

1 Corinthians Chapter 1 v 1 -9

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[0 : 0 0] and praises him for this reason. He says this, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Are you here because you've received from God's spiritual blessings in Christ? Is it because in Jesus you've found the wonderful joy of sins forgiven, of peace with God, of purpose, of life, of hope?

Is it because you know that he is your God and you are his child? Do you know that Jesus is your saviour and your Lord? Are you moved to come here because you want to praise him, worship him and thank him?

I'm sure that for many of us that's the case and I hope for all of us too. Our first hymn is 647 which speaks about the fact that everything that we have, every blessing, every good gift from God is because of what Jesus has done for us and it's only because of Christ.

Not because we're good people or deserving people, but because Christ has done everything for us. Let's stand and sing 647, In Christ alone my hope is found.

[1 : 1 3] He is my heart.

I'm sure that he is my heart. I'm sure that he is my heart. I'm sure that he is my heart. I'm sure that he is my heart. I'm sure that he is my heart. I'm sure that he is my heart.

I'm sure that he is my heart.

Here in the love of Christ I stand. Your guilty mind, your fear in death, This is the power of Christ in me.

From lifeless cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny.

[3 : 0 0] No power of hell, no scheme of man Can ever find me from his hand Till he returns, O closely home, Here in the power of Christ I stand.

Amen. Let's come to the Lord in prayer together.

Let us all pray. Amen. We cannot help, O Lord, But find our hearts and souls moved When we sing of the truths Of which we've just been thinking.

When we consider him who is fully God Becoming helpless babe. We think of him Who is the creator of the universe Taking on the very form of creation.

When we consider him suffering and dying That the wrath of God should be satisfied. When we consider that he was laid in the tomb But rose triumphant from the grave.

[4 : 3 1] O Lord, these things, Considering your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, Are things that we have heard again and again, Things that we've known about for some of us Many, many years.

And Lord, we ask that they might ever be fresh, Ever be special, Ever be wonderful and glorious And marvellous and sparkling to us. May that person who is Jesus, The Son of God, our Saviour, May he be all in all our heart's desire, Our longing, our joy, our delight.

O Lord, we pray that where our hearts Become distracted and our thoughts Become diverted from him, When we find ourselves Becoming lukewarm or cool Or accepting of these truths Without being moved.

O Lord, breathe on us Afresh by your spirit. Fan into flame, O Lord, Our hearts and lives That we may passionately burn For Jesus.

We thank you again, O Lord, That every blessing, Every blessing, Every blessing, And so many blessings. Lord, to quote the song of old, We cannot count them.

[5 : 43] Were we to try to count them? They are numerous, beyond number. Lord, every blessing comes to us Through Jesus. He is the very channel, He's the very source, He's the very fountainhead, He's the very one Who are the hands that give us, Lord, every blessing that we have.

We confess that we are Those who have nothing in our hands That we bring, But simply to his cross we cling. Naked come to him for dress, Helpless come to you for grace, Foul I to the fountain fly, Wash me, Savior, or I die.

And we thank you that you've washed us And cleansed us from our sins. We thank you that you cast them Behind your back. We thank you that you count them No more against us, For you have counted them Against him on the cross.

You have outpoured the very last drop Of your anger and judgment And justice against our sin Upon your own dear, Innocent, spotless, Sinless son Who became sin for us, The righteous for the unrighteous, To bring us to God.

And Lord, we thank you That this evening All who've called on your name Are forgiven. All who have been born again Of your spirit Are accepted. All, O Lord, Who have trusted in him Are children of the living God.

[6 : 58] And Lord, we thank you That as a good father, A gracious, a loving, A tender father, Your desire is to bless And to give And to give And to give again. And yet, Lord, We know that so often We are poor receptors Of your grace Because we're bunged up With so much rubbish From the world, So much of our own thoughts, So much of our own worries, Our anxieties, Our fears, And we pray, O Lord, That you'd unbung us This evening That we may be Open vessels, Ready to receive Your blessings That you long to pour out Into our lives Through your word And by your spirit.

O come, O Lord, We pray. Hear us as we ask These things. And Lord, Meet with us. Lord, That we may say together How good it's been To be in the presence Of God.

