

PS JESUS IS GOD

–MESSY (BUT BEAUTIFUL) CHRISTIANITY, WEEK 59–

1 Corinthians 16:19-24 (NIV)

I. GREETINGS: FROM _____ WITH _____

¹⁹ The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings.

Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord,
and so does the church that meets at their house.

²⁰ All the brothers and sisters here send you greetings.

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

II. AUTOGRAPH: FOR _____ AND _____

²¹ I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand.

III. _____ WARNING: STAY _____

²² If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed!

IV. EVIDENCE OF _____: ANCIENT _____ JESUS AS _____

Come, Lord!

NIV footnote:

The Greek for *Come, Lord* reproduces an Aramaic expression (*Marana tha*) used by early Christians.

V. ENDING WHERE IT BEGAN: _____ AND _____ IN _____

²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

²⁴ My love to all of you in Christ Jesus.

Amen.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Through life's _____, _____ onto the _____ of _____.

...by _____ that the Lord Jesus Christ is _____ and _____.

...by fighting for _____, _____, and _____ toward _____.

...by letting _____ tune your _____ to _____ for _____.

The Creed of Nicaea, 325 (Leith, *Creeds of the Church*, 30-31)

We believe in one God, the Father all Governing, creator of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father as only begotten, that is, from the essence [reality] of the Father, God from God Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not created, of the same essence [reality] as the Father, through whom all things came into being, both in heaven and on earth; Who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate, becoming human. He suffered and the third day he rose, and ascended into the heavens. And he will come to judge both the living and the dead.

And [we believe] in the Holy Spirit.

But, those who say, Once he was not, or he was not before his generation, or he came to be out of nothing, or who assert that he, the Son of God, is of a different [essence], or that he is a creature, or changeable, or mutable, the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes them.

On the Significance of 16:22b (Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God?* 36-37)

It is widely accepted among scholars that we even have a linguistic fragment or actual artifact of the devotional practice of Aramaic-speaking circles of Jewish Christians preserved in 1 Corinthians 16:22. The untranslated expression found here, “*Marana tha*,” is commonly taken as a prayer or an invocation formula, and is probably to be translated something like “O Lord, come!” It is also now commonly accepted that it was the exalted Jesus who was addressed as the “Lord” in this formula. It is interesting that Paul does not bother to translate the expression here for his Greek-speaking church in Corinth, probably because he expected his readers to recognize it. This is likely because it was one of the devotional formulas from Aramaic-speaking circles of the early Christian movement that he conveyed to his Greek-speaking Gentile converts, as a gesture of their religious solidarity with believers in Judea, whom Paul refers to as predecessors of his Gentile converts (E.g., 1 Thess 2:13-16; Rom 15:25-27). Other examples of devotional expression that derive from Semitic-speaking Christian circles and were circulated by Paul among the congregations that he established include “*Abba*,” as a devotional expression used to address God in prayer (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:60).

To repeat the point for emphasis, the “*Marana tha*” expression must have been conveyed to Paul’s Greek-speaking converts as already a standardized devotional formula, which confirms that the devotional stance reflected in the expression was a familiar feature of Aramaic-speaking circles of Christians well before the date of 1 Corinthians. Indeed, as I have argued here (and more extensively in previous publications), it seems most likely that this kind of devotion to Jesus erupted with amazing force and rapidity. As Hengel contended in that important essay which I have mentioned earlier, the really crucial period of the origin of remarkable beliefs about Jesus’ significance is “the first four or five years” of the early Christian movement.