Continues discussion of "Paul or Apollos or Cephas" (i.e. Christian Workers) from 3:22:

1 This is how one should ***regard us***, as **servants of Christ** and **stewards of the mysteries of God**. 2 **Moreover** it is ***required*** of stewards that they ***be found faithful***.

They were judging men by their allegiances (1:12; 3:4, 21)

Found faithful by God, not man! (1:17; 2:1)

3 **But** with me it is a very small thing that I should be ***judged by you*** or by ***any human court***. In fact, ***I do not*** even ***judge myself***. 4 **For** I am ***not aware of anything against myself***, **but** I am ***not*** thereby ***acquitted***. It is the **Lord who judges me**. **<- Mt 25:31-46; 2Co 5:10**

5 **Therefore** ***do not pronounce judgment*** before the time, **before the Lord comes**, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will ***disclose the purposes of the heart***. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. **<- Stop making allegiances to men and focus on serving God!**

6 I have ***applied*** all these things to **myself** and **Apollos** for your benefit, brothers, ***that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written***, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.

This section takes aim at their selfish, worldly pride evidenced by their allegiances to men (7-13)

7 **For** *who sees anything different in you*? *What do you have that you did not receive*? If then you received it, *why do you boast as if you did not receive it*?

8 Already ***you have all you want***! Already you have become ***rich***! Without us you have become ***kings***! And would that you did ***reign***, so that ***we might share the rule with you***!

9 **For** ***I think*** that God has exhibited ***us apostles*** as last of all, like men ***sentenced to death***, **because** we have become a *spectacle* to the world, to angels, and to men.

10 We are ***fools*** for Christ's sake, **but** you are ***wise*** in Christ. We are ***weak***, **but** you are ***strong***. You are ***held in honor***, **but** we in ***disrepute***.

11 To the ***present hour*** we ***hunger and thirst***, we are ***poorly dressed*** and ***buffeted*** and ***homeless***, 12 and we labor, working with our own hands. When ***reviled***, we bless; when ***persecuted***, we endure; 13 when ***slandered***, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the ***scum of the world***, the ***refuse of all things***. **<- Rom 12:14; 1Pet 3:9**

For I Think / The Present Hour (9, 11-13) – This is the ***heart of the irony***. They ***act as though*** they are ***"kings"*** who ***"reign"***, while those they claim allegiance to are ***"sentenced to death"***, ***"homeless"***, ***"reviled"***, ***"persecuted"***, ***"slandered"***, ***"like the scum of the world"***, ***"the refuse of all things"***, etc.

Quarrelling Among You

*Paul is still dealing with the ***root cause*** of their ***divisions*** (**1:10-31**)

Mysteries of God

μυστήριον (*mystērion*)

*As used in the NT, it does ***not*** represent an enigma, or ***a riddle that must be solved***.

*Refers to God's plan of salvation, which was formerly kept veiled but ***is now fully revealed in Christ through God's Holy Spirit***.

-Ro 16:25; 1Co 2:7; Eph 1:9; 3:3-9; 5:32; 6:19; Col 1:26; 2:2

For (4) - Answering the ***anticipated question***: ***"why doesn't Paul judge himself?" Phil 3:6***

Not to Go Beyond What is Written?

*Trying to ***impress upon them*** that in their esteem for teachers (i.e. Paul & Apollos) they ***should not follow them further than they do the will of God***.

*The ***purpose*** of teachers like ***Paul & Apollos*** was to ***lead others to God***, not to build allegiances to themselves!

You Have Become Rich!

Irony / Sarcasm**: Intended to show the ***absurdity of their ***pride*** and ***boasting in men***.

Revelation 3:17 – For you say, "***I am rich***, I have prospered, and ***I need nothing***," ***not realizing*** that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.

*One will ***never seek Christ***, or ***grow in their faith***, ***without*** the ***realization of spiritual poverty*** (**Matt 5:3**)

Regard Us?

*Referencing all who are ***teaching the Gospel message***, e.g.

-Paul, Apollos, and Cephas (3:22)

-Paul & Apollos (4:6)

Servants of Christ

*i.e. ***belonging to***

***3:5-7** "Servants through whom you believed..."

Stewards of the Mysteries of God

*The ***Gospel*** has been ***entrusted to Christian workers*** to be carefully ***used and guarded***.

*As ***servants*** of Christ, they have ***no authority over these truths*** but ***teach them in Christ's name to God's people.***

****Bearing*** the ***Gospel of Christ*** is an ***awesome responsibility***

-Acts 20:26-27; Jam 3:1 2Tim 2:1-2, 14-19; 4:1-5

Three Questions (7)

(1) Who sees anything different in you?

What makes one group better than the other?

(2) What do you have that you did not receive?

What spiritual blessings do you have that did not come from God?

(3) Why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

Why are you boasting as if you are the source of your position before God?

-1Co 1:26-31; Rom 3:21-28; Eph 2:1-10

Three Contrasts (10)

*A series of ***contrasts*** between the ***proud Corinthians*** and the ***"weak" apostles of Christ***

*All from the ***warped viewpoint of the Corinthians***.