For we ask these things In the name of your Son, The Lord Jesus. Amen. Acts of the Apostle Acts and chapter 18 And we're going to read The first 18 verses.

Just before the summer began, We came to the end Of our study in 1 Peter. And over the summer, We've had one-offs Because, of course, In the evenings, We've been having The open-air services And those were wonderful, Really wonderful times.

And please continue To pray for those who came. And so over that time, I've been thinking And we're going to actually Be starting a study On Sunday evenings In 1 Corinthians. It's a big book, As we'll see.

[8 : 33] It's full of all sorts Of lovely, Nutty problems. Tricky bits. But wonderful, Helpful, Practical instruction For living for Christ.

And to give us Some background To the letter to Corinthians, We're going to read Acts chapter 18, Which is when Paul Came to Corinth For the first time And when the Lord Under him Established that church To whom he writes Several years later.

So, beginning at Chapter 18, Verse 1, Reading through To verse 18. After this, Paul left Athens And went to Corinth.

There he met A Jew named Aquila, A native of Pontus, Who had recently Come from Italy With his wife Priscilla, Because Claudius Had ordered all Jews To leave Rome.

Paul went to see them. Because he was A tent maker as they were, He stayed and worked with them. Every Sabbath, He reasoned in the synagogue Trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

[9 : 37] When Silas and Timothy Came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself Exclusively to preaching, Testifying to the Jews That Jesus was the Messiah. But when they opposed Paul And became abusive, He shook out his clothes In protest and said to them, Your blood be on your own heads.

I am innocent of it. From now on, I will go to the Gentiles. Then Paul left the synagogue, Went next door To the house of Titius, Justus, A worshipper of God.

Crispus, The synagogue leader, And his entire household Believed in the Lord. And many of the Corinthians Who heard Paul Believed and were baptized. One night, The Lord spoke to Paul In a vision.

Do not be afraid, Keep on speaking. Do not be silent, For I am with you, And no one is going to attack And harm you, Because I have many people In this city.

So Paul stayed in Corinth For a year and a half, Teaching them the word of God. While Galileo Was proconsul of Achaia, The Jews of Corinth Made a united attack on Paul And brought him To the place of judgment.

[10 : 50] This man, They charged, Is persuading the people To worship God In ways contrary To the law. Just as Paul Was about to speak, Galileo said to them, If you Jews Were making a complaint About some misdemeanor Or serious crime, It would be reasonable For me to listen to you.

But since it involves Questions about words And names And your own law, Settle them out of yourselves. I will not be a judge Of such things.

So he drove them off. Then the crowd there Turned on Sosthenes, The synagogue leader, And beat him In front of the proconsul. And Galileo Showed no concern Whatever.

Paul stayed on In Corinth For some time. We're going to read The first nine verses. 1 Corinthians chapter 1.

The first nine verses. Beginning at verse 1.

[11 : 55] Paul, Paul, Called to be an apostle Of Christ Jesus By the will of God And our brother Sosthenes. To the church of God In Corinth, To those sanctified In Christ Jesus, And called to be His holy people.

Together with all Those everywhere Who call on the name Of our Lord Jesus Christ, Their Lord And ours. Grace and peace to you From God our Father And the Lord Jesus Christ.

I always thank my God For you Because of his grace Given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been Enriched in every way With all kinds of speech And with all knowledge.

God thus confirming Our testimony About Christ among you. Therefore, You do not lack Any spiritual gift As you eagerly wait For our Lord Jesus Christ To be revealed.

He will also keep you Firm to the end So that you will be Blameless on the day Of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful Who's called you Into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ Our Lord.

[13 : 10] Let's sing together 370 And then we're going To turn to that Please turn then To 1 Corinthians And to chapter 1 And to those first Nine verses That we read A moment ago.

Perhaps if you can Put a finger in Acts In chapter 18 We'll pop back there Once or twice as well To help us to Grasp and begin To unfold God's word Here in this letter.

When was the last time You wrote a letter? I mean Actually pick up a pen And a piece of paper And write a letter. Not a note Not a birthday card But a letter.

