



Searching for a Winner: Livingston in “Chronicles” Magazine (Continued); Restoration of Unity, 1 Cor 1:10b

Greeks, Romans, Hebrews, and Christians had different understandings of what the human good is, what the virtues are, and how they should be ranked; but they never questioned the metaphysical postulate that there is such a thing as the human good and that morality is the adventure of critically exploring it in a concrete way of life. Liberalism rejects this fundamental assumption, arguing that a metaphysical vision of the human good is not something human beings can agree on. Since compromise over questions of the ultimate good is not possible, liberals argue that constant and implacable conflict is inevitable. Instead, we must work to establish a universal civilization based on individual autonomy (or self-rule). Everyone should be able to do what he chooses, provided he shows equal respect for the choices of others. The problematic metaphysical question of the good is set aside in favor of a set of rules that maximizes choice. Ethics is reduced to following these rules, and government is reduced to enforcing them.

Liberalism further argues that the rules for maximizing choice are rationally self-evident and cannot be denied by any rational person. An ethical and political order governed by these rules would naturally seek to build a global, cosmopolitan civilization in which such archaisms as community, tradition, religion, moral authorities, and ethnic and national identities either disappear or become as trivial as the latest fashions. Abandoning the notion of the human good, liberalism, from the French Revolution on, stressed individual autonomy and became, thereby, the enemy of virtue, community, tradition, and religion. In rejecting the human good, man would also have to reject religion, for in the Western tradition religion and the good are intimately connected. Ronald Dworkin [Professor of Law and Philosophy at New York University and Professor of Jurisprudence at University College, London], whose philosophy of law has had a great influence in law schools, argues that, in conflicts between the rights of the autonomous individual and the community, the rights of the individual are “trumps.”

Liberalism gradually began to shape American public policy after the Civil War and kicked into high gear after World War II. The Bill of Rights, designed primarily to protect the states from the central government, was turned upside down to protect the autonomy of the individual from the states. The regulation of morals, law enforcement, and religion was transferred by judicial social engineers to the central government. The education of children, which had been the province of local schools financed by real-estate taxes, was now regulated by the federal courts.

By the 1980s, the earlier philosophical rejection of the Western conception of morality was cashed out in the collapse of many of the institutions necessary to sustain it. The United States was becoming a spiritual desert, and the signs of moral decay were ubiquitous: a spectacular increase in crime, divorce, falling educational standards, promiscuous abortion, illegitimacy, and a society with little desire to reproduce itself. In its obsession with individual autonomy, liberalism had ignored the importance of community and tradition.

Substantial human communities are typically not liberal. They stress virtue and duties over rights; they respect authority over autonomy; they are exclusive more than inclusive.

When members of a church are taken prisoner through the agency of philosophical propaganda and deceitful lies and thus emphasize their own personal desires over the mandates of the Word of God, then the body of Christ is handicapped and cannot function as designed.

Such was the case in Corinth where its believers were more into the freedom of individual rights instead of humble submission to the authority of the Word of God and the traditions of morality that it conveys from the eternal Logos.



The issue for the believer is duty to God before self. God's Word is the priority. Reciprocity is the motivation. Unconditional love is the outward expression toward one's fellow believer and is the key to unity. To achieve these virtues the believer must submit to the authority of the Word of God. If he does not, then he contributes to disorder in the local church and foments its divisions.

If the believer does orient to the guidance provided by the authority of Scripture then he contributes to restoration of order in a fractured church and helps unite its divisions. This is the result of the words "be made complete," the perfect passive participle of the verb **καταρτίζω, *katartizō***:

perfect: Intensive; denotes the progress of an act to a point of culmination and the existence of its finished results. The intensive stresses the finished results which are the healing of factions and the restoration of unity.

Spicq, Ceslas. *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament. Vol.2. Translated by James D. Ernest. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 274:*

καταρτίζω. To calm, appease the factions, restore unity. While there are divisions (*schismata*) in the Corinthian community, Paul exhorts the believers to be reconciled in one and the same Spirit, to maintain harmony between one another. The Christian life involves steady progress in the restoration and reordering of whatever is deficient either in one's personal life or in one's relations with one's neighbor.

passive: Each individual believer receives the action of being restored to the filling of the Holy Spirit and status quo spirituality and collectively the body of Christ in the local church is restored to the condition of unity, or *exoterike harmonia*.

participle: Periphrastic; combined with the present subjunctive of the verb **εἰμί, *eimi***, the verb "to be," is translated: "that you, the believers in the Corinthian church, be permanently restored to unity, *exoterike harmonia*."

How unity is achieved or restored is given next, in fact there are two ingredients required. The first is the "same mind": the instrumental of means from the noun:

νοῦς, *nous*- Refers to a mental attitude; a way of thinking as the sum total of the moral state of being; the Christian attitude [**Arndt & Gingrich, 544-45**].

This mental attitude that brings unity may be classified as *esoterike harmonia*: inner harmony. This harmony must also include the "same judgment," the instrumental of means from the noun:

γνώμη, *gnōmē* - "purpose or intention"

The expanded translation of the verse reads this way:

1 Corinthians 1:10 - Now I exhort you, fellow believers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing [**from the same inventory of doctrinal ideas**], and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be permanently restored to unity [**ἐξωτερικὴ ἁρμονία, *exōterikē harmonia***] by means of the same mental attitude [**ἐσωτερικὴ ἁρμονία, *esōterikē harmonia***] and the same purpose and intention [**the simultaneous advance in the double-column phalanx toward the objectives of spiritual maturity, invisible hero status, and escrow conveyance**].