

A Temple Consisting of Wise and Rich People
Corinthians Explained
By Pastor Pieter Van Ruitenburg

 sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 3; 1 Corinthians 3:16-23
Preached on: Sunday, November 1, 2020

Bethel Netherlands Reformed Congregation
8920 Broadway Street
Chilliwack, BC V2P 5W1

Website: www.nrcchilliwack.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/bnrcchilliwack

Congregation, the Apostle Paul heard about Corinth and the whole situation in the congregation there, and as you remember, he was concerned, concerned about the carnality in the congregation. The carnality, what do you mean? So fleshly, so critical, and divisions and strife, and one saying, "I prefer Paul." Others say, "No, no, no, I like Peter way more." There was tension in the congregation and even among the servants of God, even among the pastors there was tension, and some were also building with hay and wood and stubble. They yet spoke of Christ as the only foundation of salvation but yet there were also errors, errors in the sermons of God's servants.

So the Apostle Paul was very concerned and he warned them and he wrote this epistle, and also this third chapter that we have read this morning hour. We have seen last week that he said, "Now it's the one that planteth and the other one that watereth but they are one. They are ministers of God." And so he continues with that in our chapter. I would like to focus on the verses 16 through 23. Let's read those verses again slowly and try to understand what it means. It makes easier for you also to listen to the sermon. So 3:16,

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

Don't you know that, that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? Oh, he warns,

17 If any man defile the temple of God [that's bad], him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Then he changes the subject a little bit in verse 18,

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise [it's about wisdom]. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. 20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

So he's talking about the temple and about wisdom, and then he ends with riches in verses 21 through 23.

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;
I think that touched me the most in this sermon, "all things are yours."

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death [or death], or things present, or things to come; all are yours; 23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

So the theme is "A Temple Consisting of Wise and Rich People." You say, "A temple consisting of wise and rich people?" Yes, because the temple is God's church and they are rich and they are wise. So again, a temple consisting of wise and rich people. They are the temple. Three thoughts. God's people are his temple, 16 and 17, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God." What does that mean that the church, not the individual, the church is the temple of God. What does that mean? Secondly, God's people are truly wise. We touched on that in the previous chapters already but again the Apostle Paul underlines it, what true wisdom is, God's people are truly wise. In the third place, God's children possess all things. They're rich.

Congregation, the Apostle Paul has a reason to talk about the temple, and when we talk about the temple in the Bible, we know what we are talking about, right, children? The temple? The temple of Solomon, for example, and the temple of Zerubbabel built on later? Oh, I see the court around the temple and I see the altar of burnt offering, and I see the tabernacle and later on the built temple, the stony temple, and I see in the first part the table of shewbread and the candlestick and the incense altar, and then the curtain, the veil with those cherubim embroidered on there, and if you were able to go inside into the most holy place, you'd see the ark and the cherubim. But the most important thing in the temple is something invisible because the ark and those angels, those golden cherubim, are just the throne. The throne, not God himself. The throne and God was above. His glory was over the ark. God's real presence, the glory, in Hebrew a very important word, the "kavod," the "kavod" of the Lord was there, his holy, weighty presence.

And you know, the people of Israel took it very hard when that temple was destroyed. They felt kind of missing God. God has let his people go, and the Lord has forsaken the people. So that temple was something central in the religion of the Jewish people, so important. There was only one in the whole country. Later on, not in the Old Testament but in the New Testament, actually after they came back from the captivity, they started to build synagogues. In the Old Testament, I don't read about any synagogue, do you? I don't. There were no synagogues. There was only one temple and they came once in a while from different places to the temple. The temple was the real house of God. Not just a synagogue, not like our church building. Some people say this is God's house. I know what you mean. We also think that things are sensitive and we try to be cautious but, you

know, it's not. This is not God's house. This is just a building but the temple in Israel was different. It was God's house.

Now the Lord Jesus saw that temple and he said, "It will be destroyed and in three days I can build it up again," and the Pharisees got offended. "This fellow said, I'm able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?" What did the Lord Jesus mean that the temple be destroyed and that he will build it up in three days, the temple of what? The temple of his body. The Lord Jesus' resurrection, that was the temple. The temple was built up again in three days. The third day he rose from the dead. It was the temple being rebuilt. So the temple at that place was his body. His body.