I honestly cannot remember When I did that. Emails of course Have to a large extent Meant the death Of personal letters. But of course They can never really Replace them.

Emails tend to be Informal, short Lacking in warmth And very soon Deleted From our computers Or phones Or whatever.

[14 : 22] But if we have letters We're more likely To keep them Aren't we? We might file them In a box Or put them somewhere Especially letters From loved ones Or family Or friends. It's because letters Convey a sense Of worth Don't they?

Somebody's taken the time To write me a letter There's a sense of love Being conveyed in that letter It's very personal. If the saying is true That a picture is worth A thousand words Then surely one letter Is worth a hundred Emails.

Well the Apostle Paul Wrote four letters To the believers In Corinth We have only two here And they wrote to him A number of times as well We don't know Exactly how many It's in reply To a letter From the church In Corinth That Paul Is actually writing This letter Later on In chapter 7 And verse 1 He says Now for the matters You wrote about And that letter That they wrote to him Was also A response And a reply To a letter He had written To them Even earlier Before that Chapter 5 And verse 9 I wrote to you In my letter So we know That there are Four letters Two of them The Lord has preserved For us Two of them The Lord in his wisdom Has not Included For us But as with Nearly all of Paul's letters In the New Testament He is writing To a church

That he might Correct Problems Errors Trouble Division And so on In this local Church It's not a letter To congratulate In one sense On passing exams Or a test It's not a letter To inquire about How they are Though there is Certainly an essence Of that It is a letter To deal with A specific set Of needs Difficulties Problems For that church And there are A lot of problems In the church In Corinth A lot of them That's why This is his Longest letter By some amount And we see As we go through In the coming weeks Just what those Problems are What sort of a mess The church in Corinth Had got into In spite of the fact As we saw That Paul spent 18 months there In laying a foundation Of teaching Application No doubt Church leadership And so on

We mustn't think That because A church Has started Well It will always Carry on well We mustn't think That somehow We can look back To the past And say perhaps As many of them Could Paul planted This church It's a true church A biblical church We must be looking At ourselves In the present We must be ever Under the microscope Of God's word Of the interrogation In one sense Of the Holy Spirit As David says Search me O God Find any wrong way Within me There are at least Nine major problems In the church In Corinth That we shall see Here's just five Division Disorder Debauchery Doubting Deception Many others as well Some even Not beginning with D So where does Paul begin?

[17 : 49] When you're faced With a church Which is in such A catastrophic State Where do you start? Teachers of course Are sent in Headmasters To failing schools To sort them out And bring them up To standard Or directors Into hospitals Or managers Into businesses To turn them around How do they Start to sort it out?

Well how is Paul Going to begin To deal with The many problems That he knows Are here in the church In Corinth The church in Corinth Is very much Like a derelict House Spiritually It's got some walls And stones And stones left But the roof Is caved in There's damp Climbing up Everywhere The floors Are rotten And the windows Are all broken The temptation Would be To knock it all Down And start again To level it And build up From the foundations Once more But Paul Paul doesn't do it That way Paul begins With something else And as we come To look at this letter Immediately We recognise That this letter Is written for us Here in Whitby In 2016 This letter Is as relevant To us As it was To the church In Corinth Different names Different age But similar Problems Problems that seem To be gigantic

In proportion Perhaps to what We think of our own But there are Problems here In our lives In our church In some measure Like that of the church In Corinth There are in every Single local church As somebody has said If you ever find A perfect church Don't join it Because you'll spoil it There is no Perfect church There is no Perfect group Of God's people We know it's for us Because even there In verse 2 This is exactly What Paul says He's writing to The church of God In Corinth To those sanctified In Christ Jesus And called to be His holy people Together with All those Everywhere Who call on The name of Our Lord Jesus Christ Their God And ours So that includes us We have called on The name of Our Lord Jesus Haven't we And he is our Lord And therefore The words that We have before us Are his words To us They are authoritative God's words