*Paul is continuing to show the ***absurdity of their reliance on human wisdom***! (**1:18; 3:1-4**)

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Quarrelling Among You / Wisdom & Folly

1 Corinthians 1:10–31 (ESV)

10 I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you
agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same
mind and the same judgment. 11 For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that
there is quarreling among you, my brothers. 12 What I mean is that each one of you says,
"I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." 13 Is Christ
divided? Was Paul crucified for you? 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 may
say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (I did baptize also the household of
Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) 17 For Christ did
not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent
wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are
being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age?
Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God,
the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what
we preach to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek
wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to
Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God
and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the
weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly
standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose
what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to
shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that
are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the
presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us
wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is
written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Regard Us

1 Corinthians 3:5–7 (ESV)

5 What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the
Lord assigned to each. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7 So
neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the
growth.

1 Corinthians 3:22 (ESV)
22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours,

Acts 20:26–27 (ESV)
26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

James 3:1 (ESV)
1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

2 Timothy 2:1–2 (ESV)
1 You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:14–19 (ESV)
14 Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. 16 But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, 17 and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18 who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. 19 But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

2 Timothy 4:1–5 (ESV)
1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Mystery

3696 μυστήριον (*mystērion*), ου (*ou*), τό (*to*): n.neu.; ≡ DBLAram 10661; Str 3466; TDNT 4.802—LN 28.77 **a secret**, a mystery (Mk 4:11; Ro 11:25; 16:25; 1Co 2:1; 4:1; 13:2; 14:2; 15:51; Eph 1:9; 6:19; Col 1:26; 2:2; 2Th 2:7; 1Ti 3:9; Rev 17:5) Μυτιλήνη (*Mytilēnē*), ἡ (*hē*): n.pr.fem.; ≡ Str 3466—(Ac 28:1 v.r.); see 3639[1]

3466. **μυστήριον mustērion**; from **μύστης mustēs** *(one initiated);* from *3453; a mystery* or *secret doctrine*:—mysteries(5), mystery(22).[2]

mystery In Paul's writings, the word *mystērion* refers to God's plan of salvation, which was formerly kept secret but is now revealed in Christ. This plan includes the unification of Jews and Gentiles into one new people of God (3:3, 5–6, 9).[3]

Romans 16:25 (ESV)
25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages

1 Corinthians 2:7 (ESV)
7 But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.

Ephesians 1:9 (ESV)
9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

Ephesians 3:3–9 (ESV)
3 how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. 4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. 6 This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. 7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. 8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things,

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[1] Swanson, J. (1997). In *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (electronic ed.). Logos Research Systems, Inc.
[2] Thomas, R. L. (1998). In *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : updated edition*. Foundation Publications, Inc.
[3] Barry, J. D., Grigoni, M. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Mangum, D., & Whitehead, M. M. (2012). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Eph 1:9). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

Ephesians 5:32 (ESV)
32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Ephesians 6:19 (ESV)
19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,

Colossians 1:26 (ESV)
26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.

Colossians 2:2 (ESV)
2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,

Found Faithful

1 Corinthians 1:17 (ESV)
17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

1 Corinthians 2:1 (ESV)
1 And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom.

Allegiances

1 Corinthians 1:12 (ESV)
12 What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ."

1 Corinthians 3:4 (ESV)
4 For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

1 Corinthians 3:21 (ESV)
21 So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours,

Blameless

Philippians 3:6 (ESV)
6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Judges Me

Matthew 25:31–46 (ESV)

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will
sit on his glorious throne. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will
separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33
And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will
say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom
prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me
food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I
was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you
came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you
hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a
stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or
in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did
it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'
41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal
fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I
was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me,
naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' 44 Then
they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger
or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' 45 Then he will answer them,
saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not
do it to me.' 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into
eternal life."

2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV)

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may
receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Three Questions

1 Corinthians 1:26–31 (ESV)

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly
standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose
what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to
shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that
are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the
presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us
wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is
written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Romans 3:21–28 (ESV)

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law,
although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God
through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have
sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift,
through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a
propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness,
because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his
righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one
who has faith in Jesus.

27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law
of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart
from works of the law.

Ephesians 2:1–10 (ESV)

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following
the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is
now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the
passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by
nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. 4 But God, being rich in mercy,
because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our
trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and
raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so
that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness
toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is
not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may
boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God
prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Become Rich

Revelation 3:14–22 (ESV)

14 "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the
faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

15 " 'I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold
or hot! 16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of
my mouth. 17 For you say, "I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing," not realizing
that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me
gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe
yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your
eyes, so that you may see. 19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous
and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and
opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. 21 The one who

conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. [22] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' "

Matthew 5:3 (ESV)

[3] "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Three Contrasts

1 Corinthians 1:18 (ESV)

[18] For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 3:1–4 (ESV)

[1] But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. [2] I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, [3] for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? [4] For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

We Bless

Romans 12:14 (ESV)

[14] Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

1 Peter 3:9 (ESV)

[9] Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.