We also have read of a different building last week. So we saw a foundation being laid and gold and silver being used and precious stones fitting, and some people putting hay and wood and stubble on top of that. What building was that? That was the building of the right doctrine. The foundation, the Lord Jesus. The stones on there, the important pieces of doctrine of grace and the Holy Spirit and the Trinity and everything together. And some people were adding errors. It was the temple of the doctrine. S

o you have the temple of the body of Jesus, we have the temple of the doctrine, and then you feel kind of in this chapter that the picture is changing a little bit. The Apostle Paul on purpose just gives a twist to that and he says, "which temple ye are." You are the temple so not the body of Jesus, "I'm not talking," he said, "about the doctrine, I'm talking about the church. I'm talking about all of you at the same time. The living church," he said, "the living church and they are God's temple." He is not talking about that God's children's bodies are the temple. So not the body of Jesus, not the doctrine, not the individual people of God are the temples of the Holy Ghost but the church, plural. God's people together, they are God's temple.

So that's what we read here. Verse 16, "Know ye not," really, you don't know that? That's amazing. That's so foolish. But you are, God's people are. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" There's a story about a minister in Holland years ago from the Old-Reformed church in Sint Philipsland with the name Boone and he got a visitor from the government, I think it was the Prime Minister because he had a huge church, lots of people in Sint Philipsland coming to his church. So let me say the Prime Minister came there and he had a meeting with that minister. He was kind of one of the important people in town so he wanted to talk to him and he said, "I came to see your church." And he said, "Sure." So he brought him through one of the streets and he showed him the church and a barn, a big barn, and the Prime Minister said, "Is this your church? I had expected when you have so many people, I would have expected just a beautiful building and this looks like a barn. Sorry." Reverend Boone said, "You know, we take all the furniture out of every Monday, take the furniture out because what really counts is the furniture. When you see the furniture, then it's different, it looks different." "What do you mean?" "Well," he said, "God's people. When God's people are in church, that's the church. Not this building. We don't care about this barn. We don't care about those outer things. It's about spiritual things. They are the temple."

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Not in your heart, that's not what he means right now in the heart, but among you in the church. And, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." So if you do harm to the church, if you ruin the church, if you gossip in the church, and you make trouble in the church, and you have made division in the church when you make a mess of it in church, that church is God's church whose temple you are and the Holy Spirit lives in the church. So do you see why he talks about this? Because harm has been done to the church. We have to be so careful. You know, in 1 Corinthians 6:19 he says, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" But that's, again, a little different. That is about the body being the temple of God.

So it's not about Jesus, about the doctrine, it's not about the physical body of God's people being the temple. No, the church temple. And who are the church? God's people. Born again. Made alive. Because of the work of the Holy Spirit, "for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are, and if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." So God's children are the temple and if you are not God's people, you don't really belong to the church. Your name is in the book, you have been baptized, maybe you have done confession, but you are not really the temple. There's no life. There's no insight. Something is missing. You are outside of that because the church is a gathering of the faithful of God's people, expecting their salvation only of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me show you. Ephesians 2:20, "And you are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." So the Holy Ghost has come and the Holy Ghost has said, "I'm going to dwell here." Where? "Among my people." And the Holy Spirit knows there are also unconverted ones mixed but he says, "I'm with my people, with my church. That's my temple."

So in spite of all the differences in the church at Corinth, although some ministers are using hay, although some ministers have to be warned like the Apostle Peter had to be warned as well when he said to the Lord Jesus that won't happen to him, that he would not die and would not be crucified, and the Lord Jesus had to say to the Apostle Peter, "Behind me, Satan." In spite of all those shortcomings in the church, in spite of all that hay and wood and stubble in the church, in spite of the carnality in the church, the divisions, yet it is a temple of the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost wants to yet dwell among that people, dwell in that church. It's amazing. The Lord has no perfect church on earth. There's always something. You can't find a perfect church and we will never be one either. All that hay, that wood, that stubble, that division, that pride, many things are going wrong but yet there's a foundation, the cornerstone. Yet there are God's people as well.