To God's people For all time For all situations For all circumstances For all places So here is this Derelict Falling apart Church Spiritually How is Paul Going to deal With that Well he doesn't Go for the jugular He doesn't Immediately leap Into the problem And start Sacking people Overthrowing the Leadership Rearranging the Timetable Or any of those Things that We may feel We have to do As a head teacher Into a school Or a director Into a hospital Or a manager Into a firm He doesn't Confront their Errors on the Very first day In the very first Line As we might be Tempted to do He begins with Reminding the Believers in Corinth Who he is And who they Are And two Blindingly obvious Things we might Say But vital things To set the Foundation for What he has to Deal with Vital things

That we need To take hold Of and understand Afresh for Ourselves Before we face The challenges Of this letter First of all Who it is That's writing This letter He introduces Himself Paul They knew Paul Many of them Knew Paul This is the Same man who Brought the gospel To them in Acts chapter 1 Isn't it After this Paul left Athens and went To Corinth This is the Paul the apostle On his missionary Journey He goes to Corinth He begins to Preach the gospel People are saved We're told about Some of them Even Titius Justice Crispus the Synagogue leader And others as Well Come to faith Many of the Corinthians Who heard Paul Believed Were baptized Here's someone They know personally Here's someone That they've had Interaction with Before Here's someone Who's shown them Care and love Pastored them We might say For that time That he was there He's someone Who's not a Stranger He's not Somebody who's

[22 : 18] Just sort of Writing a General letter To everybody Not knowing The circumstances Or the situation Here's someone Who served them And to whom They owe so Very very much But how does Paul describe Himself He calls himself Called to be An apostle of Christ Jesus By the will Of God Called to be An apostle The title Apostle means Someone who Has been sent Specifically sent By a man In authority A king A ruler A government And we know That he is the Apostle of Christ Jesus He's been sent By Christ Who is the Head of the Church To this Local church To speak to Them With his Authority He is appointed By Christ To bring the Word of God And notice This appointment Is not by His own Will Or by His own Desire It's not even By the Church At Antioch Who sent him Out originally He doesn't say

Paul called to be An apostle of Christ Jesus By the will Of the church Or the will Of the pope Or the will Of the bishop Or the will Of another man Or human being But by the Will of God It's a very Serious claim Isn't it These words That he will be Writing contain And carry God's Authority And therefore They must be Heeded They must be Obeyed They must be Taken seriously They cannot be Ignored They have Carry with them Power Authority From God So Paul an apostle Sent by Christ And commissioned By God So he's laying Down in one sense That authority Again Yes they're Familiar with him But familiarity Can breed contempt Can't it They know about him And he knows them But he's not just An ordinary man If I can put it That way Not just somebody Out of the blue Who set himself up As a prophet of the day He's God's man And then he mentions Sosthenes This is only

The second place Where that name Is mentioned In the whole Of the New Testament It seems to me That though We aren't certain For sure It can only be This Sosthenes We read about In Acts 18 Just turn back There for a minute Because when we Read about this Sosthenes He's in a bit Of bother Verse 17 After he has With the other Jews And some of the Greeks Gone to the proconsul To get Paul Sort of arrested And into trouble He gets given The brush off And so the crowd Turn on him And they beat him up But here he is Our brother We don't know What's happening Between What a wonderful Wouldn't it be lovely When we get to heaven And we meet Sosthenes there How did you get To be saved One minute you're Beaten up The next minute You'll mention The letter As a brother What happened God did a work I don't think I don't think it Can be any other Sosthenes Because why would Paul mention him Unless he's Somebody from Corinth Somebody they knew And knew about Somebody they were

Familiar with Perhaps he was the one Who brought the letter From Corinth to Paul We're not told that For certain But that's often What happened The letter didn't Just get popped In the post did it It had to be taken By a courier Usually one of the church Perhaps he's the one Who takes back The letter From Paul To Corinth We don't know These things for certain But certainly He's known to them Paul adds his name In one sense To say You know Sosthenes And you know me You know that this is These are people Who you're familiar with Perhaps even that Sosthenes is almost A witness For Paul Yeah this letter Did come from Paul Not from somebody else It's authoritative It's from him But also there's a sense Of Paul Standing alongside Sosthenes And Sosthenes with Paul In one sense He's saying this letter Comes from us both It's not just me I'm part of a brotherhood I'm part of a family And Sosthenes Is my brother and yours So that's his introduction

Of himself Very brief But it's clear Who he is And then he writes To the church And he speaks about them Who are you? Who are you?

