consists of sheep belonging to the Chief Shepherd, the Son of God.

The pastor-teacher of a local church is the under shepherd of the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet.5:1-2; Acts 20:28; John 21:15-17).

Jesus Christ is the **“Good Shepherd”** while the pastor-teacher is the hireling (John 21/ Peter).

The Corinthian congregation had their favorite pastoral teachers and was making issue of it within church. It wasn't based on the word of God because all these men taught new covenant grace categorical Bible doctrine. Therefore, it must have been based on other things like personality, appearance, manners, delivery methods, and etc,

- The doctrinal point to be learned is this - “It is not the man; it is the message of the truth of God's word.”

Even Jesus had this problem with His disciples. For example, they wanted Him to teach on prayer and fasting **like** John Baptist and Pharisees (Luke 11:1; Matt.9:14-17). They felt the same way about His method of teaching by parables (Luke 18:34; John 16:29-33).

Paul asked the congregation an important question, “Is Christ divided?” The correct answer should be NO!

But the church was divided! Therefore, their answer was YES!

4. Today the one body of Jesus Christ, the Church (Acts 20:28), has been divided into denominations that differ by certain doctrines.

For example, the followers of Peter formed their own church after his death. They made a ritualistic religion out it in world. Later the followers of Luther broke from it and formed the Lutheran church. Now we have many divisions called denominations in the one body of Christ.

We, as a local church, broke with denominationalism in hopes of getting back to the New Covenant foundational doctrines of the **one church body**. We are criticized for it and appear to others as a cult because we are out of step with denominationalism.

BE A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST AND NOT A FOLLOWER OF FOLLOWERS