So when you defile that temple of God, God will destroy you. You see, that's the reason why he's talking about the temple, because the congregation is the temple of God. So you

would say, "Can you please tell us a little bit more about how you become a member of the church?" Yes, I can. I'd like to use 1 Peter 2 for that, 1 Peter 2:4-6, "To whom coming, as unto a living stone," so that's the Lord Jesus, correct? So you coming to the living stone, "disallowed indeed of men," nobody wanted him, "but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

So the Lord is building still. Do you see that house of the church, that temple of the church? The Lord is still adding stones, lively stones. Not only lively stones in the sense that they are people but they have been made alive by the Holy Spirit, and the Lord is using those building blocks to make a church, to make a congregation, and every conversion is adding a lively stone unto that house to make also an holy priesthood, so that in the church, in the temple, God's people can sacrifice. That's what you're doing in a temple, right, to sacrifice, and in a temple you need priests. So all God's people are stones and all God's people are priests and all God's people are sacrificing. It's kind of a whole bundle of things together. But you know, that cornerstone, elect and precious, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the cornerstone and he that believeth on him and leaneth on him and is building on and resting on that cornerstone shall not be confounded. So in order to know if you belong to that church, belong to that temple, the question is how you're connected to the cornerstone. Are you holding onto that cornerstone? Are you just a loose stone somewhere in the field? You need to be brought to that cornerstone to be built up as a temple unto God, to whom coming as unto a living stone. He is the living stone, disallowed indeed of men, chosen of God and precious. Has he become precious? Well, he is not precious for people by nature, so we don't belong to the temple until the Holy Spirit comes and makes us alive and draws us out of sin and guilt, and makes us a different people, and makes us a lively stone, and is connected to that stone, to the Lord Jesus, that precious cornerstone.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" You know, when you talk about the church and talk about our congregation, be careful. Be careful. We are not perfect and you may say that, and you may also point out the weaknesses but in love because it's still, in spite of all the shortcomings, God's temple. And if you defile that temple of God, destroy, he will destroy you, "for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." So we are becoming a temple by faith, by faith only to see his preciousness and to be connected to that cornerstone.

So the Apostle Paul is concerned about the congregation in Corinth and he said, "You know, with all that's going on there, you have to still believe that you are the temple of God." So you may be self-conscious, you may feel shy, you feel unworthy, but you are the temple of the living God as a church. So also when you come to church, when you are listening through the telephone or online, you're connected with the church. We are the temple of the living God of whom Christ is the cornerstone.

Let's go to the second point. God's people are truly wise. Verse 18, 19, 20, "Let no man," be careful, "no man deceive himself." We are so prone to do that, yeah? "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool." What is that, you have to become a fool? Please, "let him become a fool," why? "That he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise," he knoweth the thoughts of the wise, "that they are vain." The wise people are vain.

I heard a story of someone who said to one of the young friends in church, you know, in college, he said, "You people are brainwashed, brainwashed by your parents, and brainwashed by the pastors, and brainwashed in school, and brainwashed at catechism class. You're just brainwashed." And what I found interesting is the answer that young friend gave, and he said, "That's right. That's right, we have been brainwashed by the Lord. The Lord has washed our brains clean so now we understand because we have been brainwashed by God." And right, that's what we need. We need to be brainwashed because by nature we are so foolish. We just don't get it. There's something in us that resists, resists to the core the truth. We are so prone to deceiving ourselves. "Let no man deceive himself."

Remember John Calvin? Did you listen yesterday evening? Maybe not. When John Calvin for the first time heard about that new doctrine about by grace only, by faith only, he was offended, offended by that novelty. "I lent an unwilling ear. I lent an unwilling ear at first, I confess. I strenuously and passionately resisted to confess that I had all my lifelong been in ignorance, that the whole of my life I have been in ignorance, so I have been wrong my whole life?" He had such a hard time, Calvin had such a hard time to confess that, admit that. He couldn't. "And at length, I perceived as if light had broken in upon me and what a stye of error I had wallowed and how much pollution and impurity I had thereby contracted." So the Holy Spirit came and just, what happened? Did the truth change? It's still the same truth but the light was switched on in Calvin. He was a very smart man but he lived in darkness. He didn't see it. When he heard about it for the first time, he resisted it.

