



1 corinthians 1. ⁴⁻⁹

⁴I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; ⁵that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; ⁶even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: ⁷so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: ⁸who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

After greeting the saints at Corinth, Paul reveals his hopes for the saints. He does so, as he often does in his epistles, by sharing his personal prayers and the things he asks God to bestow upon them.¹ Paul is not frivolous in his hopes. He is no small dreamer. He has big hopes and plans for us.

In today's reading, Paul hopes that Jesus "enriches" our "utterance" and "knowledge." It is not enough that we be given "utterance" and "knowledge." Oh, no. Our "utterance" and "knowledge" must be "enriched" before Paul is satisfied. Paul also prays that we "come behind in no gift." Again, it is not enough that we be given gifts. We must have them to their fullest. These are expansive hopes indeed?

In addition, Paul hopes that God, ever true to us (faithful), will strengthen us in our daily lives such that we can stand before Jesus "blameless." What a blessing! We are often so skilled at finding reasons to criticize and blame ourselves.

Paul has much to say to the Corinthians in this epistle. Before launching into his to-do list, however, Paul has one more thing to say: "Ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." This brings us back to the "grace" that we discussed in our meditation for 1.¹⁻³. Jesus is accepting and welcoming. He invites those who hear of him to believe and receive and act boldly and trustingly upon the reality of his grace. We, like the Corinthians and like the Psalmist before them are invited, "Seek ye my face." Paul would have us respond,

"My heart said unto thee, "Thy face, LORD, will I seek."

In doing so, we will "behold the beauty of the LORD."²

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

(edition: june 6, 2024)

¹ See Romans 1. ⁸⁻¹²; Ephesians 1. ¹⁵⁻²³; Philippians 1. ³⁻⁵; Col. 1. ³⁻⁶

² see Psalm 27. ^{4, 8}