[26 : 34] Well you are Notice that He says God's people He doesn't immediately Launch out I've got the authority Of an apostle The authority of God's will To sort you out He still is holding back He still is rather Wanting to stir their minds up To who they are You see What we do Flows from who we are How we act Is fashioned by What we think of ourselves If we have a low opinion Of ourselves We think ourselves worthless Then we will never Aspire to anything We will not seek To achieve Or to accomplish And if we have Too high an opinion Of ourselves We may try to do Something which is Utterly beyond us But we need to know Who we are We need to know Who we really are And so Paul begins By telling them Reminding them You are The church of God In Corinth That's an amazing thing You're God's people In Corinth You're those who belong To God Out of the population

Of that metropolis That large city of Corinth With all of its cultures And all of the things Going on You have been set apart By God as his possession You're something special Dear friends We need to remind ourselves Of that Out of all the people Of Whitby You mean what I'm going to say By this You are God's people We know there's others Who are God's people In other churches Not saying that But we are God's people We're the church of God Here in Whitby We're his possession And for Paul He was trying to say To them as well Something This is what God Promised to me That there would be a church That there would be A people for me Remember We read there In Acts 18 How Paul Was told by God He had a vision From God To say Don't be afraid Don't be worried Don't run away Keep on preaching Why?

I have many people In this city Now there are some Already converted But what God Is talking to him about Is others will come To faith Others will come To trust in me Others will Will be part of my church Will be part of my church Part of my people And here's the fulfillment Of it To the church Those other people In the city That God has gathered To himself Through the preaching Of Paul And since Paul Left the city To the church of God In Corinth To those Sanctified In Christ Jesus To those Sanctified In Christ Jesus The word sanctified Sanctification It means to be set apart To be separated We use the word Holy Sacred It means there's something Which is set apart But it's set apart For God It's set apart As belonging to God It's set apart From the rest of the world The rest of humanity In Christ Jesus All those in Christ Are sanctified They belong to God

All Christians Throughout the world Throughout time Belong to God And this setting apart Of the church In Christ Jesus Is for a purpose Is for a reason When God sanctifies us Makes us holy Sets us apart Takes us to himself He does that In a one off act That's what happens When we're converted But actually The work of sanctification Goes on Because he says And called to be His holy people Other translations Called to be saints But it's the same word Called to be holy people There's something Of an action Going on There's something Of an activity Going on there Isn't it Called to be Holy people There's an ongoing Lifelong transformation That takes place In the heart Of the believer In the life Of the believer God's purpose In taking us

To himself Is that we should Increasingly live For him Alone In one sense That word Sanctification Doesn't need to be made If I can put it this way To sort of Super spiritual Sanctification Simply means Maturing That's another phrase That's used in the Bible Growing In faith Deepening In our knowledge Of Christ It's that Word by which We as believers Are being Transformed Day by day Week by week Month by month Year by year All of us Are changing Aren't we I was in When I was in Guernsey I went up With a boy A man Now he's my age I'd been to school With When I was only Primary school I hadn't seen him For many many years He pulled out A photograph Of us When we were Around about Seven Six I think We were all In a Catholic school So we were having Our first communion There's a picture Of him and me And some others That I've known And were there

[31 : 31] I've changed a bit I've certainly Grown a lot Anyway Since those Forty or so years But even Even in the last Five or ten years We're changing Aren't we We're changing Physically We're changing In our In our appearance We're changing In our bodies Changing in our Mental capacities So But so it is With us Supernaturally Spiritually We are changing Paul talks about it Later on We get to Chapter 13 Being transformed From one degree Of glory to another We're being changed Changed by the Holy Spirit Changed in our love Changed in our Understanding Changed in our Lifestyle In our habits Becoming more and more The people that God Wants us to be That's what you've been Called to dear Christian You've not been called Simply to become a Christian And then there's heaven You've been called To know and experience The very life of God Working in you And through you Which is changing you That's what we've called to We're holy people