So we need that real wisdom and the Apostle Paul is talking to the people in Corinth and he said, "You know, with all the divisions going on, all the problems, I would like to warn you, let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." So one of the most dangerous things in this regard is that you think you're wise, that you know it all. That's one of the biggest problems in church, you know it all. "He's wrong. That is all wrong. I don't agree with that. I wish..." And maybe you are unconverted and you think you know it, you exactly know who is right, who is wrong, who is converted, who is not converted. You think you know it and you don't know anything. That's the biggest problem in church, that people think that they know it.

"If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." You have to become a fool, and I tell you and the Holy Spirit comes, he makes you wise, but then you feel you're a fool and that you don't know anything. You

don't know it anymore. You actually, you don't know it anymore. You throw your hands up, "Lord, I don't know it anymore. What is the truth? I need to know. I'm so ignorant. I've been so wrong my whole life. I have been wallowing in the miry clay as a pig in a pigsty, all my errors." And the Apostle Paul writes about that here, so we have to understand a different wisdom. For God giveth wisdom. Out of his mouth comes knowledge and understanding through the Bible. Not in addition to the Bible but through the Bible. It's about reading the Bible. When the Holy Spirit comes in, he accompanies himself with the Bible and just opens your understanding and you begin to see what you have not seen before. You've heard about God, you've heard about sin, you've heard about grace. It's kind of a little basic idea of what it is about, but you don't know what it is. You have no experience with it.

So only God can give that. "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul," Proverbs 2:10, "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul." In a way it is pleasant, it is joyful when God opens your understanding and begins to shine in their hearts, and you begin to see things you haven't seen before. In a way it's pleasant, beautiful. You see things you haven't seen before, ugly things but also very special things. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding," because then your whole life changes. You have a purpose and there is joy and there is hope and there is humility and there is grace. It's so different.

Proverbs 4:7, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." Get it. Also this morning hour, the Lord is saying to all of us, the young friends also, "Get it. Get understanding." How do you get understanding? By realizing that you're dumb in the first place, and prize, prize wisdom and say, "Lord, I want to be wise. I want to be wise unto salvation." Because all the other wisdom, science and mathematics and philosophy and you name it, it is so at the surface. You cannot live with it, you cannot die with it, there's no comfort in it, there's no hope in it. The principal thing is God's wisdom, for wisdom is better than rubies and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. Maybe there are better things, good at this or that, interest and knowledge of certain things of this life, but you know, when you are on your deathbed, when you get corona, when you are short of breath, what do you do with that? It's not making any difference. But if you're on your deathbed and may have wisdom about spiritual things, be wise and belong to the temple of God, that is the only thing that counts. Nothing else counts but that wisdom, to be wise unto salvation. Nothing else. So get wisdom. Proverbs 4:7, "principal thing; therefore get wisdom." And where is that wisdom found? Especially in Christ. "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength."

So we need to be foolish first in order to be made wise. Now again about Calvin, I like that quote as well from yesterday evening. He writes about what happened, "Therefore illumined by the Spirit's power, we believe that neither by our own nor by anyone else's judgment." No, it was not my own judgment that the Bible is true. It's not so that I study the Bible and say, "Yeah, I think, I come to the conclusion myself that the Bible is true." No. "Nor by someone else's judgment," you know that's a smart man. He comes with all

the arguments that the Bible is true and that God exists and that our God is right. Someone else's judgment, no. "Therefore illumined by the Spirit's power, we believe neither by our own nor by anyone else's judgment that Scripture is from God; but above human judgment we affirm with utter certainty, just as if we were gazing upon the majesty of God himself, that it has flowed to us from the very mouth of God by the ministry of men." So Calvin said, let me simplify it, "I did not come to the conclusion myself what wisdom is. I didn't get it from other people. But with utter certainty, the majesty of God, I was gazing upon the majesty of God himself, and I was so deeply impressed with that, that all things flowed out of the very mouth of God."

So that's wisdom. John Owen is one of the most gifted and intelligent theologians of the world, comparable to John Calvin and others, Jonathan Edwards. Very smart. Very smart and gifted, and John Owen said, "I am jealous of John Bunyan who had no formal education in theology. I'm jealous of him." Because he knows there was light given to him.

So that's what we are in need of. So that's the way the Lord works. He makes you weak to be made strong. He makes you blind to let you see. He makes you feel sick that you may be healed. He slays you, kills you, to make you alive. That's all for God's glory.

So, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity." Our thoughts are vanity. We need to know it from the word of the living God himself.

So the temple of God consists of wise and rich people. We talked about God's people are his temple and God's people are truly wise, especially wise because of the wisdom in Christ. He is the wisdom. Get wisdom means get Christ. And God's children possess all things, our third thought. First we sing.

As I told you, the Apostle Paul writes that God's people are rich, so let's read again. We were to ask the children to make a list in their mind of all what God's children possess, they are so rich. They have number 1, number 2, number 3, number 4, just count the things the Apostle Paul is mentioning. We are so incredibly rich. If you have a new heart, all things are yours. Count it.

So let's read starting with verse 21, "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death," really, death? "Or things present, or things to come; all are yours." And by the way, all those things are yours but "you are of Christ, and Christ is of God." So God has Christ and Christ has the church and the church is everything.

So the Apostle Paul is also comforting the children of Corinth and saying, "In spite of everything that's going on, you are the temple of God. There is still true wisdom there as well. And don't pity yourself, you possess all things." All things. That's right to let it sink in because you possess all things or you don't possess anything. All things are yours or nothing is yours really. So that's something you have to think about, right? All you have

is not yours or everything that's in the world, it's all yours. You are the richest person you can think of or you are the most poor person you can think of.

So let's focus on God's people, what they all have. "Therefore let no man glory in men," don't praise men, "For all things are yours." Then he says, "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas." Does he mean that the congregations can say, "We, as a church, we have, we have received, we have received Paul. He's ours. And we have received Apollos. And we have received Cephas. We own them. They are our ministers." Yes. Exactly. And not the other way around. Not the ministers who say, "That's my congregation." No, minister, you are their servant. They own you. They possess you. You are just the ministers of God to minister unto them and they have received you out of the hand of God. Paul, whether Paul or Cephas, whoever it is, God's servants have been given by God to the church so they can say, "That's my minister. I have received them, more than one, from the hand of God."

So that ties into what we read in previous verses and previous chapters, that they are ministers. Chapter 3, verse 5, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" They're just instruments. So the Apostle Paul is saying to the congregation, "You are critical. You are dividing the congregation. There are factions in the congregation, you know, but I have given you them, I have given you Paul and I have given you Peter and I have given you Apollos, those are gifts of mine, so don't you want them? You possess them. All things are yours as instruments for your faith, repentance, conversion, holiness."

So all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, elders, deacons, in a way as well, "or the world." The world. So what is the world? The equator? The north pole? Antarctica? The oceans? The deep in the oceans? All the ocean life living in the ocean? All the microbes and viruses and whole creation? And we have seen this morning the beautiful sunshine on the mountains. It's all yours if you are God's child. If you have been adopted, then you are an heir and a co-heir with Christ and all things are yours. You drive through nature, you see the farms, you see the corn, you see the grass, you see the equipment, you see this whole world and you say, "It's all mine." Because it is. It's yours because you are inheriting the kingdom of God and all things are yours.

So think about that. When you go outside after this service or when you look outside from the window at home and you see mountains and you see sunshine and you see the trees and you see the beauty of it, just think on that. That's not mine or you say, by God's grace, it's all mine. Because there will be a new heaven and a new earth and the meek will inherit it, and God's people will see God and the Lord will say, "It's all yours."

Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, even politically. It's God's world. God's world. My Father's world. And in spite of all the tension and stress in China and in the Chinese sea and Donald Trump, the President, and all the tension, everything of what's happening, all things must work together for good for the church. It's going well. It's all things are theirs. All things must work together for them. It's all about the church and nobody can really work against that.

All things are yours. Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, "or life." You were born, hopefully you were also reborn, and that life is yours, and the Lord has given that life, but especially eternal life, spiritual life. It's his gift. He has granted it by grace only.

So all things are yours in the world, in the church, or life, "or death." I had to think about that. Is that not a mistake in this list? The Lord is saying to his people, "All things are yours. All the good things, but I give you death." Now what would you say? "I don't need that. I don't want that. Just, Lord, no, keep that gift to thyself. Please, give that to someone else. I don't want it." All things are yours, the world, life, death. How can that be that death is a gift of God and that God's people say, "All things are mine. He even gives me death." That must be a real good death, right? Right. The sting is out. It doesn't hurt God's people. It does not separate them from God. It brings them to God. Death for God's people is an entrance into life eternal, and they don't get any harm by that. It's to be delivered from sin and sorrow and everything. And the Lord says, "I will give you the most beautiful death you can think of. It's yours." When you are God's people, death will be nice and good. It might be a struggle bodily or physically but you will go into life eternal, that eternal life that already started before. "And I will give you that death without its sting."

