

# A House Divided

Long Beach Alliance Church • September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, “I am of Paul,” and “I of Apollos,” and “I of Cephas,” and “I of Christ.”**

**Has Christ been divided?**

**~ 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:12-13a (NASB)**

## **1) Chopped Up Koinonia**

- A) Pivoting from his clear teaching that “koinonia” unity comes only through Jesus Christ (10x10!), Paul contrasts the Corinthian church experience with words of exhortation (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:10).**
  
- B) Paul’s challenge to the church for unity is a clear appeal “by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” His appeal is to “ultimate authority” (1:10).**
  
- C) Paul’s experience is that when Christians exclusively follow Christ (fidelity), there will be “no divisions among you” (1:10).**
  
- D) You can imagine how the listeners in Corinth must have responded to this introduction of unity in Christ Jesus and clarion call for unity! It goes without saying that anyone involved in divisions within the church were sharply convicted!**

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## **2) The Heart Of Church Divisions**

- A) We do not know who “Chloe’s people” (1:11) are, but Paul trusted their estimation of extensive divisions and rivalries which existed.**
- B) The heart of the divisions exist in church groups which show “preference” for certain leaders over other leaders (1:12).**
- C) The groups are so pronounced, the text indicates that the groups have become loyalists, lending a sense of “belonging” to their leader -- as though the groups are political parties within the church!**

## **3) Holy Sarcasm Producing Clear Loyalties**

- A) Paul, with tongue firmly planted in his rhetorical cheek, asks a string of questions designed to get the attention off church politics and back to an exclusive focus on Jesus Christ (1:13).**
- B) Evidently, one of the marks of “belonging” to a certain group was baptism by its leader, a view which Paul vilifies with heavy sarcasm (1:14-15).**
- C) Paul’s seeming stream of consciousness regarding who he has baptized serves to see how little he regarded baptism in light of clearly following Jesus Christ with koinonia unity (1:16).**
- D) Finally Paul gets to the heart of the matter (1:17). NOTHING should distract any of us from the centrality of the cross of Christ (the Gospel), so as not to make the message void (senseless).**

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