Together with everywhere That's true of every Christian That's what he says Together with all those Everywhere We're not to plateau As Christians We're not to reach A sort of A higher plane Where we say Well that's it I've achieved this Holiness in my life And that's it I'm just going to Sort of carry on Along that Coasting along On that holiness Till I get to heaven No it's always Upwards It's always advancing That's part of the Reason for this letter That's part of the Reason why we need To take it seriously Well how did this happen How did we Come To faith in Christ How do we come To be part of God's church We came Ultimately this We're told there Through faith in Christ Calling on the name Of the Lord Jesus Christ You cannot be a Christian Unless you call upon Christ You cannot be a Christian Unless in your heart of hearts There's that longing There's that desire There's that help me Lord Save me Lord Until that's happened In us In some measure

Or way Some reality Then we aren't Part of the church Not part of the church By being baptised Not part of the church By taking communion Not part of the church By being on the members list Not part of the church By being given a title Not part of the church By coming regularly Sunday by Sunday We are only part of the church Of Jesus Christ When we call on his name Have you done that?

Have you seriously done that? Called on him Lord Jesus Be my saviour Be my Lord That really doesn't explain How then Really we have come To faith in Christ Doesn't really explain What God has done for us Why did God Take us To be his holy people?

Why did he Set us apart? Especially when you think About these Corinthians To the church of God In Corinth To those sanctified In Christ Jesus And called to be His holy people As we go through the letter We realise that These people Who make up the church Are really Pretty rum lots They're the lowest Of the low They're the ones Who you'd cross the street Particularly When we're told About some of their Activities And their lifestyles Later on in chapter 6 Verses 9 and following Do not be deceived Says Paul Neither the sexually immoral Or idolaters Nor adulterers Nor men Who have sex with men Nor thieves Nor the greedy Nor drunkards Nor slanderers Nor swindlers Will inherit The kingdom of God And that is what Some of you Were You know These weren't The middle class People of Corinth These weren't Merchants and traders Who sort of Held the places Of power They were the

[35 : 09] Scam Sorry They were the lowest Of the lowest He's going to tell us Later on in chapter 1 God has chosen The foolish things Chosen the weak things The despised things The things that are not And he's talking about You and I as well Why on earth Should God have chosen These sort of people You and I And if we're honest With ourselves And if we look back At how we lived Before we came to Christ And the attitudes we had And the way we spoke And the things that we did We know that we were not Good people Deserving people Righteous people No Paul tells us That the reason For all of this Is because of God's grace It's going to come out Again particularly When we get to verse 4 But he's got this Lovely greeting Hasn't he It's his It's Paul's Traditional greeting It's often how he opens His letters Grace and peace to you From God our Father And the Lord Jesus Christ It's a blessing But it's also a reality We are those who have

Received God's grace And it has brought about Peace in our lives God's grace We know what it is It's his undeserved favour Our special status with God Our special relationship with God Is all because we've received grace From God the Father And the Lord Jesus Christ Grace is the hallmark Of all of God's acts of love Why does he love us?

Because of grace Why does he save us? Because of grace Why does he send his son To die for us? Because of grace Why does he send his spirit Into our hearts? Because of grace It's all of grace Otherwise sinners Could never be saved The Corinthians Nor us And the result of that grace Is God's peace Peace with God Where previously There was war Colossians tells us That we were enemies of God In our minds And alienated from him We were at war with God It was me against God My will against God's will What I wanted Against what he wanted We hated the fact That God told us What to do We hated his laws That we thought Tried to bind And hinder our lives And tie us up But God has made peace With us He's made it possible For us to be at peace With him And peace with one another He's the author of peace The prince of peace And of course And of course Every blessing

Every gift of grace Every token of peace Comes through the Lord Jesus Christ Through that one person Verse 4 I always thank my God For you Because of his grace Given you in Christ Jesus Have you noticed How many times already Jesus' name has been mentioned An apostle of Christ Verse 1 Sanctified in Christ Jesus Verse 2 Name of our Lord Jesus Christ Verse 2 Lord Jesus Christ Verse 3 Given you in Christ Jesus Verse 4 Over and over and over And over again It's all through By And because of Jesus Christ Paul is reiterating This truth As he comes to verse 4 Grace given us Given us In Christ Jesus There's no place There's nowhere You can find grace Except being in Christ Outside of Christ There is no grace Outside of Christ There is no salvation

