

Lordship, Fulness and Resource

From Some Notes on 1 Corinthians 1: 9-31.

W. H. Westcott.

Extracted from Scripture Truth, Volume 36, 1948, page 69.

We have been called by God into the fellowship of **His Son**, Jesus Christ, our Lord. This fellowship is not an organization. In the affairs of men it is the practice to have certain officers trained to do all the official part of the work, usually consisting of grades of offices, from lowest to highest; promotion being according to efficiency. This is seen in various Christian systems, where the laity are required to keep quiet and unexercised, save to do as they are told.

But in the Church of God, properly speaking as constituted by God, and comprised in the fellowship, this is not so. On the contrary, it is a living organism, the body of the living Head in Heaven and each member of the Body has its place and function. It is the intention of God that in saints there should be seen all the harmonies and character of Christ produced, not in one saint only, in the way of pious and heavenly character, but worked out collectively in many, in the way of united corporate holiness and love. There is no part without its function and adaptability to serve the will of God. It is maintained, not by rules nor by the appointment of ritual, but by every member being operative, subject to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Christ Himself being the Leader in the assemblies.

The leadership is just as real as though He could be seen, though this is true only to the eye of faith and to the affection that owns Him Lord. Its health and prosperity depend upon the state and conduct of each individual in it, to the refusal of the flesh and the entire subjection of the heart to Christ.

Hence the comfort of knowing that God is faithful. He will never fail to exercise the heart, though we live amid the unfaithfulness of man. He never abandons His purpose and never cancels His call. He never deflects for a moment from His principles which He has established in Christ. Three things are established in Him; Lordship, Fulness and Resource. These three things are challenged in the history of failing saints. Other leaders are set before men's minds, some part of the truth is made a rallying centre, or men insist on wisdom of words, i.e., a proper standard of education and training before one can be an instrument for God in the assembly.

In Corinth there was the effort to establish parties on the names of Paul, Apollos, Cephas and Christ. We can understand the first three being named; Paul with his unique heavenly ministry of the Body; Apollos eloquent, fervent in spirit in the Old Testament expositions; Cephas, the leader of the Twelve, the Apostle of the circumcision, the pillar of the Church, impulsive and much used of God. But Christ!! What misuse of Him and His Name in endeavouring to make out that He is connected only with a few! What a mistake it is to give the impression that He is not accessible to all and that He is specially identified with our number. The truth is that grace has taught us the ground where all may be on earth and where all will be in Heaven, every earthly distinction done away with in the Cross of Christ and we brought into association with Christ risen; the new man. Members of His body and equally indwelt by one Spirit.

Then all fulness dwells in Christ. Our testimony is to Him in all His fulness. No one portion of truth is to be a rallying centre, though it be part of the truth of Christianity. There is one body, but we are not "one bodyites;" there is one Spirit, but we are not "one spiritites;" there is one baptism, but we are not baptists.

There is no name named upon us but that of **Christ** and all Christians are thus named; He is the fulness of God and all else is confusion. The whole truth is set forth in Him and we cannot make any one part of the truth a rallying centre, we need the whole truth of **Christ**. The name sets out the glory of the Person. It is by that Name that we are called to refuse division and even contention.

In Him, and Him alone, is all wisdom and He is therefore the resource of His people. No matter what the difficulty, there is in Him wisdom to guide and overcome the difficulty. It is not necessary to turn to anyone on earth, but if we refer everything to Him, He will never fail His dependent servant or children. Thus, in the midst of all the present confusion we can encourage ourselves in the Lord knowing that God is faithful and our confidence and hope is in Him.