

## **1:1 *Called by God***

### **Called by God's Will.**

Chrysostom: From the very beginning Paul casts down the Corinthians' pride, in that he speaks of himself as "called." "For what I have learned," says Paul, "I did not discover myself, but it was while I was persecuting the church that I was called. It was God who willed that you too should be saved in this way."

We have done nothing good by ourselves, but by God's will we have been saved. We were called because it seemed good to him, not because we were worthy. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians

1.1.2

## **1:2a *To the Church at Corinth***

### **Sanctified in Christ.**

Origen: Why did Paul write "to those called to be saints" as well as to those who are already "sanctified" and in the church? Surely this means that the letter is addressed not only to those who are already cleansed from their sins but also to those who still await cleansing, though they are among those whom God has called. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1.1.7.5

## **1:2b *Those Called to Be Saints***

## **1:2c *All Who Call on the Lord Jesus Christ***

### **The One Assembly All Over the World.**

Chrysostom: The church ought to be united because it belongs to God. It does not exist only in Corinth, but all over the world, and it is one, for the church's name (ekklēsia) means "assembly." It is not a name of separation, but a name of unity and concord. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 1.1.8

### **1:3 *Grace and Peace from God and Jesus Christ***

#### **Grace and Peace.**

Chrysostom: If our peace comes from God's grace, why are you so proud, since you are saved by grace? How can anyone find grace with God, except through humility? Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 1.3.11

### **1:4a *Thanking God for Them***

#### **All the Time.**

Origen: Paul does not just give thanks for the Corinthians some of the time, nor only when they do good. He puts himself in the position of a father, who is thankful for his children all the time, whatever they may have done. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1.2.1–15.1

### **1:4b *The Grace of God Given in Christ Jesus***

#### **Not by Works.**

Chrysostom: You were saved by grace, not by works. And who gave you this grace? It was not Paul, or another apostle, but Jesus Christ himself. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 2.3.3

### **1:5 *Enriched with Speech and Knowledge***

#### **Speech Goes Further.**

Origen: Knowledge shows what there is to know. Speech goes further and explains it. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1.2.29–30.5

#### **To Understand and to Speak.**

Chrysostom: There is knowledge which goes beyond speech. Many have knowledge which they cannot express—for example, those who are uneducated and unable to express themselves clearly. But the Corinthians were not like them. They were able both to understand and to speak. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 2.3.8

## **1:6 *The Testimony to Christ***

### **Confirmed in Us.**

Origen: The testimony of Christ is confirmed in us if we can say, like the apostle Paul, "I am persuaded that neither life nor death etc. can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" [Rom 8:38–39]. But if we are upset by every little thing that happens, then Christ's testimony has not been confirmed in us at all. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1.2.35–40.9

## **1:7a *Lacking No Spiritual Gift***

### **Praise Before Criticism.**

Chrysostom: These praises are not uncritical, as the rest of the epistle makes clear. But they are inserted in order to prepare the Corinthians for the criticism which is to come. For whoever starts out with unpleasant words antagonizes his hearers. Paul starts by praising them in order to avoid this. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 2.5.11

### **Unimpeachable in the Present.**

Jerome: Although we lack no gift, nevertheless we await the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will then keep us secure in all things and present us unimpeachable when the day of our Lord Jesus Christ comes. The end of the world shall arrive, when no flesh may glory in his sight. Against the Pelagians 2.8.12

## **1:7b *The Revealing of Our Lord Jesus Christ***

### **Waiting for the Revealing.**

Origen: In this life the righteous person does not yet enjoy what he hopes for but rather endures suffering and danger. He is waiting for the revelation of Christ to come. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1.2.48–51.13

## **1:8 Sustained by Christ**

### **Sustained Forever.**

Origen: Who sustains us? Christ Jesus, the Word and Wisdom of God. Moreover, he sustains us not merely for a day or two, but forever. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1.2.52–54.16

### **Hidden Reproof.**

Chrysostom: This is not praise but backhanded reproof, since the Corinthians were far from “guiltless,” as the rest of the epistle makes clear. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 2.7.18

## **1:9a God is Faithful**

### **The God Who Is Faithful.**

Clement of Alexandria: That God is faithful means that we can trust his self-revelation. His Word reveals him. He is the God who is faithful. Stromateis 2.27.3.20

### **The Problem Is Not with God.**

Chrysostom: Paul says this so that the Corinthians will not fall into despair when he criticizes them. He reminds them that God is not the problem. We are, because of our sin and unbelief. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 2.7.21

## **1:9b Called into Fellowship by God**

### **Called to Be One with Christ.**

Origen: Believe in Christ always, because you were called for no other purpose than to be one with us in him. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1.3. 22

## **1:10a *An Appeal for Unity***

### **Let There Be No Dissensions.**

Origen: The visible church is a mixed body, consisting of both righteous and unrighteous people. This is why Paul praises some of its members and criticizes others. The person who agrees with the right doctrine and the church's teaching concerning the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as well as with the dispensation concerning us, with resurrection and judgment, and who follows the rules of the church is not in schism. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1.4.1

## **1:10b *United in Mind and Judgment***

### **United in Judgment.**

Chrysostom: It is possible to agree on a form of words but still harbor dissent, which is why Paul speaks the way he does here. It is also possible to share the same opinion with someone but not the same feelings. For example, it is possible to be united in faith without being united in love. This is why Paul says that we must be united both in mind and in judgment. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 3.2.4

## **1:11 *A Report from Chloe***

### **Paul's Source Not Personally Identified.**

Chrysostom: Paul is careful to mention who his informers are without singling out one particular person. This gives his criticisms plausibility without allowing the Corinthians to direct their feelings toward any one person. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 3.3.6

## **1:12 *Factions Within the Church***

### **Corinth Had a History of Partisanship.**

Clement of Rome: Inspired by God, Paul wrote to you concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos, because even then you were given to faction. But that factiousness involved you in less guilt, because then you

were partisans of highly reputed apostles and of those commended by them. Epistle to the Corinthians 4.7.3–4.8

### **Is Christ the Head of a Faction?**

Chrysostom: The quarreling at Corinth was not over trivial matters but over something fundamental. Even those who said they were of Christ were at fault, because they were implicitly denying this to others and making Christ the head of a faction rather than the head of the whole church. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 3.5.10

### **1:13 *Is Christ Divided?***

#### **The Question Rhetorical.**

Chrysostom: Whenever Paul uses rhetorical questions, as he does here, he implies that the whole argument is absurd. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 3.5.13

### **1:14 *Paul Baptized Only Crispus and Gaius***

#### **The Name Invoked in Baptism.**

Chrysostom: The greatness of baptism does not lie in the baptizer but in the one whose name is invoked in the baptism. Furthermore, although baptism is important and even necessary in order to obtain the kingdom, still it is much less than preaching the gospel. A person of no singular excellence can baptize, but only the truly gifted can preach the gospel. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 3.6.15

### **1:15–16 *Baptized in Paul's Name?***

#### **Paul Not Seeking Glory.**

Chrysostom: Paul downplays his own role in order to show that he was not seeking honor or glory for himself. Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 3.6.16