There is no forgiveness There is no relationship With God Are you in Christ Jesus Have you found Him to be That place of shelter That refuge In the storms of life That lovely hymn Rock of ages Clef for me Let my Hide myself in thee We are to be Hidden In Christ We are to be those Who are very much In him And Paul says For that reason I thank God I thank God For you He's thankful For this church As we're going to see This church full of Problems and difficulties A pastor's nightmare Of a church I always thank My God For you He's thankful To God For the church He's thankful For such people And what's he thankful For He's thankful For what God Has done Because of his grace Given you in Christ Jesus Are so thankful To God

[39 : 33] For you Because of what God Has done in you Because of the work God has poured out Into your life Of his grace What has God done What is he thankful for What is it that has been Given us In Christ Jesus This grace What does it mean What's it mean In the road of life What's it mean In the reality of life For in him You've been enriched In every way What does it mean To receive grace It means to be enriched It means to be Richly given We are rich people And notice that We have been enriched In every way With all kinds There's no measure To the riches of God That are ours In Christ Jesus There's no limit To the riches of God In Christ Jesus There's no end To his grace There's no cut off points When we're in Christ There's no point In our lives Or no situation Or circumstance We face Whereby we come To the end

Of God's grace Where we use it all up We've been enriched We've been enriched In every way Without reservation You dear friends Are the church of God And you have been enriched By God In Christ Jesus In every single way You are the people Who are the richest people In Whitby Aren't we We're the richest people In Whitby Who cares about that Half a million pound Mansion down the road Who cares about that Ferrari that they bought They've got nothing We have the riches of God The one who Owns the whole universe We have every spiritual blessing We have every spiritual blessing in Christ As we read there At the beginning In Ephesians And why has God enriched us Why has he given us And given us And given us grace in Christ Why has he poured out Into our lives Such riches What are they there for Are they there so that We can be happy people There's a measure of that Has God enriched us So we can feel better About ourselves With self-esteem

There's a certain element Of that But ultimately The reason that God Has given us such grace The reason he's enriched us In such a way Is that we might live Lives of holiness So that we might be The people he saved us to be So that we might live out The very purpose and calling Of our lives Called to be His holy people Verse 2 And look there Verse 7 Therefore you do not lack Any spiritual gift As you eagerly wait For the Lord Jesus Christ To be revealed He will also keep you Firm to the end So that you'll be Blameless on the day Don't it's those two senses Blameless on the day of Christ When he comes again But waiting for the day of Christ As we are waiting We are living Waiting in the Bible Doesn't mean Sitting down Waiting Reading a magazine So that when the bus comes We can get on it It means actually Hoping Trusting Living Looking forward to

With expectation While we get on with life And you and our dear friends Have been given by God Everything necessary All the resources that we need From Christ To live Today Tomorrow And every day of our lives As the people Of the church Of God So as Paul is preparing These people To be faced with the Shortcomings of their lives He first of all Assures them That it's not because God has let them down In some way It's not because They are lacking In some gift It's not because They are They haven't the resources Of God That they've fallen Into sin Or fallen short They cannot look to God And say It's your fault That we're in this mess They will have to face The reality That God has given them Everything And that the problem Is their fault What have we been given What are these riches What is it that God Has supplied

For us And for God's people Here in Corinth Well we need to Just very briefly We can see them First of all Verse 5 With all kinds of speech And with all knowledge So much so That our conversation Is flavoured With God's grace The way we speak Is different To the way we used to speak Our words Are important How we speak to people How we greet people How we talk Whether we gossip Whether we pull people down Those are not the ways Of the believer That's not the words That God has given us He's enriched our speech With all kinds of Knowledge Understanding So that we can give a reason For the hope that's in us It's my language Language which shows That it is rich With the grace of Jesus It's my language such That it speaks of And confirms God's grace to us