You know, do you sometimes fear, kind of, "Oh, I hope I don't have that virus. Oh, I feel kind of a sore throat. Oh, I started sneezing, or maybe I feel some headaches. What is going to happen tomorrow?" And after a couple of hours, you feel better and you say, "Okay, I feel better now again." And you fear that you have to be admitted to the hospital and that you would have real serious symptoms. You fear maybe for different reasons death, but you need to become prepared. You need to get that wisdom for salvation so that all things are yours, your life, your death, and the time you are born and the time you die, and all the circumstances and all that it will do to others, it's yours. Don't worry. The Lord is speaking to his people, "Don't worry. You're fine. Death is yours. I will give it to you." And after death for God's people, it starts. Then it starts. Then they begin to really live. Then eternity, in eternity long they don't have to struggle with their sins and sorrows anymore, but they may inherit all things and have joy unto the fullest, and never be bored. And the Lord says, "Now it's all yours and conquered."

Amazing. Amazing grace. Romans 8:17, "And if children," if children of God, "then heirs," you'll get it all. Heirs of what? "Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." So that's why the Lord Jesus came. He was rich but he became poor, because of his poverty, he might make rich. He's the Redeemer. He is the Savior and he does not find people only in their sins, he also delivers from their sins. He finds people living in sin and living in foolishness and all things will be taken away from them.

All things, Paul, Apollos, Cephas, world, life, death, "or things present," whatever is present, "or things to come," they're not yours yet, "all are yours." Think about that. It's not wrong to be jealous of that and to say, "Lord, I want everything." It's not wrong. Why

not? Because the Lord wants you to desire him and all his gifts, and if you desire God with all his gifts, there's nothing wrong about that. It's to God's glory.

"And ye are Christ's." So why are all things yours, the Lord speaks to his people? Why are all things theirs? Because Christ owns them. Christ came for them. He paid with his blood. He redeemed them. They are his people. They are his church. They are his temple. And because they are his, all things are theirs. So are you his? Are you for his account?

"And ye are Christ's," even if you have only a little faith, even if you're only a beginner. But then the Lord has given you that hunger for God, a thirst for the Holy Spirit, and the Lord has spoken to you so of his salvation, and if you have found Christ and have looked upon him as the serpent in the wilderness and relied on him with all you have, your whole heart, and if you with all your sins fled, having taken refuge unto him, then all things are yours and you are Christ's.

You are Christ's. What does the Heidelberg Catechism say about that? What is thy only comfort in life and death? That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own. I don't own myself. I'm not my own but I belong, belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, he owns me, who with his precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins and delivered me from all the power of the devil, and so preserved me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head, yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation and therefore by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life and makes me sincerely willing and ready henceforth to live unto him.

Do you see? All things are for the church. "And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Christ is God. So Christ is the church and God has Christ. So in the holy Trinity, the Father is first and he has Christ. The Lord Jesus, the second person, took upon himself a human nature and he came to earth to save a people for himself, and he became a servant. So that leaves three ways: Christ is God's in the Trinity, in his coming, in his serving. So that's why we read in Philippians 2:6, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Congregation, the Apostle Paul is writing to the congregation of Corinth and he says, "You are the temple. The Holy Spirit dwells in you. Be cautious and treasure it." He said, "Now be really wise and, in the first place, become a fool and get wisdom." And he says to the congregation, "And in spite of all the tension and problems in this life, it's all yours, even those office-bearers, they're all yours. All things are yours. You will inherit them. So why are you making such a big fuss about things? Why are we so discontent? You should be content. You should say, 'I have everything.' So why are you complaining? You have everything, stop complaining."

And yet, oh, how serious it is to be for your own account without God in the world, not being an heir of God, not being a joint heir with Christ, and losing everything when you die. No words for that. But you're still alive so far. Get wisdom. Amen.