[44 : 36] Notice verse 6 God thus confirming Our testimony About Christ among you What is he saying He's saying Both in verse 5 And in verse 7 The gift of God In giving us A changed speech And the gift of God In giving us Spiritual gifts Are the confirmation That we've received The gospel Through the preaching Of God's word That we've been changed That God's gospel Has power Why is it that men And women around about us Don't believe In Christ Why do they not Believe in God Why do they think That the gospel Is ineffective Could it be That in my life And yours We aren't testifying To that power That they don't see The change They don't see The reality They don't see us As being any different From anybody else And yet here we are Laden with riches With speech And with spiritual gifts And what Paul is saying To the Corinthians This failing And foolish church Is These gifts

That you've got Are proof That God is working In you Proof Proof That the gospel Is effective And powerful To save So we've got speech Spiritual gifts They'll come out A bit later When we look at Some of those We don't need to Think about them Especially at this moment But basically God gifting us With skills Abilities Qualities Characteristics And so on But also We have been given As well All strength All perseverance He will also Keep you firm To the end And the Things that many Younger Christians Particularly struggle With is assurance How can I Keep on Following Christ Through my life How can I know That I'll get to heaven And particularly Where sadly In much preaching Or some preaching There's this sense Of how you can Lose your salvation Or you can fall away From Christ Or lose out of grace No no

Those things aren't true But there can be Doubts in our minds Am I really a believer How can I know That I will get there Well our confidence Is in Christ It's not in ourselves It's not in our power Not in our ability He's the one Who's enriched us And one of the things He's given us Is keeping power He will keep you firm When our legs go Jelly like In the face of trials And difficulties One of the things We heard about Even this weekend The young people Was how How God is Able to Cause us to stand firm When life sucks Or when life Goes pear shaped As Paul Gampton Put it Christ sustains us He sustains us And strengthens us And keeps us To the end Even when we feel Flabby And floppy But notice this as well He's given us Fellowship With Christ We have a shared life With the Lord Jesus Christ

God is faithful Who's called you Into fellowship With his son We're united to Christ We're united to him Both in the joy Of fellowshiping With daily But also in receiving From him The grace And life we need Remember that Lovely Saying of our Lord Jesus In John 15 I am the vine You are the branches Abide in me If you abide in me You'll bear much fruit If you abide in me You will do this And you'll do that It's We are united with Christ We have fellowship With him And he's the one Who works And his life Flows through us As the sap Through a branch His life flows through us To create fruitfulness So we've got These incredible riches Of gifts And of qualities Of characteristics Of strength Of fellowship We've got everything Possible that we need And all these things All these blessings That we have Are evidence That God is faithful How do we know

That God is faithful Well because God is faithful He's done these things He's blessed us He's given to us We've been changed We've been transformed God is faithful He's begun a good work In us Says Paul to the Philippians And therefore I'm convinced And certain He's going to carry it On to the end How can I make certain Because he started it Because he's manifestly Poured it out upon us Therefore there's ultimately No reason And certainly no excuse For us to be faithless Or unfaithful For the Corinthians In one sense What Paul is saying Is this You cannot say There's an excuse For your behaviour In living godless And sinful lives That I'm going to point out There's no excuse For your divisions There's no excuse For your disorder There's no excuse For the sexual immorality There's no excuse For the idolatry There's no excuse For any of those things Because God has given you Exactly and everything All that you need In abundant supply

[49 : 40] To live for him In a wicked Sinful world And now that we know Who we are Now we recognise What we have in Christ It's only now That we can have The confidence To face the challenges That this letter will bring It's only now That we are assured That whatever God Has to say to us Is possible Is accomplishable Is achievable Because of his supply It's only now That we can begin To be faced up with Those searching words Those changing And transforming And challenging words That this letter brings Only now That verse 10 Paul says I appeal to you That you all agree Now he's going to face them And now we're going to be Faced with them too Dear friends We have everything We need God's given it to us By his grace in Christ Let us with boldness Advance

Into these challenges Before us And may his word Have that wonderful work In us Of bringing glory To Christ And holiness In our lives Let us in our lives Also To be honest We have Qui pH What is Hope If you are And lose Let us This way Or Let us To be honest